

Shopping

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INTRODUCTION

Retailing is one of the most dynamic sectors of the economy and plays a vital role in the life of the Borough. The retail industry is constantly in a state of evolution as it strives for greater efficiency and responds to changing social and economic circumstances occurring in the market place. These changing trends lead to new consumer habits and retailer practices, which then exert pressure for change on the physical and locational aspects of shopping development. It follows, therefore, that land use planning in general, and the UDP in particular, will have a central role to play in maintaining and improving shopping provision within the Borough against a background of continuing change in the retail sector.

Because of the dynamic nature of retailing and persistent local development pressures, a retail study was commissioned ("Study of Retail Provision in Bury", Drivers Jonas, January 1990) to assist in understanding the changes taking place in retailing in general, particularly in relation to Bury, and to gain an insight into future retail requirements of the Borough, at the town, district and local level. The study highlighted the way in which the retail sector has responded rapidly to changing circumstances with a marked growth in multiple traders, together with a concentration of influence in the market by a few large groups, occupying larger stores. Horizontal expansion (through new stores and takeovers) and vertical expansion (through incorporation of different stages in production and distribution processes) has occurred in many areas, enabling multiple retailers to achieve large economies of scale. As a result retailers, especially those requiring large stores, have started to move out of the high street to locations on the edge-of-centres or near major road junctions. These new forms of retailing which have developed in response to consumer demand, can stimulate competition and may relieve congestion in the high street, thus providing town centres with new opportunities for innovation and change. More recently, this trend towards decentralisation has widened to include retail parks, twin or joint venture stores and new free standing sub-regional shopping centres, one of the latter now under construction on the western side of Greater Manchester and due to open in 1998.

Essentially, such schemes are primarily aimed at car borne shoppers, which can often be inconvenient for people who rely upon public transport. In addition, some major schemes may have a significant long-term impact, based for example on the levels of traffic generated, or by contributing to urban decay resulting from significant increases in vacant shop floorspace and reduced levels of investment in neighbouring town centres. There is valid concern, therefore, that the proliferation of such shopping facilities could seriously affect the vitality and viability of established shopping centres, particularly in an area like Greater Manchester with its somewhat unique hierarchy of sub-regional centres where there is already fierce competition for trade.

If these trends are allowed to continue without adequate control then there is a danger that this could manifest itself in terms of the loss of key stores or traders and the deferral of further retail investment, which could undermine the vitality and viability of the borough's town centres as a whole. This would make it increasingly more difficult for the Borough's shopping centres to reassert themselves, and make it particularly difficult for Bury Town Centre, one of Greater Manchester's eight sub-regional centres, to maintain or even expand its current share of trade.

In terms of specific consideration of retailing activity within the Borough, the retail study highlighted general weaknesses in terms of current retail provision, especially in relation to comparison/durable goods and retailer representation. The importance and competitiveness of Bury Town Centre, as the Borough's premier shopping centre, was also given special consideration. The analysis confirmed that the centre is gradually being "taken apart", on the basis of significant levels of expenditure leakage, by stronger and more attractive neighbouring sub-regional centres and other new shopping/leisure alternatives, such as new free standing retail/leisure parks. In the absence of a co-ordinated retail strategy, prior to the production of the UDP, these neighbouring centres have managed to attract trade away from this Borough by fulfilling the needs and aspirations of an increasingly affluent and mobile population, primarily by offering greater choice, in terms of goods and retailers, but also by providing modern shopping environments with complementary facilities. The message is clear, if Bury is to combat these trends, the town centre must respond with the expansion of its comparison/durable shopping provision and an improved shopping environment.

In terms of convenience shopping facilities, however, the converse is true and there would appear to be little if any need for additional floorspace provision, when assessed against limited expenditure growth projections and levels of expenditure leakage, without it affecting existing retailers (except where this would replace outdated facilities within a recognised shopping centre). Indeed, the Borough has the highest convenience floorspace/population ratio of all ten Greater Manchester districts.

The retail study has provided a sound and durable information base on which to develop shopping policies and proposals within the UDP. As a result, the main findings and conclusions of the study have been incorporated in, and form a major part of, this section of the Plan. This is particularly the case in relation to qualitative and quantitative considerations and the approach adopted for the maintenance and improvement of the Borough's hierarchy of shopping centres.

The UDP must attempt to strike a balance between maintaining accessible shopping facilities within the Borough's town, district and local shopping centres whilst at the same time allowing for the possibility of appropriately located and complementary edge-of-centre or out-of-centre facilities. Although there are ways in which the UDP can help to shape the pattern of shopping provision, it is important to recognise that retailing is strongly influenced by market forces and consumer demand.

Retailers will only trade where profits can be made and development will only take place where a developer can expect to receive an adequate return on what is often a substantial investment. In 1989, the retail sector provided approximately 5,185 jobs, 10.1% of the Borough's overall employment total. On the basis that the Borough's main shopping centres offer substantial opportunities for new and improved shopping facilities it is expected that this sector of the economy will continue to expand during the Plan period, bringing with it additional employment opportunities. The policies and proposals of the UDP will aim to facilitate and direct this development in order to benefit shoppers, retailers and developers.

STRATEGY, OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

Strategy

In considering the future retailing needs of the Borough the Strategy for the Plan has taken account of such issues as the attractiveness and competitiveness of Bury Town Centre and other shopping centres within the Borough, the vitality and viability of the existing hierarchy of shopping centres and the recognition that measures are required to improve and modernise shopping facilities, particularly within the Borough's town centres. In addition, the strategy fully takes into account national planning policy guidance and Strategic Guidance for Greater Manchester, which are again concerned with maintaining the vitality and viability of the existing hierarchy of shopping centres as well as ensuring that development and growth in retailing is sustainable.

The strategy to be pursued adopts a two-way approach. Firstly, policies have been formulated to develop a strong policy framework to control and guide development likely to affect the existing hierarchy of shopping centres. Secondly, further policies and proposals have attempted to identify opportunities and allocate land with the aim of enabling retailing activities to expand in the Borough, in line with the recommendations of the Bury Retail Study. These recommendations place a particular emphasis on providing additional retailing facilities within the Borough's town centres, particularly within Bury Town Centre, together with complementary edge or out-of-centre facilities. It is considered that this will assist and contribute towards the authority's approach in relation to sustainable development, for example, in reducing journey times, integrating development with public transport and by consideration of issues such as design, materials and energy efficiency. It is recognised, however, that the enhancement of the town centres cannot be achieved through retailing alone and that it must be associated with expansion in other sectors. The inter-dependence of activities in the town centres is considered further in the Town Centres section of the Plan (Section 13).

The main aims, therefore, for the shopping policies in the UDP will be to consolidate and enhance the existing hierarchy of shopping centres through physical and environmental improvements, together with the promotion and expansion of retailing activities where this contributes to the pursuit of sustainable development.

Objectives and Targets

To achieve the broad aims for shopping policies set out in the strategy, a number of more detailed objectives and targets have been identified below. Each of these objectives is listed, followed by the relevant targets. It should be noted that some of the targets may relate to more than one objective, and where this occurs the target has been listed with what is felt to be the most appropriate objective.

Objective 1: To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of established shopping centres at the town, district and local level.

- Identifying sites for retail and commercial development and investment opportunities.
- Encouraging a programme of environmental and functional improvements.
- Limiting the proliferation of non-retail uses in shopping areas.
- Identifying opportunities for complementary and appropriate non-retail uses.
- Encouraging adequate, efficient and reliable public and private transport facilities to make centres more accessible and safer, particularly for pedestrians.

Objective 2: To ensure that the range and distribution of shops and shopping facilities are convenient, appropriately located and provide shoppers with a balanced level of provision and choice.

- Maintaining a balanced hierarchy of shopping centres to serve the needs of residents, including those who are less mobile.
- Encouraging a diverse range of shopping alternatives which are both convenient and accessible.
- Restricting inappropriate retail and non-retail development.
- Identifying under provision and need.
- Encouraging opportunities for speciality shopping.

Objective 3: To protect and enhance the role of Bury Town Centre as a sub-regional shopping centre and to promote the centre as a focal point for further development.

- Maximising the development and identified market potential of the centre, particularly for further comparison goods facilities.

