

Written Statement

Adopted Edition

2003



Chorley



attractions. At the same time the market town character of Chorley needs to be preserved and local specialist shops encouraged to remain in the town centre. The Borough Council has also embarked on environmental improvements in the main shopping streets and this Plan endorses that commitment into the future, coupled with traffic management measures wherever necessary (Policies EP12 in Chapter 4 and TR15 in Chapter 8). Chorley has to fulfil its retail potential if only to retain, rather than improve, its position as a shopping centre. Anything less could well see a further loss of trade and employment to elsewhere.

LOCATIONS FOR MAJOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

- 9.15 Major retail development is that which is intended to serve a wide shopping catchment area. The sequential approach to selecting sites for retail (and other uses) set out in PPG6 means that first preference should be given to locations in town centres, then other centres, with locations away from such centres only being acceptable if there are no suitable more central sites and there would not be an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of nearby town, district, or local centres. Chorley is the only main shopping town centre in the Borough but account must be taken of nearby town centres in neighbouring local authority areas. Clayton Green is considered to be the only district centre in the Borough.

SP1 Subject to the full provisions of this Policy, major retail development proposals will be permitted in Chorley Town Shopping Centre, as shown on the Proposals Map. If no suitable site exists here preference will next be given to sites on the edge of the centre and then, providing the proposal is consistent with their scale and function, to District and then Local Centres, as shown on the Proposals Map.

Major retail development proposals will not be permitted:

- (a) if there is an unacceptable environmental impact; or
- (b) the road network, with any suitable improvements proposed, is unable to accommodate predicted traffic levels; or
- (c) on sites outside the above mentioned Centres unless there is no suitable site available within the Centres. If this is the case appropriate proposals may be permitted on sites on the edge of these Centres provided that the applicant can demonstrate a need for the proposal.

If there is no suitable site available in or on the edge of the above Centres appropriate proposals may be permitted in out-of-centre locations provided that the applicant can demonstrate a need for the proposal and subject to the provisions below.

On all sites outside Chorley Town Shopping Centre, the following criteria must also be satisfied:

- (i) that the applicant can demonstrate that the impact likely to result from the development, including impact from other recent and proposed developments in the locality would not undermine the vitality and viability of a nearby Town, District or Local Centre as a whole including those outside the Borough; and
- (ii) the site is well served by public transport and is readily accessible by foot and cycle.

In assessing whether sites and locations are suitable, account will also be taken of whether, from a functional point of view, the use genuinely requires a substantial adjacent customer car park, a large single floor area or a large external use and storage area.

The suitability of the sites listed in Policy SP2 for major retail development has been assessed against the above criteria.

In addition retail use will not be permitted on sites allocated for other uses unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal would not reduce the range and quality of sites available for such uses.

RETAIL ALLOCATIONS

- 9.16 Taking account of Chorley town's new bus interchange coupled with the move of the Royal Mail sorting office and the prospect of being able to retain the Post Office in some form, the opportunity to redevelop the block of property bounded by High Street/Cleveland Street/Union Street/New Market Street arises. The most successful way to introduce further retail development into a town centre is to extend around the most popular part of the shopping area. Market Walk has become the shopping focus of the town centre attracting high flows of shoppers. It is logical therefore to link any development in the vicinity with Market Walk; this could mean building over the Flat Iron half of the car park. Such a scheme would need to include replacement car parking provision (see paragraph 8.40) and relocation of the Tuesday market. However, in view of the planning permissions that have now been granted for a retail food store and public house this is now unlikely.
- 9.17 It is also appropriate to encourage the re-use of vacant buildings and the implementation of redevelopment schemes, some of which have been granted planning permission. Following the decision by the Co-operative Retail Society to cease non-food retailing a shopping occupier was found for the former Homeworld store. However, should the building become vacant again in the Plan period, the site would be suitable for a retail re-use or leisure; in the past the building, with a proposed extension, had planning permission for a range of entertainment uses.
- 9.18 Two sites in Gillibrand Street – the site of the former Graham's store and land on the corner of Market Street were cleared of buildings following the grant of planning permission for ground floor retail uses. The Market Street corner site will have upper floor residential use, as part of the newly constructed building. The former Graham's store site remains vacant. The site of 5-13 Fazakerly Street has been redeveloped for unit stores.
- 9.19 The retail study referred to in paragraph 9.14, in addition to finding a quantitative need for additional town centre comparison floorspace, also found that additional retail warehousing (in appropriate product areas) could be supported. The assessment concluded that within the limitations of market potential there is a corresponding requirement for site allocation in one or more locations that relate directly to the town centre. The two remaining sites in Policy SP2 below are, in sequential terms, edge of centre sites but relate well to the town centre and are well placed to cater for the need for more retail warehousing. The LAC vehicle hire premises at Clifford Street/Portland Street has been redeveloped for a food and drink use plus a retail store, and is also allocated for leisure purposes (Policy LT2). The former Vimto bottling plant site at George Street/Lyons Lane has been redeveloped recently for a Do-it –Yourself store plus a range of smaller units.

