

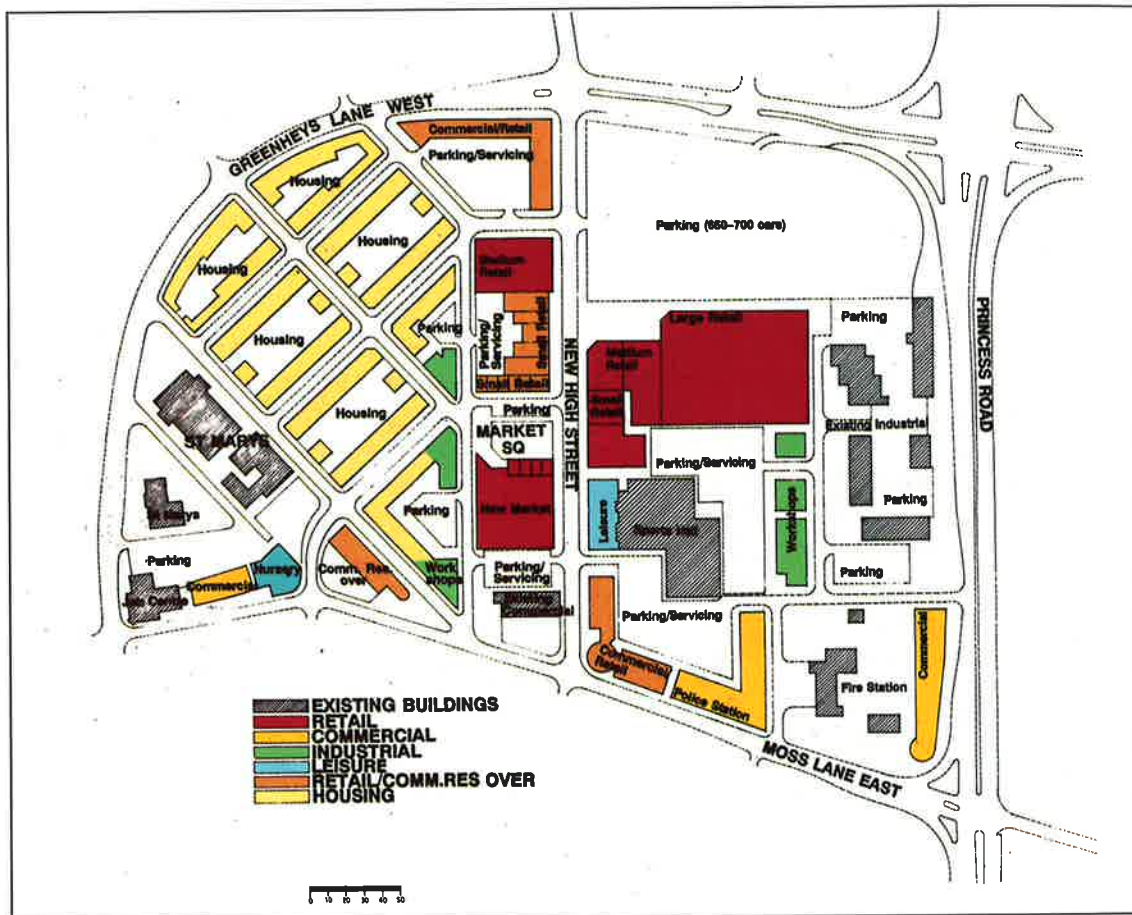
A SHOPPING STRATEGY FOR HULME



15.5

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THE PROPOSED SHOPPING HIERACHY New High Street Development



Advisory layout
for new
High Street
development

3.1 There appears therefore to be clear evidence to support HRL's view that, properly timed and marketed, a new district centre level facility can be justified and supported.

3.2 In locational terms, the Board's original proposal that the new centre development should be located to the west of Princess Road and to the south of Greenheys Lane West, have been confirmed by the various source documents. The presence of Princess Road is a key element. It is the main arterial route linking the City Centre of Manchester with Manchester International Airport, the M56 Motorway, and the more prosperous areas of South Manchester and North Cheshire. The close proximity of the orbital Mancanian Way is an added bonus to the site particularly in presentational terms. Strong proximity to major roads has been shown to be a

fundamental attraction to retailers and developers alike and ideally, the new shopping development should at least in part, directly adjoin Princess Road, as well as presenting a public face onto the new local high street.