- Increasing Bury Town Centre's overall market share of retail expenditure.
- Encouraging the provision of further modern, high quality and complementary shopping facilities.
- Encouraging the improvement and modernisation of particular shopper attractions, including the phased refurbishment and expansion of Bury's shopping precinct, the indoor and outdoor markets and parking facilities.
- Maximising the benefits and potential of the transport infrastructure for users of all modes of transport.

Objective 4: To resist inappropriate out-of-centre retail and commercial development.

- Encouraging an appropriate balance between in-town and out-of-town retailing facilities.
- Identifying sites in and around the Borough's town centres to counteract further pressure for out-of-centre retail activities.
- Monitoring the cumulative impact of retail permissions and their potential effect upon the vitality and viability of established shopping centres.

Objective 5: To minimise conflicts with the surrounding environment and to ensure satisfactory standards of design.

- Ensuring appropriate design in terms of criteria such as materials, access, parking and landscaping.
- Minimising the environmental impact on surrounding land uses.
- Ensuring that the economic and environmental benefits to be gained from the existing transport infrastructure are fully utilised.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

The detailed development control policies and proposals for shopping are presented below. Following each of the policies there is a reasoned justification. The appropriate general land use policies, or Part I policies, which can be found collectively in Part I of the Plan, are included in this section preceding the relevant Part II policies. The reasoned justifications for these policies are also included here. All references to the Use Classes made in this section relate to those Use Classes contained in "The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987", as amended.

S1 - EXISTING SHOPPING CENTRES

The Council will seek to protect, maintain and enhance the role and function of the existing hierarchy of shopping centres within the Borough.

Justification

The Council considers that the maintenance and improvement of the existing hierarchy of shopping centres is essential in order to cater for the shopping and social needs of the Borough's residents, to make efficient use of the public transport system and to make optimum use of infrastructure investment. The concentration of shopping within centres, in association with other services such as administration, entertainment and cultural facilities, confers a number of very important benefits, in particular:

- the provision of jobs, shops and other facilities within established centres is likely to offer one of the best prospects for reducing journeys by road and assisting in the pursuit of sustainable development;
- it helps consumers by providing competition, choice and the opportunity to make a variety of purchases and use non-retail services in a single trip;

- it can assist accessibility for shoppers using either private or public transport;
- it helps to provide a focus of community identity;
- it helps public transport by focusing demand at a limited number of locations where it can be served efficiently;
- it supports substantial levels of infrastructure investment which has taken place in the centres, which should be used to maximise and realise further urban regeneration;
- it can help to support the main buildings/areas of historical and architectural interest in centres which, if these are to be conserved, rely on commercial viability being maintained;
- it can help to enhance the image, character and well-being of a centre which, in turn, can influence visitor's perceptions of the wider area as a whole and help to attract further investment.

Strategic Guidance for Greater Manchester recognises that existing town centres, in particular, should continue to be the main focus for the provision of shopping facilities as part of their wider functions of providing employment, cultural, social and business services for the community. The Council fully supports this principle and regards measures to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing town centres as the first priority of its shopping policies.

The Council itself will play a leading role in revitalising the Borough's main shopping centres in recognition of the importance and need for attractive and viable facilities. In the course of this work the Council will encourage additional investment by the private sector and will enter into partnerships where this is required to make a particular scheme viable or in order to obtain financial assistance or grant aid. In order to co-ordinate these activities the Council will, where appropriate, prepare more detailed strategies or briefs for centres in order to prioritise and direct resources in an effective manner, for example within the context of town centre management.

Shopping centres identified under this policy have been classified on the basis of the range of shops and complementary facilities they offer, and the total scale of activity carried on within them (See Appendix 2 for a list of shopping centres and their classification). In addition, the function that each centre performs, the scale of the catchment area served and the potential within each centre for further development has been assessed and incorporated within the policies and proposals of the Plan.

In adopting this policy framework, the Council also recognises the need to accommodate the new types of retailing generated by changes in consumer preference, retail organisation and technology, such as superstores and retail warehouses. The Council wishes to ensure that wherever possible such developments are sited either within existing centres or in close proximity thereto (See Policies under S4).

S1/1 - Shopping in Bury Town Centre

The Council will protect, maintain and enhance the role of Bury Town Centre as a sub-regional shopping centre and promote the centre as a focal point for further development. In particular, the Council will support the expansion of the centre through the development of additional comparison shopping floorspace, complementary non-food retail warehousing and speciality shopping.

Justification

Bury Town Centre, by virtue of its size, the range of services and the function it performs, draws visitors and shoppers from an area wider than just that of the Borough. The vitality of the centre is therefore of sub-regional importance. The Council wishes to maintain and enhance this role and recognises the commercial potential for further shopping development, which will add to the centre's overall vitality and viability.

Reinforcement of the role of Bury Town Centre as a sub-regional shopping centre and as an important concentration of economic, cultural and administrative activity in the northern part of the conurbation is an essential element of the UDP strategy. The detailed proposals contained within

various sections of the Plan, in particular Section 13 on Town Centres, aim to provide a framework for the ongoing process of renewal, expansion and conservation of the town centre, which is essential if Bury is to remain a viable shopping alternative. The boundaries of the main shopping area and the town centre are shown on the Bury Town Centre Inset Map. Retail proposals which are located in the town centre will be assessed against the policies in both this section and that on Town Centres (See Section 13).

The retail aspect of the town centre's role will accordingly be maintained and enhanced through a series of improvements associated with accessibility, transportation, a quality environment, links with other activities and an extended range of shopping facilities.

New retail development or renewal within the town centre will be encouraged and a number of Opportunity Sites have been identified under Policy S3/1. Schemes already in the pipeline, including the phased refurbishment of the central shopping area, will be supported and modest increases in floorspace will be sought during the Plan period.

Specialist retail provision will be appropriate in connection with other uses in the wider town centre, such as the developing cultural zone, leisure and tourism developments and other mixed use proposals, at a scale appropriate to the primary use of these areas.

Retail warehouse development will not be permitted in the core of the town centre, but will be encouraged in locations adjacent to the ring road provided that this complements activities within the centre as a whole.

S1/2 - Shopping in Other Town Centres

The Council will seek to maintain and strengthen the retail roles of Ramsbottom, Radcliffe and Prestwich Town Centres. The Council will support modest increases in shopping floorspace, however, the main emphasis will be on consolidation and enhancement.

Justification

The main shopping areas of the Borough's smaller town centres, as identified on the Proposals Map, will be encouraged to evolve in line with local circumstances. Where centres have a capacity for additional growth, this will be encouraged. In all cases, the objective of the UDP will be to ensure that these centres remain as attractive as possible, and that their vitality and viability is maintained.

S1/3 - Shopping in District Centres

The Council will support proposals for new shopping development within the Borough's district centres at Tottington, Whitefield, and Sedgley Park, provided that such development is of a size, scale, function and character appropriate to serve the needs of the local area.

Justification

There are four district centres in the Borough, identified on the Proposals Map, namely Tottington, Whitefield (north), Whitefield (south), and Sedgley Park. They are smaller centres than Bury and the other town centres and offer local people accessible and convenient shopping facilities for predominantly convenience goods. The Council wishes to sustain and support the role of these centres. Proposals will normally have to be within the identified centre and be appropriate in terms of size, function and character when considered against the criteria set out within Policies S2/1 and S3/2.

Whilst the main emphasis in all district centres will be on consolidation and enhancement of existing shopping facilities, there are a number of opportunities for limited growth in each of the centres. The Council sees the UDP as a vehicle for drawing attention to these opportunities, but recognises that implementation of schemes will be largely dependent on market forces. The identification of opportunities should not be considered as exhaustive and the Council will, of course, give

consideration to other proposals, provided that these do not conflict with the shopping, and other, policies of the Plan.

S1/4 - Local Shopping Centres

The Council will seek to maintain and enhance local shopping centres and will encourage the provision of a range of shopping facilities required to serve purely local needs.

Justification

Local centres, as listed in Appendix 2 and indicated on the Proposals Map, primarily serve the day to day needs of residents who live nearby, some may cater for more limited specialist needs from a wider area and often have a special importance for certain sections of the community, such as ethnic minorities, the elderly and mobility impaired. They are situated in predominantly residential areas, often on main road frontages and for the purposes of this Plan are defined as containing in excess of 15 shops which cater for basic or essential local needs including, for example, a newsagents/confectioner, greengrocer, chemist, grocer/minimarket, post office, baker and butcher.

