



Local Development Framework – Core Strategy

Issues and Options Discussion Paper

Topic Paper 4 – Town Centres and Retail

1.00 Background

- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
- Planning Policy Statement 4: Practice guidance on need, impact and the sequential approach
- Regional Spatial Strategy North West
- Greater Manchester Town Centres Study
- Greater Manchester Employment Land Study
- Tameside Employment Land Review
- Ashton Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document
- Draft Hyde Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document
- Conservation Area Appraisals - Stalybridge and Ashton
- Urban Design Compendium
- Manual for Streets
- Tameside Retail Study, May 2010
- Tameside Unitary Development Plan 2004
- Tameside Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2019
- Ashton Development Group – consultancy work under way
- Tameside Economic Strategy – consultancy work under way

1.01 Historically town centres have played a key role in developing and supporting communities, providing a range of functions, infrastructure and facilities that draw users and in turn investors to create vibrant centres. While many towns have suffered from decline over the last few decades, centres continue to play a vital role providing a focus for economic activity, transport hubs and civic functions. It is such functions that need to be enhanced, evolved and developed in the future to create sustainable centres, with their own distinct role within a local hierarchy.

1.02 The Borough of Tameside is comprised of nine town-ships; Ashton-under-Lyne, Audenshaw, Denton, Droylsden, Dukinfield, Hyde, Longdendale, Mossley and Stalybridge. These town-ships play a significant role in characterising the Borough and will continue to have a vital role in its future prosperity.

1.03 Historically industrial uses and retail have shaped and influenced these town-ships, yet as the industry has declined and retailing become more dominated by high street brands and supermarkets; and competition for neighbouring centres and on-line retailing has increased; many town centres have declined. Within Tameside this change in fortune is clear across the majority of its towns, although there are also positives resulting from new developments



and the resilience of independent businesses. But as a whole the Borough needs to be aware of these issues in identifying their future roles

- 1.04 Recognising the position of Manchester as a Regional Centre, there is a need for Tameside to establish itself as a strong and attractive sub-regional destination, with Ashton at its heart.
- 1.05 Of the nine town-ships across the Borough seven town centres serve the Borough's communities, as defined by the Tameside Retail study and the current Unitary Development Plan (UDP). These are;
 - Ashton-under-Lyne
 - Hyde
 - Denton
 - Stalybridge
 - Droylsden
 - Hattersley
 - Mossley

2.00 Planning Policy

Planning Policy Statements 1 & 4

- 2.01 At a national level, Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (PPS4) sets out the current planning policy framework for delivering economic growth, a key element of which is focused on promoting vibrant and viable town centres.
- 2.02 PPS4 advocates that Authorities should set out a strategy for the management and growth of centres over the plan period and that; policies should be flexible to respond to changes in economic circumstances; there should be a defined hierarchy of centres considering any identified need for growth; any deficiencies in the network should be addressed, and where reversing decline in centres is not possible consider the scope for consolidating and diversification.
- 2.03 Allied with PPS4, PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, promotes the need to imbed sustainable developments as an overarching principle across the planning system. Town centres play an obvious role in delivering sustainable developments and communities, with PPS1 requiring local planning authorities to focus developments that attract a large number of people into existing centres, promoting their vitality and viability, social inclusion and more sustainable patterns of development.

North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

- 2.04 In response to national planning policy surrounding retail and town centres (PPS1 & 4), the North West Development Agency through its Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) established policies and principles related to the region's centres. Policy RDF 1 identifies Spatial Priorities for the region, outlining a hierarchy for the region's centres with Ashton-under-Lyne a third tier spatial priority below the 2 regional centres (Manchester & Liverpool) and their inner areas. In line with this tier of priorities, policy W5 promotes retail investment that is consistent with the scale and function of retail centres. Ashton-under-Lyne is identified as a sub-regional centre and as such should be top of Tameside's retail hierarchy.



- 2.05 These RSS policies established a regional interpretation of the national policies, which many local authorities used as the basis for localised policies in their core strategies. However, the Government's intention is to revoke regional spatial strategies through the Localism Bill rendering policies contained within them void.

National Planning Policy Framework (draft)

- 2.06 The Government's intention is to replace the current suite of planning policy statements and guidance (including PPS 1 & 4) with a single national planning document, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The consultation draft of this document was published in July 2011 which at its 'heart' has a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 2.07 While the current planning policy statements remain in place (as at February 2012), it is the content of the NPPF (once adopted) that will guide policies in the Tameside Core Strategy.
- 2.08 In relation to town centres and retail the NPPF states that planning policies should positively promote town centre environments and set policies for management and growth. When creating such policies the NPPF requires local planning authorities to consider and include a number of elements such as the allocation of sites to meet a range of town centre uses, defining a town centre hierarchy, the extent of the town centre and its primary shopping area; and pursuing policies to support viability and vitality.
- 2.09 For retail and leisure uses, the town centre first approach advocated in PPS 4 remains with the NPPF requiring a sequential test to be applied to applications that are not within the town centre or in accordance with an up to date local plan.
- 2.10 A key element in achieving vibrant and viable town centres is creating high quality environments through good design. This ethos is acknowledged within the NPPF, with the document stating that "good design is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. The Government's objective for the planning system is to promote good design that ensures attractive, usable and durable places".

