

CHAPTER 13

DISTRICT CENTRES

Introduction

- 13.1 The borough's three district centres – New Malden, Surbiton and Tolworth – provide shopping, facilities and services for the local community. Each centre is an important focus for many residents who use them for shopping, employment, leisure and also make use of their community facilities. As they are within easy walking and cycling distance of residents of surrounding neighbourhoods, and served by public transport, they should be the focus for new developments in accordance with the priorities in this chapter.
- 13.2 Increasing the vitality and viability of the district centres is a fundamental aim of the Council. Their role as shopping locations is recognised in national guidance and Policy STR5 which seeks to focus leisure and retail developments in town centres. PPG6 and RPG3 also seek to promote and protect these centres through upgrading their shopping facilities as well as introducing new community uses and residential accommodation. This chapter contains general policies applicable to each of the district centres followed by a number of centre-specific policies encouraging facilities for arts, culture and entertainment. The identification of priorities is consistent with PPG6.

DETAILED CORE POLICIES

New Retail Floorspace DC1

THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE CONSOLIDATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF NEW MALDEN, SURBITON AND TOLWORTH AS DISTRICT SHOPPING CENTRES BY PERMITTING GROWTH IN RETAIL FLOORSPACE WITHIN RETAIL AREAS, INDICATED ON THE DISTRICT CENTRE INSET MAPS AND BY PROTECTING LOCAL CHARACTER AND AMENITY.

- 13.3 Some increase and upgrading of the shopping floorspace of the centres may be permitted providing there is no adverse impact upon surrounding residential areas which in many cases are in close proximity to commercial areas. The scale of development should respect the character of the centres and should not be at the expense of other priority uses identified for each centre.

Community and Leisure Uses DC2

COMMUNITY AND LEISURE FACILITIES WILL BE PROTECTED AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, ENHANCED IN THE DISTRICT CENTRES. THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL FACILITIES WILL BE ENCOURAGED, IN PARTICULAR AS PART OF MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE INSET AREAS.

- 13.4 The Council is particularly concerned that existing community and leisure facilities are retained within the Inset Areas of the district centres to meet the needs of the local population, especially less mobile and elderly people and lower income families who can reach the district centres by short journeys on foot, by bicycle or by bus or train services. Combined trips for shopping and other activities will add to convenience and reduce the need to travel. Facilities such as primary health care facilities/one stop health centres will be encouraged to locate in the district centres.
- 13.5 Promoting additional leisure facilities in district centres will strengthen their role and complement the sequential approach to developments which attract a large number of people (see Policies RL2 and STR5). The Council will look to the private and voluntary sectors to provide additional leisure and community facilities.

Shopping Frontages in District Centres DC3

THE COUNCIL WILL CONTROL THE GROUND FLOOR USE OF PREMISES IN DEFINED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES (AS INDICATED ON DISTRICT CENTRE INSET MAPS AND IN APPENDIX 7) SO AS TO MAINTAIN THE CHARACTER OF THE CENTRES AND SAFEGUARD THEIR VITALITY AND VIABILITY.

NON-SHOP (NON-A1) USES WILL NORMALLY BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

- (A) IS FOR A2 SERVICE USES, A3 RESTAURANT AND SIMILAR USES OR COMMUNITY USES SERVING THE SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL AREA;**
 - (B) DOES NOT RESULT IN A CLUSTERING OF NON-SHOP USES SO AS TO CREATE A SIGNIFICANT BREAK IN A1 FRONTAGE; AND**
 - (C) DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE STREET SCENE;**
- PROPOSALS WHICH RESULT IN THE OVERALL PROPORTION OF NON-SHOP USES IN THE PRIMARY FRONTAGES EXCEEDING 30% WILL BE RESISTED.**

- 13.6 The District Centres contain a wide range of uses although shopping remains their primary function. The shopping frontages have been designated in order to maintain this function, as well as their vitality and character. The District Centre Inset Maps and Appendix 7 illustrate the frontages, indicating primary, secondary and, in some cases, mixed use areas (see Policy DC4) within District Centres.