The main emphasis will be on consolidation and enhancement of existing retail provision. Major increases in floorspace will not normally be encouraged, but it is possible that opportunities may arise for developments which would add to the facilities of a centre and help maintain its role. Such schemes may be acceptable, provided that they are not detrimental to existing provision in that centre or elsewhere, and can be satisfactorily integrated into the centre. For the purposes of clarification new retail development proposals, which are considered to be serving purely local needs, will be treated on their merits and against other policies and proposals of the Plan. In circumstances where a proposal is not considered to be serving purely local needs, for example in terms of its size, location and/or character, a location within or adjoining a town or district centre would be considered more appropriate.

S1/5 - Neighbourhood Centres and Local Shops

The Council will seek to retain retailing (Class A1), as the predominant use in small neighbourhood centres and in new or existing local shops, to cater primarily for the day to day needs of residents and businesses.

Justification

Neighbourhood centres, as listed in Appendix 2 and indicated on the Proposals Map, and traditional corner shops provide a similar role to those in local centres, being easily accessible to all the community, convenient and located within residential areas. Local neighbourhood centres and local shops can also cater for the daily or casual needs of the nearby residents or those passing by, thus reducing the need for additional trips and assisting in the pursuit of sustainability.

Within this tier of the shopping hierarchy it is recognised, however, that it may not always be possible to safeguard existing facilities or retain shops, especially where there is not enough consumer demand to make a shop viable. The duration of vacancy of shop premises will therefore be taken as an indication of likely viability. The Council will, however, try to retain and encourage essential convenience goods shops and local services within reasonable walking distance of every home (a maximum distance of 800 metres (half a mile)).

For the purposes of this policy local shops will generally be taken to include all shops with a gross retail floorspace of 200 sq. m. (2,150 sq. ft.) or below.

S1/6 - Additions to the Shopping Hierarchy

The Council will review and, where appropriate, look favourably upon the need for further local shopping provision to serve new and existing residential areas inadequately served by the present pattern of retail provision.

At this stage the following areas have been identified as potential additions to the shopping hierarchy to accommodate new neighbourhood shopping facilities:

S1/6/1 - Radcliffe Moor Road, Bradley Fold, Radcliffe

An area with established retail and commercial uses close to a major area of new housing.

S1/6/2 - Ringley Road West, Outwood Village, Radcliffe

The Council considers that any future demand for retailing activities could be accommodated either as a new development on a small area of vacant land (0.06 ha.) at the junction of Ringley Road West and Elm Avenue, or as a change of use within existing properties, adjacent to this site.

Justification

It is considered that the UDP will apply some restraint on the establishment of further local shopping provision outside identified centres. The main reason for this approach is to help to maintain the vitality and viability of established centres, which could be seriously undermined by too free a policy towards new retailing facilities elsewhere.

It is accepted that it is difficult to apply a rigid definition, in floorspace terms, of what is meant by local facilities. But as a general rule proposals for single shops of up to 200 sq.m. (2,150 sq.ft.) gross floorspace, or small groups of such units, will usually be regarded as falling into this category. The acceptable scale for new local shopping provision in any location must, however, be judged in the light of local circumstances, including the nature of the retailing that is envisaged, the characteristics of the site, and the relationship and potential impact upon existing shopping facilities in the area.

In view of particular local circumstances two new areas for neighbourhood facilities have been identified to serve new and existing housing development at Bradley Fold and Outwood, Radcliffe.

S2 - CONTROL OF NEW RETAIL AND NON-RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

The Council will seek to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's shopping centres by encouraging and controlling the type and location of retail and non-retail development to benefit the retailing activities of the centres.

Justification

The purpose of this policy is to channel retail investment into shopping centres whilst at the same time ensuring that all new retail development either within or outside recognised centres is appropriately located and of a high standard. It is important that the primary function of the Borough's shopping centres continues to be underpinned through the provision of a wider range of convenience and comparison goods. Priority must be given towards the consolidation of this role through the development and maintenance of compact and attractive shopping areas, predominated by retail uses. It is the intention of this policy to retain and consolidate the retail core of central shopping areas, whilst enabling those non-retail uses that add vitality to a shopping area suitable opportunities to locate within or close to the centre.

In order that this may be achieved it will be necessary to control both the type and amount of non-retail uses acceptable within the main shopping areas of each centre where a potential problem is envisaged. Without restriction there is a danger that non-retail uses would begin to dominate shopping areas, particularly where in the short term, demand for retail representation may be low or where new forms of semi-retailing activities develop during the Plan period. As well as seeking to control the displacement of pure retail uses, associated Part II policies seek to control potential disturbance to nearby residents through increased traffic, noise, amenity and environmental impact. This is particularly relevant in assessing the impact of food and drink uses and amusement centres. Where appropriate, the Council will prepare further supplementary planning guidance as a more detailed basis for determining applications in shopping areas. Any such supplementary planning guidance will be issued solely for the guidance and assistance of planning applicants and will be

consistent with the Plan and subject to Council approval. Where appropriate, public consultation will be carried out.

S2/1 - All New Retail Proposals: Assessment Criteria

The Council will support new retail development proposals which accord satisfactorily with the following factors:

- **are within or immediately adjoining the main shopping area of existing centres;**
- **sustain or enhance the vitality and viability of a centre;**
- **are accessible by and would encourage greater use of public transport;**
- **are in conformity with other policies and proposals of the Plan.**

Having successfully established the principle of development, all retail proposals will be considered with regard to their environmental impact and must take account of the following factors:-

- they should have regard to their surroundings in terms of design, scale, height, bulk, use and colour of materials and landscaping;
- the effects on the environment of the area as a result of increased traffic generation and servicing;
- the design of the proposal with regard to safety and security for shoppers, workers, visitors and surrounding occupiers;
- the effects on the amenity of nearby residents or businesses by reason of noise, smell, litter or opening hours;
- access and, where appropriate through negotiation, facilities for the mobility impaired;
- the provision of associated facilities. Where applicable, proposals should attempt to provide an appropriate level of additional community benefit and/or offset the loss of or impact on any amenity or resource present on the site. The following facilities serve as examples; creche/children's play, baby changing and feeding, public conveniences (including provision for the disabled) and recycling facilities;
- the provision of adequate car parking and servicing.

Justification

This policy provides more specific guidance for the control of all retail development and associated non-retail development within the Borough whether this is within or outside recognised shopping centres. In considering development proposals it will be necessary to establish the principle of development under criteria (a) to (d) of this Policy. Proposals for out-of-centre locations which fail criterion (a) will automatically be considered against Policy S4, prior to considering their environmental impact against criteria (e) to (k) of this Policy. The adequacy of car parking provision (criterion (k)) will be assessed against Highways and Transportation Policy HT2/4 - Car Parking and New Development.

In directing new retail proposals to the Borough's main shopping centres the Council is concerned that this is adequately controlled and that it is of a type, size and quality to maintain and enhance the centre's overall vitality and viability. Where appropriate, the Council will also endeavour to secure planning obligations in association with retail development proposals, covering for example, the provision of highway works and improved access, car parking, landscaping or other infrastructure works and/or additional community benefits and facilities. This will be assessed against guidance on the use of planning obligations set out within Circular 1/97 "Planning Obligations" and rules governing agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.

Shopping environments tend to be a focal point for community activity and are perhaps the part of the overall environment experienced most frequently by the Borough's residents and visitors. A good quality of design and layout in shopping areas and new shopping developments can, therefore, make a major contribution to the overall quality of the environment. This policy has been drawn up in order to improve and assess the environmental impact of proposals within shopping centres, whilst taking

account of the needs of all members of the community, their safety and security. New development proposals should be carefully integrated within centres to help maintain and enhance their role. In the limited circumstances where development may be allowed out-of-centre, particular regard will be paid to its environmental impact in terms of the factors identified above.

