

*"Securing a Better
environment for all the people of
Birmingham"*



November 1998

erdington

action plan



Introduction	3
<i>An Introduction to the Plan</i>	3
<i>Status of the Plan</i>	3
<i>What Area does the Plan Cover</i>	3
Erdington - The Place	4
<i>The Local Community</i>	4
What will the Action Plan do?	7
<i>The Vision</i>	7
<i>Land Use Planning Policy Context</i>	7
Supporting the Shopping Centre	9
<i>Overview</i>	9
<i>The Primary Retail Frontage Policy</i>	9
<i>Development Opportunities</i>	10
Transportation	12
<i>Road Hierarchy</i>	12
<i>Highway Improvement Lines</i>	12
<i>Public Transport</i>	15
<i>Traffic Management</i>	15
<i>Car Parking</i>	16
<i>Cycling</i>	17
<i>Pedestrianisation</i>	17
Opportunities for Environmental Improvements	20
Housing	22
Appendix - Proposals	23

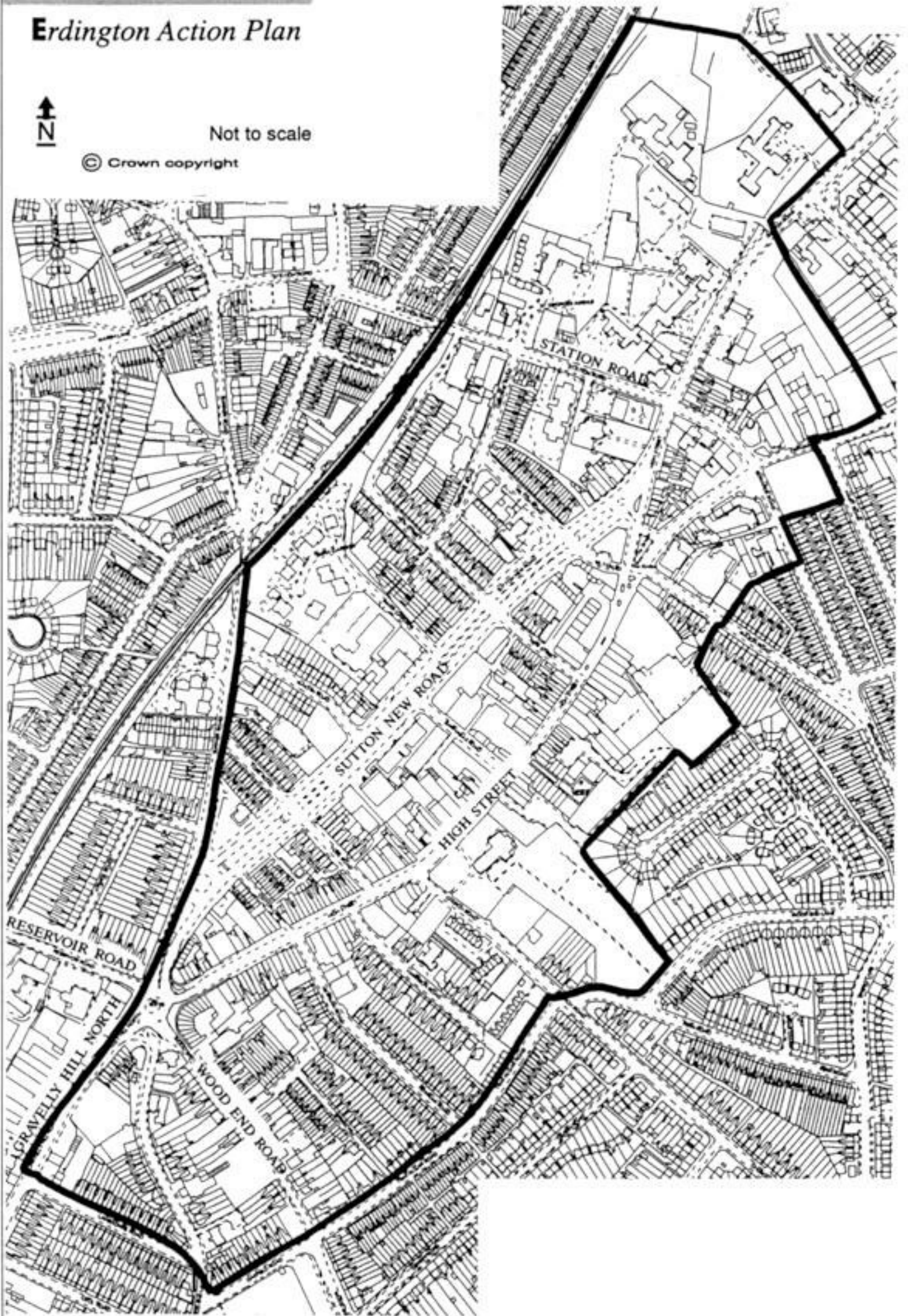
Map 1

Erdington Action Plan



Not to scale

© Crown copyright



An Introduction to the Plan

Erdington is one of the largest suburban shopping centres in Birmingham; a busy, vibrant centre, it provides a wide range of shops and other services at the heart of the Erdington community.

In recent years, however, there has been a growing concern that the centre is in decline. This concern is based upon changes in long-established shopping patterns, the development of new types of shopping, which has seen a move away from traditional 'high street' centres, as well as increasing competition from other centres in Birmingham.

This action plan has been prepared in response to these concerns. The plan has been published by the City Council following discussions with local people, traders and businesses. It deals with those matters raised in the public consultation exercises carried out by the City Council in Summer 1995 and Spring 1998.

Status of the Plan

This plan is predominantly a land use plan. This means that it is largely concerned with the physical environment, dealing with such matters as traffic management, car parking, new development opportunities and the potential for improvements to the environment in Erdington.

