

Appendix 4 – Health Checks

On Behalf of:

Derwent Holdings Ltd.

In Respect of:

Edge Lane Retail Park, Liverpool

Reference:

JB/MA/1003708/R003m APX 004

Date:

13 September 2010

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The impact of the proposed redevelopment of Edge Lane Retail Park has been modelled for all major stores and defined centres within and around the defined catchment area. Health Checks have only been prepared for Liverpool City Centre, Old Swan District Centre, Edge Hill District Centre and Great Homer Street District Centre.
- 1.2 A health check for Liverpool City Centre has been prepared due to its position within the local retail hierarchy and the function it serves as the regional centre for Merseyside. For the district and local centres, copies of relevant sections from the Liverpool City Council District & Local Centres Study (November 2009) have been included within the report. Details of the district centres of Old Swan and Edge Hill have been included due to the proximity of these centres to Edge Lane Retail Park whilst Great Homer Street details have been included due to the regeneration proposals for the centre.

2.0 Liverpool City Centre

- 2.1 Liverpool City Centre is the Regional Centre for the Merseyside area. It provides the key focus for shopping and other services for the city region, and other centres in the Liverpool Urban Area and beyond. The city has a long history with waterside industry, and is a major port trading location. Liverpool docks are an important feature of the city, and these days they serve not only a practical function, but also for tourism, arts, culture and sporting activities, as well as residential.

Diversity of Use

- 2.2 Although wide-ranging, the centre is focused along Paradise Street, Church Street and Bold Street, with a number of public squares and smaller side streets. Much of the centre is pedestrianised. The centre is highly accessible by a variety of means of transport. Liverpool Lime Street, the key mainline station links the city to the rail network, and smaller stations across the city (Central, Moorfields, and James Street) provide easy access from Manchester, Cheshire, Wirral and North Wales, as well as the rest of Merseyside. A large new bus station on the edge of the city serves

Liverpool and the surrounding area and works alongside a number of smaller sub-bus stations across the city. Consequently, the city draws its trade from a wide and varied catchment, including Wigan, Bolton, Cheshire, Wales and Preston.

- 2.3 Being the regional centre, Liverpool, as expected has a high incidence of multiples. The offer is enhanced by the newly-opened 'Liverpool One' development of the western side of the city centre. The scheme takes in the site of the former bus station, a public park and former shopping street, to provide a mixed-level outdoor street-style shopping centre including comparison shopping, leisure uses, a landscaped area and a multi-storey car park. This new development blends in well with the existing shopping offer.

Retailer Representation and Intentions to Change

- 2.4 Liverpool is a diverse centre, with a good mix of national and regional multiples and independent traders. The centre also has an independent cinema which is a key attraction of the city, as well as a plethora bars, pubs, restaurants and nightclubs. As is often the case in larger centres, large scale convenience provision is located in out of centre locations. There is a smaller Sainsbury store in Central Station in the town centre, and a 1,112 m² Tesco Metro in the centre, as well as the foodhall in Marks and Spencer. For bulk/main food shopping though, visitors must look to the Asda on Smithdown Road, Tesco in Old Swan, or Sainsbury in Knotty Ash; all around 3km out of the city centre.
- 2.5 In terms of comparison shopping, the offer is broad and extends to 212,460 sq m. In terms of the representation of typical multiples this is unsurprisingly comprehensive, which sit alongside more niche retailers and designer clothes shops. Comparison provision is also augmented by independent retailers which occupy space and add interest to the city centre.
- 2.6 As highlighted in the Liverpool City Council Economic Healthcheck (Feb 2010) the retail element of the new Liverpool One development was 97% let as of December 2009. This report also highlighted that within the city central Business Improvement District Area, which covers a large part of the city centre including St. John's and Clayton Square Shopping Centres, vacancy levels are below 10% and only 12% within the wider city centre compared to the national average of 12.5% as of July

2010.

Rents and Yields

- 2.7 The Valuation Office Agency provides information on yields for the city centre with the most up to date information included within Property Market Report 2008. Yields have been stable at around 5.25% since 2000, which compares favourably with other centres across Merseyside. These levels improved slightly in 2006, to 4.75%, but have since increased, to 5.25% by June 2008.
- 2.8 Contained within the most up to date town report for Liverpool rental levels in the city centre stood at £265 per sq ft for Prime Zone A floorspace which has dropped from a high of £320 per sq ft in 2008 due to the economic climate and the creation of new floorspace at Liverpool One which is likely to have made the market more competitive. Despite this drop this is much more than the other main centres in the Merseyside which are less than half this figure in Birkenhead and four times lower in Bootle. This is reflective of the city's importance as the regional centre.
- 2.9 Venuescore ranks the top retail destinations in England based on a scoring system which scores the centres retail offer. The 2010 Venuescore data ranks Liverpool City Centre 4th nationally compared to its 2007 rank of 12th prior to Liverpool One opening. This confirms that the city is improving, and further investment will boost the centre even more.