3.00 Greater Manchester Town Centres Study

- 3.01 The Greater Manchester Town Centres (GMTC) Study, published in 2010, sought to review the role and function of the eight principal town centre's within Greater Manchester. The study was commissioned following serious concern across the City-region that the town centres have been failing to contribute to the conurbation's growth of GVA or wealth over the last two decades. Without a reversal of this, the City-region will struggle to achieve its growth aspirations presented in the Greater Manchester Strategy.
- 3.02 The study looked at each of the 8 sub-regional centres, assessing their existing facilities, economic performance and offer. This resulted in a SWOC analysis for each of the town centres, Ashton's can be viewed in paragraph 6.0 later in this paper, highlighting where future growth and distinctiveness could be drawn.
- 3.03 The study highlighted the need to refocus development and investment toward the sub-regional centres (combating the trend toward out of town locations), applying a town centre first policy that utilises the town's existing infrastructure and assets to help attract investment and draw users.



- 3.04 The study identified the fundamental elements required to support and sustain a successful town centre: its 'core functions', which are the bedrock of town centre employment (such as the independent retail offer and civic functions in Ashton), and its individual 'distinctiveness' (such as Ashton's markets) which have the ability to transcend the town centre standardised offer.
- 3.05 To safeguard and improve the prospects of GM's town centres, the study suggests that:
- Core functions should be consolidated, through improvement of the existing offer;
 - The distinctive elements of GM town centres should be unlocked, building on local strengths to differentiate the offer from competing centres and diversify town centres to balance national retailers with distinctive local colour;
- 3.06 In the short-term, the report recommends a focus on:
- Early developments and their supporting infrastructure;
 - Management of under utilised;
 - Action to capitalise on committed investments;
 - Management of the interim stage of major developments;
 - Strong town centre management – marketing, security, cleansing etc.
- 3.07 In the longer-term a strategy is required to deliver structural changes to improve the town centre offer, including:
- Consideration of the shape of the centre;
 - New or expanded uses to create a rounded centre;
 - The potential for housing to widen the walk-in population and social mix;
 - Redevelopment sites;
 - Changes in access arrangements;
 - The phasing of development;
 - Appropriate planning policies to support the town centre and restrain out of centre development.
- 3.08 The report suggests the next steps for each of the 8 town centres is to create a bespoke strategy for each that acknowledges the outcomes and recommendations of the GMTCC Study. The emerging Core Strategies across the City-region will obviously play a key role in refocusing development into these key town centres and aid the deliverability of such strategies where they exist.

4.00 Greater Manchester Retail Trends

- 4.01 The role of Ashton-under-Lyne as Tameside's sub regional centre and its contribution to economic prosperity is given consideration through the Greater Manchester Town Centres study. Ashton is highlighted as having a distinctive and differentiated offer characterised primarily by the indoor and outdoor market, the Arcades and Ladysmith shopping centres and an emerging independent retail offer.
- 4.02 The study highlights the preference from retailers to retain units in key high street locations. But more generally, the popularity of out of town and edge of town centre sites with free parking, more flexible floor plates and more realistic rents are the immediate draw for national multiples and a threat to town centres.



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- 4.03 This shift is evident within Tameside, with Snipe Retail Park impacting on Ashton; and across Greater Manchester, with a number of out of town retail destinations competing with the GM centres. This threat has increased further as these locations have diversified their offer from predominantly bulky goods to more 'town centre ranges' such as fashion, footwear and books for example.
- 4.04 Large format, high quality; traditionally high street retailers, are also tending to seek out of centre space. The issue being that these would normally be anchor tenants in town centres and without them, town centres are susceptible to becoming dominated by discount and lower end retailers.
- 4.05 The Town Centre Study highlights that a key issue for Ashton-under-Lyne and other Tameside centres going forward is in avoiding the creation of a two tier retail environment, where out of centre retailing is of high end serving residents with private transport and in centre retailing being of a lower order for those that only have access to public transport. It also highlights that where distinctiveness exists, such as the independents along Stamford Street in Ashton and the cultural influences of the Asian community in Hyde, these should be utilised as niche reasons for visiting these centres.
- 4.06 The Tameside Retail Study builds upon the evidence of these market trends, outlining the market share of the borough and its centres, spending patterns, current and future expenditure capacity and potential for future retail floorspace over the plan period. Through doing this the policy requirements of PPS 4 and concerns of the Greater Manchester Town centre study can be addressed.

5.00 Tameside Retail Trends

- 5.01 In 2009 the Council appointed consultants, White Young Green to undertake a revised Retail Study. Completed in 2010 the study is one of the principle pieces of evidence base work that guides how the Council will plan for the Borough's town centres, set within the context of national planning policy and supplemented by various other sources of market data and research such as the Greater Manchester Town Centres Study.
- 5.02 The retailing position of the Borough as a whole is considered good with 96% of food retailing, and 69% of non food retailing expenditure being retained within the Borough. This indicates sustainable shopping patterns and that people are not principally inconvenienced by the existing retail offer available. These positions are considered good, given the proximity of strong competing offers, particularly for non food retailing, at Manchester City Centre and the Trafford Centre.



5.03 Of the seven towns identified above the Tameside Retail Study examined the retail floorspace, turnover and market share of the five largest centres as listed below.

Centre	Floorspace (sq m)	Convenience Turnover (£m)	Comparison Turnover (£m)	Total Turnover (£m)	Market Share in Study Area (%)	Market Share Amongst Centres (%)
1. Ashton-under-Lyne**	53,980	135.23	186.26	321.49	11.2	40.8
3. Hyde	40,340	98.45	79.27	177.72	6.2	22.5
3. Denton*	46,378	59.56	113.23	172.79	6.0	21.9
4. Stalybridge	13,650	49.16	18.62	67.78	2.4	8.6
5. Droylsden	16,141	28.85	19.90	48.75	1.7	6.2
TOTAL	170,489	371.25	417.28	788.53	27.5	100.0

Notes: WYG (2009) ** – Excludes Snipe Retail Park, Ashton Moss and IKEA Floorspace based on occupied convenience and comparison goods floorspace only and derived from Experian Goad (updated) or WYG assessment

* Includes Crown Point North Shopping Park and Sainsbury's store At 2007 prices

5.04 Through comparing turnover rates, a retail hierarchy was created (detailed below), which the North West RSS stipulates should have Ashton-under-Lyne at its top tier, as the sub-regional centre and principle place for investment.