The local action plan has been prepared within the context of the Birmingham Plan - the City's Unitary Development Plan. It is one of a series of plans being prepared across the City to set out detailed proposals for local areas.

The plan has been adopted as 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' to the Birmingham Plan. It will be used to direct and guide future development within the

centre and will be used in the determination of planning applications.

What Area does the Plan Cover?

The action plan focuses on Erdington High Street and the surrounding residential areas. The plan area is shown on Map 1. It extends from Erdington Abbey in the north to the former Jaffray Hospital site in the south. The Birmingham - Lichfield railway line and Summer Road forms its boundary to the west, with Trafalgar Road to the east.



"Erdington remains a busy shopping centre"

Erdington - The Place

The Local Community

The plan area covers part of Erdington Ward, within the Erdington Parliamentary Constituency.

The 1991 census showed that Erdington Ward had a population of 23,738, a decrease of 4.5% since 1981. This fall in population was particularly prominent in the younger age group, with the population below 24 falling by over 8%. There was also an increase of 3.5% in the number of pensioners in the ward. This trend is typical of Birmingham's population but is more pronounced here than in many other areas of the city. Unemployment in Erdington is slightly lower than the city average at 8.4% compared to the City rate of 10.4% (Source: Birmingham Labour Market Bulletin, July 1997). Most of the local workforce is employed in skilled and semi-skilled jobs with relatively few in professional and managerial employment.

Erdington is typical of many traditional 'high street' centres which grew up along arterial roads at the turn of the century following the rapid expansion of Birmingham's suburbs. The character of High Street reflects this historical development with a mix of Victorian and Edwardian buildings and more recent developments. Sutton New Road, completed in 1938, removed much through traffic from High Street and laid the basis for plans for pedestrianisation of High Street to be drawn up by the City Council in 1966. Although the plan has never been implemented in full, the partial pedestrianisation of High Street, between Mason Road and New Street was completed in 1984.

Erdington has long been one of Birmingham's most successful suburban centres and until the 1970's it was the dominant centre in the north of the city.

This position has been challenged over the last 20 years by a number of developments:

- the expansion of Sutton Coldfield town centre
- the development of the One Stop Shopping Centre in Perry Barr
- the completion of The Fort Retail Park in Birmingham Heartlands, which opened in Summer 1997.

Erdington has also been affected, like other centres, by changes in long established shopping patterns which have seen the greater use of the motor car for shopping trips and the growth of out of town foodstores and retail warehouses. These trends have seen a gradual shift of expenditure away from traditional 'high street' shops.

As a consequence, Erdington has seen a significant decline in total retail floorspace since the mid-1980's. This has resulted in the closure and redevelopment of larger stores into smaller units, including the closure of Co-op in 1984, Owen and Owen in 1989, the Queensway store in 1991 and Kwik Save in 1995. There has also been no major new retail development in the centre for many years. The only exceptions to this have been the granting of planning permission in 1997 for a non-food retail store on land at Barnabas Road/Sutton New Road (not yet started) and the submission of a planning application for a new supermarket on the site of the Queens Head Public House on Reservoir Road. The latter has not yet been determined.

Despite this, the centre still provides a wide range of both convenience and comparison goods and is home to a number of national multiples such as Woolworths, Littlewoods, Boots, Dixons etc. Most of these multiples are located at the northern end of High Street, between The 'Village' Green and St. Barnabas Church. The southern end of High Street is characterised by smaller independent traders and a number of charity shops.

The 'Shopping in Birmingham' survey published by the City Council in 1996 showed that Erdington was the fifth largest centre in the City in terms of total retail floorspace and the third largest in terms of estimated retail turnover (a figure surpassed only by the City Centre and Sutton Coldfield town centre). This survey was completed before the opening of the Fort Retail Park which is expected to divert some trade away from Erdington centre.

The survey highlighted the following key statistics about the centre:

Floorspace rank in the City	5th
Estimated turnover in 1993	£130m
Turnover in convenience goods	39%
Floorspace total at 1993	21,900 sq.m. (235,000 sq.ft.)
Floorspace vacancy rate	5%
Number of retail units	154
Population within 3km	103,000
Households within 3km	42,000

The table below shows the estimated turnover in Birmingham's main retail centres in 1993. The turnover in the 15 top locations was estimated to be:

SHOPPING LOCATION	ESTIMATED TURNOVER £m
City Centre	589
Sutton Coldfield	143
Erdington	130
Kings Heath	121
Northfield	118
One Stop, Perry Barr	102
Selly Oak Retail Park	69
Acocks Green	62
New Oscott	46
Small Heath	45
Harborne	44
Minworth	41
Saltley (Alum Rock Rd)	41
Mere Green	40
Handsworth (Soho Rd)	38

(Source: 1994 Shopping Survey, Birmingham City Council)

The centre is relatively well served by road and public transport. The A5127 Birmingham New Road links the centre with Sutton Coldfield and Birmingham City Centre with the Gravelly Hill Interchange (Spaghetti Junction) about 1 1/2 miles to the south. It is also located on the 'outer circle' bus route, connecting Erdington with areas to the west and east such as Witton, Aston and Perry Barr. The Lichfield-Birmingham cross-city line runs within 500 yards (0.5km) of High Street with the nearest station being on Station Road. Centro have also announced plans to investigate the provision of a new train station at Reservoir Road, as part of their 20 year strategy, although no firm commitment or timescale for this has yet been given. A new station here would be particularly well located in relation to 'lower' High Street and will be supported by the City Council.

The centre is also located at the heart of the community and is important not only for shopping but also for education, leisure and cultural facilities. Erdington library (opened in 1907) and the swimming baths (opened in 1925) are located next to the 'Village' Green. St. Barnabas Church, a Grade II Listed



*"Erdington Abbey...
now part of
Highclare School*

Building which dates back to 1822, is located at the centre of High Street. Its mature trees and graveyard soften the otherwise 'hard' environment of High Street.

