

Area 5 - City Centre

Small Area Proposals

RC20 SMALL AREA PROPOSALS

In considering proposals for development, regard will be had to the general aims and objectives of the Plan; to the policies in Part 1; to Area 5 Policies RC1 to RC19; and to the detailed proposals which will apply in the following 31 small areas of the City Centre.

- RC20 Area 1 Victoria Station/Cathedral Area
- RC20 Area 2 Corporation Street/Miller Street/Shudehill/Withy Grove
- RC20 Area 3 Arndale Centre/Market Place
- RC20 Area 4 Swan Street/Shudehill/Tib Street/Church Street
- RC20 Area 5 Blackfriars Street/Deansgate/Bridge Street/River Irwell
- RC20 Area 6 Deansgate/St Mary's Gate/Cross Street/John Dalton Street
- RC20 Area 7 The Financial Core
- RC20 Area 8 Oxford Street/Portland Street/York Street/Mosley Street
- RC20 Area 9 Piccadilly and Oldham Street
- RC20 Area 10 Oldham Street/Lever Street/Newton Street
- RC20 Area 11 Port Street/Store Street
- RC20 Area 12 The Rochdale and Ashton Canal Basins
- RC20 Area 13 Piccadilly Station/Trading Estate
- RC20 Area 14 Fairfield Street/Mancunian Way/London Road
- RC20 Area 15 UMIST
- RC20 Area 16 Piccadilly/London Road
- RC20 Area 17 Princess Street/Whitworth Street/Portland Street/Aytoun Street
- RC20 Area 18 Whitworth Street/Princess Street/Portland Street/Oxford Street
- RC20 Area 19 Oxford Road/Railway/Princess Street/Mancunian Way
- RC20 Area 20 Medlock Street/Railway/Oxford Street/Mancunian Way
- RC20 Area 21 Oxford Street/Lower Mosley Street/Mosley Street/Railway
- RC20 Area 22 Chester Road/Medlock Street/Mancunian Way
- RC20 Area 23 Deansgate/Peter Street/Lower Mosley Street/Whitworth Street West
- RC20 Area 24 Princess Street/Mosley Street/Peter Street/Deansgate/John Dalton Street
- RC20 Area 25 Bridge Street/Deansgate/Quay Street/River Irwell
- RC20 Area 26 Quay Street/Deansgate/Liverpool Road/River Irwell
- RC20 Area 27 Rivers Medlock and Irwell/Liverpool Road/Chester Road/Egerton Street
- RC20 Area 28 St Georges
- RC20 Area 29 All Saints
- RC20 Area 30 The University
- RC20 Area 31 The Hospitals

Reasons:-

The City Centre consists of a great variety and mixture of activities many of which have complex relationships with each other. Areas in the City Centre each have their own particular character, atmosphere and range of activities. One of the main objectives of the Plan is to seek to enhance this aspect of the character of the City Centre. This objective, coupled with the need to offer detailed planning guidance throughout the City Centre has resulted in the division of the City Centre area into the 31 small areas shown on the proposals map. The small area frameworks set out the main local planning considerations that the Council will seek to progress. They also provide the context for local changes and will form the background to the Council's development control action as well as making firm proposals for sites where the aims of the plan imply that this needs to be done. It has to be recognised, however, that in a continuous and complex urban area like the City Centre, any attempt to sub-divide must be somewhat arbitrary and each statement must be considered together with those for adjoining areas and against the Plan's wider aims and

objectives.

RC20 Area 1 Victoria Station/Cathedral Area

This is an important area of considerable character. It occupies a prominent position which is both an accessible gateway location and close to the Arndale Centre and the shopping and office activities in the Market Place area. The area is bounded by the proposed Inner Relief Route, Corporation Street, Cateaton Street and the River Irwell and contains one of the peripheral rail termini, Victoria Station. A major part of the area is covered by the Cathedral Conservation Area whose principal components are the Cathedral itself, Chethams School, the Corn Exchange and the high townscape quality of certain surrounding streets. Victoria Station dominates the north of the area.

The area thus combines a number of locational and physical attributes which provide opportunities, warrant high priority environmental improvement and where development is appropriate, high standards of design. However the presence of numerous unsightly vacant or under-used sites and buildings, especially at the exit to Victoria Station and on the important Corporation Street frontage, substantially detract from the area's potential character and create a poor impression of the City Centre at a prominent gateway point. The dominance of the Cathedral and its relationship with the Irwell is also marred both by substantial movements of traffic through parts of the area and by the car parking at Exchange Station and the Cathedral Approach Bridge. This general air of neglect in parts of the area becomes even more evident in the vicinity of the Inner Relief Route reservation, north of the railway lines, where the environment is poor and marginal, often low intensity, uses predominate.

In countering these problems the Plan's proposals aim to exploit the benefits of the area's location, close both to the core, the Inner Relief Route and other major roads, its prominence, as a key entry point to the City Centre, and its character which stems from its architectural features and the adjoining River Irwell. The main concerns are, then, to promote the maintenance and improvement of the suburban rail network and the way it serves the core, to maintain access to the core both by foot and by car and public transport, to provide an appropriate level of car parking serving both the core and the needs of Victoria Station, and to enhance the character and environment of the Conservation Area and the Irwell and the Corporation Street corridors. All of these are important considerations and not one of them need, or will, be pursued to the exclusion of the others.

Environmental improvements will be given high priority and other proposals will be required to be consistent with this. In particular high standard environmental treatment incorporating an element of open space will be sought on the land lying between Victoria Station and Corporation Street. The area in front of the Corn Exchange on Hanging Ditch should be given over predominantly to open space use. There is a strong case for similar treatment and use of the site in front of Victoria Station which is not only an important entry point to the City Centre but may also be used to enhance the setting of Chethams.

Similarly, means of enabling the creation of a better setting for the Cathedral and a stronger, more integral relationship with the River Irwell will be investigated. Other ways of opening up the Irwell will also be advanced as and when opportunities arise. Subsequent detailed local planning needs to investigate the street scene in the vicinity of the Cathedral, and reducing traffic on Fennel Street in order to improve the relationship between the Cathedral and Chethams and the pedestrian links between the area, the station and the core.

The use of land for car parking within the area generally remains important in terms of supporting both the needs of Victoria Station and those of the commercial activities in the neighbouring core of the City Centre. The area to the north of the railway lines adjoining the proposed Inner Relief Route is especially well-suited to long-stay permanent car parks and such a use is to be encouraged in conjunction with environmental improvements and the maintenance of existing activities.

There is a current outline planning consent for an hotel on the site west of Corporation Street,

between Fennel Street and Todd Street. Presently used predominantly for car parking, the site makes a valuable contribution towards meeting the needs for car parking in this area to serve both the core and the station. Consequently, should the present proposals for an hotel development not be implemented, high priority will be given to securing more permanent high standard environmental improvements of the car park.

In addition the surplus space within Victoria Station would be of particular value in accommodating vehicles (buses, taxis and cars) serving the station.

The theme of environmental improvement and the enhancement of the character of the Conservation Area will be reinforced not only by a sensitive, balanced approach towards car parking, but also by, amongst other things, ensuring that any development in the area complements the proposals for the environmental improvement of the land to the east and south west of the station. Priority will be given to improving the attractiveness of these areas as open spaces, although should Chethams School require additional development for expansion or additional facilities every effort will be made to accommodate their needs within the immediate vicinity. In such a case built form will be sought on the Long Millgate frontage.

RC20 Area 2 Corporation Street/Miller Street/ Shudehill/Withy Grove

This highly prominent and accessible area lies to the east of Victoria Station and adjoins both Corporation Street, an important 'gateway' into the City Centre, and the proposed Inner Relief Route. A major part of the area (between Corporation Street and Dantzic Street) is occupied by a variety of important regional commercial activities (including the headquarters of the Co-Operative Wholesale and Insurance Societies) which occupy a mixture of substantial new and older floorspace and represent a significant component of City Centre office employment. A considerable proportion of this area has a current planning consent for major office redevelopment, part of which has been implemented with the construction of the head office building for the Co-op Bank. The land east of the CIS Tower fronting the Inner Relief Route and opposite the proposed housing in Smithfield, also has an outstanding consent for office development.

The south-eastern quadrant of the area, in marked contrast to the adjoining area west of Dantzic Street, is characterised by a mixture of small scale commercial and industrial activities housed in older and frequently very small, obsolescent premises with marginal, specialist and "fringe" retailing uses predominating on the Shudehill frontage.

In view of their importance to the Regional Centre and its economy the primary consideration in the area is to retain the major commercial activities - CWS, CIS, and those at Thompson House, within the City Centre. To this end in the short term particular emphasis will be placed on improving the servicing arrangements for Thompson House in conjunction with the provision of well-screened permanent car parking on the land to the rear of Thompson House and the new Co-op Bank . Although this site and the wider area to the north has planning consent for major office development the present office market is such that this consent is unlikely to be taken up in its present form. Nonetheless renewal of older floorspace for owner occupation remains however acceptable in principle and the broad mix of commercial uses in the area is confirmed.

The main road frontages to Corporation Street and Miller Street are considered high priority environmental improvement corridors and so high standards of design and environmental improvement will be sought here. More specifically the Miller Street/Amber Street site, in view of its prominent location fronting the Inner Relief Route, will be subject to these considerations. This site has particularly good locational advantages and whilst there will normally be a presumption against major speculative office development, development tailored to a specific users' requirements or mixed commercial development (for example a combined commercial/light industrial/administrative/show room use), would be acceptable. Any development would be required to be of high design standard and to provide for its own car parking needs. Where practical, the inclusion of a residential and/or public car parking element will also be encouraged.

The area is well located for the provision of permanent long stay public car parking serving either neighbouring activities or those of the core. Whilst at present there is only one specific firm proposal for public car parking (adjacent to Garden Street, at the rear of Thompson House) this use is considered acceptable in principle throughout the area provided satisfactory environmental standards and access arrangements are achieved.

Within the south-east quadrant bounded by Hanover Street, Dantzig Street and Withy Grove/Shudehill the main concern will be to retain existing activities. Commercial development will therefore be expected to be consistent with the scale and character of existing activities. There may be scope for introducing a residential element into the mixture of uses north of Withy Grove/Shudehill and therefore, where opportunities arise this use will be encouraged.