- 13.7 The policy seeks to strictly limit the number of non-shop (A1) uses in primary frontages which form the core shopping areas within centres. It allows more flexibility in secondary frontages where a greater mix of shops (A1), financial and professional services (A2) and food and drink (A3) uses will be permitted.
- 13.8 In primary frontages the Council will seek to maintain a high proportion of A1 uses and restrict a clustering of non-retail uses which may create 'dead frontage'. Areas of relative inactivity due to an over-concentration of non-shop uses can detract from a centre's vitality and character. The Council considers that in the local context an over-concentration of non-retail units is likely to result where the proportion of shops (A1) falls below a 70% threshold. Amusement centres are not considered appropriate uses in primary shopping frontages where they are not compatible with the main retail function.
- 13.9 Secondary frontages can accommodate supporting facilities, including A2, A3 and community uses, which make a significant contribution to the vitality and viability of the centre. The level and distribution of non-retail uses in secondary frontages needs to be controlled to maintain shoppers' use of peripheral locations. The Council will have regard to whether the proposal leads to a clustering of non-shop uses, i.e. three or more adjoining non-A1 uses within any one frontage of the centre.
- 13.10 Many of the district centre frontages have residential areas in close proximity. Food and drink outlets, and particularly takeaways, which can often cause environmental problems of noise, traffic, parking, disturbance, smells, fumes, and litter will need to satisfy other Plan policies including RES3, H1 and BE11 and BE12. The appearance of any development is important in maintaining the character and liveliness of the street scene and retention of a shop frontage or window display is an important factor.

Areas of Mixed Use DC4

WITHIN THE AREAS OF MIXED USE, AS DEFINED ON THE SURBITON AND TOLWORTH INSET MAPS, PROPOSALS FOR RETAIL (CLASS A1), FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (CLASS A2), COMMUNITY AND LEISURE USE AND B1 BUSINESS USE WILL NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE PROVIDED THAT THEY COMPLY WITH OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES IN THE PLAN.

- 13.11 Surbiton and Tolworth district centres contain peripheral areas which are less attractive to retail uses, but because of their town centre locations could accommodate a variety of other uses. These areas can accommodate community or leisure uses and contribute to the overall town centre viability by attracting visitors and reducing additional or unnecessary journeys. Business use (Class B1) is also appropriate here provided that other environmental and amenity considerations are met.

13.12 The Council is keen to see a wider mix of leisure and recreation uses in these parts of the district centres in addition to those which can be accommodated in shopping frontages (see Policy DC3). Improvements to the mixed-use areas will allow under-utilised premises to be used more efficiently, provide other local services and improve the attraction of those areas and the centre as a whole. Diversification and additional variety of jobs in district centres will also allow people to live closer to work.

Car Parking in District Centres DC5

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO SECURE AN ADEQUATE PROVISION OF PUBLIC CAR PARKING IN THE DISTRICT CENTRES TO COMPLEMENT MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE DISTRICT CENTRES' PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESSIBILITY WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THEIR VITALITY AND VIABILITY, AND AVOIDING PARKING BY NON RESIDENTS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

13.13 While one of the Council's key transport objectives is enhanced access by public transport to the whole range of services and facilities in the community, it recognises that the provision of adequate public car parking is an important element in the vitality and viability of the district centres.

13.14 Provision of sufficient, good quality, safe car parking needs to work alongside good public transport services. Reference should be made to Policy T22 as the Council may require a contribution to the transport fund which may be used for a variety of purposes, including improvements to parking facilities. Target figures for weekday public parking provision, including permitted on-street parking, have been identified as:

- (i) Surbiton 750 spaces (excluding off-street railway commuter parking at Surbiton Station) (see also Policies T9 and T27);
- (ii) New Malden 1,200 spaces;
- (iii) Tolworth 400 spaces.