S2/2 - Prime Shopping Areas and Frontages

Within prime shopping areas identified in the Borough's town centres, the Council will seek to maintain retailing (Class A1) as the predominant land use at ground floor level. Proposals for change of use or redevelopment within these areas will be assessed on their merits and by taking into account the following factors:

- the design and appearance of the proposed frontage;
- the maintenance or provision of a display window at ground floor level, where appropriate;
- access for the mobility impaired, where appropriate and through negotiation with the developer;
- whether the proposal will give rise to disturbance or nuisance;

In addition, where a proposal would lead to more than 10% of any identified prime shopping frontage being in non-retail (Class A1) use, the Council will also take into account the following factors:

- the location and prominence of the proposal within the prime shopping frontage;
- the number, distribution and proximity of other premises in non-retail (Class A1) use or with planning permission for such uses;
- the particular nature and character of the use proposed, including the level of activity associated with it.

Justification

This policy seeks to protect prime shopping frontages at ground floor level by preventing or limiting the loss of prime retail units in the heart of the Borough's town centres. If unrestricted, the loss of prime retail units could not only lead to an unacceptable dispersal of shopping facilities and deter new investment, but could also serve to bring about the long term decline of a particular town centre as a whole by constraining its ability to meet the needs of shoppers.

The prime shopping frontages are listed in Appendix 3 and together with the prime shopping areas, are identified on the Proposals Map (Town Centre Insets). Appendix 3 also contains a method for calculating the percentage figure referred to in the policy above. Primary shopping areas are traditionally the busiest parts of a shopping centre, often occupied by specialist or fashion trades, markets, major department stores, chainstores and foodstores. These areas attract high levels of pedestrian flows and are, therefore, sought after locations by non-retail businesses.

In formulating this policy, detailed surveys and assessments of prime shopping areas have been undertaken as well as consideration of specific local circumstances. In many of the identified prime shopping frontages opportunities still exist for non-retail uses and the Council recognises the contribution that these uses can make to the retail character and vitality of shopping centres. However, the imposition of a relatively low percentage threshold in the policy ensures that non-retail uses can be fully assessed and considered on their merits. In addition, this policy will assist the Council in controlling the concentration or grouping of such uses.

S2/3 - Secondary Shopping Areas and Frontages

Within secondary shopping areas identified in the Borough's town centres, and in the main shopping areas of district centres, the Council will seek to maintain retailing (Class A1) as the predominant land use at ground floor level. Proposals for change of use or redevelopment within these areas will be assessed on their merits and by taking into account the following factors:

- the design and appearance of the proposed frontage;
- the maintenance or provision of a display window at ground floor level, where appropriate;
- access for the mobility impaired, where appropriate and through negotiation with the developer;
- whether the proposals will give rise to disturbance or nuisance;

In addition, where a proposal would lead to more than 40% of any identified secondary shopping frontage being in non-retail (Class A1) use, the Council will also take into account the following factors:

- the location and prominence of the proposal within the secondary shopping frontage;
- the number, distribution, and proximity of other premises in non-retail (Class A1) use or with planning permission for such uses;
- the particular nature and character of the use proposed, including the level of activity associated with it.

Justification

In line with Government guidance, the Council has adopted a much more flexible approach to non-retail uses in secondary shopping areas, compared with primary shopping areas, in order to strike a balance between the vitality and viability of the centres. In formulating this policy detailed surveys and assessments of shopping areas have been undertaken as well as consideration of specific local circumstances. As a result, a limited number of important secondary shopping frontages have been identified within town and district centres where factors (e) to (g) of this policy are considered appropriate in order to assess the concentration of, and prevent the proliferation of, non-retail uses which would be to the detriment of retailing.

The secondary shopping frontages are listed in Appendix 3 and, together with the secondary shopping areas, are identified on the Proposals Map. Appendix 3 also contains a method for calculating the percentage figure referred to in the policy above.

S2/4 - Control of Non-Retail Uses in All Other Areas

Outside the main shopping area of town and district centres, changes of use, or redevelopment, from a retail shop (Class A1) to a non-retail use will be permitted.

In considering proposals for a non-retail use the following factors will be taken into account:

- that the proposal is appropriate in scale and character to the requirements of the area and necessary to serve local needs which would not otherwise be met;
- that the new non-retail use would not result in an over concentration or grouping of uses which could result in a long term loss of trade from a centre compared with a continued Class A1 use;
- the length of time the unit has remained vacant and the viability of a continued Class A1 use;
- whether or not the locality is adequately served by alternative local shopping facilities within reasonable walking distance;
- that a display window is retained or provided, where appropriate;
- that access is provided for the mobility impaired, where appropriate;
- that adequate provision is made for car parking and servicing.

Justification

Outside the main shopping area of town and district centres, the Council will also endeavour to retain Class A1 retailing as the predominant use. The Council recognises, however, that other shopping areas can also benefit from a balanced mix of retail and non-retail services.

By controlling the number of non-retail uses the Council hopes to protect existing shopping facilities, particularly those which meet the essential shopping requirements of local communities. Inappropriate non-retail uses can weaken the attractiveness of a centre and threaten the viability of

existing retail uses. The protection and concentration of local shops can also be of particular benefit to those in the community who are less mobile.

Appropriate non-retail uses which serve a local need, or community service uses (such as a doctor's surgery or dentist), may be acceptable, provided that this does not result in the loss of an essential shop, and subject to other factors identified above. Access for the mobility impaired will be provided, where appropriate, through negotiation with the developer.

S2/5 - New Local Shopping Provision Outside Recognised Shopping Centres

Outside shopping centres shown on the Proposals Map, the Council will support small scale local shopping provision (within Class A1).

In determining proposals for new local shops or change of use applications, the Council will assess the balance of advantage and disadvantage of the proposal with regard to the following factors:

- whether or not there is a local need that cannot be met by existing provision in the area;
- the effect on the vitality and viability of established local shopping facilities;
- whether or not the proposed use would be more appropriately located within a recognised shopping centre;
- the availability of alternative vacant shop premises and/or the level of unimplemented planning permissions in the vicinity that could accommodate the proposed use;
- the potential nuisance that would be created for neighbouring residents. More specifically, the establishment of shops in terraced properties adjoining residential accommodation will not normally be permitted;
- the parking and servicing provision associated with the proposed development and its effects in terms of road safety and traffic generation.

Justification

This policy provides more specific guidance for evaluating change of use applications and proposals for new local shops. The main principles underlying this policy are concerned with protecting the shopping role of established centres, ensuring that new shops do not cause amenity or traffic problems, and that shops are as well related as possible to existing provision, where applicable. For the purposes of this policy, local shops will be taken to include all shops with a gross retail floorspace of 200 sq. m. (2,150 sq. ft.) or below.

Proposals in excess of this threshold would be more appropriately located within a recognised shopping centre. Essential local shops will usually be taken to comprise a newsagents/confectioner, greengrocer, chemist, grocer/mini-market, post office, baker and butcher.

S2/6 - Food and Drink

The Council in considering all proposals which involve restaurants, hot food takeaways, cafes, snack bars, wine bars and public houses, together with any other uses contained within Class A3, will have regard to the following factors:

- the amenity of nearby residents by reason of noise, smell, litter and opening hours;
- whether or not the proposal would result in an over concentration of Class A3 uses, which could adversely change the nature or character of a centre as a whole;
- parking and servicing provision associated with the proposed development and its effects in terms of road safety, traffic generation and movement;
- provision for the storage and disposal of refuse and customer litter;
- the environmental impact of any ventilation flues and/or ducting.

Justification

This policy is designed to control development which falls within Class A3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (or as subsequently amended). Class A3 uses pose a number of potential associated environmental and highway safety problems which need to be carefully controlled. The factors to be considered when assessing planning applications mainly relate to the effect on amenity, particularly where residential properties are in close proximity, road safety and traffic flow.

Such uses are most appropriately located within town and district centres and other mixed use areas, where their impact will tend to be least damaging and demand for their services is arguably greatest. Proposals for Class A3 uses in other parts of the built-up area may be considered acceptable, provided that they meet the detailed requirements of this policy, and other policies of the Plan.

The Council also considers that where a development is acceptable in principle, conditions may be imposed in order to ameliorate the potentially damaging effects of these uses and/or protect the amenity of nearby residents. These conditions may include measures to control the hours of opening, noise, smell, the storage of refuse and the collection of litter.

S2/7 - Amusement Centres and Arcades

Amusement centres and arcades will be appropriate, in certain circumstances, within town and district centres or in other areas of mixed commercial development. Proposals in other locations will not be permitted.