Conclusions

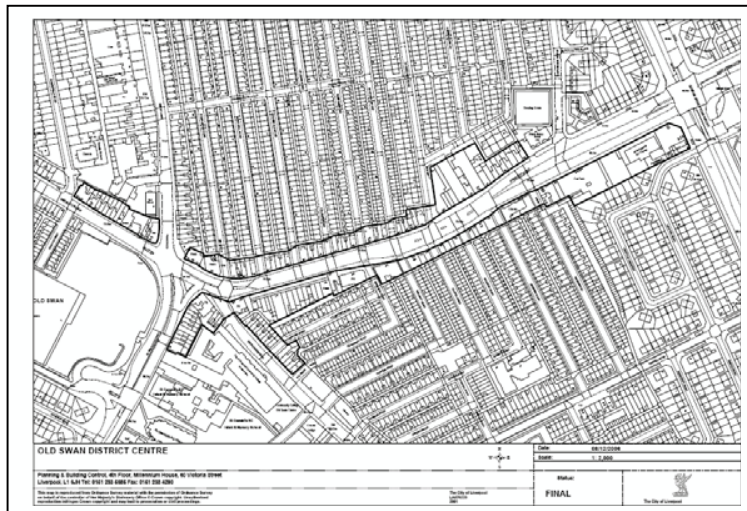
- 2.10 Liverpool is a strengthening centre. Its current retail offer is very good, and with the level of recent investment, the city is in a good position for further improvement in the future. Its wide-ranging catchment and attractive comparison shopping and leisure facilities ensures that the centre remains as a key destination for both residents and visitors.

3.0 Old Swan District Centre

OLD SWAN

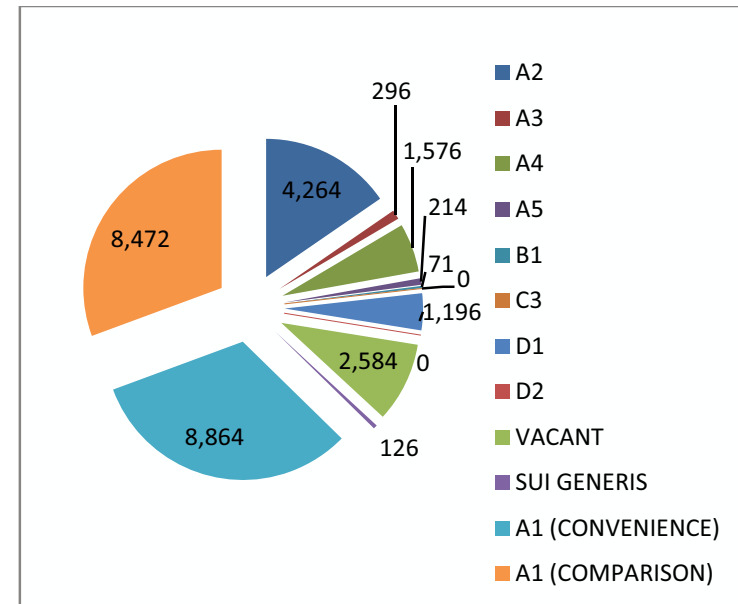
- 3.86 Old Swan District Centre is located on the A57 to the east of the City Centre. It is located just off the A5080 Edge Lane Corridor – the major gateway and route into Liverpool from the M62. The centre serves the wards of Old Swan and Childwall. Local centres at Knotty Ash and Prescott Road East are located closeby.

Figure 3.29: Centre Boundary – Old Swan



- 3.87 This is a substantial yet compact district centre which is successful, in part reflecting its central location and accessibility. It contains a good mix of convenience and comparison retailing.
- 3.88 The centre contains 132 units of which 115 are in A-class use. The mix of uses by class has remained relatively stable since 2000. Floorspace composition is average compared to other District Centres.