13.15 A controlled parking zone has been introduced in Surbiton with the aim of minimising the unwelcome intrusion of non-residential parking in residential areas (see Policy T27). The parking target will need to be reviewed in this context. It is also the Council's intention to review on-street parking in New Malden.

Pedestrian Environment DC6

Please Note

This policy has been superseded by London Plan Policy- Improving conditions for walking (3C.21)

~~WITHIN THE DISTRICT CENTRES THE COUNCIL WILL ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT FOR PEDESTRIANS BY UNDERTAKING APPROPRIATE MEASURES AND WILL REQUIRE DEVELOPMENTS TO MAINTAIN AND WHERE APPROPRIATE IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY.~~

~~13.16 Measures to improve the pedestrian environment in district centres will vary, but would normally include the widening and enhancing of footways, street lighting and improved street furniture and landscaping. Complementary traffic management measures may also be necessary (see Policy T14).~~

~~13.17 In any development or redevelopment within the district centres the Council will expect the pedestrian environment to be maintained at least to its present standard, and will in appropriate circumstances seek improvements which lead to improved pedestrian circulation, safety and access. Examples may include improvements to existing alleyways, the provision of new pedestrian routes in large developments, and improved landscaping.~~

NEW MALDEN DISTRICT CENTRE POLICIES

13.18 New Malden is an attractive district centre which acts as a focal point for everyday life for the residents in surrounding areas. New Malden should therefore cater for local people's needs and should include a mix of uses compatible with this role. This should focus on the growth and upgrading of shopping services and community and leisure facilities. The centre is a nodal point for public transport services and has been a popular location for office development, particularly around the station and to the west of it, providing jobs for borough residents and in-commuters. Opportunities for further growth in large scale employment uses are however limited. Improvements to New Malden railway station and better interchange facilities in line with policy T10 are a high priority.

New Malden District Centre Priorities NM1

DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES IN NEW MALDEN DISTRICT CENTRE ARE TO:-

1. **IMPROVE THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT AND FACILITIES FOR CYCLISTS;**
2. **SEEK IMPROVED INTERCHANGE FACILITIES AT NEW MALDEN STATION;**
3. **MAINTAIN A MIX OF SMALL SHOPS AND SUPERMARKETS OR OTHER LARGE A1 UNITS, AVOIDING EXCESSIVE GROWTH IN A2 OR A3 USES TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY DETER SHOPPERS FROM USING THE CENTRE AS A WHOLE;**
4. **RETAIN THE RESIDENTIAL STOCK AND ENCOURAGE ITS EXPANSION, ESPECIALLY IN AREAS ADJACENT TO SURROUNDING HOUSING AND ON UPPER FLOORS;**
5. **EXPAND COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND ARTS PROVISION;**
6. **IMPROVE OPEN SPACES IN THE CENTRE;**
7. **LIMIT NEW OFFICE DEVELOPMENT TO THE DEFINED OFFICE AREA.**

13.19 The primary role of New Malden district centre is that of a shopping centre catering for main and day-to-day food shopping as well as comparison shopping. The centre is in competition with nearby superstores and retail warehouses on the A3 and Burlington Road. Despite this the centre is well used, though there is some pedestrian-road traffic conflict. Sports provision is good with public and privately run facilities. There remains scope for upgrading community facilities to broaden the range of functions in the area. The priorities for the centre are therefore housing and leisure and community uses to attract people to the centre outside normal business hours.

13.20 Conveniently located town centre or edge-of-centre residential accommodation will help maintain the liveliness of the centre, including after normal business hours. New accommodation can be provided above shops, in accordance with government initiatives to maximise re-use of existing buildings for residential

accommodation, and in district centre areas behind retail and office designation (see Inset Map). To encourage people to live in the district centre it is important to keep it attractive to residents, businesses and shoppers.