RC20 Area 3 Arndale Centre/Market Place

Lying to the immediate north of the financial core and the established shopping area in and around St Ann's Square, this area is part of the Regional Shopping Centre and contains the major proportion of shopping floorspace in the City Centre, including numerous large multiples. The Arndale and Market Place developments dominate the area and provide modern, largely covered and traffic-free shopping facilities set in a lively environment. Other significant uses in the area are housing (at Cromford Court above the Arndale Centre), modern offices and substantial amounts of multi-storey and underground car parking. The only older properties in the area are on the south side of Market Street and are of varying architectural quality.

The level and diversity of shopping facilities in the City Centre are a vital component of its regional role and character. Consequently this is an area where the theme of improving and building upon existing assets is especially important and relevant. For the most part this theme finds expression in the firm emphasis placed on improving the attractiveness of the area, particularly its pedestrian environment, for the potential shopper and visitors. Significant progress will be made when the permanent environmental treatment of Market Street is completed. This scheme needs to be viewed in terms of the street scene as a whole - not just ground treatment but also environmental improvements to buildings, street lighting, and so on. There is also scope for further enhancement of the shopping environment, particularly on the fringes of this area.

In promoting environmental improvements, both within the area and around it, the importance of maintaining accessibility for shoppers must not be underestimated. In this context, the Plan's policies and proposals for improving the provision and effectiveness of short-stay car parks and the way these, and the transportation network generally, serve the core are very important indeed, as also is close attention to more detailed matters such as the provision of convenient bus routes and bus stops. It will also be important to ensure that measures designed to reduce traffic levels and improve conditions for pedestrians are not detrimental to cyclists and disabled visitors. Special parking arrangements for both these sections of the community will be provided wherever possible. In short a balanced approach to environmental improvement and accessibility needs to be pursued.

The aim of an attractive, safe and accessible shopping environment will be further complemented by a favourable attitude towards proposals which would add to the level of activity on shopping frontages. Thus, whilst the predominantly retail character of the main shopping streets will be safeguarded, a limited introduction of uses such as public houses and cafes will be encouraged. Similarly the introduction of further residential uses (e.g. at the upper level south of Market Street) will be encouraged.

RC20 Area 4 Swan Street/Shudehill/Tib Street/Church Street

A very diverse mixture of uses occupy this area at present. The area south of the former Wholesale and Retail Fish Markets is currently used for a mixture of small scale commercial activities housed in predominantly old and often obsolescent premises. Although occasional vacancies and numerous small cleared sites are evident, especially in the Copperas Street/Edge

Street area, most of the buildings are in active use despite their age, condition and lack of adequate parking, servicing and access facilities. Thomas Street is the principal local street through this part of the area and acts as a lively focus for the textile trades which predominate in the surrounding area. Small scale, often highly specialised, retail uses are predominant on Tib Street, whilst more substantial broadly commercial uses front Swan Street. The Church Street multi-storey car park is located in the south-east corner of the area.

Moving northwards, the former Fish Market buildings are important features of the area and both are the subject of works by the City Council. The Retail Fish Market building has been converted into a Craft Centre creating a permanent working base for artists and craftsmen. Alongside the former Wholesale Fish Market site is envisaged as a walled open space integrated into the extensive cleared area to the north currently used as a surface level car park. The whole area is earmarked for a further substantial housing development extending the housing newly developed by the City Council through to Shudehill.

The Plan's aim to introduce further housing into the City Centre is especially important and relevant in the area north of Thomas Street. The need to build upon the substantial residential component (both existing and planned) and improve its surroundings will be the principal and critical reference point against which all proposals in the adjoining areas will be judged.

In particular, the Copperas Street/Edge Street area is considered suitable for further accretions of housing use by way of single and mixed use infill development or conversion. Consequently, whilst existing activity will not be actively displaced, any redevelopment should be clearly linked in scale and character to the existing commercial activities or those of the Craft Centre. In the event of larger sites becoming available, housing, open space or car parking will generally be the only acceptable uses.

In parallel with all this, action needs to be taken to make the environment generally more conducive to housing. In particular, high standards of landscaping of sites used for car parking, itself a valuable and appropriate use in terms of existing activity and in view of the area's location relative to the core, will be sought as will further areas of open space.

The Swan Street frontage north of the existing and proposed housing adjoins the proposed Inner Relief Route. It is therefore an appropriate location for a mixture of commercial uses and the present uses are therefore confirmed in the Plan.

On and to the south of Thomas Street, the emphasis will be on retaining the existing activities and their scale and character. To this end investment in existing buildings and the provision of better access, servicing and car parking facilities will be sought in association with other environmental improvements. Where vacant sites do become available public parking or parking to meet local needs will normally be preferred, as will open space use.

RC20 Area 5 Blackfriars Street/Deansgate/River Irwell

This area includes important elements of the City Centre's office and retailing activities. The shopping activity ranges from the Kendal Milne Department Store on Deansgate to a wide variety of small shops in Bridge Street King Street West and in Deansgate itself. The office activity, which is concentrated along the Irwell, includes a substantial amount of both new and refurbished older premises. The street scene at St Mary's Parsonage, together with the open space, in Parsonage Gardens, contributes to generally attractive surroundings. The King Street West multi-storey car park serves the area well.

The area alongside the river has little potential for change. The main scope for positive action will be in relation to opening up the Irwell banks for access and environmental improvement. This is particularly true on Bridge Street, an important route into the City Centre for both vehicles and pedestrians, where some work has already been undertaken and where there is further scope in the Motor Street area.

The effects of the concentration in shopping brought about by the Arndale development means that whilst the presence of Kendals ensures that this area remains very much a part of the Regional Shopping Area, it may become increasingly necessary to accept the introduction of non-retailing uses. So far as shopping is concerned, it will be important to strengthen the links between this area and the remainder of the Regional Shopping Area. Deansgate is, an important traffic route, although its role will change when the Inner Relief Route is completed.

RC20 Area 6 Deansgate/St Mary's Gate/Cross Street/John Dalton Street

This area comprises primarily older property in generally good repair, with retail uses predominant at ground floor level. A substantial part of the area forms the St Ann's Square Conservation Area, containing several important regional attractions - high quality retailing, the Royal Exchange Theatre and several restaurants. Fine buildings and the lack of through traffic already offer valuable environmental qualities here encouraging both retailing and smaller office uses. King Street, which has been pedestrianised, is now a pleasant up-market shopping street, with the Royal Exchange Shopping Centre and Barton Arcade refurbishment also aimed at 'prestige' retailing.

The heart of this area is an important part of the Regional Shopping Centre, providing a link between the Arndale and Market Place Developments and Deansgate. It is of fundamentally different character to the modern developments north of Market Street and this character is something which it is important to reinforce. This will mean ensuring that new ground level uses on King Street, St Ann's Square, St Ann Street (west of the Church), Market Street, and Cross Street (north of St Ann Street), remain consistent with the character of these frontages as predominantly retailing locations. The uses in this area tend to be those relating to high environmental quality and the basic approach to this area must start from a desire to further enhance its physical qualities.

None of the streets in the area are of fundamental importance in terms of through traffic. The primary need is to ensure the accessibility of the area for essential vehicles and at the same time move towards the creation of an attractive environment for pedestrians. This has already been achieved in King Street, St Ann's Square, Barton Arcade and Police Street and there is further scope for similar improvements in the area, particularly in Ridgefield. The objective will be to promote improvement in the physical appearance of the area by use of a floorspace treatment to define the whole of this area as one in which pedestrians should, in general, have priority, without this being achieved at the expense of accessibility.

It will also be necessary to improve the links between this area and the Arndale Centre. Cross Street is an important public transport route and provides for access to the King Street area. It will be necessary to both ensure that it is able to fulfil this role and also to look at ways of making it environmentally a more attractive street which is easier for people to cross. It is extremely important that the improvements envisaged to both parts of the Regional Shopping Area are not lost because of difficulties encountered in trying to move between them.

RC20 Area 7 The Financial Core

This relatively homogeneous area is the heart of the regional centre office market. High quality buildings both new and old and a concentration of major financial agencies and institutions predominate. Much of the area is in the King Street Conservation Area and a substantial proportion of the older buildings are listed. Recent development interest has swung noticeably towards refurbishment and with the degree of security now offered to important older premises there is likely to be only limited scope for further redevelopments in the area.

The western boundary of the area is formed by Cross Street, an important access route for both pedestrians and vehicles, and the southern boundary by Princess Street, an important route for movement in and around the City Centre. (See also Areas 6 and 24).

In view of the area's importance as a major source of employment and its vital contribution to the regional role of the City Centre, the prime consideration here will be to sustain the existing level and character of activity. Particular encouragement will be given to further refurbishment for office use.

The maintenance of a high level of activity in the Financial Core is not simply a local concern but a main aim of the Plan and its office policies generally. This will therefore be a major consideration in determining the acceptability of proposals for office development elsewhere in the City Centre. With little scope for physical change within the area itself, the measures most relevant to progressing this aim, notably improving the availability of convenient short-stay parking and enhancing the City Centre environment generally, will mainly have to be progressed elsewhere, although where there is opportunity for improvement of both these components by better management of the space between buildings within the area, this will be taken up.

Where appropriate opportunities arise, a more lively and interesting street scene will also be sought by, for example, the introduction of an active ground floor use or by a sensitive approach to the design of frontages. Such measures are especially appropriate on Fountain Street with its substantial pedestrian flows. Indeed this street may also offer scope for environmental improvements although these must not undermine its important role as an access route. Upper King Street too may offer scope for both environmental improvements and marginally increased on-street car parking although here again its essential access role must not be prejudiced by such measures.

RC20 Area 8 Oxford Street/Portland Street/York Street/Mosley Street

This area is adjacent to the Financial Core and whilst having a history of commercial usage is now clearly illustrative of the decline of old commercial uses and buildings. The area north of Charlotte Street is occupied by substantial buildings having a relatively long life. New development has taken place on Portland Street (the Bank of England), south east of St Peter's Square and on infill sites further up Lower Mosley Street. However, the predominant character of the area as a whole is that of older floorspace with much of this apparently lacking adequate maintenance. A substantial degree of vacancy is evident particularly away from the main frontages and there are a number of sites where buildings have been cleared and car parking, usually lacking either landscaping or surfacing, is to be found. Despite the general physical decline the area has seen recent new activity and some reinvestment through a significant concentration of Chinese restaurants and emporia. This grouping, linked as it is to financial and cultural activities of the Chinese community in Manchester, represents an important part of Manchester's increasing role as a regional focus for the Chinese community in the UK.