One of the most notable buildings in the local action plan area is Erdington Abbey, part of which is now used by Highclare School. There is a long history of religious and educational use of this site. The completion of

the church of St. Thomas and St. Edmund in 1850 replaced an earlier chapel/school and between 1876 and 1917 the site was home to an Order of Benedictine Monks. In 1896 Erdington Priory became the first Benedictine Abbey to be founded in England since the Reformation. In 1922 the Abbey was taken over by the Redemptorists who owned the site until its sale to Highclare School. The quality of the Abbey itself was recognised in 1970 when it was included as Grade II in the Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural and Historic Interest.

The Abbey itself forms part of a cluster of educational and religious facilities on Station Road - the others being Osborne Nursery School, the Osborne Junior and Infant School and the Greek Orthodox Church.

There are also a number of other buildings in the Local Plan area which are either Statutory Listed or included in the City Council's "Local List of Buildings, Structures and Features of Architectural, Archaeological or Historic Interest". These buildings make an important contribution to the character of Erdington;

(a) Statutory Listed

- * No. 23 and 25 Station Road. Timber framed house dating back to 16th/17th Century. Grade II listed.

(b) "Local list"

- * Nos. 9 and 11 Spring Lane
- * The Church House, High Street
- * A. Hazel and Sons, High Street
- * Erdington Fire Station
- * Alms Houses, Trafalgar Road
- * Erdington Library

(c) Archaeological Areas

These buildings and areas will be protected in accordance with the policies of the Birmingham Plan (see paragraphs 3.25, 3.26 and 8.36) and the City Council's revised Conservation Strategy (1998).

- * Erdington Village Area of Potential Archaeological Importance



*"Alms Houses,
Trafalgar Road"*

What will the Action Plan do?

The Vision

Erdington High Street has traditionally been one of Birmingham's most successful district centres, not only as a place for shopping but also for educational, leisure and cultural facilities. In the words of one local resident:

"Erdington High Street is a way of life"

The overriding objective of this action plan is to support this role and to help to maintain the vitality and viability of the centre. Its main objectives are:

- to maintain and improve the attractiveness of Erdington as a local shopping centre and a focus for the local community.
- to improve the local environment to make Erdington a safer and more attractive area for those people who shop, work or live here.
- to provide a planning framework to guide and stimulate future investment and new development.
- to review car parking and traffic management in the centre and adjoining residential roads, and help to improve public transport to the centre.

To achieve this it is not proposed that the centre should experience large scale redevelopment. The basic land use pattern will remain with retailing along High Street with a mix of commercial, leisure, community and residential uses in the rest of the plan area.

This plan will focus on physical issues relating to planning and land use but the City Council alone will not be able to change Erdington on its own. This will require the help of all people with an interest in Erdington - local residents, private sector, retailers and developers and other public bodies.

In appropriate circumstances the City Council will seek planning obligations towards securing the transportation and environmental objectives of this action plan.

Land Use Planning Policy Context

This action plan has been prepared in the context of The Birmingham Plan - the City's Unitary Development Plan.

The Birmingham Plan, adopted in 1993, will guide the development of the city in the period up to 2001. It contains both the broad strategic policy direction and more detailed local planning and development policies and proposals. It sets out an overall strategy for Birmingham of:

- revitalising the economy.
- creating an attractive environment both for the benefit of local people and to attract investment.

The objectives established to achieve the strategy include measures to:

- protect and enhance existing centres as a focal point for community life.
- protect and enhance what is good in the environment and to improve what is less good.
- provide good quality transport infrastructure to support economic revitalisation.

The Birmingham Plan recognises that the existing pattern of shopping is the result of historic capital investment decisions based on the need for shops to be as accessible as possible to local communities. The Plan supports existing centres and states that they will continue to be the main focus for new retail development.

The Plan's Erdington Constituency Statement deals with the shopping centre in the following terms:

"An important asset of the area is Erdington shopping centre, the third largest in the city, which has also attracted a variety of office and commercial uses. It is by-passed by Sutton New Road, which allows a relatively safe, part-pedestrianised shopping environment. Although suffering a deficiency in car parking and under increasing pressure from competing centres, recent redevelopment in the High Street has led to consolidation of the centre.

Several further development opportunities exist. A series of proposals aim to safeguard the vitality and status of the centre and control and guide future growth and change. These include opportunities for new offices and shops, the application of primary retail frontage policies, further pedestrianisation of the High Street, additional car parks and a range of rear access and traffic management measures. Environmental improvements and quality landscaping will be encouraged (including the central reservation of Sutton New Road)." (paragraph 11.19).

Other specific proposals which are relevant include:

- the City's Strategic Highway Network (SHN): the A5127 Sutton New Road forms part of the City's SHN where the wider public interest requires high capacity and relatively free flow of traffic and limited frontage access.
- the electrification of the 'cross city' line (Lichfield-Redditch via Birmingham New Street). This was completed in 1995.
- support for a new rail station at Reservoir Road.

The action plan also takes account of relevant Central Government Policies, particularly Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 6 'Town Centres and Retail Developments' (July 1996) and PPG13 -

'Transport'. This emphasises the need to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of local centres and it also expresses a clear preference for new retail developments to be within or adjacent to existing centres.

Overview

Erdington is in competition with other shopping centres in north Birmingham. To maintain and improve its competitiveness it will need to remain as accessible as possible and continue to have a range of shops, facilities and an environment which will attract potential shoppers and visitors. To achieve this, further investment in the centre will be encouraged and promoted by the City Council working in partnership with local residents, traders, local businesses and other organisations with an interest in the future well being of Erdington.