5.05 The study indicates that Denton has increased its market share significantly when considering comparison turnover. This has resulted in Denton raising its position in the retail hierarchy from on a par with Stalybridge and Droylsden to on a par with, or exceeding Hyde. Much of this success however has resulted in a reduction of comparison goods market share in Ashton-under-Lyne which as the sub-regional centre needs addressing.

5.06 However, it should be noted that as detailed within the above table notes, Ashton's figures do not include Ikea or Sainsbury's, both of which are in the town centre. Equally, Denton's figures include Sainsbury's which is not within its town centre. Considering these points, Ashton's market share within the Hierarchy is greater.

The Retail Hierarchy	
Sub-Regional Centre	Ashton-under-Lyne
Town Centre	Hyde Denton
District Centres	Stalybridge Droylsden
Local Centres	Hattersley Mossley



Tameside's Town Centres

6.00 Ashton-under-Lyne

- 6.01 Ashton is Tameside's administrative hub and sub-regional centre, containing a mix of independent and national retailers, financial services and leisure uses across the town centre. The town's markets, Arcades and Ladysmith shopping centres together with the 'old town' contain the majority of the town's core retail and services provision. Further to this there are a number of other retailing destinations within the wider centre including Ikea, Asda and Sainsbury's amongst others. Allied with its retail offer the town also contains the St Petersfield business quarter; a high quality office-led mixed use development located in the south west of the town centre.
- 6.02 The town contains a number of transport assets; including a short and regular heavy rail service to Manchester Victoria Station and a large bus interchange providing services Borough-wide and cross boundary. Ashton's proximity to the M60 is its key road asset, linking the town with the wider conurbation and strategic road network. 2013/14 will see Ashton receive Metrolink services connecting the town to Manchester Piccadilly. This public transport asset will enhance connections between Tameside and the wider city-region, improving accessibility to employment opportunities for residents and investment opportunities for Ashton. It is important that the momentum surrounding the arrival of this infrastructure asset is positively utilised to help attract investment into the town.
- 6.03 While the town has strengths in its retail offer and transport assets, there is a need to further improve and promote the town centre in order to attract greater investment to enable the town to compete with neighbouring sub-regional centres such as Oldham, Stockport, Bury and Rochdale. This issue is detailed within the Greater Manchester Town Centres Study, which highlights that the town is considerably under performing (as are a number of GM centres) and requires focused investment, intervention and promotion to help improve its economic performance. It is vital that as the Borough's principal town, Ashton is the focus for investment, development and promotion. With a strong 'Capital' the borough and its other town's will have a greater chance of a continued sustainable future.



Sourced from the Greater Manchester Town Centres Study

Ashton-Under-Lyne

Ashton town centre has a distinctive and differentiated offer, characterised by Ashton Market and an emerging independent retail offer clustered around Stamford Street and Ashton Old Town. Multiple retailers, including Marks and Spencer, are located in the Ladysmith and Arcades shopping centres. Ashton has been boosted by the office and health functions created by St Petersfield and has the potential to capitalise on a significant edge of centre conurbation accelerator at Ashton Moss.

Strengths

- Good range of shops in the centre.
- Ashton market is a key differentiator, attracting visitors from across the city region.
- The retail core benefits from the popularity of the market
- IKEA (on the periphery) has raised the profile of Ashton.
- Stamford Street represents an emerging and distinctive independent retail offer in the centre.
- Ashton Old Town represents a diversity of traders.
- Development at St Petersfield has boosted the office and health function in Ashton.

Weaknesses

- The town centre lacks a prominent anchor store.
- Ashton suffers from a lack of private sector employers and the town centre is in urgent need of investment to bolster the market.
- The town centre has a poor representation of comparison retailers – with only 50% of the top 20 present.
- With the exception of St Petersfield, the office market is limited in Ashton..
- There is no established restaurant or food offer.
- There is a limited high quality leisure offer.
- Bias among shoppers towards lower income groups
- Stamford Street Central and adjacent streets still without a strong role since covered centres developed.

Opportunities

- On the edge of the town centre, Ashton Moss provides the opportunity to create a significant conurbation accelerator.
- A additional prominent anchor, such as Primark, would boost the town centre and attract further retailers.
- Bus station – opportunity to extend the shopping centre (subject to demand) in this location; currently a barrier between the town centre and the IKEA and adjacent shops etc
- Potential to link IKEA, Ashton Moss, St Petersfield, the Market and the Arcades through quality public realm.
- There is a possibility to relocate the Town Hall to the St Peter's Gate scheme end of Stamford Street, creating opportunity to link market to bus station and Metrolink with additional retail.
- The arrival of Metrolink.
- There is an opportunity to attract new occupiers to vacant retail units.
- A health cluster is developing within the town centre.