- 13.21 The Council will seek to capitalise upon opportunities for expansion of private sector community and leisure uses and will support the provision of arts and cultural facilities to cater for all age groups in New Malden. Open spaces, such as the area immediately west of the railway, St. George's Square, the park in Blagdon Road, the proposed proposal site at Cocks Crescent (PS33a), are important to the town centre and in many cases could be made more attractive to users.
- 13.22 The station area would also benefit from environmental improvements making it safer and more inviting to travellers, in conjunction with improved interchange facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, taxis and less mobile people (see Policy T10).

Rear Service Roads NM2

THE COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO SAFEGUARD THE LINE OF THE REAR SERVICE ROAD SHOWN ON THE INSET MAP.

- 13.23 A rear service road is safeguarded between 129-205 New Malden High Street. The provision of rear service roads can make major improvements to the shopping environment by removing stationary vehicles from roads and improving traffic flow and conditions for pedestrians and retailers.

Design and Scale of New Development NM3

NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD RESPECT THE CHARACTER OF THE CENTRE, AND NORMALLY INVOLVE:

- (A) THE RESTRICTION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT TO A PLOT RATIO OF 1.5:1;**
- (B) A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF THREE STOREYS ALONG MAIN ROAD FRONTAGES AND TWO STOREYS ALONG ANY RESIDENTIAL ROADS. THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THIS WILL BE IN THE EVENT OF THE REDEVELOPMENT OF APEX OR C I TOWERS WHERE A MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT OF FIVE STOREYS WILL BE PERMITTED;**
- (C) A HIGH QUALITY OF DESIGN AND SUITABLE FACING MATERIALS, NORMALLY BRICK OR PAINTED RENDER; AND**
- (D) THE SETTING BACK OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS FROM THE HIGHWAY EDGE, PARTICULARLY IN THE VICINITY OF 15-49 HIGH STREET AND 5-31 COOMBE ROAD, SO AS TO ENABLE LANDSCAPING TO TAKE PLACE.**

- 13.24 It is anticipated that redevelopment will continue to occur within the district centre and that when it does so it will be both acceptable and inevitable that some modification of its environment will occur. For these reasons, the Council will try to ensure that new building respects the character of its surroundings and will seek to enhance it where possible.
- 13.25 To assist in achieving this objective, and bearing in mind the under-developed nature of some land, buildings in excess of the heights referred to in part (B) of the Policy, and developments with plot ratios greater than 1.5:1, are likely to be out of scale with the prevailing character. Commercial development is usually only appropriate on the High Street frontage as it would be detrimental to the residential character of the side roads. If redevelopment of CI or Apex towers occurs within the plan period, development on a smaller scale will be expected in order to ensure the buildings are in character with other parts of the district centre.
- 13.26 New buildings should be clad in brick or painted render in order to harmonise with and enhance the centre's existing character. They should also make a positive contribution to the local townscape. Careful attention will continue to be given to the detailed design and materials used in shopfronts in order to enhance the appearance of the individual building and the street scene.
- 13.27 In addition to its concern with the quality of redevelopment of individual sites, the Council will have regard to the appearance of highway land, including the use of good quality paving materials when resurfacing of the footways is required, and the opportunities exist for enhancing the appearance of highway and other public land. Nos. 46-64 High Street, a parade of three storey Edwardian shops, are buildings of townscape merit. Conversely, Nos. 15-49 High Street and 5-31 Coombe Road are shopping parades of little intrinsic quality, at present fronted by narrow pavements with little room for planting and seating. The setting back of any redevelopment of these sites would allow the pavement to be widened and landscaping to be introduced. This would aid pedestrian movement, and enhance the attractiveness of these parts of the centre.