This part of the action plan, therefore, concentrates on those measures which will be promoted to support the role of the centre. These are dealt with in detail in the following sections. The key proposals are:

- the identification of a 'primary retail frontage' policy for the centre.
- opportunities for new development and investment.
- improving facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and car users.
- opportunities for environmental enhancement, including the potential for further pedestrianisation of High Street.
- the review of existing Highway Improvement Lines.

The proposals in the action plan are summarised in Appendix A.

The Primary Retail Frontage Policy

Although its main role is that of a district shopping centre, Erdington is more than simply a place to shop. It also provides an important source of local employment as well as other cultural, social and business services. This diversity is welcomed by both national planning policies and the City's own Unitary Development Plan.

Whilst this diversity is welcomed, it is the retail function which remains the foundation of the centre and the range and choice of shopping opportunities on offer is the main reason why people continue to visit Erdington.

In recent years there has been a growth in the number of non-retail uses, a trend affecting most 'traditional' High Street centres nationwide. In 1984, 35.5% of all units in the centre were in service uses (Source: 'Shopping in Birmingham', Birmingham City Council) and the 1994 shopping survey showed that this had risen to 41.5% of all units (1). Survey work undertaken for this action plan in July 1997 showed that this had fallen slightly to 40% as a result of the closure of three building society branches and their conversion to retail use.

It is considered that the centre has now reached the stage where the growth of further service uses needs to be managed in order to protect the viability of the centre as a whole. This will be achieved through the adoption of a Primary Retail Frontage Policy. This will operate on the basis that further non-retail uses will not normally get planning permission.

(1) Based on survey work undertaken in 1993

The extent of the centre covered by this policy is shown on The Proposals Plan. This covers all of the units on High Street from Mason Road as far south as Church Road and York Road. The policy has been drawn up having regard to a number of key considerations:

- the current distribution of service uses in the centre - there is a marked concentration of these uses at the southern end of High Street and at York Road.
- the distribution of outlets of national and regional multiples eg. Coop, Kwik Save, Boots, W.H. Smiths etc who have a particular concentration at 'upper' High Street.
- levels of pedestrian flows, which are higher north of Coton Lane.
- the need to avoid the creation of 'dead' frontages caused by concentrations of non-retail uses.

Development Opportunities

One of the notable features of the centre, and the wider area covered by the action plan, is the lack of any extensive vacant land and buildings which could offer opportunities for new investment and development.

Vacancy rates in the shopping centre have traditionally been low in comparison with other centres in Birmingham. The City Council's 1994 shopping survey showed that the centre had an average vacancy rate of 5% between 1984-1994 although this had risen to 6.5% in July 1997, possibly as a result of the impact of the Fort Retail Park. Overall there are concerns about both the quantitative and qualitative decline of the centre.

The key development opportunity within the shopping centre exists on land either side of Barnabas Road. This area includes car parking/rear servicing and two sites fronting Sutton New Road:

- land adjoining Erdington Market Hall. In March 1997 planning permission was granted for a non-food retail unit on this site although development has yet to commence.
- land adjoining the former Gala Bingo Hall. This narrow site of 0.5 acres (0.23 ha) which was formerly the offices of the Family Practitioner Committee, and has now been cleared and is currently used as temporary car parking.

Whilst it would clearly be possible for independent development proposals to come forward on these sites, the City Council consider there may be a larger redevelopment site here by looking comprehensively at all of the land between Sutton New Road and High Street. This would provide an opportunity to assemble a site to deliver the type, quality and scale of development which the centre needs and which currently does not exist elsewhere within the centre.

The City Council will, therefore, encourage developers (and landowners) to look positively on the redevelopment potential here and will offer support to assist the process of site assembly. A Development Brief will be prepared to guide the development of this site. A retail development will be particularly welcome, as well as office uses, and the opportunity should be taken to provide a quality frontage to Sutton New Road.

Those other development opportunities that can be readily identified at this stage are:

- (i) Land at 16-22 Orphanage Road. An opportunity exists here for retail development.

- (ii) 52-62 Wood End Lane and 27-35 Wood End Road. This 0.95 acre (0.4 ha) site was formerly in use as a garage and has been vacant for a number of years. Planning permission for residential development has been granted. Part of the site is affected by a Highway Improvement Line.
- (iii) 7-13 Wood End Road. This site has been vacant for a number of years following the demolition of a number of Edwardian terraced houses. Infill housing development or retail, commercial or office development will be encouraged. The site is affected by a Highway Improvement Line.
- (iv) 14 Newman Road. Re-use of this vacant office block will be promoted.
- (v) Queens Head Public House, Reservoir Road/Six Ways. In April 1997 a planning application was submitted for a new supermarket on the site of the public house and land adjoining Six Ways. This application has not yet been determined as part of the site is affected by land protected by a Highway Improvement Line for future alterations to the Six Ways/Reservoir Road junction. There are also concerns about how traffic flow generated by a supermarket here could be accommodated given the existing congestion at Six Ways and whether a supermarket on this site would be acceptable under PPG6. Discussions with the developer are continuing in order to resolve the outstanding highway concerns. As part of this action plan a review of existing Highway Improvement Lines is to be carried out and this site is, therefore, identified as a (medium-term) redevelopment opportunity. This site would be suitable for commercial development. The design of any development should be appropriate to its 'gateway' location.
- (vi) 122-132 Gravelly Hill North. This site is also affected by a Highway Improvement Line protecting land for the future widening of Gravelly Hill North. Until such time as any redevelopment scheme comes forward, the site will be laid out as a car park. In the longer term the site may be suitable for residential or commercial/office development.

Road Hierarchy

Erdington Centre is situated on the original A38 Birmingham-Derby road, which was locally bypassed by Sutton New Road in 1938 and strategically by the Sutton bypass in 1972. The Sutton Bypass is now designated A38 and Sutton New Road A5127. Erdington High Street is non-classified and has been pedestrianised between New Street and Mason Road. Connecting roads between High Street and Sutton New Road form part of a partial one-way traffic management scheme.