3.3 It is important to ensure that a range of appropriate, good quality shopping facilities are available for the residents of Moss Side. Any significant shift to the north of the main shopping focus would have an impact on their attractiveness to residents in that area. Concerns have already been expressed about the detrimental impact of traffic on the local centre at Princess Road. Moss Side residents are likely to have similar concerns if the focus of shopping was shifted to the north of the new Greenheys Lane extension. Such a proposal would also isolate Moss Side Leisure Centre and the office block from the main commercial focus, and although this could to some extent

be dealt with by realigning their front entrances southward, to address Moss Lane East, it would also possibly reduce the extent to which the employers and visitors to both premises, utilise the new shopping facilities and therefore the development's ready made customer base. The justification for the proposed southward road link (envisaged as the new high street) would also be considerably reduced, as one of the key arguments in the bid for funds for the road package, has been to effect access to the proposed new shopping facilities.

3.4 In design terms a new development must clearly break away from the design, management and social problems associated with the former precinct. It should be the result of a comprehensive, integrated overview and approach. The design of the new shopping area, based around a new high street should enable a site to be identified for a major new foodstore, together with an adequate level of car parking, and a range of other units linking the key elements together. Although it will be necessary to make some assessment of potential floorspace for the purpose of producing a development brief, it is considered that the overall size of the major foodstore should be determined on the basis of market appraisal, rather than at this stage by statistical considerations.

3.5 The evidence also points to the obvious attraction of both indoor and outdoor markets, and it is considered that the benefits of a market, both to local shoppers from Hulme and Moss Side and for attracting shoppers from further afield, should not be discounted. The arguments also appear to confirm HRL's original view that a traditional market (as opposed to a less regular "themed" market) should be located within the development so as to be easily accessible to Moss Side residents. In addition, to be successful, a market would need to attract a level of car borne trade which would again confirm its location on, or near to the new High Street, rather than closer into the heart

of Hulme, where a tight urban form is envisaged.

3.6 The positive elements of the old precinct, the local retailer base, the physical presence of a market and the market traders should not be ignored however. These features represent the face of retailing in the area; a clear source of local pride; a direct input by residents to the local economy, and a vital specialisation/differentiation to incorporate in the new scheme to provide identity and to broaden appeal throughout the wider conurbation and region.

3.7 One key aspect of these proposals is the concept of community asset participation, whereby an element of the funding of any proposed development would be raised by the sale of shares to the local community. This proposal has two significant strengths. Firstly, it is a clear and potentially effective route for the direct involvement of local people in the future of the area and secondly it enables the potential funding of elements of the new centre to come from outside the more traditional routes, a course of action which was always seen as essential to enable the mix of uses implicit in HRL's Vision for Hulme.

3.8 Finally, whilst developing new proposals for the site of the former district centre, it is important to ensure that the future of the existing facilities on Princess Road are secured. The area was always viewed as complementary to the district centre, providing a neighbourhood rather than a strategic role. None of the source documents dissent from this view. Although outside HRL's area of responsibilities, this report therefore recommends that the Princess Road area should be carefully handled to ensure that an adequate level of shops and services are retained; that no major new shopping proposals which might jeopardise the viability of the existing facilities are allowed; that the area is enhanced by environmental and security improvements and that vacant space, particularly on upper floors is brought back into use.



Stretford Road Neighbourhood Centre

3.9 The proposal to reinstate Stretford Road through the heart of Hulme from Chorlton Road to Cambridge Street and to focus a range of business and retail activities to form a neighbourhood level centre in this area, has been one of the flagships of the City Challenge Programme. One of the most important reasons for proposing the reinstatement of this historic shopping focus is because it is this route which offers the best opportunity to make a range of good quality shopping facilities available to Hulme residents located on the fringes of the area; in Shawgreen, St. George's, the Boundary Lane area, and beyond. The difficulties of providing and retaining localised shopping (particularly early on in the programme) makes commitment to this proposal more necessary.



The Zion Institute an original building to be retained in the redevelopment of Stretford Road

3.10 With respect to the distribution of activities in this area, from the mainstream retailer's perspective, the preferred location for facilities appears to be close to the Stretford Road/Chichester Road junction, rather than more centrally placed on Stretford Road, so that visibility to passing traffic is maximised. It is possible that this is a short term view which will disappear when Stretford Road is fully open. However, it is unlikely that a more accurate assessment for the demand for a location of this type of activity could be determined at this stage, as much will depend on the progress of housing

development on the Crescents site and the success of the activities proposed for the Zion Institute, the Hippodrome and the NIA Centre.