Challenges

- IKEA (with adjacent retail park, cinema and restaurants) has the potential to draw trade from the town centre.
- Retail vacancies are above average – this also detracts from the streetscene.
- Public realm improvement is necessary to attract higher value retailers.
- Commitment to low carbon energy expansion and the attainment of governmental energy requirements.
- Attracting more affluent shoppers to the centre.
- Reviving the night-time economy.
- Bringing forward the numerous development opportunities within the centre.
- Out of town retailing at Snipe and Crown Point North
- Risk that Metrolink may increase loss of spending to regional centre



Retail & Town Centre Uses

- 6.04 Property vacancies across Ashton are above the national average but the town has proved relatively resilient throughout the recession in being able to recycle its retail floorspace although this has been discount retail focused. There is a need therefore to bolster the town's contribution to the Greater Manchester economy, attracting higher order retailers, developing an office market and generally diversifying the offer.
- 6.05 The retail study indicates that there is an immediate capacity for both food and non food retailing. This is due to the overtrading of some food supermarkets around the centre and quantitative evidence of a need to improve the comparison offer in the sub-regional centre. This gives capacity to address the fall in market share spend directed to Ashton (29% in 2005 to 24% in 2010) as a result primarily of developments in Denton.
- 6.06 As the sub regional centre, Ashton needs to create a policy environment that helps to retain its anchor national multiples and celebrates a growing number of independents; an important element of Ashton's 'unique' retail offer. This will likely manifest itself through bringing forward such schemes as the approved extension to the Arcades shopping centre and development opportunities that arise as a result of the Ashton Northern Bypass. The floorspace potential may also mean that over the plan period there is a requirement to identify sites to accommodate both food and non food need.
- 6.07 As previously highlighted, in order to help achieve the town's retail aspirations Ashton needs to attract more users / spend. A key element of this will be increasing its non-retail town centre uses, particularly office based employment. This in turn will not only help retail viability, but also the town's leisure and evening economies, and elements of residential. The continued development of the office-led mixed use scheme at St Petersfield will play a key role in this diversification; as will the emerging proposals for the town's Northern Core adjacent to the, under construction, northern bypass. This area could offer development opportunities for a range of town centre uses such as office, retail, education, civic and leisure. As detailed below, St Petersfield is establishing a high quality environment but it is important that this quality is emulated across the town centre to not only enhance the wider town centre, but support St Petersfield.
- 6.08 As with a number of centres, Ashton has suffered from a stalling of potential development due to the recession. Across Ashton there are numerous planning approvals for residential-led mixed use schemes, which could help the vibrancy and viability of the town centre if brought forward. Equally there are a number of retail led proposals that are yet to come forward, the most significant of which is the extension of the Arcades Shopping Centre.

Design & Public realm

- 6.09 As Tameside's key town centre, its public realm must help to positively present Ashton to potential visitors and investors. Unfortunately, at present the existing public realm; coupled with areas of road domination, is failing to achieve this. The St Petersfield development is the only area of the town centre that contains a modern, high quality area of public realm. It is this quality that needs to be replicated across the whole town centre.
- 6.10 Areas that require specific intervention include the following:



- Market Square would benefit from a complete redesign to create a gateway space and focal point.
- Improved pedestrian linkages are required between the rail station and market square area.
- Old Street – links to St Petersfield.
- Improved links between Ikea and Sainsburys to core town centre.
- De-cluttering of street furniture across the town.

6.11 Allied with the public realm, the town's urban fabric contains a mix of building types, styles and ages. The southern area of the town centre around Stamford Street (Old Town) lies within the town's conservation area and has a distinct character that would benefit from further enhancement through renovation of existing buildings and sympathetic new developments. Unfortunately a number of the post war developments fail to acknowledge the character of this historic area. Equally across the wider town centre there is a similar mix of pre and post war developments that add and detract from the urban environment. There is a need to ensure future development across the town centre contributes to a town wide aspiration to improve the town centre and only accept high quality design.

6.12 Particular attention needs to be paid to potential development sites such as the Northern Core area and town centre gateways. The multi-modal gateway along the Penny Meadow and Market quarters (shown in the Ashton Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document) require improvement as the bus, rail, road and future Metrolink gateway into the town centre. At present this area is dominated by the road environment, bus station and the Arcades and Council Offices which turn their backs on the area, masking any awareness of the town centre beyond.

6.13 To help guide future development across the town centre, the Council adopted the Ashton Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document in January 2010. This document provides guidance to developers, highlights potential development sites and outlines potential future projects such as public realm improvements and site specific development projects.

7.00 Hyde

7.01 As with much of the borough, Hyde expanded considerably during the industrial revolution. At its peak the town had 40 working mills and a colliery. While these industries have long since declined, the wider town is home to a number of other industries that play an important role in Tameside's economy.

7.02 Historically Hyde was considered Tameside's second town, with 2 vibrant markets, the Clarendon Square Shopping Centre and 2 large supermarkets. Whilst the town retains all these assets, together with a strong independent business sector, the success of Crown Point has elevated Denton above Hyde in terms of retail expenditure. The close proximity of Denton to Hyde has also impacted on the town centre, limiting its ability to attract certain high street names, an issue that is likely to become exacerbated by the 'Crown Point East' development on the former Oldham Batteries site.

7.03 The Council, through the Hyde Business Forum (a local group comprising business representatives and local authority Councillors and Officers) commissioned three pieces of work to help guide a future role / direction for the town, building on its strengths and



identifying areas for change including improvements to the public realm and marketing of Hyde town centre. The outcomes of the studies commissioned are as follows:

Hyde Marketing Strategy

7.04 The methodology involved undertaking surveys of local businesses and members of the public in Hyde and Ashton, which highlighted a number of issues, perceptions and opportunities that steered the Marketing Strategy. The primary recommendations of the Strategy are:

- Promote a new image for Hyde
- True Working Partnerships - between the Clarendon Centre, the markets and all retail interests.
- Pride in Our Streets - improvements to the public realm
- Welcome to Hyde - new signage

Development Framework

7.05 The study aimed to evaluate the design, performance and commercial viability of Hyde Town Centre and assess its capacity for change and investment.