Sutton New Road is part of the City's Strategic Highway Network (SHN) and is a key link between the City Centre, Aston Expressway and the suburbs to the north, including Sutton Coldfield. The road carries around 25,000 vehicles per day, including 400 heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and is congested at junctions during peak hours.

The orbital (A4040) intersects the A5127 at the southern end of the Erdington shopping centre at a five-arm (formerly six-arm) roundabout junction, where traffic congestion, delays to public transport and pedestrian and cycle safety are particular problems.

Highway Improvement Lines (HILs)

The City Council retains HILs in order to protect land for future improvement schemes. Across the City, there remains a significant number of lines which were imposed many years ago but which, with current limits on funding and in the light of the changing strategy on road building, are unlikely to be required in the foreseeable future or within the timescales attached to them. These lines are being reviewed, through processes which include Local Action Plans, and many are

being revoked as a result. This action can result in the lifting of uncertainty and there is evidence that investment and development may follow.

In the Erdington LAP area, the following HILs exist:-

- Gravelly Hill North (Lansdowne Road to Six Ways)
- Six Ways/Reservoir Road/Wood End Road/Sutton New Road
- Station Road
- Station Road/Sutton Road/High Street

All of these lines are timed at "12 years" and are shown on Map 2.

The outline schemes illustrated in this LAP would result in the reduction in the total area of land affected by HILs. Adoption of schemes such as those illustrated could bring forward the process of revoking or reducing the effect of lines no longer required.

Six Ways Junction - Improvements to this junction include a proposal to replace the existing roundabout with traffic signal control, to benefit pedestrians, cyclists and buses. This scheme will need to take account of any redevelopment of the Queens Head Public House site and, possibly, the Highcroft Hospital site.

Station Road Railway Bridge - a one-way 'shuttle' scheme has been suggested which would enable the footways to be increased in width for pedestrian safety. Queuing traffic would be a problem and further evaluation work is needed.

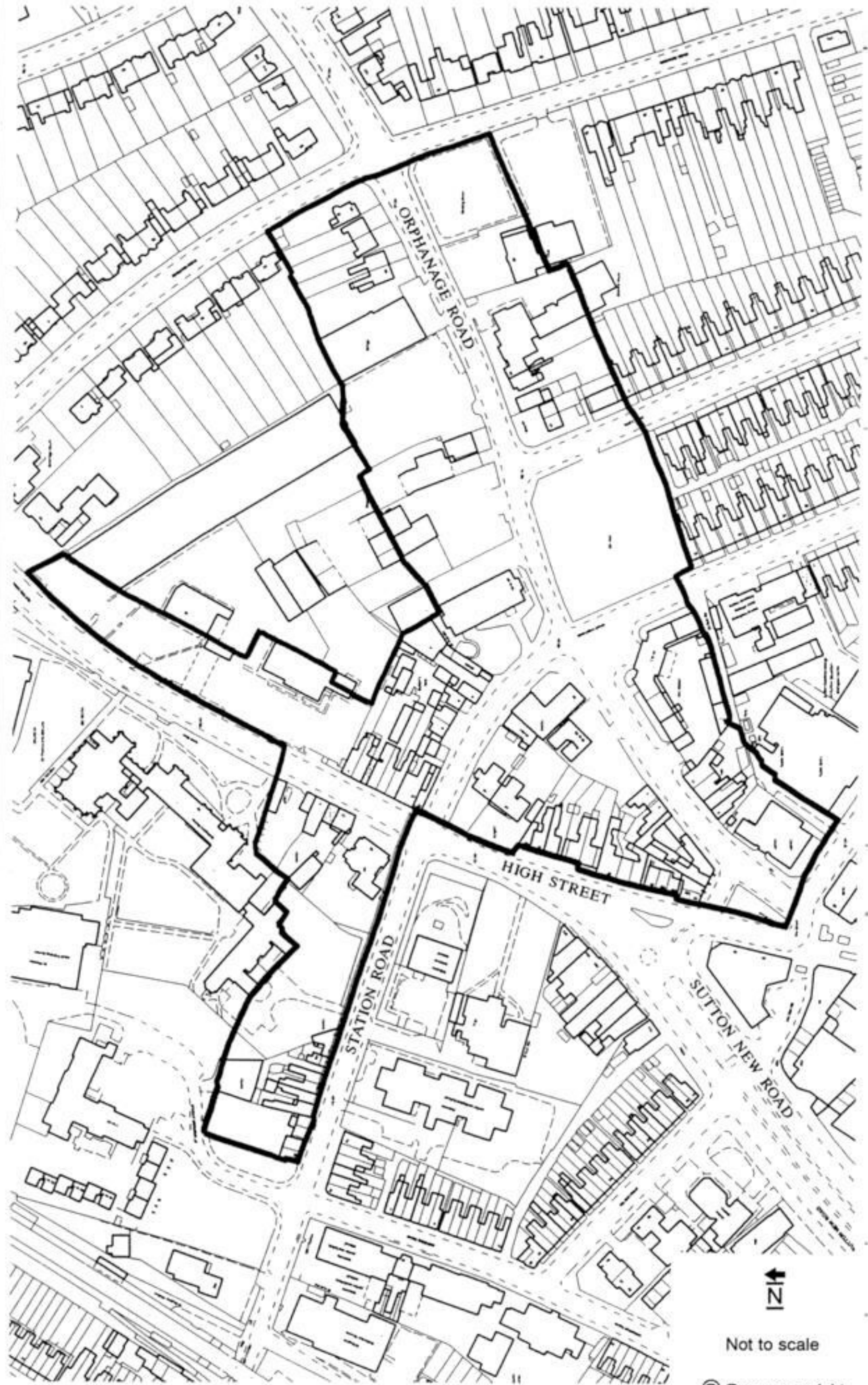


Not to scale

© Crown copyright

Map 3

Erdington Village Area of Potential Archaeological Importance



The Village Green - traffic congestion and illegal parking in this area is a serious problem that could be addressed by redesigning the roadspace, limiting car access and increasing amenity area.