SP2 The following sites have been allocated for retail development taking account of the provisions of Policy SP1:

1. High Street/Cleveland Street/Union Street including the bus station site/New Market Street and the Flat Iron;
2. Bolton Street/Pall Mall, Chorley +
3. Corner of Gillibrand Street and Market Street, Chorley +
4. 5-13 Fazakerley Street, Chorley +
5. 5-9 Gillibrand Street, Chorley

or, if there are no other suitable sites for the use proposed in a Centre:

6. Clifford Street/Portland Street, Chorley +
7. George street/Lyons Lane, Chorley +

+ These sites had been redeveloped, or were in use, for retail purposes as of August 2003.

PEDESTRIANISED DEVELOPMENTS

9.20 Pedestrian priority in shopping streets can greatly add to their retail attractiveness. For its part the Borough Council is proposing to extend such measures (Proposal TR15 in Chapter 8) and improve the environment of the existing pedestrianised areas (Proposal EP12 in Chapter 4). It is appropriate to ensure that new shopping developments link to and complement these schemes.

SP3 In Chorley town shopping centre pedestrianised thoroughfares should be incorporated within new shopping developments where practical and these should link into existing pedestrianised areas whenever possible including proposals for Market Street, Chorley in Proposal TR15.

PRIMARY SHOPPING AREA

9.21 A major attraction to shoppers in Chorley town centre is the Primary Shopping Area where there is a compact concentration of predominantly shopping frontages at street level. To break up this area with numerous non-retail uses such as banks, building societies, estate agents, betting offices or amusement arcades would significantly reduce its attractiveness to shoppers.

However, if carefully controlled such uses can support the retail attractiveness of the area. Greater provision for non-retail uses is made in Policy SP5 below. Cafes and restaurants can make a positive contribution to the street scene, to the vitality and viability of shopping areas and to the continued use of town centres outside normal shopping hours. They are therefore uses which should be allowed in the Primary Shopping Area.

SP4 Within the Primary Shopping Area of Chorley town shopping centre, as shown on the Proposals Map, the only uses which will be permitted at ground floor level are: Class A1 (shop) or A3 (food and drink) and, with the exception of properties in Market Walk, Class A2 (financial and professional services); provided that the proposal will not have a detrimental effect either individually or cumulatively, on the shopping character of the Primary Shopping Area, and will contribute to its vitality and viability.

LANCASHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN

- 8.13 This takes into account how to manage the demand for movement through increases in personal mobility and the demand for transport effectively, especially in urban areas. One of the objectives is to constrain peak hour traffic volumes in the towns by 2006 to, or below, those of 1991. It contains a number of policies to secure improvements to the transportation network, seeks to improve public transport facilities and proposes no further increases in town centre parking with a shift to short stay parking in town centres. It resists the provision of additional long stay commuter parking.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT – TESTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 8.14 The primary mechanism for achieving the aims of PPG13 for land use and transport planning is to reduce the need to travel. By influencing the location of different types of development relative to *transport provision*, fostering forms of development and public infrastructure which encourage walking, cycling and public transport use, the Council will seek to promote a more sustainable form of development. In turn this will reduce congestion and therefore the environmental impact of private transport. It will also ensure that where new development is proposed any increase in traffic will not result in a loss of amenity in adjacent areas by virtue of increased noise, poor highway safety etc.