Figure 3.30: Floorspace by Use Class – Old Swan



- 3.89 Vacancy levels are below average at 10% compared to other district centres, however the number of vacant units has increased from 6 to 13 between 2008-9.
- 3.90 The centre contains a more significant representation of multiple retailers than most District Centres in Liverpool. It is anchored by a substantial 6,500 sq.m Tesco superstore which has been delivered and subsequently extended since the 2004 Study was prepared. Other multiple retailers include Boots, Swinton Insurance, Co-op Travel, Max Spielman, Ethel Austin, Peacocks, Specsavers, Hallmark/ Thorntons, Bon Marche, Greggs, Sayers and Iceland.
- 3.91 The centre provides a range of basic services, including five banks, a Post Office, two pharmacies, a library and Job Centre Plus.

Strengths:

- Strong accessibility, located on a primary route leading to the City Centre and with good public transport accessibility.
- Good mix of retail uses, including comparison and convenience retailing and a mix of high street multiples and independents.
- Centre contains large foodstore and strong civic anchors including Job Centre Plus, Library and Health Centre.
- Historically the centre has included a concentration of comparison retailers selling ladies and children's clothes.
- A number of number of A3, A4 and A5 uses which contribute to an evening economy.
- Centre benefits from CCTV.

Weaknesses:

- Significant congestion affecting road network and access to the centre by car.
- Limited pedestrian crossing points along Prescott Road.
- Varied quality of buildings some of which do not maximise development potential in terms of massing.
- Evidence of public realm investment but maintenance has been sub-standard.
- Shopper parking in residential streets off Prescott Road due to lack of car parking facilities in the core of the centre.

Opportunities:

- Delivery of new retail development on former Community College site on Broad Green Road, incorporating Aldi foodstore, non-food retail unit and 6 residential dwellings.

- Potential long-term development opportunities, including Old Cinema Block (currently housing Ethel Austin and Home Bargains); the former Kwik Save store at the eastern end of the centre; and the 1970s development opposite the Black Horse Hotel (which includes a seven storey residential tower together with ground floor retail including Bon Marche and Iceland).

Threats:

- Potential impact of retail-led redevelopment of Edge Lane Retail Park.
- Impact of investment in this centre on Prescott Road Local Centre.

3.92 The Aldi Store and associated development on Broad Green Road is currently under construction.

3.93 A business association, Old Swan Business Association, has been formed to promote and bring forward improvements to the District Centre. This provides a potential model for other centres in Liverpool. The Business Association manages and maintains a website promoting Old Swan.

3.94 The Tesco Store forms an important anchor to the centre. However from a design perspective the supermarket car park presents a poor frontage to Prescott Road/ St Oswald's Street at this key gateway location. This area is dominated by highways infrastructure which results in a degree of severance between the anchor supermarket and the remainder of the centre.

Options for Intervention:

This centre plays an important strategic role in serving an extensive population in East Liverpool. It has been bolstered by delivery of a large anchor foodstore.

The centre is currently performing relatively well. There is a limited needs case for significant investment. Limited intervention is therefore proposed to support this centre and its continued success.

The centre would benefit from investments to enhance pedestrian flows and improve environmental quality and maintenance. The centre has seen some public realm improvements (in terms of tree planting and provision of plant boxes) however environmental maintenance is sub-standard. Public realm improvements to gateways at either end of the centre on Prescott Road are also encouraged.