Reduced traffic levels in Mosley Street will ease access for buses and make it more pleasant for pedestrians. Conversely there will be an increase in traffic on Portland Street where it is intended that a long established road improvement scheme that would have affected much of the Portland Street frontage should not now go ahead. Improvements will now be restricted to the section between Charlotte Street and Piccadilly (where the carriageway will be widened without affecting any of the frontage property) and to the junction of Oxford Street and Portland Street.

This area is seen to lie outside the present office and shopping core areas, although proximity to the financial core is an important feature. The need for short to medium stay parking relevant to the financial core may be met in this area by either multi-storey or surface level car parks or a combination of both. The low activity and often poor property offer scope for the incremental assembly of sites for surface level parking that could combine the provision of open space and environmental gains in parallel with the provision of parking. Part of the area, lying between George Street and Faulkner Street north of Nicholas Street is the site of a current City Council proposal for car parking, and the area generally is one of the few locations suitable for providing the additional short stay parking which is central to the Plan's aim of maintaining activity in the core. Consequently, with the exception of the main road frontages incremental assembly of sites for car parking/open space will be encouraged and new development for other uses will not

normally be acceptable. In the event of applications for private car parking, high standards of landscaping will be required.

The recent growth of the Chinese community in the area has been closely related to the availability of cheap older floorspace and, whilst seeking to see those buildings that have little or no further usefulness replaced by parking, continued encouragement will be given to users willing to take on and maintain the more viable older properties. The frontages to Oxford Street, Portland Street, Charlotte Street, Princess Street and Mosley Street are prominent and are occupied by buildings of a higher general standard and use level than the core of the blocks behind them. Consequently, the retention of commercial uses in frontage buildings and infill office or other commercial redevelopment at a limited scale on frontage sites is appropriate and need not preclude car parking provision behind.

RC20 Area 9 Piccadilly and Oldham Street

A number of factors combine to make this area an active and important part of the Regional Centre. Whilst the recent completion of the Arndale Centre to the immediate west has resulted in a shift in the focus of mainstream shopping in the City Centre, this area, especially on the north side of Piccadilly and in the vicinity of Market Street, remains an active and vital part of the Regional Shopping Centre.

The substantial pedestrian activity which stems from the area's shopping role is supplemented by the attractions of Piccadilly Gardens, a major civic open space, which is also a focal point receiving passengers from the numerous bus stops in the area and those en route from Piccadilly Station to the shopping and office core areas.

The area is characterised not only by high pedestrian and bus activity but also lies at the edge of major routes (Portland Street/Newton Street) for general traffic moving around the core. It is thus an area where the Plan's concern of improving the environment of the Regional Shopping Centre and the major civic open spaces, of maintaining accessibility whether by foot, bus or car and of enhancing the level and diversity of activity generally are of direct relevance.

The main emphasis will be on enhancing the character and appearance of the area, making it even more conducive to pedestrian activity whilst at the same time ensuring continued access to and free movement around the core. Particular attention will be given to the improvement of pedestrian links to the bus station and those pedestrian routes through the area leading to Piccadilly Railway Station.

The Market Street pedestrianisation scheme has resulted in improvement on Market Street between Lewis's and Debenhams. Furthermore the proposals for Portland Street/Lever Street/Newton Street, together with the promotion of the use of Travis Street and Whitworth Street as a through route, will not only cater for movements of general traffic around the City Centre but also offer further scope for enhancing the pedestrian environment notably in Oldham Street and Piccadilly Gardens and its surroundings as well as improving accessibility by public transport.

Yet further improvements would accrue from a reduction in the prominence of bus station activities around Piccadilly Gardens. The Council and the Passenger Transport Executive will concentrate bus terminal stands in the Parker Street Area and remove the bus stands fronting Piccadilly. In addition, bus services will be extended from Greengate (in Salford) and from Lever Street to Parker Street, whilst those presently routed north to south through the Piccadilly area will be rerouted to concentrate on Oldham Street and Mosley Street.

One of the attractions of the area is its lively, commercial and undeniably urban environment. Two of the essential features contributing to this are the form and appearance of surrounding buildings and the uses within them. In this context retailing is both a vital element in the City Centre's role as a regional centre and provides a lively and interesting atmosphere. Although two major

retailers, C & A and British Home Stores have relocated from the area into the Arndale Centre, leaving two substantial vacancies on Oldham Street, it is intended that shopping will continue to be the predominant frontage use. However, there are also numerous non-retail services which not only contribute to street activity but also complement neighbouring shops and provide a useful service to the substantial numbers of people walking through the area. Uses such as building societies, estate agencies and job centres are therefore to be encouraged provided the predominantly retailing character of the area is not lost.

The opportunities for major redevelopment in this area are likely to be very limited. Existing office and hotel uses in the area are confirmed, whilst a mixture of uses, including, for example, housing will be encouraged on refurbishment of existing buildings or in any limited redevelopment, subject again to shopping remaining the dominant use of the area.

RC20 Area 10 Oldham Street/Newton Street/Lever Street

This area is predominantly commercial, with a high proportion of substantial older properties and a textile warehousing base. The area's qualities, notably its many sound buildings, suggest that general environmental and operational improvements, particularly the cleaning of buildings and an increased availability of parking to meet local needs, could well stimulate higher levels of future activity. Easy access to the Inner Relief Route adds to the attractions for new uses to supplement the existing mix in the area.

The shift in the City Centre shopping pattern brought about as a result particularly of the Arndale Centre Development has brought evident loss of trade for retailing on Oldham Street and Tib Street, with the broadly based comparative shopping on Oldham Street more markedly affected than Tib Street's smaller specialist shops. The general assumption here is that some degree of non-retail or quasi-retail uses need to be accepted or even encouraged, particularly on Oldham Street where the generally larger buildings offer scope for cash and carry/retail warehousing use.

Newton Street and Lever Street link Portland Street with Great Ancoats Street and the rest of the Inner Relief Route and together represent a better and more attractive route than Oldham Street in catering for cross-city movements of general traffic. There will be a reduction of general through traffic on Oldham Street and this will allow improved bus operations and pedestrian improvements in the part of Oldham Street within this area. Improvements to parking and servicing will be important to encouraging a diverse mix of new uses and the provision of additional public parking on a site at Bradley Street/Spear Street would be particularly relevant both to activity on Oldham Street and to maintaining activity levels in commercial buildings around Lever Street.

None of these measures need imply major change in the character of the area and the aim overall will be both to retain existing activity and encourage further additions to the mixture of uses. In the longer term, with housing uses proposed on the two adjacent areas of Smithfield and the Canal Basins, housing could play a positive part as one of the elements in the mixture of uses in this area.

Retailing in Stevenson Square and the strong wholesaling element also apparent are clearly linked to the area's garment trade. The Square's role as a bus and taxi terminus tends to dominate its character at present. The attractiveness of the area would clearly be improved if it were possible to remove some buses and carry out environmental works to create a more attractive urban space, linking also to environmental improvements elsewhere in the area. The potential for this may be limited in the short term but will be substantially increased when the intention of the Council and the Passenger Transport Executive to replace Stevenson Square as a bus terminus is fulfilled.

RC20 Area 11 Port Street/Store Street

This area contains a variety of uses and separates the Rochdale and Ashton Canal basins from the Inner Relief Route along Great Ancoats Street. The Lees Street/Store Street area is industrial

and although active has seen recent decline with evident vacant premises. Commercial premises on the Great Ancoats Street frontage are, on the whole, in poor condition. The Ashton Canal forms the southern boundary of the area.

The two most important considerations in this area are the adjacent proposals for single use housing development at the Rochdale Canal Basin and for a significant housing element at the Ashton Canal Basin and the existence of the Inner Relief Route (Great Ancoats Street) with its opportunities for uses of a commercial character notably in the retail warehousing and service industry fields. Whilst it is important to retain existing commercial and industrial activity, in the long term extension of housing from the Rochdale Canal Basin across Tariff Street would appear practicable as would extension of housing from the Ashton Canal and Basin onto vacant sites in the Store Street/Meadow Street/Ashton Canalside area.

With a similar attitude to existing uses, it is proposed to promote new activity on the Great Ancoats Street frontage and to identify a 'commercial frontage strip' consistent firstly, with the aim of encouraging frontage development of a scale and character appropriate to the Inner Relief Route (with an emphasis on mixed commercial/service/retail warehousing components) and secondly, enabling long-term housing development of sites to the rear as accretions from the canal basins' proposals. New uses will be expected to complement this approach and behind the commercial frontage strip only housing, open space or parking use of cleared sites is envisaged.

The area as a whole has attractions for long-stay parking acting to offset lost capacity displaced from the Canal Basins on their redevelopment. Suitably landscaped parking would be a particularly appropriate interim use for longer term housing sites in this area.

RC20 Area 12 The Rochdale and Ashton Canal Basin

This area contains two large, predominantly open areas each based on a canal basin.

Around the Dale Street basin of the Rochdale Canal is a large site presently used for car parking. Around this area are a number of substantial older commercial properties with several having some architectural merit. Most of these are in the Dale Street/Tariff Street area, but others on Ducie Street and Upper Stanley Street also contain moderate levels of existing commercial activity, with textile warehousing, some retail warehousing, older offices and vacant floorspace all evident.

The Ashton Canal Basin which includes an important listed former railway goods warehouses is also largely undeveloped and used for parking. Some small scale environmental improvement work has been progressed adjacent to the Ashton Canal.

The introduction of housing into the City Centre is one of the key themes of the Plan and sites of sufficient size and character to enable housing to create an 'internal' residential environment are rare. The Rochdale Canal Basin offers perhaps the best example of such a site and housing is considered to have overriding priority here. One of the greatest assets of both canal basins for housing is the opportunity to create a distinctive waterside environment which could give a housing development a strong and attractive character. To realise this potential it will be particularly important to promote environmental works immediately around the canal basins and to open up canalside pedestrian routes and recreational opportunities. Since these could be potentially important elements of the City Centre environment as a whole as well as an asset to on-site development, it will be important to ensure that public access to an improved canalside environment is secured in connection with housing development.

