

Policy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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