Within the areas specified above, planning permission will not be granted if:

- **the proposal is located within a primary shopping frontage;**
- **the proposal would be likely to adversely affect the amenity of nearby existing dwellings or other sensitive uses such as schools and places of worship, by reason of noise or disturbance;**
- **the proposal would adversely affect the appearance or setting of a listed building, or the character or appearance of a conservation area.**

Where permission is to be granted for a proposal in a retail frontage, provision of a shop front and display window will be required. In addition, conditions may be attached to limit noise and disturbance.

Justification

Proposals for amusement centres and arcades give rise to a number of issues, including displacement of retail uses, potential disturbance to nearby residents and businesses, together with the visual impact on the street scene. This term covers such activities as bingo halls and clubs, and amusement-with-prizes machines for example fruit machines (pin tables and video games). This policy seeks to direct proposals towards those centres, and parts of centres, which are considered best able to accommodate these uses, away from more sensitive locations. Where a small number of amusement machines are installed in premises used for other purposes, for example in cafes and hotels, planning permission may not be required if the use is ancillary to the primary use of the building. In cases of doubt, the local planning authority should be consulted. In granting planning permission for amusement centres and arcades, the Council may impose conditions to limit potential loss of amenity, noise and disturbance.

S3 - NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

The Council will encourage and permit appropriately located retail development and environmental improvements within or immediately adjoining the main shopping area of the Borough's main shopping centres.

Justification

The Council is concerned that all the Borough's shopping centres reaffirm their roles as important retail, commercial and social activity centres, that they are able to attract appropriate new facilities and that environmental quality is improved. New development will be expected to be of a high standard and appropriate in terms of its environmental impact (Policy S2/1). This approach is entirely consistent with the requirements of PPG12 "Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance", which requires authorities to have regard to environmental considerations when preparing UDP policies.

S3/1 - New Retail Development Opportunities Within or Adjoining Town Centres

On land within or immediately adjoining the main shopping area of the Borough's town centres proposals for new retail development will be permitted. Proposals will, however, be expected to be appropriate in scale and character to the areas which they serve, make provision for adequate access, car parking and servicing, and accord satisfactorily with other policies and proposals of the Plan.

The Council considers that the following sites are suitable for retail development purposes:

S3/1/1 - Land at Back Bridge Street/Paradise Street, Ramsbottom (0.04 ha.).

A small site within the prime shopping area capable of accommodating a small craft/speciality shopping development.

S3/1/2 - Land Bounded by King Street/Palatine Street, Ramsbottom (0.22 ha.).

This site provides an opportunity for a formal market area or other prime retail facilities.

S3/1/3 - Land at the Junction of Railway Street/Irwell Street, Ramsbottom (0.16 ha.).

This site is being temporarily used for a car/coach park for a minimum period of 3 years (up to 1994). In the medium to long term the site has retail/speciality retail development potential, although any development will be dependent upon the provision of replacement car parking, see Highways and Transportation Policy HT2/6.

S3/1/4 - Existing Buildings Bounded by King Street/Prince Street/Irwell Street and Palatine Street, Ramsbottom (0.56 ha.).

This site is allocated as an Opportunity Site on the Ramsbottom Town Centre Inset Map and occupies a central position within the heart of the town centre. The Council recognises the redevelopment potential this site offers for a range of complementary town centre uses including retailing, business (B1) and offices. In terms of retailing, the Council considers that the site could accommodate a medium sized supermarket/foodstore or smaller scale retail development in order to counteract significant levels of expenditure leakage from the local area, and to provide additional choice and convenience facilities for a growing local population. See also Economy Proposal EC1/2/3.

S3/1/5 - Land Bounded by Railway Street/Irwell Street and Square Street, Ramsbottom (1.27 ha.).

This edge of centre site would be suitable for complementary town centre retailing in order to counteract significant expenditure leakage from this area of the Borough, and to provide additional choice and convenience facilities for a growing local population. The Council will, however, in considering a retail development scheme, take into account any potential cumulative effects on the town centre or other retail development sites identified within or immediately adjacent to the town's main shopping area. The site has been identified as an Opportunity Site and consideration may also be given to alternative proposals involving, for example, business (B1), offices, leisure and tourism related uses, or a mixture of these. A planning application for a children's nursery has recently been granted approval by the Council (May 1993). See Economy Proposal EC1/2/1 and Recreation and Tourism Proposal RT4/1/1.

S3/1/6 - Moor Street/ Hornby Street, Bury (1.43 ha.).

This Opportunity Site on the northern edge of Bury Town Centre is considered suitable for non-food retailing (outline approval granted April 1993) or B1, B2 and B8 employment uses, see Economy Proposal EC1/1/6.

S3/1/7 - Woodfields, Bury (6.88 ha.).

Woodfields provides a unique opportunity to establish complementary food and non-food retailing and leisure facilities adjacent to Bury Town Centre. As well as complementing activities within the town centre this allocation will help to strengthen the role of Bury as a sub-regional centre and counteract the threat of inappropriately located proposals elsewhere, which could significantly affect the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole. A development brief will be prepared for this Opportunity Site which will include: further investigations regarding the physical suitability of the site for development, siting, acceptable/preferred uses, access, and identification of areas to be maintained and/or protected as open space, etc., See Recreation and Tourism Proposal RT4/5/1.

S3/1/8 - Land at Moorgate, Bury (2.42 ha.).

A prominent Opportunity Site at Moorgate, which is currently in commercial and business use. The site has already been identified for retailing and has outline planning permission for a food store and car park. A number of buildings on the site have subsequently been demolished. In addition to retailing, the Council also recognises the site's potential as a business/office location and as such would consider favourably proposals for business (B1) and office uses, or a mixture of these. A planning application for a new car showroom and ancillary facilities has been granted approval by the Council on part of the site (May 1993). See Economy Proposal EC1/2/5.

S3/1/9 - Land Adjacent Bury Fire Station, The Rock, Bury (0.07 ha.).

Small Opportunity Site within Bury Town Centre suitable for retail/office development. A planning application for a 3 storey office block development has been approved by the Council (May 1993). See Economy Proposal EC5/1/1.

S3/1/10 - Land and Buildings at the Junction of Rochdale Road and The Rock, Bury (1.54 ha.).

In developing town centre retail proposals, the importance of retaining accessible car parking has been stressed. In response to this view it is proposed, as a first stage in the redevelopment of the central shopping area, that this Opportunity Site be reserved as a potential site for additional car parking (see Highways and Transportation Proposal HT2/5/3), which may possibly include ground floor retailing. In the event that car parking requirements are accommodated elsewhere within the town centre, the Council considers that this site provides an opportunity for additional retail warehousing or other complementary comparison shopping facilities. Provided that this does not prejudice overall parking provision within the centre as a whole.

S3/1/11 - The Rock/Tithebarn Street, Bury (0.21 ha.).

This site provides opportunities for redevelopment or refurbishment of the existing properties which could provide modern retail/speciality retail facilities.

S3/1/12 - Land Bounded by Union Arcade/ Angouleme Way/Rochdale Road/The Rock, Bury (1.82 ha.).

The Council will encourage and support an extension to Bury Town Centre's prime shopping area on this prestigious town centre redevelopment site. Development of this site will give a major boost to the local economy and provide for an identified shortage of prime comparison floorspace, helping to strengthen and reaffirm the centre's role as a sub-regional shopping centre. As well as helping to fulfil the needs of both retailers and shoppers, the development will need to be designed in such a way as to enhance the physical fabric of the town centre and improve the appearance of an important gateway into the town. Taken together with other policies of the Plan, the Council is looking to substantially increase comparison retail floorspace (up to a maximum of 18,580 sq.m. (200,000 sq.ft.) by 2001) and car parking provision within the centre to meet existing and future demand, possibly in

a multi-storey facility located either within the development or on an adjacent site (see S3/1/10). The Council considers that a development of this kind will help to meet the shopping demands of residents and increase the centre's market share of retail expenditure well into the 21st Century.

S3/1/13 - Site of Central Methodist Church, The Haymarket/Crompton Street, Bury (0.18 ha.).

A planning application for 4 retail units and a new church has been approved by the Council.

S3/1/14 - Rochdale Road, Bury (0.15 ha.).

Small Opportunity Site within Bury Town Centre suitable for retail/office development, see Economy Proposal EC5/1/2.

S3/1/15 - George Street/Foundry Street, Bury (0.98 ha.).