The area as a whole lies outside the core and is well placed to offer parking. This use is not inappropriate until such time as housing development can be secured. Whilst the retention of car parking at the Rochdale Canal Basin is not regarded as so essential as to preclude its use for housing, a significant parking component should be retained in any development of the Ashton Canal Basin area in association with major housing and open space uses.

The retention and re-use of important older buildings in the area will be encouraged, particularly the Ashton Canal Basin warehouse where any use appropriate to its retention and future maintenance will be allowed. The Plan as a whole seeks to sustain the level of existing activity in older commercial premises including those around the Rochdale Canal Basin. Any scope for practical attention to servicing and local parking difficulties where these arise will be considered.

The Plan's broad approach to 'accretions' of housing adding to short-term developable sites points to the potential for extensions of housing use into adjacent properties and also to the possibility of extending new housing development ultimately into the area lying between the Canal Basins and the Inner Relief Route. In the Dale Street/Tariff Street area existing older commercial floorspace may offer residential conversion prospects. In the event of vacant sites arising on demolition of any existing property, this approach to the area as a whole points to only housing, permanent landscaped car parking or open space uses being appropriate.

RC20 Area 13 Piccadilly Station/Trading Estate

This area is predominantly industrial, with premises ranging from relatively large older buildings around Chapel Street to modern floorspace on the Piccadilly Trading Estate.

New small industrial units have been built near Store Street and there are further cleared sites nearby which offer the potential for additional development to take advantage of the area's ready access to the Inner Relief Route and to the rail network. The Great Ancoats Street frontage offers particular opportunities for mixed commercial uses where consistent with the general policies for the City Centre Area.

The largest single user in the area is British Rail with Piccadilly Station's bulk effectively divorcing much of the area from the heart of the City Centre. However the general area immediately behind the station is not inappropriate for long-stay parking use as already exists at Sheffield Street.

The potential of Travis Street as a traffic route is an important consideration in improving access to the City Centre and especially relevant to catering for through traffic seeking to avoid the core. The increased use of Travis Street, which connects well into Whitworth Street, is proposed. Store Street is restricted as a traffic route by its limited width at the canal aqueduct and its junction with London Road. The attraction of new uses to the area should seek not only to generate new activity but also to integrate it more closely into the City Centre as a whole.

Environmental works throughout the area will be relevant to increasing its attractions as a working environment and these, together with improved access arrangements and parking provision where appropriate, will be important in sustaining and encouraging existing activity. The provision of adequate on-site parking will be required on redevelopment. Environmental measures, which will be valuable in this area, need to reflect the importance of the Great Ancoats Street frontage.

RC20 Area 14 Fairfield Street/Mancunian Way/London Road

With Mancunian Way to the south and London Road to the west, much of this area is close to important elements of the City's road network, although within the area itself the River Medlock forms a more apparent spine alongside which older industrial uses have concentrated. Along London Road, the ribbon of new office blocks represents a substantial component of commercial activity and a prominent visual feature on entering the City Centre. However there is only limited opportunity for further frontage development here and the major part of the area, east of the London Road frontage offices, is industrial, with generally older works close to the Medlock but more modern buildings also apparent including the British Rail Parcel Depot (former Mayfield Station). In the eastern part of the area and close to the Piccadilly Trading Estate, there is a recreation ground on land over the culverted Medlock. Part of the eastern extremity of the area is affected by a road reservation for the proposed Inner Relief Route, forming a new link between Great Ancoats Street and Mancunian Way.

The general attitude to the area is one of seeking to sustain existing activity. In the long term it is hoped to improve the Medlock Valley with riverside environmental improvements. There is a similar aim of improving the appearance of key traffic routes into the City Centre by appropriate built form and landscaping treatment adjoining main entry radials such as London Road and the Inner Relief Route, of which Mancunian Way is a part. There is considerable scope in this area to progress both of these aspects of environmental concern.

In the case of the Medlock it is intended to adopt an opportunistic approach based on a strong statement of intent to open up the river where possible, but such an approach would be implemented with sympathy for the viability of existing riverside industries. The eastern part of this area appears to offer the earliest prospects for riverside environmental improvement, although progress will largely depend on if and when redevelopment proposals arise. Recent development of the adjacent Piccadilly Estate coupled to the locational advantages of proximity to the Inner Relief Route suggests scope for some redevelopment in which case the general aim of improvement of the Medlock Valley and a presumption against further culverting will be applicable, as will the more specific concern to improve access to the riverside and recreation ground from surrounding areas. For redevelopment proposals adjacent to the Inner Relief Route, standards of design and site treatment appropriate to the prominence of their location will be essential.

Sites close to Piccadilly Station are also well placed to offer long stay parking, as at Travis Street/Carston Street where a surface level car park already exists.

RC20 Area 15 UMIST

This area is the present extent of UMIST's main site - a stable area of long life floorspace with little likelihood of change in basic use. On the western edge of the area UMIST have a substantial amount of parking, much of this in a multi-storey car park with a substantial proportion available for public use. Surface parking on the undeveloped area adjacent to Princess Street and Brook Street has little landscaping screening despite its prominence on this main radial route.

UMIST is an important user and there is no wish to inhibit consolidation of their campus activities. However, the existing availability of public parking is important to meeting general needs in the vicinity around Whitworth Street and any reduction would be opposed.

In the short term, environmental improvements need to be progressed on the Princess Street/Brook Street frontage consistent with this route's importance as a City Centre gateway. Subject to this there is no reason why the surface level parking should not continue to be an appropriate use of the undeveloped part of the site. Future development of the Higher Education Precinct will be clarified by the review of the Higher Educational Precinct plan currently progressing. Consideration of the parking needs of the various education establishments will be an important part of this review. Any further development should not result in any loss of public parking availability within the City Centre. As part of detailed local planning work in both areas it will be important to strengthen both pedestrian and cycle routes between UMIST and the remainder of the Higher Education Precinct along Oxford Road and between both these areas and the core of the City Centre.

RC20 Area 16 Piccadilly/London Road

The London Road/Piccadilly route dominates this area's character acting as a major gateway and accommodating large numbers of buses and pedestrian movements to and from Piccadilly Station. Important routes across the City Centre are also significant. The Portland Street to Newton Street and Lever Street route skirts Piccadilly Gardens, whilst the Whitworth Street to Store Street and Travis Street routes cross the area and with their potential for increased use, will be important components of the road network. Regional Centre uses, including the Portland Hotel close to Piccadilly Gardens, contrast with evident vacant floorspace in some substantial older buildings, although commercial development is also to be found including the prominent Gateway House on Piccadilly Station Approach.

The frontages to Piccadilly and Aytoun Street north of Auburn Street offer opportunities for commercial re-investment. Both refurbishment and further redevelopment for office or other commercial uses would be appropriate here when they accord with the Plan's general office policies, whilst other regional centre activities including hotels would be welcomed. On Piccadilly, lively ground floor uses will be essential in view of the street's importance for pedestrians. Ground floor shops are common here at present, and will remain appropriate although the scale of individual new retail uses needs to be limited as major additions could prejudice existing parts of the Regional Shopping Centre. To aid pedestrian movement to and from Piccadilly Station and the bus terminal facilities in and around Piccadilly Gardens, convenient crossing facilities will be provided both at the junction with Ducie Street and at Portland Street/Piccadilly Gardens. General environmental improvements will also be progressed both to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and to reflect the importance of the London Road and Aytoun Street routes to the core.

The area between Whitworth Street and Auburn Street will require particular environmental improvement attention. A large part of this area is vacant and used for surface parking. Surviving older buildings on the London Road frontage contain a mixture of users but illustrate evident decline. Whilst activity in existing buildings will be encouraged to remain, the main aim for this part of the area is the provision of well landscaped surface level parking. Easy pedestrian access to the core, proximity to Piccadilly Station and the opportunity to offset reducing car parking availability at the canal basins all point to parking as particularly useful and appropriate here.

South of Fairfield Street is the listed former Fire Station building. Other equally substantial buildings, on Granby Row and Fairfield Street, are in general commercial use. Here the intention is to retain existing activities and find new uses for vacant floorspace. The residential accommodation that was present in the former at the Fire Station represents a use which might be extended, with proximity to the UMIST campus suggesting scope for student accommodation or for other ancillary activities relating to the Higher Education Precinct. Other uses of the existing buildings for offices, warehousing/retail warehousing or service industry would also be appropriate in many cases.

RC20 Area 17 Princess Street/Whitworth Street/Portland Street/Aytoun Street

This diverse area contains many substantial buildings, both old and new. It has the potential to offer a more attractive environmental setting and to sustain a higher level of activity.

Portland Street is an important route for traffic crossing the City Centre, whilst Whitworth Street's available capacity offers an attractive way to meet cross city centre traffic movements which do not need to impinge on the Core. Princess Street has an important function as a radial route whilst to a lesser extent Aytoun Street and Chorlton Street also have important traffic roles. Opportunities to improve the frontages to these routes need to be carefully handled.

In the north of the area substantial development has taken place, including Westminster House, offices on Portland Street and Chorlton Street, Manchester Metropolitan University buildings and the Chorlton Street Coach Station and multi-storey car park. Important older properties are also represented, notably the Police Courts and the former Cook and Watts Warehouse on Portland Street, now with a new use as a hotel well related to the existing hotel concentration near Piccadilly Gardens. The setting for many of these Regional Centre uses is capable of significant improvement, with a number of derelict buildings and large vacant cleared sites around Major Street used for surface level parking and illustrating the reduced prospects for large scale office development. However the present high level of available parking represents a definite asset, meeting medium to long stay needs of the core as well as servicing this area as a whole. Permanent parking use of the major vacant sites behind County Hall, at Major Street/Bloom Street and at Aytoun Street/Minshull Street is therefore confirmed and further office redevelopment on these or other major sites throughout the whole area is generally excluded. To improve the general environment of the area, site treatment should aim to improve the setting for

existing buildings to include elements of incidental open space and to establish attractive relationships between buildings and open areas. Throughout the area limited infill development would only be appropriate where assisting toward these aims.