The following firm proposal has already been the subject of local consultation:-

Wood End Road/Trafalgar Road junction - widening and traffic signal control (now completed). This is necessitated by the development of the Jaffray Hospital site and has been designed to increase safety where road widths are very limited. Care will need to be taken to ensure that side road traffic is not encouraged to 'rat run' in the local area. This is shown on Map 4.

Public Transport

Erdington is located in a 'corridor' offering a very high level of public transport provision.

As far as buses are concerned, in the radial direction (A5127 and Summer Road), 14 services provide up to 32 buses per hour, whilst the Outer Circle Number 11 service operates on the A4040 at a frequency of up to 8 buses per hour. In addition there are a number of other bus services meeting local needs, including a 'ring and ride' service. Although frequencies are high, there is a need to address the following issues:-

- poor quality of stop and shelter facilities and the environment created by the juxtaposition of very busy bus stops, residential properties and busy roads
- the need for better pedestrian links between the shopping centre and bus stops
- congestion around bus stops on narrow footways
- lack of bus priority at peak times

The shopping centre is within a ten-minute walk time of Erdington Railway Station, which is situated on the Centro Cross City line. Trains between Lichfield and the City Centre are



"Erdington Village Green"

available throughout the day at a frequency of up to four per hour in each direction. Pedestrian routes between the shopping centre and station need to be addressed - footways on Station Road are narrow and hazardous.

Traffic Management

The shopping centre is partly pedestrianised, with on street parking available in most streets (see Car Parking section). Some of the premises on High Street also suffer from poor delivery and service facilities. This arrangement results in drivers circulating streets in search of spaces, making use of the remaining footways hazardous at narrow sections. There is also a disbenefit for the centre in terms of increased air pollution.

A scheme jointly proposed by Centro and the City Council, to specifically address the issue of pedestrian access to bus services and traffic calming in Coton Lane, was the subject of local public consultation in Spring 1997. The scheme, which is illustrated on Plan 5 is expected to be completed by March 1999. It includes:-

- the resiting of existing bus stops and their replacement with modern shelters
- a new pedestrian crossing on Sutton New Road
- footpath improvement works
- traffic calming measures on Coton Lane to ease pedestrian movement between High Street and Sutton New Road.

Further environmental improvements to the centre could result from increased use of Traffic one-way orders to limit traffic in the most sensitive areas. Although such ideas would limit the use of residential streets by 'rat running' traffic, it could result in access problems for some residents and businesses. A further study is, therefore, proposed which will explore the impact that this scheme may have. This study will also include a review of short stay parking on High Street in the context of opportunities to improve the pedestrian environment within the centre.

Schemes have been drawn up in outline to deal with specific local problems but it will only be possible to implement these if increased funding becomes available, possibly through private sector contributions resulting from development proposals.



"Opportunities to improve pedestrian movement"

Car Parking

At present there are around 600 car parking spaces available to serve the shopping centre (excluding on-street car parking in those residential roads adjoining the centre). The location and type of car parking is mixed:

- City Council owned 'Pay and Display' car parks at Church Road, Machin Road, Orphanage Road/Edwards Road and at the central reservation along Sutton New Road.

- dedicated 'off-street' car parking provided by retail stores eg. at the rear of Iceland, Co-op and Kwik Save.
- on-street car parking along High Street and adjoining roads.
- opportunistic car parking on vacant land, for example, at Barnabas Road.

The provision of safe and secure car parking, particularly for short-stay visitors, is important for the future well being of traditional linear 'High Street' centres like Erdington. An assessment of future car parking needs for the centre will be guided by two key principles:

- that car parking should be targeted at improving the needs of shoppers. This dictates a concentration on short stay parking and how this is managed.
- that where possible car parking should be off-street thereby maximising opportunities for pedestrian and environmental improvements along High Street.

The following measures will, therefore, be promoted to improve car parking provision at the Centre:

- a review of on-street car parking, delivery and servicing along High Street. The traffic management section of the action plan deals with measures to improve management and circulation of traffic within the shopping centre. As part of the review of car parking arrangements on High Street a further study will be carried out in the context of the opportunities for improving the pedestrian environment within the centre.
- extending the existing 'pay and display' car park at Church Road onto vacant land at Harrison Road.
- laying out new car parking on City Council owned land at:
 - Barnabas Road
 - Gravelly Hill North/Wood End Lane
- encouraging car parking on land at Church Road, between St. Barnabas

Wood End Road/Trafalgar Road
Signal Controlled Junction

Map 4



Not to scale

© Crown copyright

Map 5

Erdington Centre Bus Stop Enhancements



- KEY**
- CC EXISTING BUS STOPS TO BE REMOVED
 - █ PROPOSED LOCATION OF BUS SHELTERS
 - ~ ZIG-ZAG ON APPROACH AND EXIT TO PEDESTRIAN CROSSING - NO-PARKING IN THIS AREA
 - NEW TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER NO-PARKING IN THIS AREA (YORK ROAD TO SUMMER ROAD)
 - EXISTING NO-PARKING
 - EXISTING RESTRICTED PARKING IN THIS AREA
 - █ NEW PAVEMENT TREATMENT
 - 25, 60, 66A EXISTING STOPS
 - 75, 66, 66A PROPOSED STOPS
 - ▨ PROPOSED FOOTWAY EXTENSIONS



Not to scale

© Crown copyright

Church and The Vicarage (privately owned). This site was previously leased to the City Council for a 'pay and display' car park.