SURBITON DISTRICT CENTRE POLICIES

13.28 Surbiton is an attractive district centre with a distinctive character. It has a mix of shopping including two popular supermarkets, specialist shops and a wide variety of cafes, pubs and restaurants which provide a lively environment outside normal business hours but can raise issues of residential amenity. The town has an essentially Victorian and low-rise character, much of which forms part of a conservation area. A major programme of environmental improvements in 1993/94 has enhanced the quality and cohesiveness of the centre's appearance. It has a high student and single person population due to the proximity of Kingston University and the availability of single person accommodation, and a lively atmosphere in the evening. The appeal of the centre stems from its inherent quality and the character of its built form although there are parts of the centre where further refurbishment and upgrading of the building stock is needed. Part of the town centre's attraction stems from its fast rail links to Waterloo Station.

Surbiton District Centre Priorities

SUR1

DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES IN SURBITON DISTRICT CENTRE ARE TO:-

- 1. PROTECT OR ENHANCE THE CHARACTER AND TOWNSCAPE OF THE CENTRE;**
- 2. INCREASE HOUSING PROVISION, INCLUDING ON UPPER FLOORS AND ADJACENT TO SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL AREAS, AND TO PROTECT RESIDENTIAL AMENITY;**
- 3. EXPAND PROVISION OF LOCAL COMMUNITY, CULTURAL, LEISURE AND ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES;**
- 4. MAINTAIN A WIDE RANGE OF FOOD AND COMPARISON SHOPS (A1) AND UPGRADE THE QUALITY OF SHOPPING, RETAINING A BALANCE WITH COMMERCIAL SERVICES AND RESTAURANT PROVISION;**
- 5. LIMIT OFFICE DEVELOPMENT TO THE DEFINED OFFICE AREA;**
- 6. IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE;**
- 7. IMPROVE OPEN SPACE PROVISION IN THE CENTRE.**

13.29 The policies for Surbiton aim to protect and enhance the town's conservation area; promote and consolidate Surbiton's function as a district centre; provide improved public transport and interchange facilities; control car parking to give priority to the needs of residents and shoppers; and to protect existing character by maintaining a mix of land uses, particularly favouring residential accommodation, community and leisure uses and small retail shops whilst limiting office development. The Sainsbury and Somerfield supermarkets have been a major attraction and the recent addition of a Waitrose has considerably strengthened the convenience shopping here. Encouragement of more small specialist shops would be in keeping with the character of the centre and add to its vitality. A2 (bank, building society etc) and A3 (restaurant, takeaway etc) uses provide useful services and complement the shopping but need to be controlled so that the mix does not harm the attraction of the centre as a whole.

- 13.30 A large amount of office development has occurred in the past and only limited opportunities exist for office development within the defined office area which encompasses the south side of Victoria Road and DST house and close to the station. This area can assimilate some additional office accommodation as part of a mixed development. Its location in close proximity to the railway line and Victoria Road make it inappropriate for residential uses. Elsewhere, except for identified proposal sites, opportunities are limited either because of townscape or conservation constraints on redevelopment, or because existing retail and residential uses constrain the prospect of introducing offices. Policy E3(B) will therefore be applied outside the office area.
- 13.31 Although Surbiton contains some valuable community and leisure facilities such as the YMCA and many places to eat and drink, there is scope for broadening the range to include additional arts and entertainment provision. The introduction of further facilities will be encouraged, where appropriate, to bolster the centre's standing as a focus for Surbiton's residents and to cater for the wide range of age groups who use the centre.
- 13.32 Whilst the centre benefits from its fast rail service and is well served by bus services, there is still a need to further improve interchange facilities, notably around Surbiton station, and to tackle problems of commuter car parking. Off-street parking spaces for 750 cars (excluding off-street railway commuter parking at Surbiton station) has been identified as appropriate for the centre, subject to review in relation to the introduction of controlled parking zones in adjacent residential areas.
- 13.33 Where opportunities arise or exist for enhancing the appearance of the highway and other public land, schemes of environmental improvement may be initiated within the centre.