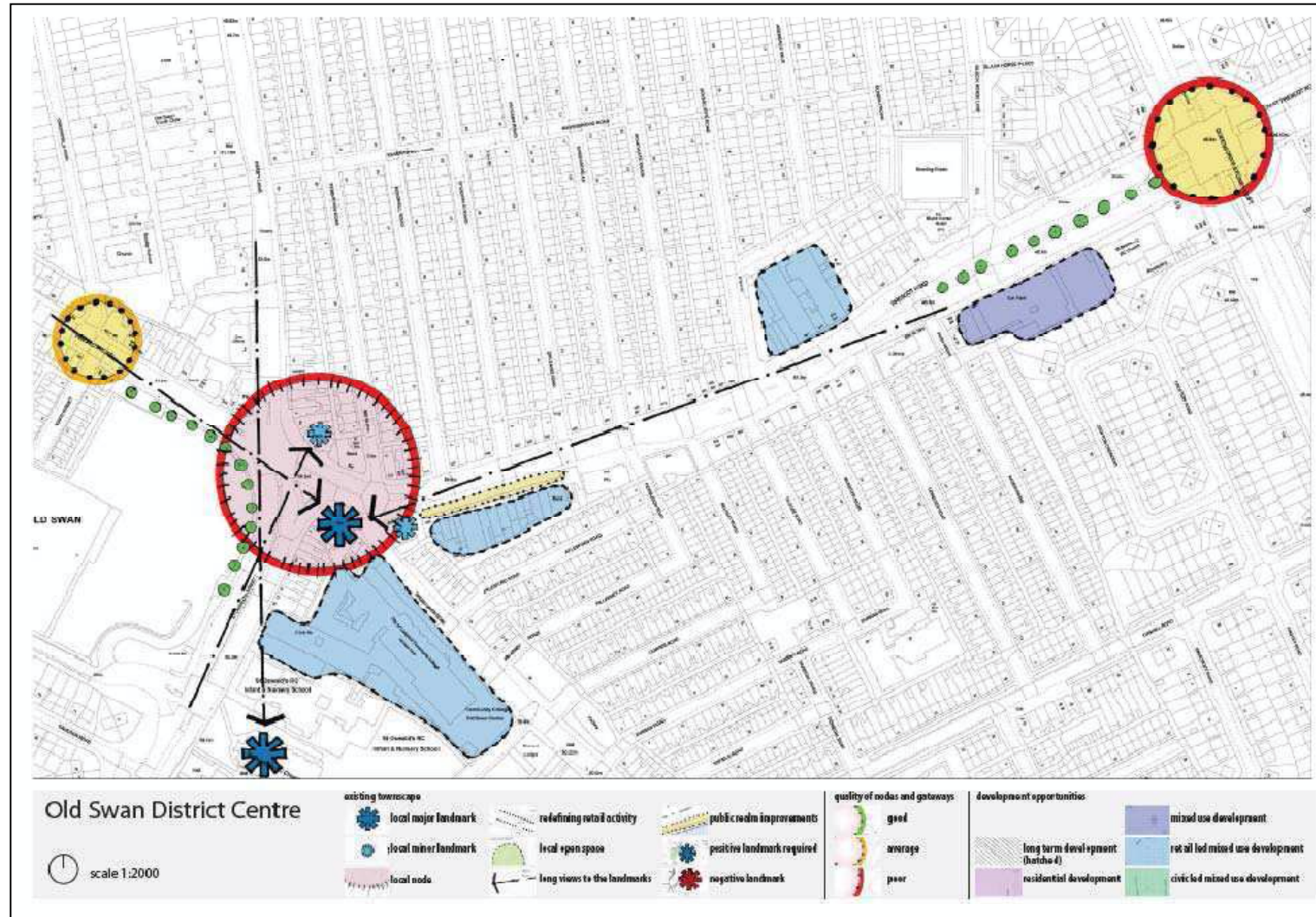
The centre would benefit from tree planting around the boundary of the Tesco Car Park and the Prescott Road/ St Oswald Street Junction; and within the central reservation towards the eastern end of the centre on Prescott Road.

Potential funding to implement these schemes could come forward either through S106 receipts or through collective investment of local retailers, such as through designation of a Business Improvement District.

There are a number of longer-term development opportunities which have been identified where redevelopment and intensification could be taken forward. These sites offer the opportunities to increase development density and bring forward a mix of uses including new modern retail units.

The potential to create a stronger anchor to the centre at the eastern end of Prescott Road should particularly be explored. This might involve a mix of civic or retail uses.

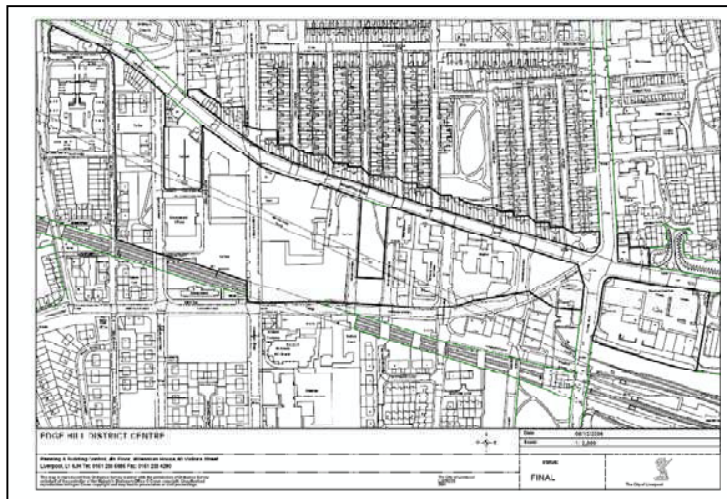
Figure 3.31: Issues and Opportunities – Old Swan