This site may provide an opportunity for additional retail warehousing or other complementary comparison shopping facilities adjoining the town centre. Satisfactory new and replacement car parking will be expected as part of any redevelopment proposal and overall parking provision within the centre as a whole must not be prejudiced, see Highways and Transportation Policy HT2/6.

S3/1/16 - Minden Parade/Market Parade, Bury (0.10 ha.).

Potential redevelopment site within the prime shopping area.

S3/1/17 - Princess Parade/Murray Road/Hilton Road, Bury (0.36 ha.).

This site could provide an opportunity to rationalise existing servicing, parking and market access arrangements. The site could be redeveloped to provide a large retail unit fronting onto Princess Parade or facilities complementary to the market area.

S3/1/18 - Angouleme Way/Spring Street, Bury (1.13 ha.).

This Council owned site provides an opportunity for additional retail warehousing or other complementary comparison shopping facilities adjoining the town centre. Satisfactory new and replacement car parking will be a requirement of any redevelopment proposal, and overall parking provision within the centre as a whole must not be prejudiced, see Highways and Transportation Policy HT2/6.

S3/1/19 - Land South of Church Street West, Radcliffe (1.64 ha.).

This site, a large part of which is vacant, has been identified as an Opportunity Site and has the advantages of a large river frontage and proximity to Metrolink. Although housing is the preferred use, as reflected within the Radcliffe Renewal initiative, the Council also recognises the commercial potential of the site and the business/employment needs of the area. As such the Council has identified a number of alternative development opportunities for the site and will consider favourably proposals for complementary town centre retailing, business (B1) and office uses. Any development would have to meet a high standard of design at this important gateway into the town centre and developers will be required to incorporate the river frontage into the design of any development, including the provision of landscaping and public access to the riverside (see Environment Policy EN10/2). The site is in part private and part Council ownership. See Housing Proposal H1/1/35 and Economy Proposal EC1/2/11.

S3/1/20 - Land Between 23 and 37 Church Street West, Radcliffe (0.04 ha.).

Small retail infill development site.

S3/1/21 - Land Between 51-63 Blackburn Street/Foundry Street, Radcliffe (0.06 ha.).

This site is currently semi-derelict and provides an opportunity for a small retail infill development. The Council has granted planning permission for 3 shop units with offices above (December 1991).

S3/1/22 - The Asda Store, Green Street, Radcliffe (0.79 ha.).

The Council recognises that this site has an existing use for retailing. However, in the event that the focus of retailing activity within the centre changes to more up to date retailing accommodation, (for example at Riverside Retail Park, off Pilkington Way), the Council will encourage redevelopment or

reuse of this Opportunity Site for retailing, business (B1), office and leisure uses. See Economy Proposal EC1/2/12 and Recreation and Tourism Proposal RT4/5/3.

S3/1/23 - Land Between Dale Street and Railway Street, Radcliffe (0.11 ha.).

This Council owned site occupies a prominent and central position within the town centre, adjacent to Pilkington Way. The site has deemed planning consent for retail (Class A1 and A2) and office use (Class B1).

S3/1/24 - Sion Street/Phoenix Way, Radcliffe (0.20 ha.).

An Opportunity Site located on the fringe of the town centre, which already has planning permission for a car showroom. The Council will also consider proposals for office use, see Economy Proposal EC5/2/2.

S3/1/25 - Land Bounded by Pilkington Way/Sion Street and River Irwell, Radcliffe (4.55 ha.).

This is a major Opportunity Site in a prime location, adjacent to Pilkington Way and the prime shopping area of Radcliffe Town Centre. Development of the site for retailing would enhance the strategic retail function of the town centre and provide more modern retailing facilities. Although retailing is the preferred use and outline planning consent has been granted, the Council also recognises the site's potential as a business/office location together with the business/employment needs of the area. As such, the Council will also consider favourably proposals for business (B1) and office uses (see Economy Proposal EC1/2/10), where this would not undermine the strategic retail function of the centre as a whole. A high standard of design on road and river frontages will be expected and improvements to the riverside frontage should be included in any scheme, see Environment Policy EN10/2.

S3/1/26 - Pilkington Way/Mill Bank/Mellor Street, Radcliffe (0.37 ha.).

Prominent town centre retail redevelopment site fronting Pilkington Way. The Council owns a major part of the site and will encourage the development of a small to medium sized retail unit which will enhance the retail function of the town centre.

S3/1/27 - Pilkington Way/Outwood Road, Radcliffe (0.18 ha.).

A prominent Opportunity Site fronting Pilkington Way, which already has outline planning permission for a car showroom (September 1991). As well as retail development the Council will also consider proposals for business (B1) and office uses, see Economy Proposal EC1/2/13.

S3/1/28 - Land at the Junction of New Road/Stand Lane, Radcliffe (0.27 ha.).

Prominent redevelopment site located at a major gateway into Radcliffe Town Centre.

S3/1/29 - The Longfield Centre, Prestwich (0.04 ha.).

A small infill/open space area within the Longfield Centre. In developing this site, proposals will be required to demonstrate that sufficient and/or alternative open space can be provided within the Centre as a whole. This could be achieved through refurbishment and/or wider environmental improvements, including more efficient use of public space. Such an approach was incorporated into a scheme to refurbish the whole shopping centre, including the construction of four new retail units on this site, granted full planning permission in May 1991.

S3/1/30 - Land Adjacent to 440 Bury New Road, Prestwich (0.10 ha.).

Vacant site adjoining the prime shopping area.

S3/1/31 - Land to the Rear of the Red Lion, Bury New Road, Prestwich (0.34 ha.).

The Council recognises the retail/office development potential of this Opportunity Site which could be integrated more closely with existing commercial activities fronting Bury New Road or combined to provide a prominent frontage redevelopment site, see Economy Proposal EC5/2/4.

Justification

Town centres are in the main the most accessible locations for retailing and commercial activities and, as such, provide the prime locations for new shopping development. Priority has been given to the identification of suitable sites within and immediately adjoining the Borough's town centres. The aims and objectives of this policy fully accord with the main thrust of national planning policy (PPG6 "Town Centres and Retail Development") and also Strategic Guidance for Greater Manchester, which emphasise that existing town centres should be the main focus of shopping facilities and that local planning policies, which promote and encourage their modernisation and refurbishment, are fully justified. In addition, retail and commercial development opportunities can play an important part in the regeneration of town centres and inner areas. Proposals on all the sites identified above will be expected to be appropriate in scale, make provision for adequate access, car parking and servicing and accord satisfactorily with other policies of the Plan.

S3/2 - New Retail Development Opportunities Within District Centres

The Council will encourage and permit appropriate new retail development within or immediately adjoining the main shopping area of the Borough's district centres.

Where a proposal is to be considered, the following factors will be taken into account:

- **that it is of a size, scale and function in keeping with the character of the local area;**
- **that it fulfils the requirements and needs of the local area;**
- **whether or not the proposal is a replacement within the same centre for obsolete shopping floorspace which is to be, or has recently been, demolished or changed to non-retail use;**
- **whether or not the proposal would be more appropriately located within a town centre.**

The Council considers that the following sites are suitable for retail development purposes:

S3/2/1 - 33-35 Market Street, Tottington (0.02 ha.).

The site provides an opportunity for limited infill shopping facilities, development would improve amenity and fill an unsightly gap in the street scene. The design and materials of any redevelopment should be sympathetic with the surrounding area.

S3/2/2 - Land off Green Lane, Whitefield (0.71 ha.).

The Council considers that this area of vacant land adjoining The Elms Precinct is suitable for additional retailing/car parking provision, appropriate to a district centre. This allocation reflects initial proposals to expand and refurbish the precinct for which an outline planning application has been approved (October 1992).

S3/2/3 - Land North of the New Grove Inn/Mills Street/Bury New Road, Whitefield (0.06 ha.).

Small infill development site suitable for retailing.

S3/2/4 - Land Bounded by Bury New Road/Victoria Lane/Recreation Ground, Whitefield (0.40 ha.).

A prominent site, occupied by a number of uses, which is considered to have potential for comprehensive redevelopment. The site is allocated as an Opportunity Site on the Proposals Map and a retail, business (B1) or office afteruse is considered most appropriate, see Economy Proposal EC1/2/14.

S3/2/5 - Land Adjacent to 16 Bury New Road, (garage/former Odeon Cinema), Sedgley Park (0.53 ha.).