Size of Retail Units

SUR2

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE REPLACEMENT OF, AND WHERE POSSIBLE AN INCREASE IN, THE PROVISION OF SMALL RETAIL UNITS WITHIN THE DISTRICT CENTRE. DEVELOPMENTS WHICH INCLUDE THE AMALGAMATION OF SMALL UNITS OR THE PROVISION OF LARGER DURABLE RETAIL UNITS WILL ONLY NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE WITHIN THE FOLLOWING AREAS IDENTIFIED ON THE INSET MAP:-

- (A) THE SOUTH SIDE OF VICTORIA ROAD (NOS 72-83);**
(B) PROPOSAL SITE 36.

- 13.34 Redevelopment opportunities should maintain the centre's predominance of small units, in order to maintain the character of Surbiton so that it can continue to provide specialist services.

13.35 Concurrent with the need to retain the town centre's individual character, it has to be adaptable to meet changing needs. Opportunities need to be provided to accommodate modern shopping facilities, particularly larger units. Larger units in the identified locations will also help to ensure that retailing activity does not concentrate around the Sainsbury's development at the south western end of Victoria Road, to the detriment of other parts of the centre.

Design and Scale of New Development SUR3

NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE PARTICULAR CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE TOWN CENTRE, AND WILL NORMALLY INVOLVE:-

- (A) A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 3 STOREYS;**
- (B) A PLOT RATIO NOT EXCEEDING 1.5:1;**
- (C) RESPECT FOR THE EXISTING PATTERN OF NARROW PROPERTY FRONTAGES;**
- (D) HIGH QUALITY OF DESIGN AND SUITABLE FACING MATERIALS, NORMALLY BRICK OR PAINTED RENDER;**
- (E) THE RETENTION OF EXISTING VICTORIAN SHOPFRONTS AND RESPECT FOR ANY ADJACENT SHOPFRONTS OR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES;**
- (F) THE INCORPORATION OF FEATURES AND DESIGNS THAT COMPLEMENT THE IMPROVEMENTS RESULTING FROM AREA REVITALISATION, AND PRESERVE OR ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREAS AND THE SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS AND BUILDINGS OF TOWNSCAPE MERIT.**

13.36 In view of the district centre's attractive character, and the fact that much of it falls within conservation areas (mainly the Surbiton Town Centre Conservation Area), it is important to ensure that new development will preserve or enhance its character or appearance. To assist in achieving this objective, and bearing in mind the under-developed nature of some land, buildings in excess of the heights referred to in Part A of the policy and developments with a plot ratio greater than 1.5:1 are likely to be out of scale and inappropriate. They might also lead in some locations to loss of sunlight at pavement level for shoppers. The introduction of wide frontages would be similarly disruptive and out of keeping.

13.37 Within this important shopping area the careful control of shopfront design will continue to be of particular importance. The introduction of unsympathetic features and facing materials, including very large plate glass windows and anodised aluminium window frames, can harm the important visual relationship between the shopfront and the building. Wherever possible the Council will seek to retain valuable design features and ensure that new development takes due account of such features on adjoining buildings.

13.38 The Council, in liaison with representatives from the local residential and business community, has implemented a programme of area revitalisation.

This involved a comprehensive package of environmental and traffic management measures including highway layout improvements, footway and landscaping provision, street lighting and street furniture. The initiative also encompassed a partnership with English Heritage to bring about the enhancement of selected listed buildings. New buildings should complement in their design the improvement that has been achieved for the centre.

- 13.39 Where further opportunities exist for enhancing the appearance of the highway and other public land, schemes of environmental improvement may be initiated within the centre.

Rear Service Roads SUR4

THE COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO SAFEGUARD THE LINE OF REAR SERVICE ROADS AS INDICATED ON THE INSET MAP.

- 13.40 The provision of rear service roads can bring about major improvements to the shopping environment, particularly in a relatively major road such as Victoria Road where on-street servicing can impede pedestrian movement and traffic circulation. New development will therefore not be permitted along the safeguarding lines for rear service roads along both sides of Victoria Road. The Council will in due course prepare detailed proposals for the rear service roads under the Highways Acts which will be the subject of consultation.