At Canal Street and Richmond Street there is significant environmental potential with the Rochdale Canal passing through the area and with Sackville Gardens (6) an attractive open space. These assets, together with the more domestic scale of existing buildings and a limited through traffic use of the area, offer possibilities for residential use initially in the Canal Street area but with possible longer term extension to Richmond Street and across the Rochdale Canal to the Whitworth Street/Princess Street/Rochdale Canal/Sackville Street block. The Conservation Area status of much of the area and the importance of many particular buildings make it essential to adopt an attitude of encouraging a wide mix of uses for existing buildings, but the area also has potential for small scale infill redevelopment and suitable sites will be sought for housing to be introduced incrementally in single or mixed use schemes. This area is also well placed to offer parking, but the promotion of housing development will be given high priority in the instance of cleared sites arising. Parking use would be acceptable however, subject to high landscaping standards. Additional incidental open space and improved canalside access need to be part of the general environmental improvement of the area.

The Princess Street frontage is part of one of the City's most characterful street scenes, with important listed buildings, often with severe vacancy problems. Here any use consistent with the aim of conserving the character of the built form will be encouraged. Similarly at Bombay Street/Granby Row the main aim will be to secure a future for the existing textile warehousing use and widely encouraging new uses with special attention given to introducing housing into the mixture of uses in the area. Only housing, open space or car parking use would normally be considered appropriate uses of any cleared sites.

RC20 Area 18 Whitworth Street/Princess Street/Portland Street/ Oxford Street

This area is one of very considerable architectural character, with a substantial proportion of the finer Victorian and Edwardian buildings in the Princess Street/Whitworth Street Conservation Area. The Princess Street and Whitworth Street frontages are particularly fine, whilst the Oxford Street and Portland Street frontages also have significant architectural merit. All these streets also have important traffic functions and Oxford Street acts also as the major pedestrian route to Oxford Road Station. The Rochdale Canal and River Medlock both pass through the area.

South of the Rochdale Canal the importance of key elements of Manchester's Victorian Heritage and the general aim to seek improvements along the Medlock will guide future action. The refurbishment of the Palace Theatre has brought a major regional centre activity back to this area of otherwise evident underuse and acts as a key pointer to the potential for new activity. The overriding importance of the majority of the existing buildings gives a presumption for their retention so strong as to imply acceptance of virtually any use compatible with the broad aims of conservation. Although substantial office uses would not be appropriate in redevelopments so far from the core areas, these uses need not be precluded here in existing buildings where their contribution to conserving built form would override general use considerations. However some of the existing buildings offer particular potential for housing as a preferred use. The existing surface level car park south of the Medlock is a major asset to be brought into play together with encouraging new activity. This site is well located to offer parking with associated substantial landscaping works to improve the immediate riverside area and the rear aspect from listed buildings including the Refuge Assurance building and India House.

Canalside improvements and the creation of incidental open space along the Rochdale Canal would make a positive environmental contribution, but the opportunities to do this are limited. The substantial buildings north of the canal show a higher level of commercial use than those to the south, but despite some recent refurbishment, underuse of upper floors is a common problem and it is clear that not all of the specialised older buildings are suited to present day commerce. There is also a marked shortage of short stay local car parking relative to the substantial

floorspace. Here too, whilst aiming to sustain existing activity, it is clearly necessary to encourage a wide range of uses compatible with the broad aims to raise activity levels and to conserve the Victorian Heritage and enhance the important frontages to the major streets. On Oxford Street in particular lively ground floor uses will be appropriate alongside this important pedestrian route.

RC20 Area 19 Oxford Road/Railway/Princess Street/Mancunian Way

This area is dominated by the regional headquarters of the BBC and the National Computing Centre, both of which occupy redeveloped areas. The block between Princess Street and Pritchard Street has a mixture of commercial uses in older buildings, some of which show signs of disrepair and underuse. These buildings obscure the River Medlock which flows through the area. Charles Street has a higher level of activity and has seen some small scale redevelopment on sites backing onto the Piccadilly to Oxford Road railway viaduct.

Bounded on three sides by major roads and on the fourth by the railway, the area is extremely prominent. Although it is outside the office core area, its attractions, in terms of proximity to major transport facilities and to the existing 'prestige' institutions, support the case for specialized commercial development of an appropriate character. The BBC is the most likely user to require any additional land and its expansion and consolidation will be encouraged.

The smaller premises on and adjacent to Charles Street are considered valuable in meeting the needs of small mixed commercial and service industry uses, particularly those related to the activities of the neighbouring national concerns. New development should be of a scale and character consistent with the existing mix of uses in the area. Car parking is an acceptable activity in this area, both for the longer stay commuter and to meet local needs.

The River Medlock contributes little to the area at the present time. The long term opening up of its banks for public access and high quality associated landscaping are regarded as important aspects both of creating a more satisfactory aspect for the BBC and at the same time contributing to improving the appearance of the Princess Street frontage as a 'gateway' to the City Centre. There will therefore be a strong presumption against any further culverting of the Medlock in this area.

RC20 Area 20 Medlock Street/Railway/Oxford Street/Mancunian Way

This area includes a mixture of industrial activities and the Manchester Metropolitan University. Most of the buildings are old, although there has been some redevelopment related to the construction of Mancunian Way. Whilst this has largely been associated with the Manchester Metropolitan University, there has been commercial redevelopment taking advantage of the locational advantages of the area. The Oxford Road frontage is a mixture of entertainment and local retailing uses with car parking behind.

This area offers considerable potential. The existing industry provides valuable jobs and the plan seeks to promote improvements in operating conditions in terms of access and car parking where there is scope for such action. Medlock Street is the main entry point into the City Centre from the Airport and Princess Parkway and is in close proximity to the GMex, the redevelopment of which is envisaged as a major contribution to the regeneration of the City Centre as a whole and not least, its immediate environs. In this context the Medlock Street frontage is seen as a major gateway site capable of supporting showrooms and other commercial activity including offices where a high standard of environment would be particularly appropriate.

In environmental terms the objective will be the general enhancement of the area as befits its locational importance. Advantage will be taken of any opportunities to open up access to the River Medlock which arise in the event of redevelopment. In such circumstances housing would be considered a possible use. This could be related to the neighbouring Higher Education Precinct.

The presumption will be that the area should provide for its own car parking needs and also

contribute to those of the adjacent Area 19. The car parking in Chester Street is particularly valuable in this respect and should be retained. Further car parking in the Gaythorn area, either in isolation or in association with redevelopment, will also be encouraged.

RC20 Area 21 Oxford Street/Lower Mosley Street/Railway

This is an area of substantial opportunity bordering the edge of the core and adjacent to the G-Mex. Oxford Road is both a major traffic route into the City Centre and the main pedestrian route between the core and Oxford Road Station. Lower Mosley Street is the main access route from Princess Road and the Airport. The Rochdale Canal forms a spine along the southern edge of the area although at the present time it is neither a prominent feature of the area nor is it readily accessible. Whitworth Street West, running alongside the canal is part of an important route across the City Centre.

The overall level of activity in the area is low, with large vacant sites between Lower Mosley Street and Chepstow Street associated with former National Ice Skating Centre project and redevelopment proposals for the Oxford Street frontage. Much of this land is currently used for surface car parking, although neither acceptably surfaced nor landscaped for this use, whilst on Oxford Street, the frontage buildings (of which the facade of Princes Buildings is listed) are retained, but enjoy only minimal levels of activity. The recent cleaning of part of this frontage has improved its general appearance.

Chepstow Street forms part of another important route across the City Centre from Great Ancoats Street to Deansgate, although the present standard of the road is inadequate for this role. The improvement of the Chepstow Street/Oxford Street, the Lower Mosley Street/Great Bridgewater Street and the Albion Street/Whitworth Street West junctions are proposed to ease the flow of traffic into the City Centre and to encourage through traffic to avoid the core. The existence of the major routes along Portland Street and Whitworth Street should not be allowed to become a barrier to pedestrian movement between Oxford Road Station and the core or for cyclists coming into the City Centre.

The remainder of the Oxford Street frontage contains a mixture of buildings and uses, many of which illustrate clear links with adjacent areas. The large and listed Victorian former Headquarters building of Tootal Limited shows a clear affinity to the buildings in Area 18 and is one of the finest older commercial buildings in the City. Canada House, adjacent, is also architecturally important and in active commercial use. The other frontage buildings contain leisure or entertainment uses reflecting the concentration of such activities in this area.

The large area alongside Lower Mosley Street provides a rare opportunity for accommodating a large scale regional facility. This will be retained as a single site for such a use which may be related to the G-Mex. In view of its prominence substantial environmental improvement will be required, presenting a high quality appearance to Mosley Street. A similar approach will apply to Albion Street.

The Oxford Street frontage is not considered appropriate for major office development. The existing entertainment concentration and the relationship between this area and G-Mex suggests potential for future development related to either of these activities. The listed facade to Princes Buildings is of value and any development here should incorporate its retention. Immediately behind the facade a range of uses relevant to this end, including offices, would be favourably considered. A substantial element of car parking in any scheme associated with this development would be expected.

There is some evidence of the underuse of buildings along Whitworth Street West. Car repair and related activities in the railway arches present an active but unattractive street scene. The potential of the canal will be exploited to greater advantage. The whole of the area associated with the canal is considered suitable for car parking, public open space and a mixture of small scale residential or office developments, all of which would be expected to improve the level of

public access to the canal.

RC20 Area 22 Chester Road/Railway/Medlock Street/Mancunian Way

This area sees the transition between the River Medlock and the navigable canal network of Castlefield. It is a predominantly industrial area and has seen some redevelopment for industrial users, with several new industrial/warehousing developments recently completed near Mancunian Way. Further renewal is continuing, with clearance of older works and their replacement by modern floorspace near to Chester Road, an important entry point into the City Centre from Trafford and, via the Inner Relief Route, from the M602.