7.06 Through baseline assessments and consultations the framework produced a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) assessment of the town centre that lead to the following proposed intervention options / key projects, with accompanying action plan:

- Public realm & connectivity – improve across the town centre
- Market place – redesign market and square, open-up entrance to Clarendon Square
- Culture & Leisure – enhance / promote cultural and leisure offer.
- Independent, specialist businesses – Improve the quality and diversity of the independent retail offer and create a Challenge Fund to aid this.
- Commercially-led mixed use development on the sites currently occupied by the multi-storey and surface car parks at Union Street.

Traffic Management & Pedestrian Study

7.07 Having undertaken an assessment of Hyde's transport network the study recommends the following improvements are made to the study area:

- Improve the quality of Hyde Central Station and town centre bus stops, and improve rail service frequencies.
- Improve the operation of the key highway corridors and key junctions to reduce the congestion that currently causes significant delay.
- Investigate ways of reducing the rat running that still takes place in traffic calming areas.
- Improve the provision of signal controlled pedestrian crossings on key desire lines.
- Address the severance of the main shopping area caused by Market Street.
- Introducing on-street or off-street cycle facilities.

7.08 Following the completion of these studies, the Council has committed over £1million to Hyde to undertake public realm and highway improvements, as a first step to improving and promoting the town centre. The largest element of these improvements will be a new



market square and outdoor market that will create a high quality focal point and gateway in the town's core retail area.

Retail & Town Centre Uses

- 7.09 The Tameside Retail Study indicated the potential for some increases in both the food and non food retail offer in Hyde. However a new major food store at Hattersley post completion of the study will reduce this projected potential.
- 7.10 Hyde should therefore focus on improving its retail offer through regenerating its existing retail premises / floorspace and the general retail environment. The study recognises the role and distinctiveness of Hyde, together with the impact of neighbouring centres. As such, it suggests that Hyde should build on its cultural assets and independent businesses, and consolidate the town centre to reflect and aid this.
- 7.11 As with all of Tameside's town centres, Hyde contains a diverse range of non-retail uses (including financial services, cultural and religious facilities, medical services, pubs and restaurants and light industrial uses) complementing its retail offer and providing diversity in the town's economy. It is such uses, allied with its existing retail offer that could play an important role in providing Hyde with a sustainable future.

Design & Public Realm

- 7.12 As with many of the Borough's town centres, Hyde contains a range of building types and ages from Listed Victorian properties to modern supermarkets and 1960's office buildings. It is essential that future development (buildings and public realm) represents high quality design that contributes to regenerating the town centre and improving its visual appearance.
- 7.13 A draft Hyde Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced by the Council to provide guidance to developers wishing to invest in the town, together with details of potential future projects that could help to improve / regenerate Hyde. These include the following:

Development Projects

- Refurbishment of Clarendon Square
- Eastern Gateway (Clark Way)
- Western Gateway (Manchester Road)
- Consolidation of Market Street
- Marketing Strategy & Accompanying Initiatives

Public Realm

- Pedestrian link to Donnybrook Medical Centre
- Public Transport Links
- Rail Gateway
- Western Gateway – improved pedestrian environment
- Eastern Gateway – pedestrian route across Clark Way
- Redesigned Market Square & Outdoor Market
- Improvements to Market Street
- Public Realm Guidance Document



8.00 Denton

- 8.01 Denton is located in the south of the borough, straddling the M67 and in close proximity to the M60. Once famed for its felt hat making industry, Denton has now become an important retail destination following the development of a town centre Morrison's store and the Crown Point North shopping area. Sited next to the town's M67 junction, Crown Point draws shoppers from across the sub-region.
- 8.02 Whilst these assets have increased the town's 'high street' retail offer, they have had a negative impact on the town's 'traditional' independent businesses and increased traffic congestion.

Retail & Town Centre Uses

- 8.03 Building on the success of Crown Point North Retail Park, the former Oldham Batteries site (Crown Point East) south of the M67 has planning permission for a second retail development that will further enhance Denton's retail position within the Borough and help draw retail uses and people back toward the core town centre. This site is being actively progressed with help from the Council via its compulsory purchase powers to help deliver comprehensive development of the site.
- 8.04 Crown Point East is expected to have a benchmark turnover of around £40m. Due to the success of Crown Point North Retail Park it would appear there is capacity for further retail floorspace over and above this existing commitment. However the Tameside Retail Study advises that this represents an inflated position due to increases in market share and that there is a need to address the balance of the retail hierarchy (with Ashton at the top), as previously highlighted. Therefore after Crown Point East there is no identified need for further floorspace.
- 8.05 Therefore retail improvements in Denton should be associated with the existing retail core to minimise the number of vacancies and improve pedestrian linkages between Crown Point North Retail Park, the existing core and Crown Point East. As detailed above, greater competition from the Crown Point East site may result in increased vacancies / loss of independents in areas of the town centre. If this does occur, alternative uses and potential consolidation of the town centre may need to be considered.
- 8.06 Whilst the town's modern retail developments will continue to dominate its use mix, there are a number of other uses such as pubs and restaurants, banks, estate agents and medical services, together with the town hall and park which serve a more localised need. It is important that these uses and facilities are retained and where appropriate encouraged to expand.

Design & Public Realm

- 8.07 Physically, the town centre has been able to improve the quality of its public realm from developer contributions secured from Crown Point. This has enabled improvements to be made to primary streets and the former Market Square, which has been redesigned to create a high quality civic space.
- 8.08 As with many of Tameside centres, a town colour (dark blue) has traditionally been applied to the street furniture. Yet with the modern palettes used at Crown Point and the former market square, together with a likely modern palette at the former Oldham Batteries site, the town colour elements of the town centre are appearing at odds and out dated. In order



to create consistency across the town centre and visually connect Crown Point and former Oldham Batteries site into the core town centre, replacing the town colours furniture should be considered.