TR1 Development in accordance with other Policies in the Plan which is likely to generate a significant number of trips will only be granted planning permission where:

- (a) it can be served by existing public transport provision or appropriate provision can be made for public transport services;
- (b) appropriate measures are included to enable access by foot;
- (c) appropriate measures are included to enable access by bicycle;
- (d) it will not result in an unacceptable increase in traffic flows through residential or other environmentally sensitive areas;
- (e) it is situated adjacent to primary routes or other main roads or is close to and can be linked adequately to appropriate roads.

ROAD HIERARCHY

- 8.15 Lancashire County Council is the authority responsible for most roads in the Plan area. The Borough Council is not a Highway Authority in its own right although for the central urban area of the District it acts as the County Council's partner in respect of many highway matters. The Highway Authority for the M6, M61 and M65 Motorways and all purpose trunk roads is the Highways Agency.
- 8.16 To assist with justifying road schemes and improvements and to help make best use of the existing highway network particularly in terms of influencing the location of large development sites a hierarchy of traffic routes has been defined for the Plan area this is shown on Map 3.

TR2 A hierarchy of traffic routes is proposed. All new major development will be expected to be sited close to the main road network or be linked adequately to this by the secondary road network. Planning permission will not be granted for development involving access to the main road network which would result in unacceptable interference with the free and safe flow of traffic.

However, all development proposals need to be appropriately designed in terms of their external appearance and respect the character of the areas in which they are located.

- 2.20 The Council applies spacing standards to ensure that new dwellings are not too close to each other and nearby buildings in terms of amenity and privacy. It has also produced guidelines on the size, design and positioning of house extensions. However, all too often designers produce scheme proposals which use standard building types, external materials that are alien to the local area and estate layouts which take little account of the individual features of the site and its surroundings.
- 2.21 The development must also be sensitive to the character and local distinctiveness of the wider area around the site, which is the result of a series of natural and human processes and events over many hundreds, sometimes thousands of years. Attention needs to be paid therefore not only to creating a new development which both works well as an environment for those that are going to use it, but also fits well on the site, incorporating existing landscape and wildlife features. Very often retaining vegetation and water areas, boundary and other landscape features currently present on a site can help the new development appear less stark and blend in with its surroundings.
- 2.22 To ensure that proper account is taken of the characteristics of the site, designers are required to adopt a thorough and systematic approach to planning a new development. The Borough Council will expect designers to have surveyed the site and its surroundings, identified key features worthy of retention and prepared a design proposal which incorporates these and is in keeping with the character of the area. The Council will expect designers to take full account of any development brief and other guidance produced or adopted by the Authority including Village Design Statements and the Lancashire-wide assessment of landscape character which provides guidance on respecting local distinctiveness. However, this does not mean that the designs for new buildings should just be copies of period styles, as modern interpretations of locally characteristic architectural features could be appropriate. The layout and spacing of new development is similarly an important aspect of ensuring that the character of the surrounding area is respected. In terms of housing these sentiments are set out in paragraphs 54 to 56 in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3. The Council is preparing Supplementary Planning Guidance on design in order to raise design standards within the Borough.

GN5 The design of proposed developments will be expected to be well related to their surroundings, including public spaces, and with landscaping fully integrated into the overall scheme. The appearance, layout and spacing of new buildings, which may include innovative and original design forms, should respect the local distinctiveness of the area.

Applicants for planning permission will be expected to demonstrate that they have followed a methodology which sets out the design principles adopted, and have carried out a full survey of the site and its surroundings, the likely impact of the development and how this is to be mitigated, and propose a design which is specific to the site. The following design features will also be considered:

- (a) building height, bulk and roof shape;
- (b) external construction materials;
- (c) proposed landscaping and incorporating existing important and characteristic landscape features;
- (d) layout, levels and spacing of buildings;
- (e) retaining important natural habitats and historical landscape features; and
- (f) measures which help to prevent crime and promote community safety.

During construction works developers will be required to suitably protect those wildlife, landscape and other important features which are to be retained.