The area between the Bridgewater viaduct and Deansgate contains a mixture of buildings and activities. Whilst functionally part of this area it is also linked to the neighbouring Castle Quay (Area 27) at water level. The remainder of the area is characterised by older premises, notably between the River Medlock and the railway viaduct. Despite some run down property the appearance is of a thriving area with a high level of activity and diverse industrial uses. Larger, more substantial premises on Whitworth Street West are also in active commercial use. A City Council long stay car park occupies the Little Peter Street/Albion Street corner adjacent to the River Medlock.

The locational advantages of this area are reflected in the extent of redevelopment that has already taken place. The Council would wish to exploit any further opportunities that exist, seeking to broaden the range of activities in the area and at the same time to generally upgrade the environment at these important entry points to the City Centre. Similarly any development associated with the Medlock will be required to contribute to the general improvement of the environment of the area. The specific nature of the activity is likely to be of less importance than the contribution it is able to make to the improvement of the area. Consequently a whole range of activities would be considered appropriate, either in isolation or, preferably, as part of a development involving a mixture of uses. Specific opportunities can be identified on Medlock Street and Albion Street, whilst on Chester Road the area in and around the old canal basin between Knott Mill Bridge and the Bridgewater Viaduct has considerable potential both in its own right and also as a way of obtaining greater benefit from the canal and providing access to the Castle Quay area.

The location of the area also means that it is able to accommodate car parking. New developments will be expected to provide for their own needs whilst public car parking can contribute to both the needs of this area and to the long stay needs of the core.

RC20 Area 23 Deansgate/Peter Street/Lower Mosley Street/Whitworth Street West

This area is dominated by the G-Mex and the adjacent Great Northern Railway Warehouse, the Midland Hotel and the Free Trade Hall. Apart from G-Mex and the frontage buildings to Deansgate and Peter Street, the area is used mainly for car parking. Along Peter Street the Midland Hotel, the former Y.M.C.A., Theatre Royal and Free Trade Hall are all listed buildings. These frontages coupled with those along Deansgate offer a uniformity of street-scene unique in the City Centre and the recent cleaning of the Deansgate facade has revealed more of the quality of this elevation. South of Great Bridgewater Street workshops are located under the approach of Central Station. These, like adjacent premises are broadly industrial with a strong motor trade theme.

Taken as a whole this area offers one of the most important opportunities to bring new activity into the Regional Centre and to improve its environment. Steps toward these primary aims for the area will be given every possible encouragement. Central Station has been redeveloped as the Greater Manchester Exhibition centre (G-Mex).

Proposals for the regeneration of the area include commercial and hotel development in the Great Northern Railway Warehouse and on the Deansgate and Peter Street frontages. The proposals also provide for the Free Trade Hall to become a hotel and conference facility. The

strategy retains much of the site's function as an important car parking area and offers potential for improved pedestrian links between Castlefield, Deansgate Station and the core. The proposals are also compatible with Metrolink.

All of the main elements of the proposals will make an important contribution to the future Regional Centre.

Environmental improvement at and around the G-Mex will be important and works to improve the appearance of the Deansgate and Lower Mosley Street/Albion Street frontages could have a significant impact on these prominent gateways into the City Centre. The Rochdale Canal runs to the south of the area and there is scope for further environmental improvement here. Between Whitworth Street West and Great Bridgewater Street the emphasis is likely to be upon improving the conditions of existing activities.

RC20 Area 24 Princess Street/Mosley Street/Peter Street/Deansgate/John Dalton Street

This area contains primarily office floorspace. Several large modern buildings have been completed or are under construction but the predominant character is set by older buildings, notably the Town Hall and Central Library. The John Dalton Street and Deansgate frontages are generally well maintained older premises with retail uses commonly found at ground floor level. The Divisional Police Headquarters occupies a large area in Jackson's Row. Albert Square and St Peter's Square are both important open spaces which, together with neighbouring buildings are both designated as Conservation Areas.

This area is on the fringe of the main office core, with some scope for redevelopment, particularly on the main frontages which are important in townscape terms, and with potential for car parking to serve both this area and the neighbouring core. The main aim is to retain and consolidate the existing commercial activity. The amount of new office floorspace recently constructed in Albert Square and Queen Street will absorb a large proportion of foreseeable demand in this area. Further small scale infill or redevelopments of existing floorspace is possible, however, and would be supported provided that it is set firmly in the context of the scale and general character of the area.

Encouraging the use of existing premises implies a need to increase the general attractiveness of the area. In addition to public car parking there may be some scope for private parking provision to be used in relation to existing floorspace. It would clearly be desirable if such private parking could also be made available for public use wherever possible. The opportunities for this are greatest in the Jacksons Row/Bootle Street areas.

The most important scope for positive change, however, will be in improving the visual and pedestrian environment of the Civic Squares, with Albert Square in particular offering scope for a high quality urban square. In order to achieve this it will be necessary to work towards reductions in traffic levels and increasing the amount of space given over to the pedestrian. The pedestrianisation of Brazennose Street coupled with the smaller civic square to the rear of Heron House will complete an important pedestrian route between the Law Courts and the Town Hall. Incidental open space treatment, based on Brazennose Street but spread throughout the area, will go a long way towards the general environmental upgrading of this area.

RC20 Area 25 Bridge Street/Deansgate/Quay Street/River Irwell

This area has been substantially redeveloped with major new buildings for the Magistrates and Crown Courts, the newspaper publishing complex on Deansgate and the College of Building. Some older buildings remain along Deansgate, notably the John Rylands Library, along Bridge Street and in the block between Quay Street and Hardman Street. Along with several small surface car parks the Gartside Street Car Park provides for local needs in this area and makes a modest contribution to the wider needs of the City Centre.

The River Irwell is relatively inaccessible at this point, although hopefully this may be remedied in

the longer term. However, Crown Square, Deans Court and Spinningfield provide a series of linked open spaces through the heart of the area and provide a sound base for further environmental improvements.

The presence of important public buildings in and around Crown Square adds an element of stability to the area. Such development as might be envisaged is seen as likely to be related to existing activities. West of Gartside Street there is scope for the further expansion of the College of Building whilst the Courts extension will enclose Crown Square and complete the Bridge Street frontage. Bridge Street is a thriving area of mixed uses on the fringe of the Regional Shopping Centre, which adds to the general level of activity in the area.

Environmental improvements for the River Irwell and the entry points into the City Centre at the Albert and Irwell Street Bridges will be important as will the improved landscaping of surface level parking. This area is outside the main core and well suited for car parking. Consequently, except for land required to facilitate the expansion of existing activities, a similar approach to that adopted in Area 8 would be appropriate here making good the present deficiency in this area in terms of the "moat" of car parking to be provided surrounding the core. All but the major frontages to Quay Street, Deansgate and Bridge Street will therefore be earmarked for car parking primarily intended to serve the core. In practice, however, given the limited room for manoeuvre in this area, the major provision is to be found behind the Deansgate frontage in the block between Hardman Street and Atkinson Street. In order to minimise the effect of Deansgate becoming a barrier to pedestrian movement it will be important to maintain and, where possible, improve crossing facilities along this stretch of road. This is particularly important at the major junctions.

RC20 Area 26 Quay Street/Deansgate/Liverpool Road/River Irwell

Lying for the most part within the St John Street and Castlefield Conservation Areas, this is an area with an extremely rich mix of activities and opportunities.

To the west of the area is the headquarters of Granada Television, a major activity and involving a variety of facilities associated with television production and recreation. This relates well to Liverpool Road Station, the world's first railway passenger station, now the Museum of Science and Industry; the conversion of the City Exhibition Hall into the Air and Space Museum; the development of a Local Heritage Centre in the former Campfield Market Building on the corner of Deansgate and Liverpool Road and the development of a variety of facilities in and around Castlefield Wharfs (Area 27). Along the western boundary of the area is a thin strip of land between Water Street and the river which is affected by the proposed Inner Relief Route. At the present time the river is relatively inaccessible, being screened by several old warehouse buildings (one of which is listed) and vacant sites being used for car parking.

The eastern part of the area fronting onto Deansgate and centred on St John Street is a stable and environmentally attractive area, likely to remain buoyant in terms of demand for smaller commercial premises and for the recently completed private housing at St John's Gardens. Most of the built form is either recent or long life with some architectural merit, the only major remaining development opportunity being along the Deansgate frontage. The area is characterised by small office suites often used as medical consulting rooms or by solicitors and barristers, the area being conveniently located in relation to the neighbouring Crown Square court complex (Area 25). The changes that are evolving in this area are to be welcomed and the basic approach here should be to do anything that will encourage them. Deansgate and Quay Street will remain important traffic routes and the commercial use of frontage sites to these streets is envisaged whether in existing or redeveloped buildings. Any redevelopment would be considered very much with reference to the characteristics and qualities of the St John Street area and would give encouragement to a wide use of relevant small scale commercial uses. High environmental standards will be required and uses not relevant to the future character of the area and determined by the adjoining tourism and housing components will be precluded.

Elsewhere it will be important not to inhibit the further expansion of Granada's activities, with

some consolidation around Grape Street and expansion between Water Street and the River in association with the Liverpool Road Station developments. Such developments should take account of the wider aims for opening up access to the Irwell and achieving some riverside environmental improvements. The listed riverside warehouse may have potential for conversion to housing whilst the use of any remaining land for car parking should be encouraged to provide for the developing activities in the area. It would clearly be desirable if any private car parking in the area can be made available for public use when not required by the private owner so as to add to the general level of car parking available for the recreational facilities. Such demands are likely to be complementary.

The provision of adequate car parking is important to the success of the museums in this area which are seen as very important to the future regional centre. The amount required will clearly vary considerably and will require an increasingly flexible approach to the provision of car parking in this area of the City Centre.

RC20 Area 27 Rivers Medlock and IrweU/Liverpool Road/Chester Road/Egerton Street

This large area most of which is in the Castlefield Conservation Area is predominantly industrial in character, with older warehousing and works around the Rochdale and Bridgewater Canals contrasting with new industrial development along the Water Street and Egerton Street frontages. The canals and the River Medlock at present tend to divide the area which is also crossed by several railway viaducts which further limit access. Castle Quay and Castlefield Wharf, to either side of the River Medlock, have several historically important canal warehouses and an area of relatively open land. The area between Deansgate and Duke Street marks the site of the original Roman settlement of Manchester and excavation of the Roman Fort has recently taken place. The land to the west of Water Street and Dawson Street is characterised by the river frontages onto the Irwell and the Medlock.