This site provides a unique redevelopment opportunity within Sedgley Park district centre. The site currently has outline planning permission for a nursing home with communal facilities and a number of retail permissions have lapsed. The Council will continue to support retail development appropriate to a district centre. A high standard of design will be required in such a prominent gateway location together with satisfactory access and parking provision.

Justification

The sites identified above either create gaps in the street scene, or detract from the overall appearance of the relevant district centres. Their redevelopment for shopping purposes in a sensitive manner would serve both to improve amenity and add to the provision of shopping facilities within the centres. The developments would be private undertakings and would be evaluated against criteria set out within this and other relevant policies of the Plan.

S3/3 - Improvement and Enhancement (All Centres)

The Council will encourage the refurbishment and improvement of shopping centres within the Borough in order to actively promote the regeneration of these centres for retailing activities. Particular emphasis will be placed on those centres, or parts thereof, which:

- **contain outdated, inadequate or substandard shopping facilities;**
- **are in need of enhancement due to poor environments, poor building condition or under occupancy;**
- **suffer from problems associated with traffic, parking or inadequate servicing;**
- **are inadequately served by public transport facilities or suffer from poor accessibility;**
- **are experiencing a decline in shopping patronage;**
- **do not properly cater for pedestrians.**

The Council considers that the following centres would benefit from particular attention when assessed against the above criteria.

Town Centres

S3/3/1 - Ramsbottom.

During recent years the centre has experienced renewed investment interest, mainly as a spin-off from tourist related projects. In addition, a number of environmental and physical improvements have been progressed, mainly through the efforts of the Council, English Heritage and local traders. The Council is keen to encourage further improvements, particularly where this would reduce or control the volume of traffic using Bolton Street and Bridge Street, enhance car parking and servicing provision, and improve the River Irwell/ East Lancashire Railway corridor.

S3/3/2 - Bury.

The town centre has experienced a decline in shopping patronage not only as a result of competition from more attractive shopping facilities elsewhere, but because the centre has suffered from neglect and a lack of investment over the last few years. The Council is keen to reverse this trend and will encourage both physical and environmental improvements, refurbishment and new retail development schemes, to help retain and extend shopping facilities. The refurbishment of part of the Millgate Centre is considered to be the first step in reversing this trend and it is hoped that this will act as a catalyst and springboard for further investment.

S3/3/3 - Radcliffe.

The number of vacant and substandard units in the town centre suggests that Radcliffe has experienced some decline in its popularity as a shopping centre. The completion of Pilkington Way opens up several new opportunities for retail development and enables a host of additional highway and environmental schemes to be implemented, improving access, circulation, parking and pedestrian movement. Combined with other qualitative improvements to the physical structure of the town centre the Council considers that this approach will create a more attractive environment, and possibly stimulate national multiple interest and further retail investment.

S3/3/4 - Prestwich.

The majority of Prestwich's shopping facilities are located within the Longfield Centre, a 1960's pedestrianised shopping precinct. The Council is keen to encourage refurbishment along with the

provision of appropriate new retail floorspace to help to retain and improve shopping facilities. The remainder of the centre, which consists of mainly older shopping parades located on both sides of the A56 Bury New Road, suffers primarily from problems associated with traffic, servicing and inadequate parking. Here, as with the Longfield Centre, there is a need for environmental improvement and enhancement. The designation of the St. Mary's Park Conservation Area over the southern part of the town centre may assist in improving environmental conditions.

District Centres

S3/3/5 - Whitefield North.

The Council will encourage measures to refurbish and/or extend The Elms precinct, to improve its environment and to increase its attractiveness to shoppers. In order to prevent further deterioration of this 1960's precinct, the Council will support proposals for its sensitive upgrading which might, for instance, include a partial covering over of the main square, along with other appropriate improvements or extensions (See also Shopping Proposal S3/2/2).

S3/3/6 - Sedgley Park.

Suffers from problems associated with traffic (the A56 Bury New Road), servicing and, in particular, inadequate parking provision. The Council recognises, however, that opportunities to resolve these problems are limited.

Local Centres

S3/3/7 - Walmersley Road/ Moorgate, Bury.

Rundown shopping area located at an important gateway into Bury Town Centre, suffers mainly from traffic and environmental problems.

S3/3/8 - Bolton Road/ Bury Bridge, Bury.

Linear shopping centre suffering from traffic, parking difficulties and environmental problems.

S3/3/9 - Ainsworth Road/Water Street, Radcliffe.

Contains a large number of vacant and substandard properties which have been identified for clearance. Traffic, parking, servicing and environmental problems all need to be resolved.

S3/3/10 - Whittaker Lane/Bury Old Road, Prestwich.

Contains a large number of vacant premises and suffers from problems associated with traffic and inadequate parking. Indeed, as the centre is located adjacent to Heaton Park Station, parking difficulties may well be exacerbated with the introduction of Metrolink.

Neighbourhood Centres

S3/3/11 - Manchester Road, Sunnybank, Bury.

Suffers from inadequate and substandard parking facilities and would benefit from minor environmental improvements.

S3/3/12 - Water Street, Radcliffe.

Contains several substandard shopping facilities and suffers from environmental and traffic problems, particularly in relation to pedestrian crossing facilities.

S3/3/13 - Albert Place/Ribble Drive, Whitefield.

Rundown and outdated neighbourhood shopping centre suffering a decline in investment, patronage and occupancy. Environmental improvements and a new car park between Ribble Drive and Albert Place would make the centre more attractive, particularly to passing trade.

S3/3/14 - Moss Shaw Way, Radcliffe.

Contains a number of vacant units and is experiencing a decline in shopping patronage.

S3/3/15 - Thatch Leach Lane, Besses o'th' Barn, Whitefield.

Problems associated with inadequate parking facilities.

Justification

The Council will monitor the health of centres in terms of factors such as the incidence of vacant premises, accessibility and environmental quality. Given the financial constraints that are likely to limit the scale and pace of the Council's own programme of improvements, it will be necessary to explore energetically any other possible approaches that might attract resources towards the regeneration of shopping centres. Indeed, the Council may assist improvements by identifying problems and co-ordinating an appropriate response by the private sector, local traders or in partnership.

S3/4 - Markets

The Council will encourage and support proposals which seek to consolidate and enhance existing market facilities in Bury, Ramsbottom and Radcliffe Town Centres through environmental and physical improvements.

Justification

Markets can add vitality, interest and colour to the attraction of a shopping centre and can have positive effects on the shops in the area by generating increased pedestrian flows. Existing markets within Bury, Ramsbottom and Radcliffe Town Centres serve as major attractions to the shopping public. The Council recognises their popularity and will explore opportunities which might attract resources towards visual and functional improvements, including improved access and circulation for pedestrians and service vehicles, improved refuse storage and collection, (including recycling facilities), and hard and soft landscaping.

S4 - NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE TOWN AND DISTRICT CENTRES

The Council will not permit new retail development to be located outside the main shopping area of the Borough's town and district centres, unless it is to meet purely local needs or satisfies the criteria set out in Policy S4/1 or S4/2.

Justification

In the interests of shopping concentration the Council will require all retail developments to be located in or immediately adjoining the main shopping area of identified shopping centres. The Council recognises, however, that retailing is a dynamic and evolving industry and that its requirements may change over time or that certain retail developments may not be easily accommodated in or adjoining identified shopping centres e.g. foodstores, retail warehouses, builders merchants and garden centres. The public too can often benefit from a widening choice of shopping facilities and increased competition, in particular, where additional provision is to meet purely local needs.

For the purposes of this policy the term "purely local needs" is taken to mean facilities which cater for the essential day to day needs of a local community and which do not generate trips other than on foot or by bicycle.

S4/1 - Retail Development Outside Town and District Centres

The following retail facilities are considered appropriate to be located outside the main shopping area of the Borough's town and district centres:

- facilities required to serve purely local needs;
- facilities which come within the following categories:

- **builders and plumbers merchants, timber suppliers, hire depots and other outlets providing a service mainly to the trade;**
- **car and caravan sales, petrol filling stations, car accessory shops, tyre and exhaust and other outlets whose goods are almost entirely related to motoring;**
- **nurseries and garden centres requiring large external storage and display areas;**
- **small scale shops catering primarily for tourists and visitors particularly within the Upper Irwell Valley, as identified in the Draft Tourism Strategy e.g. Summerseat and Holcombe Village; and**
- **factory/mill shops or farm shops occupying a relatively small area and selling predominantly goods manufactured on the premises or produced on the farm.**

All development permitted under this policy must also take account of its environmental impact and satisfactorily accord with other relevant policies and proposals of the Plan.