4.0 Edge Hill District Centre

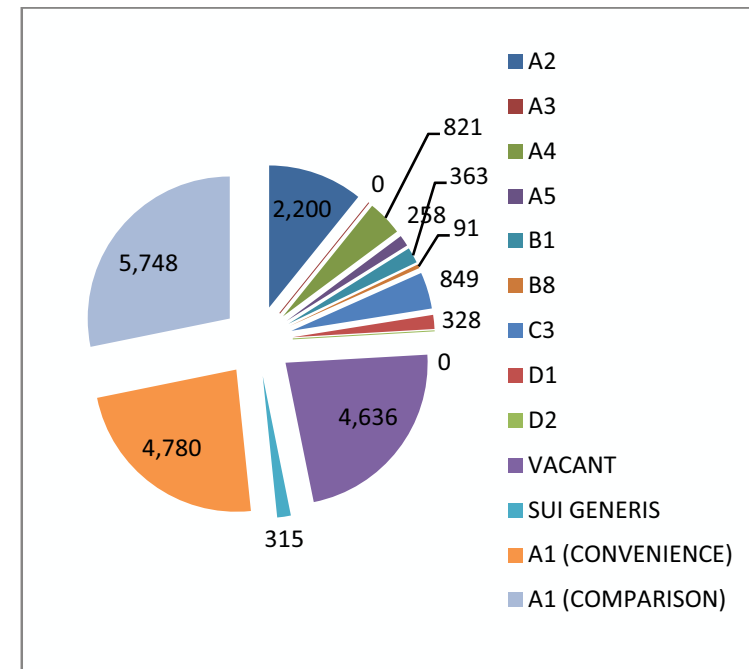
EDGE HILL

- 3.68 **Description:** Edge Hill District Centre is located on the B5178 Wavertree Road directly east of the City Centre. It serves Smithdown and Picton wards.

Figure 3.23: Centre Boundary – Edge Hill

- 3.69 Ground floor retailing exists in terraced properties along the north side of the road between Holland Place and Durning Road. A number of community and civic uses are located along the south side of the road. The Wavertree Retail Park is located at the eastern end of the centre, adjacent to Edge Hill Rail Station.
- 3.70 The centre contains 81 retail units of which 34 are in active A-class use. There has been a significant fall in the number of comparison retail units within the centre since 2000, albeit that this will have been offset in floorspace terms by delivery of the Matalan store. The proportion of A1 convenience floorspace in the centre is below average at 24%.

- 3.71 There are a significant number of vacant retail units in the centre, which has a vacancy rate of 42% - the highest of any of the District Centres. At the time of survey, 45 vacant shop units were recorded.

Figure 3.24: Floorspace by Use Class – Edge Hill

- 3.72 Vacancy is concentrated within the independent retailing on the north side of the road. A significant proportion of these units are due to be demolished through the Housing Market Renewal Initiative. A Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) has been confirmed (Edge Hill Phase 2a) covering the retail frontages on Wavertree Road from Durning Road to Dorothy Street. Further properties along this frontage fall within Phase 3 of the clearance/ redevelopment scheme, the CPO for which is due to be submitted in 2010 subject to funding.

- 3.73 There is the prospect therefore that the majority of the retail premises on the north side of Wavertree Road will be cleared and redeveloped for residential, reducing retail provision within this centre.
- 3.74 The south side of Wavertree Road currently contains a mix of larger floorplate retail and community uses. A Tesco Metro (2,000 sq.m) now occupies the former Kwik Save store on Overton Street. Taskers Bathrooms is located opposite.
- 3.75 There are a range of community uses in the centre, including Job Centre Plus, a Council Customer Focus Centre, Police Station, Housing Office and Job Bank.
- 3.76 The Wavertree Retail Park located at the west of the centre contains Netto (1,100 sq.m), Iceland, Home Bargains, Gala Bingo and Matalan. There is one vacant unit.
- 3.77 The Council has had pre-application discussions with Neptune Developments and John Tasker regarding the potential for a retail development scheme on a site bounded by Woodside Street, Wavertree Road, Shenstone Street and Harbour Street. The proposal was to redevelop this area to provide a supermarket, 1,850 sq.m of non-food retail together with residential development. However it is understood that the future of this scheme is uncertain.

Strengths:

- Good public transport access, including proximity to rail station.
- Strong provision of community / civic uses including Police Station, Job Centre and One Stop Shop.
- Strong gateway at west of the centre around St Mary's Church/ Holland Place.
- Adequate parking within the centre, mainly adjacent to larger retail units.
- Some retail occupiers, such as Taskers and Matalan, have a wider catchment attracting shoppers to the centre.