- 8.09 Whilst the hard landscaping of the town's public realm has been improved, there's a need to try and use the public realm to reduce the dominance of the town's road network. Ashton Road and the Manchester Road, Stockport Road junction are particularly problematic areas where the road considerably hinders the pedestrian / town centre environment. Applying measures to help reduce this dominance will not only improve the town centre environment, but will also help cohesion between areas such as the park and market square to Ashton Road / Crown Point / Oldham Batteries.
- 8.10 As with the majority of town centres, Denton's urban fabric comprises a range of architectural styles and periods, with the historic (predominantly Victorian) core providing the town centre with a number of distinct buildings that contribute to the town's identity. Conversely, the majority of the post war development offer limited enhancement of the town's environment. Future development within the town centre must remedy this with developments that enhance the town's environment and where possible utilise and complement key historic buildings.

9.00 Stalybridge

- 9.01 Of all Tameside's town's Stalybridge has witnessed one of the greatest use diversifications with a number of residential developments and an emergence of the night-time and evening economy dominating areas of the centre. Together with the above, there are other declining uses including a range of high street retail and financial services. There is a bus station providing services across the surrounding area and a heavy rail train station on the Trans Pennine route, linking the town to Manchester, Leeds, Manchester Airport and beyond.

Retail & Town Centre Uses

- 9.02 The town's current retail offer comprises a Tesco and Aldi supermarkets together with a dwindling number of independent business located within the historic streets (a large proportion of the town centre is within a conservation area) and 1960's precinct development. The presence of the supermarkets have played a part in the decline of independent traders, as has the offer in neighbouring centres together with the recession and changing shopping habits.
- 9.03 This sentiment is supported by the findings of the Retail Study, which views the centre as generally serving a convenience goods shopping role, with the majority of expenditure directed towards the Tesco store, which dominates shopping patterns in the local area. Comparison goods offer is limited with the town retaining low levels of expenditure.
- 9.04 Despite elements of comparison retail decline, the Tameside Retail Study identifies some further scope for food retail development within the town but notes that this should be to improve the quality of the retail offer as a competitor to the existing Tesco store.
- 9.05 With elements of the town centre in decline, the town's night time economy began to dominate the western area of the town, with numerous bars, restaurants, take-a-ways and clubs. Whilst this has been beneficial to the local economy, it has also resulted in problems with anti-social behaviour and has left areas of the town centre lifeless during the day.



After transforming the western area of the town centre into a night-time destination, a number of the bars and clubs have now closed, leaving this area of the town centre without any use, day or night.

- 9.06 Allied with the declining night time economy, the western area of the town centre also contains a large potential development site known as Stalybridge West. The site; bounded by Market Street, the Rail Station / line and the River Tame, has a Council prepared development brief seeking mixed use development comprising residential, office based employment, leisure and elements of retail (including food). With its close proximity to the rail station, linking the town with notably Manchester Piccadilly, Victoria, Huddersfield and Leeds, this large site could play a part in diversifying the borough's employment opportunities and prosperity of the town centre.

Design & Public Realm

- 9.07 Large elements of the town centre are covered by a conservation area which has helped to preserve elements of the town's historic character. However, despite this designation the town has suffered from poorly designed buildings and deterioration of the historic fabric, as highlighted by the draft Stalybridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (sections 6.1 to 6.3 and 6.23 to 6.25). Through future development this issue should be addressed with developments that successfully utilise and complement the historic environment with high quality buildings that enhance the town's environment.
- 9.08 Set against the low quality buildings across the town centre, there are also developments that have applied a high quality, bespoke design such as Longlands Mill and the non-generic Tesco's; which have helped to enhance areas. It is such developments that should be viewed as setting a precedent for the future, particularly for the large Stalybridge West development area. This area presents the largest potential development site within the town and could play an important role in further diversifying the town's use mix and improving connections to the rail station.
- 9.09 The quality of the public realm across the town centre is mixed, with areas of well defined urban grain creating clear routes and spaces through the town. Equally there are areas where due to inappropriate development or site clearance the urban grain is fragmented leading to poorly defined routes and environments. Amongst this public realm 'framework' the quality of landscape finishes is variable. Spaces such as Armentieres Square and the canal sides have recently been landscaped with new materials, yet equally there are numerous areas that would benefit from new materials, de-cluttering of street furniture and improved maintenance.

10.00 Droylsden

- 10.01 Droylsden lies on the western fringe of the Borough, neighbouring Manchester City. The town centre is centrally located, with residential communities surrounding it. South of the town centre lies the historical Fairfield Moravian Settlement, this is covered by Conservation Area status, with a number of the buildings also being listed.
- 10.02 Droylsden will be the first town in Tameside to receive the Metrolink and it's hoped this transport connection to Manchester City Centre will enhance the towns economy of the town and contribute to the success of the Droylsden Marina development. This development is a large residential-led mixed use scheme that's created a new marina and will provide a range of high quality homes and office developments in the heart of the town



centre. The first phase of the housing element has been completed and a revised proposal for the remaining residential element has recently received planning permission.

Retail & Town Centre Uses

- 10.03 The town's 'high street' offer comprises a Tesco supermarket, the Droylsden Shopping Centre and properties along Market Street and elements of Fairfield Road. Collectively these comprise a range of retail and non-retail uses including high street banks, estate agents, pubs, medical services and retailers such as Wilkinsons, Somerfield and Boots. In addition to these high street uses, the town centre also contains Droylsden Football Club, a small number of industrial units and the town's library.
- 10.04 Similarly to Stalybridge there is scope for some expansion of the food retail floorspace offer. It would be advantageous if this expanded offer was able to bring a new food operator into the town, increasing user choice over the currently dominant Tesco store. However, the recent completion of a new Morrisons store in Openshaw is likely to impact on this projected growth capacity.
- 10.05 Beyond the town's supermarket offer, the Droylsden Shopping Centre and its immediately neighbouring retail units are well served by the local community, with few vacancies (at present). However, in contrast the severing effect of Manchester Road has resulted in lower pedestrian movement to the south of this route, leading to a number of retail vacancies. It is hoped that as Droylsden Marina progresses pedestrian movement will improve, aiding the viability of retail and other town centre uses in this area.