TOLWORTH DISTRICT CENTRE POLICIES

13.41 Although Tolworth performs the role of a district centre, surveys and Health Checks indicate that its catchment tends to be more limited than New Malden and Surbiton. It has been perceived as more vulnerable to competition than the other centres. A particular problem has been its linear form, astride a major traffic route, which adversely affects both the environment and pedestrian movement within the centre. Whilst the adjacent A3 gives it a locational advantage for car users, with rapid access to inner London, it restricts pedestrian access and separates the shopping centre from the station which is itself only on the Chessington branch line, limiting its catchment to the south.

13.42 To alleviate some of these problems, Tolworth has been the subject of an area revitalisation scheme which aimed to regenerate the centre and make it a more attractive place in which to work and visit. Although this scheme was successful in achieving environmental improvements and improving the attractiveness of the area, Tolworth is still seen to be vulnerable to out-of-centre development. Further measures to revitalise the district centre, including environmental and pedestrian improvements are important to ensuring its continued viability.

Tolworth District Centre Priorities

TOL1

DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES IN TOLWORTH DISTRICT CENTRE ARE TO:

1. **IMPROVE THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT AND FACILITIES FOR CYCLISTS TO ALLOW FREE MOVEMENT WITHIN AND INTO THE CENTRE (ESPECIALLY ACROSS THE A3);**
2. **INCREASE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND CULTURAL FACILITIES SERVING LOCAL RESIDENTS;**
3. **ENHANCE THE VIABILITY OF THE CENTRE BY MAINTAINING OR UPGRADING THE QUALITY OF THE SHOPPING AND ENSURING A MIX OF A1 SHOPS, A2 SERVICES AND A3 FOOD & DRINK OUTLETS, WITHOUT DETERRING SHOPPERS FROM USING ANY PART OF THE CENTRE OR THE CENTRE AS A WHOLE;**
4. **INCREASE THE VISUAL ATTRACTION OF THE CENTRE, IMPROVE OPEN SPACE AREAS AND SEEK TO ACHIEVE A MORE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER;**
5. **IMPROVE THE FUNCTIONING AND APPEARANCE OF THE MIXED USE AREAS TO INCREASE THE ATTRACTION OF THE CENTRE.**

13.43 Tolworth will benefit from the introduction of further new quality shopping to add to its drawing power for shoppers. The operation of the frontage policy (DC3) poses particular problems for Tolworth because of its length, linear pattern and location of main food stores at its extremities. Whilst more non-shop uses can be introduced, it is important that particular lengths of frontage are not

completely dominated by them, so as to deter shoppers from using the centre as a whole. The barrier effect of the road adds to this concern.

- 13.44 Tolworth lacks the range of community and leisure facilities found in the other district centres or Kingston e.g. a community centre, and opportunities exist to secure improvement by sensitive location within the district centre as with the Community Library. Facilities should especially meet the needs of less mobile residents from the local neighbourhood. Such location of these uses in the centre will enable multi-purpose trips and add to the vitality and viability of the centre. Whilst there are some opportunities for increased residential use, for example above shops, the main road environment is not ideal and a strengthening of the commercial or community facilities serving the surrounding residential areas is seen as a higher priority.
- 13.45 The mixed use areas of the Broadway in which community and leisure facilities are considered appropriate lie close enough to the retail area to enable each to mutually benefit from visitors attracted primarily for other purposes, and to make use of the goods and services which are available. The Council will support the retention of existing community facilities, the introduction of a community centre and the provision of further community and leisure facilities.
- 13.46 Tolworth District Centre is not a location suited to further major office development. The large majority of office floorspace currently found in the Inset Area can be found within Tolworth Tower. There is only limited scope for office development within the Inset Area, given Tolworth's primary role as a shopping centre and focus for community uses which are identified above as meriting greater priority.