Weaknesses:

- Centre is fragmented in nature with modern retailing focused within the retail park and around Overton Street. Poor footfall and movement between these nodes.
- Land use to the south of Wavertree Road is fragmented, with areas of redundant open space and car parking.
- Significant vacancy in independent retailing, influenced by HMR Clearance Programme, affects current attractiveness/ appearance of the centre.
- The Centre is effectively a convenience location with a limited comparison retail offer. However it contains relatively limited convenience floorspace relative to other district centres.
- The centre lacks key local facilities, including a Post Office and Bank. It contains no A2 or A3 uses.
- Poor quality/ environment of node around Harbord Street/Durning Road/ Wavertree Road junction.

Opportunities:

- HMR Clearance Programme will reduce oversupply of small retail premises and support consolidation of independent retailing.
- Significant planned housing development within catchment area will support population and potentially improve expenditure profile.
- Substantial improvements to the environment and streetscene would be necessary to support any investment.

Threats:

- Proximity to other centres at Kensington, Lodge Lane/Smithdown Road North and Wavertree High Street, as well as the City Centre.

- Impact of clearance/redevelopment programme on population base which could further impact on viability of existing retail businesses.
- Crime is a major threat which inhibits retail investment.

3.78 The 2004 Study identified the potential to split the centre to create two distinct retail locations, defining the Wavertree Shopping Centre as a local centre.

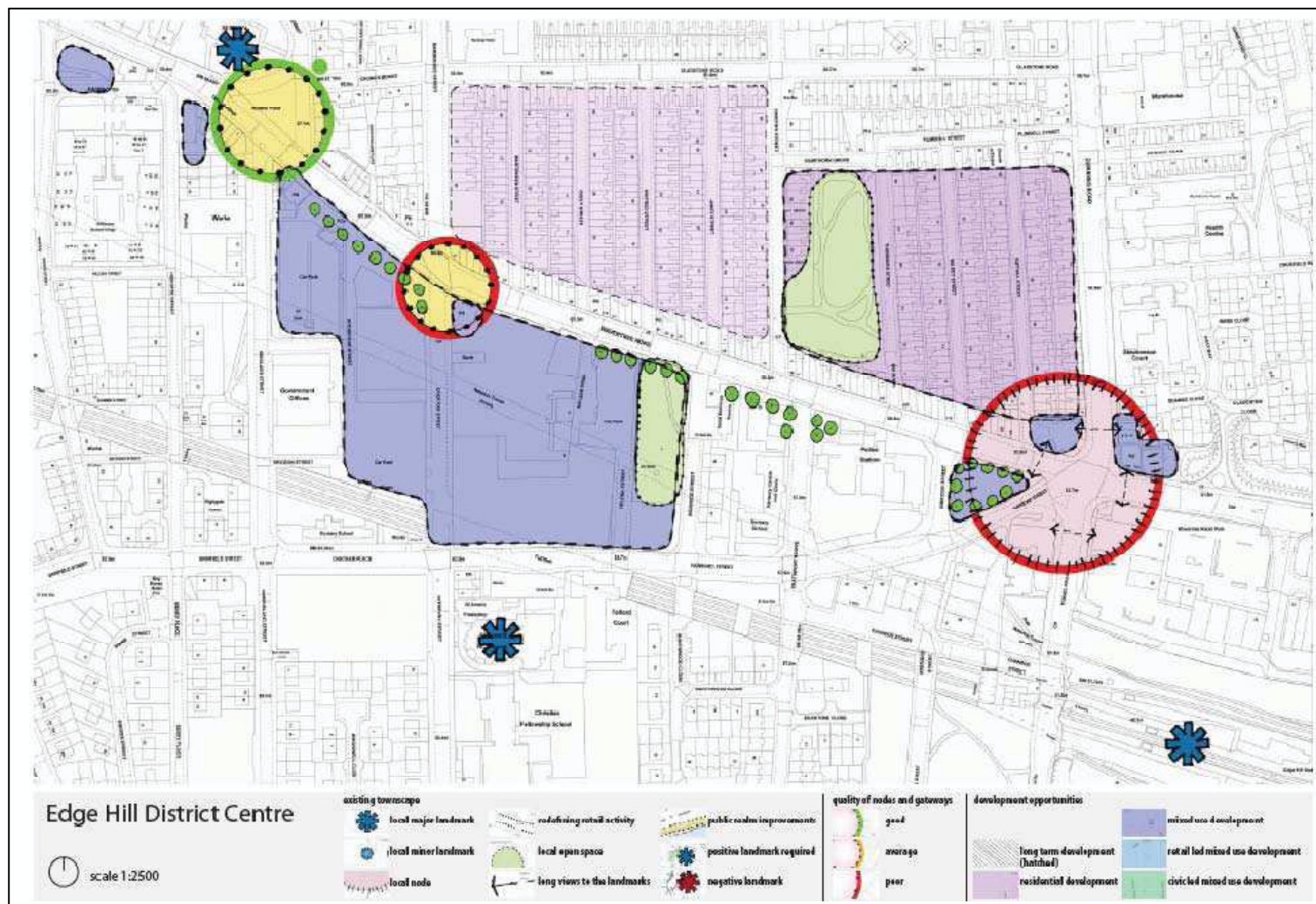
Options for Intervention:

The HMR Programme is likely to address the high vacancy level within this centre and address over-provision of smaller shop units. There is an opportunity to consolidate the centre, providing greater coherence and an improved convenience offer.

It is recommended that the boundary of the centre be reviewed to take account of HMRI interventions. There is potential for the the Taskers/Tesco site to be identified as a long-term mixed-use development opportunity. If this scheme comes forward, it would be appropriate for the centre to remain a District Centre. If it does not, we recommend that the Centre boundary is revised to extend from the Retail Park to Woodside Street.

The opportunity should be considered, through delivery of the HMR Programme/ CPO to upgrade the public realm along Wavertree Road, including potentially widening the pavements and through provision of street furniture, trees and planting. This should be used to draw together and link the current two nodes of the centre. This scheme should also address pedestrian crossings providing access from new residential development to the Wavertree Shopping Centre and Edge Hill Station.

Figure 3.25: Issues and Opportunities – Edge Hill

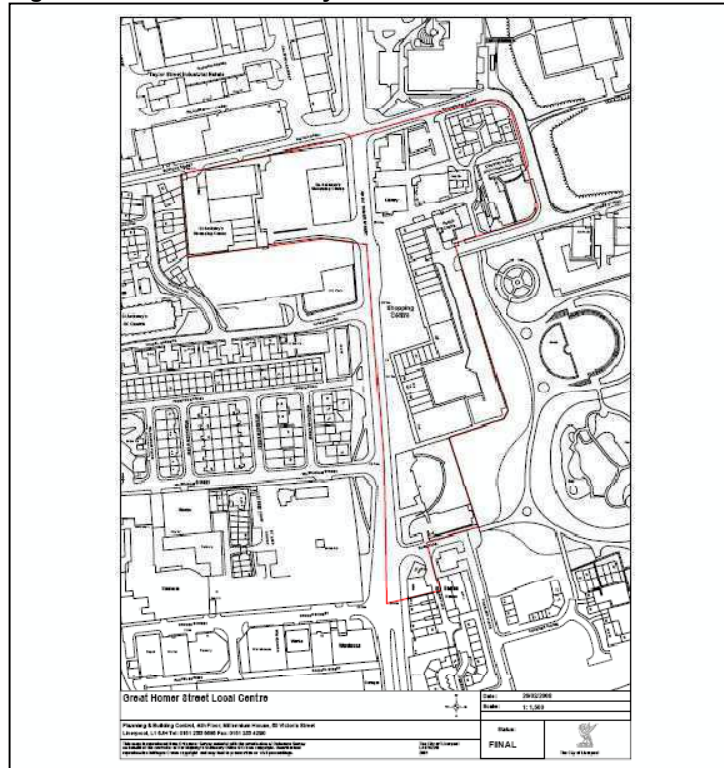


5.0 Great Homer Street Local Centre

GREAT HOMER STREET

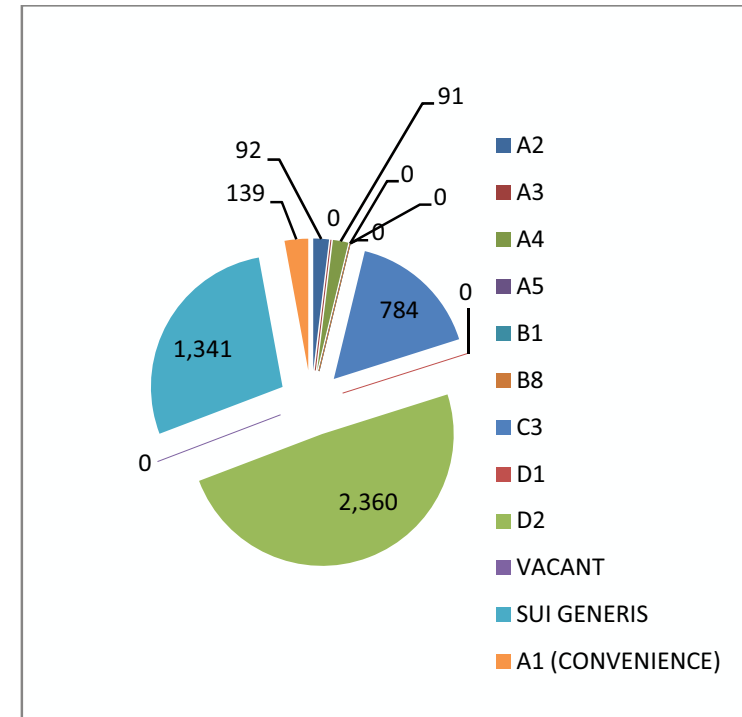
- 4.16 Great Homer Street is located in Vauxhall to the north of the City Centre. It is situated on the boundary of Vauxhall and Everton wards in one of the most deprived areas in the UK. The nearest other centres are County Road and Breck Road to the north and north-east respectively. The centre is surrounded by a mix of parkland, housing estates and industrial/ business premises.

Figure 4.10: Centre Boundary – Great Homer Street



- 4.17 The centre contains a total of 27 units excluding the currently derelict St Anthony's Shopping Centre. However of these units, 15 are currently vacant representing a vacancy rate of 56%. There are just 9 occupied shopping units. There is no main foodstore and Sayers is the only multiple retailer present. The centre includes a public library, Post Office and medical centre. Patronage of the centre is however particularly poor although a Saturday market at this location remains popular with local residents.

Figure 4.11: Floorspace by Use Class – Great Homer Street



- 4.18 The centre is currently a particularly poor shopping destination which provides a basic level of top-up convenience retailing for its immediate catchment. Environmental quality is poor and safety issues/ fear of crime significant. It is generally unattractive and uninspiring.
- 4.19 The City Council has identified a development partner, St Modwen, to deliver a new District Centre at Great Homer Street. This is termed 'Project Jennifer.' It is intended to deliver a £150 million investment including:
- A 10,700 sq.m foodstore together with 7,400 sq.m of non-food retail;
 - A market hall and 300 relocated outdoor market stalls;