This area offers considerable potential to extend the tourist related facilities planned for the area north of Liverpool Road and part has been designated an Urban Heritage Park. The basic approach in this area will be to encourage such uses and stimulate environmental improvement whilst at the same time keeping and strengthening the area's links with the past. As opportunities occur, the site of the Roman Fort will be opened up and made a permanent feature of the area. Apart from the Roman Fort, the presence of large tracts of canal and river offers scope for water related activity and environmental improvement which will significantly enhance the character of the area. Given the necessary environmental improvements there is no reason why some new housing cannot be encouraged in the area with the greatest potential being in the Castle Quay area where a host of canal related activities could also be accommodated. In addition to environmental improvements, such developments can only be expected to take place if the existing accessibility of the area is improved. Such improvements, coupled with increased car parking provision, would also benefit the existing industrial activity in the area.

Dawson Street, Egerton Street and Regent Road form an important route from the west to the City Centre and to Mancunian Way. This role has been strengthened with the completion of the M602 and Cross Lane Diversion in Salford. Together with Water Street this route also forms part of the Inner Relief Route. This means that the western part of the area and in particular that bounded by Regent Road, Dawson Street and the Rivers Medlock and Irwell is extremely well located and is an important gateway into the City Centre. This offers scope for a mixture of commercial activities and the opportunity to exploit the river frontage by generally upgrading the present environment and increasing the level of public access in a way that would complement other initiatives in Castlefield. The level of car parking associated with such development would be such as to minimise the demands it would place on public car parking elsewhere in the area. As in Area 26, such car parking might also contribute to the peak demands created by the tourist facilities in the area.

RC20 Area 28 St. George's

The St. George's area Lies on the south western fringe of the City Centre and is the westernmost

sector of the Central Manchester Urban Development Area. It is bounded by Chester Road (A56) to the south, the River Irwell and River Medlock to the north and the line of Egerton Street to the east. The area is crossed by the Bridgewater Canal and the Cornbrook Railway Viaduct.

To the north east of the area lies the core of the City Centre and more immediately the Castlefield area where over the last few years significant change has taken place as older industrial uses have moved out, significant environmental improvements have been secured, and new development for residential, leisure and commercial uses has been attracted. The Castlefield area (mainly contained within area 27) is designated as a Conservation Area and as an Urban Heritage Park. Within the Urban Heritage Park, the local planning authority is committed to promoting leisure and tourist-related uses while at the same time respecting and enhancing interpretation of the area's unique history. Part of the St. George's area around St. George's Church and around Hulme Junction Lock lies within the Castlefield Conservation Area. The area to the north of Ellesmere Street and the east of Hulme Hall Road is also within the Urban Heritage Park.

To the west of the area lie Salford Quays and Trafford Wharfside where major regeneration initiatives are underway and in the last few years significant housing and commercial development has been completed. To the south across Chester Road lies the inner city housing area of Hulme where major regeneration is proposed. The location of the St. George's area on an axis between the core of the City Centre and Castlefield, and Salford Quays and Trafford Wharfside, and close to Hulme, will have an important influence on the area's future development.

The St. George's area is currently a somewhat run-down industrial area containing a mix of uses, some of which can be described as 'bad neighbours'. The environment is generally poor and accessibility is limited. Many properties are under-utilised.

Despite being adjacent to Chester Road which is a major 'gateway' into the City Centre and which feeds into the strategic road network, accessibility to St. George's by road is generally poor. The area is also poorly served by public transport and although the Cornbrook Viaduct which runs through the area will carry the new Metrolink tram system there are currently no plans for a station to serve the area when the system opens. Within the area vehicle, cycle and pedestrian accessibility is not good with the railway viaduct and canal acting as physical barriers. To the north there is only a single pedestrian footbridge across the Irwell.

The general approach to the St. George's area will be to revitalise the area's industrial activities while at the same time taking advantage of the area's location and physical assets of the rivers and canals to attract new development for leisure and recreation uses and for new housing. To this end, attention will need to be given to improving accessibility to and within the area for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians and to enhancing the area's environment and image.

Along the eastern fringe of the area the Council will complete the Inner Relief Route by improving the junction at Chester Road/Mancunian Way, by replacing the existing flyover with an underpass, and by widening Egerton Road/Dawson Street to a two-lane dual carriageway. In the detailed design of these highway improvements, attention will be given to the overall environmental impact on the Castlefield Conservation Area and Urban Heritage Park, and to the need to maximise accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists into Castlefield and to the City Centre.

The Hulme Junction Lock area, with its river and canalside locations, have considerable development potential. Housing and leisure, recreation and tourist-related activities would be acceptable either as single use developments or part of mixed use schemes. New uses must build on the successes in Castlefield to the east of Egerton Street and create functional links to the areas of regeneration at Salford Quays and Trafford Wharfside.

At the bus depot site bounded by Hulme Hall Road, the Bridgewater Canal, Hulme Junction Lock

and the railway viaduct there is potential for leisure-based redevelopment utilising the canalside location.

Accessibility to the area needs to be improved. Vehicular access to the St. George's industrial area off Chester Road and the Inner Relief Route will be maintained and, where possible, enhanced.

The area is poorly served by public transport and this is a major limitation on the revitalisation of the industrial area and the fulfilment of the potential of Pomona for leisure and housing use. The local planning authority will promote the provision of a new station on the Metrolink route at Cornbrook Road. Furthermore, the River Irwell has potential for use as a transport link between the City Centre, and Salford Quays and Trafford Wharfside. The local planning authority will support the establishment of a river bus or equivalent service on the River Irwell.

The local planning authority will seek to improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists both into St. George's and within the area. Links to Castlefield, the core of the City Centre, Hulme, and the north bank of the Irwell will be priorities. In particular, the local planning authority will seek the completion of a riverside walkway between St. George's and the core of the City Centre. Parts of the walkway already exist closer to the core of the City Centre and a section of walkway has been completed along the Irwell to the south of its junction with the River Medlock. Improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists is part of the Council's policy of encouraging walking and cycling and it will increase the attractiveness of St. George's as a place in which to live, work and invest. The Council will seek to enable access to the Bridgewater Canal from Hulme Halt Road and at Egerton Street, and to reopen the Hulme Hall Lock towpath link to the proposed riverside route.

Improvements to the environment are the second major element of the strategy for St. George's. The River Irwell and Bridgewater Canal will be promoted as part of a network of strategic recreational routes crossing the City. In addition to meeting recreational needs these routes will be of ecological value. To this end the Local planning authority will promote environmental improvements alongside the River Irwell and the Bridgewater Canal such as that recently completed close to the junction of the Rivers Irwell and Medlock. In addition, the local planning authority will encourage the improvement of water quality through its support for the Mersey Basin Campaign.

In order to secure environmental improvements, the local planning authority will seek to relocate bad neighbour uses such as scrap yards, vehicle repair businesses and open storage uses where suitable alternative locations can be identified. If bad neighbour uses must remain within the area, the local planning authority will seek to minimise their negative effect on the environment, for example, by rationalising uses within a smaller, defined area and by improving the appearance of those sites which contain bad neighbour uses.

The railway viaducts which traverse the area are dominant physical features and the local planning authority will seek to improve their physical appearance through support for environmental improvements such as painting, cleaning and repair work. As part of improvements to the viaducts the local planning authority will seek to upgrade the viaduct arches and secure their use as small-scale business units. Such uses should support the regeneration objectives for the area.

The local planning authority will seek to improve the environment along the Chester Road corridor which is a major "gateway" route into the City Centre. The environment along "gateway" routes has an important effect on the image of Manchester.

St. George's Church is a listed building and an important local landmark. It also lies along the Chester Road "gateway" into the City Centre. The building is currently vacant and the local planning authority will encourage its re-use. Leisure and tourist-related uses or community uses

are considered to be most appropriate for this building, although the local planning authority would be prepared to accept other uses provided that they maintain the architectural and historic character of the Church. Leisure and tourism related uses would support the objectives of the Castlefield Urban Heritage Park designation and community uses would be a resource for people living in Hulme and in any new housing developments in the area.

RC20 Area 29 All Saints

The All Saints area forms the northern sector of the Higher Education Precinct and is bounded by the Mancunian Way, Cambridge Street, Booth Street West and Upper Brook Street. The important axis of Oxford Road bisects the area.

Immediately to the north of the area lie important and established Regional Centre uses including the B.B.C., the National Computing Centre and the John Dalton Building of Manchester Metropolitan University. To the south lies the main campus of Manchester University (see Area 30) while to the east and west lie areas of predominantly public sector housing. In Hulme, to the west, major redevelopment is proposed.

The All Saints area is dominated by educational land uses. It contains the main buildings of Manchester Metropolitan University, part of the UMIST campus and the Royal Northern College of Music. There is a significant amount of student accommodation, notably UMIST's Grosvenor Place and Bowden Court developments, and the Metropolitan University's Cavendish and Loxford buildings. A number of small-scale retail units front Oxford Road and these in part serve the daily needs of the student population.

In recognition of the importance of the Higher Education Precinct to the people and the economy of Manchester and the region, policies for the All Saints area are intended to sustain and enhance its educational role and maximise the spin-off benefits which result from the concentration of scientific and technological resources in the Higher Education Precinct. The Council recognises the need for the educational institutions to respond to changing pressures and will respond favourably to necessary development and redevelopment proposals. There will be a presumption in favour of development and redevelopment of land and buildings which support the area's educational function. Small-scale commercial units such as shops and restaurants which serve the daily needs of the student population will be acceptable. Large scale developments containing primarily commercial floorspace will not be acceptable, although the Council recognises that ancillary commercial floorspace may be required in primarily educational developments to ensure the development's economic viability. Commercial uses at ground floor level should provide a lively street frontage. Retail units and offices which are accessed by the public would bring diversity of use and activity to the area and complement its primarily educational role.

Four sites within the All Saints area have particular development potential. Grosvenor Square is an important public open space, but the Council recognises that there is some redevelopment potential along the Oxford Road frontage of the site. Any development should be for educationally-related use only and should involve the retention and upgrading of a significant element of the existing public open space. Regardless of any future development of the site there is an immediate need for the open space to be upgraded and a safer environment created.