Design & Public Realm

- 10.06 The character of Droylsden is undoubtedly affected by the primary road routes of Manchester Road and Market Street which dissect the centre, hindering its ability to effectively function as a cohesively. Whilst traffic flow along these routes cannot be reduced, public realm interventions should be used to help soften the environment and improve pedestrian movement. Such interventions will be particularly appropriate to aid connections with the Marina development.
- 10.07 This need to create a cohesive town centre is also evident in the town's street furniture. As with all the towns across the Borough, Droylsden has a town colour (red) that's applied to the street furniture within the town area. Whilst this has helped provide an element of identity, the furniture and concept does not present a modern feel and will be at odds with modern furniture and materials applied to new development such as the Marina and Metrolink.
- 10.08 The town centre's built form comprises a mix of architectural styles, including Victorian properties at Market Street and Fairfield Road, the 1960's/70's shopping centre development and the modern developments at the Marina. Whilst the varying styles create diversity within the street scape, few of the buildings represent high quality design, with the only exceptions being the former co-operative building at the junction of Manchester Road / Fairfield Road, and the new developments surrounding the new Marina.
- 10.09 Any future developments within the town centre should be of a high quality, sustainable design following the precedent set by the Marina and relevant historic buildings.



11.00 Hattersley

- 11.01 Hattersley lies in the south east of the Borough neighbouring Mottram and Broadbottom and within close proximity to Hyde. The community has good access to the region's motorway network via the M67 which begins at Hattersley and lies on the Glossop to Piccadilly train line.
- 11.02 Developed as a Manchester overspill estate in the early 1960's the area has suffered from high levels of deprivation for a number of years. In the early 2000's the Hattersley regeneration initiative was launched involving physical, social and economic programmes to improve the quality of life in Hattersley. In physical terms this has involved the removal of low quality housing and its replacement with new, primarily private housing. Phase 1 of this programme is currently under way.

Retail & Town Centre Uses

- 11.03 In addition to new housing development, a new district centre is being created at Stockport Road, adjacent to the M67 junction. This area already contains a McDonalds, Premier Inn, Brewers Fare and a small cluster of light industrial units. This is being further enhanced with the development of a large Tesco store and a new community centre containing library and community space, together with offices for police, Peak Valley Housing, Credit Union and the Hattersley Community Partnership. The existing district centre is to be demolished and eventually redeveloped.
- 11.04 As development occurs of the new Tesco store and ancillary community hub the status of the existing retail centre and new district centre will be reviewed to more appropriately reflect the retailing positions of each location.
- 11.05 In addition to the new district centre, an existing parade of shops at Honiton Avenue has been demolished and replaced with new retail units and an apartment development. Adjacent to this development is a local pub; one of two in Hattersley.

Design & Public Realm

- 11.06 As is common of large housing estates of this era, Hattersley is a very 'green' area with large areas of public realm and open space. Whilst in areas this helps to 'soften' the environment, they can also become areas of blight. As part of the new housing development underway, areas of this public realm are to be improved and formalised to improve the visual appearance and functionality of the spaces.
- 11.07 The existing housing stock across Hattersley has been constructed using a small group of house types of a traditional form. This principle has been taken forward into the new housing developments, but strict design standards have been applied to ensure all new development represent high quality design that enhance the character of Hattersley.



12.00 Mossley

- 12.01 Mossley lies at the north eastern edge of Tameside, bordering the Saddleworth area of Oldham. An historic small Pennine town, Mossley is characterised by its steep Pennine topography and the stone buildings located amongst this landscape. The town developed with the wool and cotton industries, with a number of spinning mills developed across the valley.
- 12.02 The town is commonly divided into 2 main areas, Top Mossley and Bottom Mossley; mirroring the topography of the landscape. Top Mossley houses the town's primary shopping area and the majority of its public services, with the exception of the rail station. While this role is likely to remain, Bottom Mossley has received the majority of the town's 'modern' housing developments which in turn is likely to increase demand for retail, leisure and services in. This demand and potential viability may also be aided by the town's detachment from the borough's other urban areas.

Retail & Town Centre Uses

- 12.03 Mossley's current town centre is located within Top Mossley where the town's Co-op supermarket and a cluster of independent traders (including a butchers, estate agents, chemist, dentists, hairdressers, café, organic food stores and physiotherapist) are located, together with pubs, restaurants, George Lawton Community Hall and the town's library.
- 12.04 Bottom Mossley also contains a local parade of shops at Manchester Road, together with the town's rail station, central post office, pubs, restaurants, doctor's surgeries and an RBS bank.
- 12.05 Whilst Top Mossley is a relatively small town centre (ranked a 'local centre' in the retail hierarchy), the town has received high levels of residential development's over the past 15 years, considerably increasing its population. Whilst this has not yet lead to an increase in retail or employment developments, in the future demand may exist to expand, particularly the retail and leisure offer.