Justification

This policy reflects and refines existing Council policy aimed at maintaining the existing hierarchy of shopping centres. As well as setting out general requirements in terms of location, scale and character, the policy identifies a number of retailing activities which may, in principle, be acceptable in out-of-centre locations, subject to compliance with other policies of the Plan, in particular, Policy S2/1- All New Retail Proposals: Assessment Criteria; S4/2 - Assessing Out-of-Centre Retail Development; S4/3 - Nurseries, Farm Shops and Garden Centres; and S4/4 - Car Showrooms, Car Sales Areas and Petrol Filling Stations.

Where permissions are granted under this policy, conditions may be attached preventing changes of use to other types of retailing. Other considerations may also include conditions regulating the hours of opening and/or goods sold and, in terms of facilities identified in (b)(i), use by the trade only via a trade counter. Shops associated with a major industrial use, for example, mill shops, and/or farm shops (not covered by permitted development rights) may also be acceptable provided that they are truly ancillary to the main use i.e. occupying a relatively small area and selling predominantly goods manufactured on the premises or produced on the farm. However, if the primary use ceases or substantially reduces in scale, retail use is not retained.

The public can often benefit from a widening choice of shopping facilities and increased competition, in particular, where additional provision is to meet purely local needs. For the purposes of this policy, the term purely local needs is taken to mean facilities which cater for the essential day to day needs of a local community and which do not generate trips other than on foot or by bicycle.

S4/2 - Assessing Out-Of-Centre Retail Development

Proposals for out-of-centre retail development (other than those covered by Policy S4/1) will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- **the effect on, and contribution to, urban regeneration;**
- **the economic effects, including employment, particularly on the vitality and viability of any existing shopping centre as a whole and the cumulative impact with other recent or proposed large scale retail developments, both within and outside the Borough boundary;**
- **the environmental and social effects on the locality and on any existing shopping centre;**
- **the effects on the highway network, and the impact on amenity, traffic movement and road safety;**
- **accessibility by public and private transport;**
- **the feasibility of using any alternative site in or immediately adjoining the main shopping area of an appropriate shopping centre;**
- **the need for, and suitability of, the site for other land uses.**

Proposals which comply with the above criteria should not be on sites within the Green Belt or on other protected open land.

The following out-of-centre sites are allocated for retail development:

S4/2/1 - Bridge Hall Lane, Bury (4.90 ha.).

This Opportunity Site located at Junction 2 of the M66 is considered suitable for restricted non-food retailing and/or B1, B2 and B8 employment use, see Economy Proposal EC1/1/8. Any non-food retailing will be restricted in broad terms to the sale of bulky goods and/or goods and services for the construction, repair, maintenance and improvement of the home, garden and car and will be subject to a detailed agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A Traffic Impact Assessment may also be required with any development proposals for this site.

S4/2/2 - Land at Prestwich Hospital, Bury New Road, Prestwich (4.63 ha.).

This site is allocated for a retail superstore following the granting of outline planning permission (April 1993).

Justification

The Council acknowledges that in certain circumstances, out-of-centre development may be permissible, but that this needs to be well justified in respect of particular factors. Efforts will be made to accommodate such proposals within or adjoining the main shopping area of recognised shopping centres and to this end the Council has identified a number of Opportunity Sites where retail development will be considered, (see under Policy S3).

Proposals for out-of-centre development will be considered against the criteria above, which are intended to ensure that:

- development of the site would not jeopardise the Council's objectives in terms of urban regeneration.
- the proposal would not affect the trading position of any existing town centre so seriously as to threaten its vitality and viability as a whole. In accordance with PPG6 "Town Centres and Retail Development", the Council will take into account the cumulative impact of other retail permissions in assessing this issue. Developers may also be required to demonstrate the potential impact of a proposal on existing shopping centres through an independent retail impact study. It is clear that major retail proposals can raise many complex issues that need to be thoroughly examined before a decision can be made. In circumstances where the impact of a development can not be adequately considered by the Council without an appropriate technical study, this will be requested.
- the local environment and the environment of existing shopping centres should not be adversely prejudiced.
- the proposal should be acceptable in terms of highway and safety considerations.
- the proposal should be easily accessible for people of all levels of mobility, including those without access to private transport.
- consideration has been given to any alternative site which may be more appropriately located (the sequential test).
- the proposal should not prejudice other policies of the Plan.
- Where out-of-centre retailing units are approved subject to the above criteria, limitations may be imposed on the main range of goods to be sold, in order to protect the vitality and viability of existing centres.

S4/3 - Nurseries, Farm Shops and Garden Centres

The Council will permit proposals for nurseries, farm shops and garden centres where:

- the proposal does not detract from the appearance and character of its surroundings;
- the proposal does not prejudice road safety;

- **the proposal conforms with the other policies of the Plan including Green Belt, other open land and environmental policies.**

Justification

Nurseries, farm shops and garden centres can incorporate both retail and leisure activities and are expected to increase in popularity and number over the Plan period. As this type of development tends to locate on the periphery of the built up area and in open countryside, the Council is concerned that this type of development should not have a detrimental impact on the local environment. Proposals for the conversion of existing buildings, which are considered worthy of retention, will normally be encouraged, subject to Green Belt and other Plan policies. New schemes should be designed to be appropriate to their setting.

In approving such schemes, however, the Council recognises that developments of this kind are beginning to provide an extensive product range which may affect the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres. In assessing planning applications, the Council may wish applicants to enter into agreements or impose conditions to ensure these developments do not subsequently change their character or to restrict the type of goods sold, in the interests of protecting established shopping centres.

S4/4 - Car Showrooms, Car Sales Areas and Petrol Filling Stations

Car showrooms, car sales areas and petrol filling stations should be located within or adjoining established shopping areas, along classified roads or within other industrial and commercial areas within the Borough. Proposals should also take account of the following factors:

- **potential disruption to the free flow of traffic;**
- **the provision of adequate, well laid out car parking and display facilities together with safe and convenient arrangements for access, circulation and egress;**
- **road safety and the safety of pedestrians;**
- **the amenity of nearby residents and businesses.**

Justification

Car showrooms, car sales areas and petrol filling stations can cause a number of environmental problems which can be avoided by selecting suitable locations where the continuity of shopping frontages or the free flow of traffic is not disrupted. When determining applications of this kind the Council will ensure that satisfactory parking, access arrangements, landscaping and other measures are considered in order to prevent any unnecessary detrimental impact on the locality.

In addition, the Council recognises that petrol filling stations, in particular, have diversified in recent years because of the increasingly wide range of convenience and durable goods offered to both motorists and non-motorists. In certain circumstances they make a significant contribution to local retailing activity and provision, especially where essential local shops are inadequate. However, in assessing new proposals, the Council may wish applicants to enter into agreements to restrict the type of goods sold, in the interests of protecting established shopping centres.

S5 - LARGE OUT-OF-TOWN SHOPPING CENTRES

The Council will oppose new shopping proposals, within Bury or elsewhere in or around the Greater Manchester conurbation, which by reason of their scale, nature or location would significantly prejudice the implementation of development plan policies and proposals and/or the vitality and viability of established town centres.

Justification

Experience has shown that major out-of-town retail centres can have a substantial impact over a wide area. They should only be allowed where they would fulfil an important retail need, taking full

account of all the likely impacts. The Council considers that, in any foreseeable circumstances over the Plan period, further approvals for major retail development would be totally inappropriate if the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres is considered to be seriously threatened. The Council is particularly concerned about the impact of, and pressures for, large out-of-centre shopping developments which could eventually affect the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres and the range of facilities and services they offer.

This approach is entirely consistent with PPG6 "Town Centres and Retail Development" and Strategic Guidance for Greater Manchester, which both state that Local Planning Authorities should consider the threat to the vitality and viability of existing town centres from proposed large new retail developments. Although the same policy guidance advocates that planning policies should respond flexibly and positively to market forces this should not be to the detriment of the vitality and viability of existing town centres.