- lighting, landscaping and resurfacing improvements to car parks.
- a review of car parking charges at 'pay and display' car parks.
- improved directional signage to parking areas in, and around, the shopping centre.
- measures to allow traffic circulation between the car parks at the rear of Iceland/Kwik Save, the Co-op Superstore and the parking/servicing areas to the rear of 94-106 High Street. There are currently 3 separate car parks here providing up to 300 spaces. There is clear potential here to allow traffic circulation between each car park by providing ramps to deal with any changes in levels and better demarcation between servicing - staff parking - and customer car parking. The City Council will encourage the private landowners to take appropriate measures to enable this to happen and thereby ease movement between Mason Road and High Street.

Cycling

■ The City Council is committed to the promotion of safe cycling in Birmingham and it recognises the environmental and health benefits that can arise from the greater use of bicycles. Opportunities will be taken to improve facilities, and create a safer environment for cyclists. Measures such as improving crossing facilities for cyclists will be investigated as part of any alterations to traffic signal junctions (eg. the proposal at Six Ways). Additional cycle parking facilities in the shopping centre will also be provided.

Pedestrianisation

■ Plans for the pedestrianisation of the shopping centre, from The Village Green to Six Ways, together with rear servicing

yards and off-street car parks, were first drawn-up by the City Council in May 1966. At this time it was thought that funding would be



"Car parking conflicts"

available to acquire and demolish private property in order to carry out a phased programme of pedestrianisation along High Street.

Only part of this plan - pedestrianisation between Mason Road and New Street, together with some rear servicing - has been implemented. Although this pedestrianisation scheme has been successful, previous public consultation has shown that attitudes towards any further pedestrianisation of the centre are mixed. Indeed, there are now perceived to be clear community safety benefits in not having full pedestrianisation provided the right balance can be struck between people and vehicles to create an attractive environment.

There are two major obstacles to pursuing further pedestrianisation of the centre at this time:

- the lack of any approved funds to carry out any scheme.
- the limited amount of land available to provide new car parking areas which may be needed to offset the loss of on-street car parking caused by pedestrianisation. It is of particular concern that sites suitable for off-street car parking will equally be suitable for new investment and development in the centre.

This action plan, therefore, recommends that the further pedestrianisation should be extended up to Barnabas Road.

Opportunities for Environmental Improvements

The quality of the environment in this part of the city is important for both the long term vitality and health of the shopping centre and for those people who live in the plan area. The creation of a place which is pleasant to be in is as fundamental as the attractions and accessibility of a centre for attracting shoppers and visitors. The promotion of quality development and taking opportunities for improving the environment will play a vital role in underpinning the success of the centre both as a place to shop and work as well as its role as a focus for the local community.

It is considered that a further detailed study is required looking at opportunities for improving the pedestrian environment along High Street. This will look at the following issues:

- townscape quality.
- rationalisation of on-street car parking.
- improving pedestrian movement, including the possibility of widening existing pavements.
- street furniture and other landscaping improvements.
- an accessibility audit for vulnerable road users eg. people with disabilities.

The maintenance and refurbishment of properties and shop frontages will be encouraged and any new developments should seek to improve the quality of the street scene. The Shopfront Design Guide produced by the City Council's Department of Planning and Architecture provides advice and guidance on good shop front design including security measures and roller shutters. There are a number of buildings along High Street and on Orphanage Road which reflect the Victorian and Edwardian legacy of this part of Erdington. In many cases the character and architectural quality of these

buildings has been disrupted by modern signage and shop front design and a return to 'traditional' shop fronts would be a marked improvement to the quality of the townscape. Any shop refurbishment schemes should take the opportunity to make it easier for people with restricted mobility, for example people with disabilities or parents with prams and buggies, to gain access into and through the shop.

The survey of residents views on shopping issues conducted as part of the 'Shopping in Birmingham' study asked respondents to identify the type of facilities that they would expect to see in a good shopping centre. The most frequently mentioned facilities were: public toilets, shelter from the weather, car parking close to shops, good public transport, traffic free pedestrian areas, seating and baby changing facilities. Very similar views have been expressed by local people and business in the course of preparing this action plan. The need for the City Council to improve its maintenance of public pavements and street lighting has also been frequently mentioned. All of these issues will be tackled as the opportunities arise, either in association with new development or by better co-ordination of the City Council's expenditure through its main programme. The quality of spaces which make up the public realm often have a crucial effect on the image of an area. Occasionally, the quality of new buildings can alter perceptions but more often additional tree planting, better landscaping, improved pedestrian crossings, quality street furniture and removing street 'clutter' can have a more significant impact. This will be particularly relevant to Erdington where opportunities for new development (or redevelopment) are limited. The City Council will, therefore, encourage a co-ordinated approach to improve the quality of public spaces in the plan area.

Key opportunities which exist are:

- better landscaping, and lighting, of car parks and the approaches to car parks.
- additional quality street furniture, repaving and landscaping/tree planting within the shopping centre.
- removing advertising hoardings which are affecting the quality of the environment. This will be achieved through negotiation with landowners and, if necessary, the City Council will use its enforcement powers where hoardings have been erected without consent. Applications for new temporary hoardings will be considered in terms of their impact on visual amenity and highway safety. They will not normally be permitted where they:
 - are excessively large
 - have a dominant visual impact
 - do not respect the scale of adjoining buildings
 - result in the over-concentration of hoardings
 - adversely affect highway safety
- improving the Sutton New Road corridor: the creation of this road, which itself required the demolition of much Edwardian and Victorian Property, effectively severed the traditional street pattern between High Street and surrounding residential areas. The construction of the road has exposed both gable-end and the rear of properties and left pockets of vacant or poorly landscaped land. Development which has taken place since its construction has also been set back from the road to take account of previous highway improvement lines which have now been abandoned. Overall, this presents an image of Erdington which is in need of improvement. A number of opportunities exist:
 - strengthening landscaping along the corridor with additional tree planting works to the central reservation have

been a marked improvement on the previous situation and further tree planting will be beneficial.