Design & Public Realm

- 12.06 The town centre and shopping parade at Manchester Road, Bottom Mossley are characterised by the historic built environment, dominated by Victorian properties constructed of stone. While this historic character has not lead to conservation area designation, it is important that this character is retained and enhanced by future development.
- 12.07 Whilst the existing town centre (Top Mossley) has largely retained its historic character, with limited post war development within the town centre itself, the developments that have occurred, such as the Library, Methodist Church, Co-op and George Lawton Hall have failed to acknowledge the local vernacular in terms of materials or scale.
- 12.08 The town's public realm fails to appropriately 'dress' the town, with standard pavers and tarmac patching applied across the town centre. Whilst street trees successfully add a welcome green element to the public realm, a much improved palette of materials and furniture is needed to improve the visual appearance and historic character of the area.



13.00 Summary

- 13.01 The promotion and creation of a vibrant and viable town centres is realised both by current and pending national planning policy as an important element in delivering sustainable developments. The draft NPPF retains the sequential test of PPS4, yet it also requires planning authorities to identify appropriate edge of centre sites where suitable and viable town centre sites. Where these are not available, other accessible locations should be identified.
- 13.02 Despite the focus on town centres, evidence shows there are increasing trends from retailers to re-evaluate investments and current trading locations. Inadvertently this would appear to be leading to the development of a two tier retailing environment with lower order in centre and higher order out of centre. Within Tameside out of centre developments such as Snipe Retail Park have the potential to create this tiering. It is therefore vital that Tameside's centres react appropriately to this threat and attempt to limit its evolution.
- 13.03 The primary focus must be on strengthening Ashton as the sub-regional centre. The town's retail sector has been relatively resilient during the recession and there's scope for additional floor space, but there's a need to attract higher order retailers and create greater use diversity across the town centre.
- 13.04 In other centres, not all of which benefit from the potential to expand their retail floorspace, improvements need to be focused on enhancing the retail environment, consolidating town centres where appropriate, enhancing and promoting niche elements of the centre and regenerating floor space. However, this needs to be undertaken with a realisation that not all of Tameside's centres can survive in their current form. Centres need to be realistic about their future function and role within the Borough.
- 13.05 The role high quality design can play in aiding the prosperity of centres should not be underestimated, as acknowledged by national policy (existing & proposed). Attractive, usable and welcoming environments create places and spaces where people want to be. In turn, this attracts investors which helps create the viability needed to feed the vibrancy. This design quality needs to be applied across all centres, through new developments and particularly public realm.

14.00 Key Issues

14.01 Tameside's Retail Trends

- The retailing position of the Borough as a whole is considered good with 96% of food retailing, and 69% of non food retailing expenditure being retained within the Borough. This indicates sustainable shopping patterns and that people are not principally inconvenienced by the existing retail offer available. However, there is some comparison goods leakage outside the Borough that could be captured in part by appropriate expansion. Such expansion should be focused towards Ashton.
- Denton has increased its market share of comparison retail significantly with the development of Crown Point North Retail Park, which will continue to grow with the proposed Crown Point East development.
- There is a need to avoid the creation of a two tier retail environment across the Borough, with out of centre retailing focused on high end and in centre retailing focused on lower order offer.



- The Retail Study suggests in some instances town centre boundaries appear to be encouraging development on or beyond the fringes of what reasonably could be termed the town centre, conflicting with ambitions to strengthen and consolidate the centres.

14.02 Ashton as the sub-regional centre

- Ashton needs to be strengthened in its role as the sub-regional centre improving its comparison retail offer and diversifying its town centre use mix. Where possible, investment should be focused towards the town to help achieve this 'strengthened' role. Once Tameside has a strong Capital, a more successful role for its other town's can be sought.
- The Retail Study highlights an additional potential for increased convenience goods offer within the town centre.

14.03 'Other' Town's

- Capacities for future retail floor space vary across the Borough's other centres, but is generally more limited than that available in Ashton:
- Hyde – some expenditure for some increase in convenience & comparison, Tesco development at Hattersley will limit this.
- Denton – further retail floorspace above existing commitments should be resisted.
- Stalybridge – some scope for further convenience development which should improve the quality of the offer as a competitor to Tesco.
- Droylsden - some scope for further convenience expansion which should improve the quality of the offer as a competitor to Tesco. However, the Morrison's development in Openshaw is likely to impact on the growth capacity.
- Mossley – maybe future demand resulting from recent residential developments.
- Centres around the Borough have distinctiveness in terms of character and use offer that should be retained and enhanced to create a future role of each of the centres. Not all centres can fulfil or seek the same function and survive going forward.

14.04 Design & Public Realm

- The design quality of buildings and public realm across the Borough's centres are largely poor and require improvement. A modern palette of materials and furniture needs to be applied to town centre environments and design standards should be applied to ensure future development represents high quality sustainable design that enhances the character of its surroundings.

15.00 Cross Cutting Themes

15.01 Links / themes with other topic areas:

Economy & Employment – the Borough's town centres will play a key role in supporting and diversifying Tameside's economy. Aspirations to strengthen Ashton's sub-regional standing will be particularly reliant on improving its economic performance.

Housing – appropriately sited and designed housing remains an important town centre use that compliments and aids viability of other town centre uses.

Decentralised Energy & Climate Change – the concentration of development within town centres will help enable the viable development of decentralised forms of energy production such as district heating networks and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plants. The



Tameside Decentralised Energy Study highlights Ashton and Stalybridge as centres with particular potential for delivering these technologies.

Heritage & Conservation – the historic architecture and landscapes of the Borough’s centres provide them with a distinct identity and character. Such assets should be utilised and enhanced through town centre developments / improvements to create the bespoke environment needed to attract users and investors.

Transport and Infrastructure – centres will continue to act as key transport and infrastructure hubs. Through continued focus on developing and strengthening our town centres, appropriate transport and infrastructure will play a key role in ensuring sustainable prosperity.