 - 480 homes;
 - A new library and leisure facilities together with a PCT health centre;
 - 80,000 sq.ft of light industrial units; and
 - A public transport interchange.
- 4.20 The scheme has outline planning consent. St Modwen has engaged Sainsbury's to develop the foodstore.
- 4.21 The City Council has however received an alternative application from Tesco Stores for delivery of an 8,500 sq.m foodstore together with indoor and outdoor markets and filling station. The application was received in June 2008 and is now subject to an appeal against non-determination.

Options for Intervention:

Delivery of a new district centre at Great Homer Street is of strategic importance to support comprehensive regeneration in surrounding areas. It is a regeneration priority. It will serve existing communities in Vauxhall and Everton as well as new development which could be brought forward through the Liverpool Waters proposals. It will support delivery of the Housing Growth Point Programme.

Delivery of a new district centre will require:

- A comprehensive approach;
- Strong commitment from the City Council and its partners;
- Delivery of a supermarket to anchor the centre;
- A mix of uses, including retail, employment, community and leisure;
- Reprovision of the market;
- Good public transport, pedestrian and cycle access.

Great Homer Street is currently not a well-used through route. Moreover the A59 Scotland Road divides the centre from residential and business areas to the west. It will be important that pedestrian and cycle links from these areas to the new Centre are improved. The centre should also be visible, and easily accessible, from the A59 Scotland Road.

6.0 Conclusion

Old Swan District Centre

- 6.1 As highlighted within the extract from the Study of District and Local Centres the centre is performing well and there is little need for significant investment in the centre. As such we consider that the centre is vital and viable and given the lack of impact the proposals will have on this centre there will be no change to this vitality or viability.

Edge Hill District Centre

- 6.2 There are a number of vacant units within this centre and as such the centre is not performing well. The vitality and viability of the centre can be therefore considered marginal. Despite this, as highlighted within the study, the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) initiative is likely to address the high vacancy level and make the centre vital and viable.

Greater Homer Street Local Centre

- 6.3 The centre is currently performing poorly with high vacancy levels, a poor retail offer, poor quality environment, and issues regarding safety and fear of crime. As such the centre cannot currently be considered vital or viable. However, with the delivery of 'Project Jennifer' and the council's commitment to improve the centre to a district centre, these issues will be addressed helping to make the centre vital and viable in the future.