Consolidation of Retail Area TOL2

Please Note

This Policy has been superseded by the London Plan Policy – Town Centres (2A.8)

~~RETAIL ACTIVITY IN TOLWORTH WILL BE CONSOLIDATED IN THE RETAIL AREA, AS INDICATED ON THE INSET MAP, WHERE EXTENSIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PREMISES WILL NORMALLY BE PERMITTED.~~

- ~~13.47 There is scope for new or upgraded food or convenience goods floorspace within the centre (see policy DC1). It is therefore sensible and practical to consolidate the existing retail floorspace and functions into a more defined and compact retail area which reflects shopping patterns. This will facilitate the protection of the remaining shopping area and provide a sounder basis for its operation whilst allowing scope for introducing more varied community or leisure uses elsewhere in the centre.~~
- ~~13.48 Within the defined retail area, the Council will support, wherever possible, the improvement of facilities, new development, or the conversion of existing buildings which will enhance the Broadway's retail facilities and bring all the buildings within the defined area into full productive retail use.~~

Design and Scale of New Development TOL3

NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE CHARACTER OF TOLWORTH DISTRICT CENTRE AND NORMALLY INVOLVE:-

- (A) A PLOT RATIO NOT EXCEEDING 1.5:1;**
- (B) A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 3 STOREYS ON MAIN ROAD FRONTAGES AND 2 STOREYS ON ANY RESIDENTIAL ROAD FRONTAGE. THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THIS WILL BE IN THE EVENT OF THE REDEVELOPMENT OF TOLWORTH TOWER, WHERE A MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT OF FIVE STOREYS WILL BE PERMITTED;**
- (C) A DESIGN, AND USE OF MATERIALS WHICH RESPECT ADJOINING BUILDINGS AND MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF INTEREST IN THE STREET SCENE;**
- (D) SHOPFRONTS ACHIEVING STANDARDS SET OUT IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: 'TOLWORTH BROADWAY SHOPFRONT DESIGN GUIDE'.**

13.49 With the exception of Tolworth Tower, Tolworth is basically low rise with most commercial buildings being three storeys in height, and most residential areas two storeys. The scale of the existing buildings is entirely in keeping with the size of the centre and forms an integral part of the character of its shopping parades. Plot ratios in excess of 1.5:1 would result in development which would tend to be intrusive by virtue of height and/or bulk. As a result they would have the effect of disrupting the character of the centre rather than providing additional interest to enhance it. In order to retain this character, if Tolworth Tower were proposed for redevelopment, the Council would expect the new development to be more in keeping with the existing scale and character of the rest of the centre.

13.50 New buildings should normally be clad in brick and incorporate pitched roofs to reflect the style of existing buildings. However, there may be occasions when the use of different materials such as painted render or glass, or the incorporation of features such as bay windows, would be appropriate in order to give more interest and variety. The Council will be seeking, in the design of new buildings, or the alteration of existing buildings a positive contribution towards the enhancement of the street scene consistent with the centre's overall scale and character.

13.51 Besides its concern with the quality of new development, the Council will also have regard to the appearance of highway land including the use of good quality paving materials, street furniture and the planting of trees. In particular, it is intended that measures to improve the appearance of the underpasses will be undertaken. Schemes of environmental improvement may be implemented where further opportunities exist for enhancing the setting of highway and other public land.

Broadoaks Rear Service Road TOL4

THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE BROADOAKS REAR SERVICE ROAD IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANY DEVELOPMENT OF ADJACENT PROPERTIES AND WILL ACCORDINGLY ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH RETAILERS AND DEVELOPERS, AS AND WHEN APPROPRIATE, IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS.

13.52 Rear servicing can be of great benefit to both businesses and shoppers. It can help improve the shopping environment by removing the need for delivery vehicles to unload on main roads, thus alleviating traffic and congestion problems in the centre. The needs of banks and other financial institutions, particularly for security deliveries, will be fully taken into account.