The land fronting Oxford Road in the ownership of UMIST at the junction of Booth Street East is a major development opportunity. The site would accommodate a mixed use scheme related to the educational function of the area which could include an element of commercial activity.

On Oxford Road, the area of land between the Royal Northern College of Music and the Mabel Tylecote Building, which is currently used for car parking, has considerable development potential for educational and related uses. Regardless of the longer term development potential of the site there is a need to improve the appearance of the car parks through quality landscaping schemes.

The land bounded by the Mancunian Way, Upper Brook Street, Hillcourt Street and York Street,

which is currently in use for car parking, has potential for an educationally-related development. Any development of this land could also incorporate the vacant site currently used for car parking which fronts Grosvenor Street. Regardless of the development potential of these sites, there is a need in the short term for them to be landscaped with quality surface and boundary treatments and-for vehicle circulation to be better managed.

The large number of students attending educational institutions places heavy pressure on the availability of student accommodation both within the Higher Education Precinct and in adjoining housing areas. The Council will encourage the development of new student accommodation in the All Saints area. Residential units should be designed to be fully accessible to disabled people.

Because of the public functions located in the University area there is a need to maximize accessibility to all sections of the community. Special regard needs to be had to the requirements of disabled and mobility impaired people and to the needs of those on low incomes to ensure that these groups have equality of access to educational facilities. Particular improvements are needed in public transport provision and in the conditions experienced by pedestrians and cyclists. The Council is to investigate the possibility of extending the bus priority measures which currently exist along Oxford Road and Upper Brook Street.

Cycling is an important means of transport for the student population and the Council will carry out improvements to cycle lane provision and upgrade the general conditions for cyclists throughout the area. Existing cycle lane provision on Oxford Road is to be improved and extended. Cycle routes in the All Saints area will be integrated into a City-wide network.

Conditions for pedestrians will be improved by providing surface level routes and better surface crossings at busy main roads. In particular pedestrian linkages will be improved between the All Saints area and the adjoining UMIST campus to the north of the Mancunian Way, and between the All Saints area and the adjoining inner city residential areas of Hulme and Brunswick.

Attention will be given to resolving problems of on-street parking and to improving off-street parking facilities in the area.

The Council recognises that the student population is particularly vulnerable to personal attack and attention will be given to making the environment of the area safer. To this end the Council will make the curved underpasses at the junction of Upper Brook Street and the Mancunian Way safer by, for example, improving lighting.

In view of the regional, national and international significance of the Higher Education Precinct efforts are required to improve its environment. Improvements in the Higher Education Precinct will also benefit residents in neighbouring housing areas, for whom the Precinct provides many important services. The Council will encourage land owners to tidy and Landscape derelict or unsightly areas, with priority being given to those sites along radial routes and main road frontages.

Oxford Road is an important 'gateway' route through the Higher Education Precinct and into the core of the Regional Centre. Environmental improvements along this route will make a significant contribution to the image of the Precinct and the City of Manchester in general. The block of buildings on the east side of Oxford Road between Grosvenor Street and Sidney Street contains several vacant and unsightly plots and these need to be landscaped as a short-term priority. In the longer term these plots provide opportunities for well-designed infill developments.

All environmental improvements in the All Saints area will have regard to the access requirements of disabled and mobility impaired people and to the need to create a safe pedestrian environment. The design of tree planting and landscaping schemes should not prejudice the personal safety of pedestrians in the area and should require little ongoing maintenance.

RC20 Area 30 The University

This area contains the main campus of Manchester University, including the Medical School and the Dental Hospital. The area is bounded by Booth Street to the north, Moss Lane East to the south, and Upper Brook Street, Grafton Street and Oxford Road to the east. The western boundary runs along Higher Cambridge Street, Lloyd Street North, Cecil Street, Dilworth Street, Acomb Street, Burleigh Street and the western edge of Whitworth Park. The area is bisected by Oxford Road, which along with Upper Brook Street is a major radial route into the City Centre.

To the west of the University lies the Manchester Science Park and the major public sector housing area of Hulme where significant regeneration is proposed over the next decade. To the east lies the Brunswick area which is dominated by public sector housing, although there are pockets of commercial activity along Upper Brook Street. Both Hulme and Brunswick are important areas for student housing.

To the north of the University area is All Saint's which is also dominated by educational institutions, notably the Manchester Metropolitan University (formerly the Manchester Polytechnic), and UMIST. To the south lies the 'Hospitals' area which also has important functional links with the University.

The University is the predominant Land user in the area. Specific uses include the educational buildings themselves, student accommodation and extensive areas of car parking. To the south of the main campus lies Whitworth Park, an important area of open space for the local community, and Whitworth Art Gallery, an important cultural resource.

The shopping precinct at the junction of Oxford Road and Booth Street and small retail units along Oxford Road serve the daily needs of the student population.

There is a significant pressure in the area for car parking to serve staff, students and visitors. Excessive demand leads to on-street parking in the neighbouring residential areas and around the Hospitals and this causes conflict and nuisance. While wishing to encourage the development and growth of the Higher Education Precinct, the Council recognises that further development may create pressures for more car parking. The main opportunities for new development are likely to be areas which currently provide surface level car parking. In considering proposals for new developments within this area the Council will take account of their effect on car parking for the University especially the adequacy of short and medium stay parking for people wishing to visit the University.

The largest such area is the Higher Education Precinct. One of the major issues affecting this area is the growth in the need for student housing accommodation as student numbers grow, and it may well be that this cannot be solved within the Precinct area but needs to be tackled as part of the wider regeneration process in the City.

In recognition of the importance of the Higher Education Precinct to the people and the economy of Manchester and the region, policies for the University area are intended to sustain and enhance its educational role and maximise the spin-off benefits from the concentration of scientific and technological resources in the Higher Education Precinct. The Council recognises the need for the educational institutions to respond to changing pressures and will respond favourably to necessary development and redevelopment proposals. There will be a presumption in favour of development and redevelopment of land and buildings which support the area's educational function. Small-scale commercial units such as shops and restaurants which serve the daily needs of the student population will be acceptable. Large scale developments containing primarily commercial floorspace will not be acceptable to the Council, although the Council recognises that ancillary commercial floorspace may be required in primarily educational developments to ensure the development's economic viability. Commercial uses at ground floor level should provide a 'lively' street frontage. Retail units and offices which are accessed by the

public would bring diversity of use and activity to the area and complement its primarily educational role.

Because of the public functions located in the University area there is a need to maximize accessibility to all sections of the community. Special regard needs to be had to the needs of disabled and mobility impaired people and to the needs of those on low incomes to ensure that these groups have equality of access to educational facilities. Public transport improvements are needed and to this end the Council will investigate the introduction of further bus priority routes on Upper Brook Street and on Oxford Road. Cycling is an important means of transport for the student population and the Council will carry out improvements to cycle lane provision and upgrade the general conditions for cyclists on Oxford Road and link these routes into a City-wide network.

Conditions for pedestrians will be improved, especially at major road junctions. Pedestrian linkages between the University area and the neighbouring housing areas of Hulme and Brunswick need to be improved.

The Council recognises that the environment of the Higher Educational Precinct needs to be improved to reflect its status as an international educational centre. In addition, environmental improvements in the Higher Education Precinct will benefit residents in neighbouring housing areas, for whom the Precinct provides many important services.

All development will be required to be of a high quality, especially along major road frontages. The Council will seek improvements to the appearance of surface level car parks, with the focus again being on major road frontages. The design of tree planting and landscaping schemes within the University area should not prejudice the personal safety of pedestrians in the area and should require little on-going maintenance.

RC20 Area 31 The Hospitals

Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI), the Royal Eye Hospital and St.Mary's Hospital are situated within this area, which is bounded by Grafton Street, Upper Brook Street, Hathersage Road and Oxford Road. Upper Brook Street and Oxford Road are important radial roads into the City Centre. MRI also have medical facilities located in the immediately adjacent areas at Hathersage Road (Area 4 sub area 30) and Hathersage Road (Area 11) which are related to the main hospital site.

To the west and north of The Hospitals area lie All Saint's and the Manchester University, and the three areas together form the Higher Education Precinct. To the immediate west of the Hospitals, across Oxford Road, is Whitworth Park and Art Gallery and to the east is the primarily public sector housing area of Brunswick. To the south of the Hospitals is the inner city residential district of Rusholme.

The medical facilities found in this area are a national and regional resource but in addition provide a service for much of the City and a local health facility for nearby residential areas. Hospitals and associated medical uses, including some medical student and nurses' residential accommodation dominate the area. Car parking for visitors to the hospitals and for staff is another major land use within the area, especially along Grafton Street and Hathersage Road. Pressure on car parking often results in on-street parking elsewhere in the Higher Education Precinct and in neighbouring residential areas, where it is a particular nuisance.

The Council supports the continuation of health-related uses in this area. In recognition of the regional importance of the Hospitals and the spin-off benefits they bring to the economy and people of Manchester, the Council will respond favourably to development and redevelopment proposals of a health-related nature.

The Council will seek to ensure that, as land within the Hospitals site is developed and

redeveloped, improved car parking is provided. This will help to relieve the pressure for parking on neighbouring streets. A particular priority will be the improvement of parking provision for hospital visitors.

The Council wishes to see accessibility to the Hospitals improved for public transport users, for cyclists and for pedestrians. The Council will investigate the possibility of extending the existing bus priority measures along Oxford Road and Upper Brook Street. Conditions for cyclists will be improved with the extension of existing cycle lane provision on Oxford Road and the Council will promote additional cycle stands in the area. Pedestrian access will be enhanced with particular emphasis on improving surface crossing conditions at main road junctions.

In the Hospitals area it is especially important that accessibility for disabled people is maximized and the Council will have regard to this in carrying out improvements to the environment, in consultations with the PTE about bus services, and in discussions with land owners and developers.

The environment of the area will be improved, with particular attention being given to the major road frontages of Oxford Road and Upper Brook Street. Surface level car parks, especially those close to the edge of the Hospitals site, will be required to include high quality landscaping. The design of any landscaping scheme must not prejudice the personal safety of pedestrians and should require little ongoing maintenance.