3.11 In addition to the provision of mainstream conventional shopping for central Hulme's residents, several recommendations identify the potential of the triangle of land located between the Zion

Institute, the Hippodrome, the NIA and the innovative Homes for Change/Work for Change scheme on Chichester Road, to become an area of mixed activity. This would include themed destination or focus shopping related to the cultural activities of these key buildings-in other words a cultural quarter. To encourage provision of this type of mixed use where local businesses or "make and sell" producers are located alongside more conventional shopping, the availability of innovative funding mechanisms where the eventual end use may vary over time, should be fully explored by potential developers.

3.12 In locational terms, the concept of mixing uses, along the new high street and its extension north to Bonsall Street and central Hulme, is considered particularly important. The sites fronting the new streets should be primarily retailing, commercial or workspace but even if residential, should be designed to bring activity onto the new road and into the Zion, Hippodrome, NIA area in accordance with Hulme's design guidelines.



3.13 The overall design proposals for the triangle between the Zion, Hippodrome, NIA and Homes for Change/Work for Change must therefore be both innovative and sufficiently robust to allow the exact mix of uses to be determined later in the programme as confidence in the area grows. The idea of several attractive boulevard type routes and spaces through the area with development fronting onto them is proposed to link the key buildings in this central heart of Hulme. These boulevards could then be used in conjunction with adjacent piazza type spaces to stage themed events such as craft markets, exhibitions or concerts.



Morenga Bambata, Director of the NIA Centre for African-Caribbean Culture

Local Facilities

3.14 Beyond these “district” and “neighbourhood” facilities there is a clear social need to ensure adequate provision of local facilities for residents, in an area where car ownership rates are likely to be low for some time to come. It is difficult to use statistical analysis to determine the size or optimum location of this level of facility, however, expert advice (including that of existing traders) indicates the most important determinants to be a clearly visible street-front location, and a stable customer base (which might be either residents or nearby workers).



3.15 There are several locations along Hulme’s major streets where these conditions can be met. These include the corner sites at Stretford Road/Chorlton Road; Stretford Road /Boundary Lane; and the Bonsall Street/Boundary Lane junction. In such areas it is proposed that up to 15,000 sq ft of business/retail space should be sufficient to provide the mix of activities and mass sought by HRL, without undermining the role and character of the main centres. Development briefs for these areas will seek the design of ground floor street frontages as adaptable shells which can be used for shopping or workspace according to demand, or at least, the provision of a small amount of retailing to be developed at the same time as and as an integral component of associated office, residential, or workspace schemes.



Robert Key MP on a recent visit to Hulme to inspect progress



3.16 Such integrated developments are not easy to fund under current circumstances, largely due to the reluctance of financial institutions. However, a sufficient number of such schemes already exist in the City to suggest that mixed use proposals should be pursued. Elsewhere, it is considered that if proposals are brought forward for small retailing developments, they should not be dismissed, but would need to be considered individually in the light of both their scale and design.

3.17 The final component of the strategy is the provision, where necessary, of corner shops; small scale facilities catering almost exclusively for a very local catchment. So far two such developments have been proposed, the first four units (4,000 sq ft) are already under construction adjacent to the Chequered Flag Public House on Boundary Lane, and the second (of

similar size) will be on Epping Street adjacent to the Martenscroft Centre. The provision of a similar sized facility will be included within the development brief for the area opposite St. Wilfrid's Workspace, although the exact location will only be determined when the boundaries of the new park, and therefore the area available for future housing, have been confirmed.

3.18 It is not expected that any further local facilities will be required within the new residential areas. However, the level of provision within the retained areas needs to be carefully monitored. In St. George's, the existing parade at Quenby Street has an important role, and it will be upgraded by Mossacre Housing Association as part of the refurbishment of the block which they have recently acquired. Provision in both the Shawgreen and Bentley House Estates is, however, poor and the potential for similar proposals needs to be investigated here. Finally, the Monton Street area in the extreme south east of Hulme is in an isolated location between the Scottish and Newcastle Brewery, the Higher Education Precinct and several schools, the provision of local shopping facilities will be included in any development proposals for this area.