- ensuring that any redevelopment of land and property takes the opportunity to create an appropriate street frontage.
- the 'Village Green': the Green at the northern end of High Street is in many ways the community focus of Erdington, lying at the northern end of High Street, next to Erdington Library. There is an opportunity here to improve the setting of the Village Green and the library by changes to current traffic priorities. This can be achieved by allowing the land in front of Sega World/Blockbusters to become part of an enlarged Village Green/pedestrianised area. Funding for the refurbishment of the Village Green was approved by the City Council in 1998. Options for the refurbishment will be the subject of further consultation.
- there is an opportunity to create a 'pocket park' at the junction of Oakfield Road and Wood End Road.
- The Pergola, High Street: the Pergola has been a feature of High Street for many years. It softens the otherwise harsh built environment of this part of High Street and provides a relatively pleasant sitting area for shoppers. However, the City Council has received a petition from local residents requesting its removal on the grounds that it is not well maintained, is an eyesore and that nuisance is caused by pigeon's perching on its frame. The refurbishment of the Village Green will also look at its relationship with the Pergola, thereby proposing a comprehensive approach to environmental improvements in this part of High Street.



"Erdington Library"

Housing

No major proposals are included for the housing areas adjoining High Street. The issues here are largely concerned with the need for property maintenance and the need to monitor the impacts of shoppers parking in residential streets. The introduction of residents-only parking schemes may be needed and the City Council will consider any additional requests. There are a number of streets adjoining the centre, and Sutton New Road, which are affected by conflicts between resident and shoppers car parking or 'rat running' traffic. The introduction of traffic management measures to deal with this will be considered. Opportunities for new housing development are limited by the lack of available land. Those opportunities which do exist are:

- land at 52-62 Wood End Lane and 27-35 Wood End Road.
- land at 7-13 Wood End Road.
- the former Jaffray Hospital site (just outside the plan area). The hospital closed in 1991 as part of the (former) West Midlands Regional Health Authority's hospital rationalisation programme. In July 1993 the City Council adopted a Development Brief to provide guidance on the redevelopment of the site for housing. In November 1998 development was largely complete. As part of the development the City Council is negotiating a legal agreement with developers to provide for off-site open space improvements and a financial contribution towards a traffic light controlled junction at Wood End Road/ Trafalagar Road.

Appendix - Proposals

SITE LOCATION	PROPOSAL	COMMENTS
Development opportunities		
(i) Land at Barnabas Road	New retail and office development	Development Brief to be prepared and land ownership/land assembly issues to be addressed. Key opportunity within the shopping centre. Opportunity to strengthen Sutton New Road frontage.
(ii) Queens Head Public House and adjoining land, Six Ways/Reservoir Road	Commercial development	Site development dependant on addressing highway issue at Six Ways. Any proposals should reflect the sites "gateway" location.
(iii) Nos. 16-22 Orphanage Road	Retail development	
(iv) Land at 56-62 Wood End Lane and 27-35 Wood End Road	Housing development	Site affected by a Highway Improvement Line on Wood End Road
(v) Land at Nos. 7-13 Wood End Road	Housing, retail, office or commercial development	Site affected by a Highway Improvement Line on Wood End Road
(vi) 14 Newman Road	Re-use of vacant office block	
(vii) Land at 122-132 Gravelly Hill North	Temporary car parking (short term). Commercial or residential development (mid-long term)	Site is affected by a Highway Improvement Line on Gravelly Hill North. Access issues to be resolved
Transportation		
(i) Highway Improvement Lines	Review extent of land affected by improvement lines at: Six Ways, Reservoir Road, Wood End Road, Sutton New Road and Station Road	The guiding principle of this review will be to ensure that any land absolutely necessary for any highway scheme will continue to be protected
(ii) Six Ways	Junction improvement: - improved pedestrian and cycling crossings - bus priority measures	Long-term - impact of redevelopment of Highcroft Hospital and (possible) redevelopment of Queens Head PH to be assessed
(iii) Station Road	Improvements to help pedestrian movement	Options to be discussed with Railtrack
(iv) Junction of Mason Road/High Street (Erdington Village Green)	Revised junction layout to allow environmental improvements to Erdington Village Green	Funding for the Village Green refurbishment approved by Birmingham City Council in 1998. Detailed options to be subject of further consultation.
(v) Junction of Trafalgar Road and Wood End Road	Alteration to traffic light controlled junction	Part funded by the Jaffray Hospital Legal Agreement. Now complete

SITE LOCATION	PROPOSAL	COMMENTS
(vi) Sutton New Road/Reservoir Road/Wood End Road/Summer Road	Improved bus interchange facilities: - bus shelter relocation and improvements - additional pedestrian crossings - footway enhancements on Sutton New Road and Coton Lane	Scheme prepared jointly by CENTRO and Birmingham City Council. Implementation 1997/98 by March 1999
(vii) Avenue Road	Introduction of traffic management measures to reduce the impact of 'rat running' vehicles	
(viii) New Street	Introduction of traffic management measures to reduce the impact of 'rat running' vehicles	
(ix) Osborne Road	Introduction of traffic management measures to reduce the impact of 'rat running' vehicles	
Car Parking		
(i) High Street	Preparation of a further study to look at opportunities for pedestrian and environmental enhancement along High Street. To include a review of short-term parking on-street in High Street	
(ii) Existing car parks	Landscaping, lighting and resurfacing improvements	
(iii) Land at 6-12 Harrison Road	Extend the existing Church Road car park onto this land	
(iv) Land between St. Barnabas Church and The Vicarage	Re-use site as car parking	Site previously leased by the Church to Birmingham City Council for off-street parking
(v) Land between Sutton New Road and 49 Barnabas Road	Car parking pending redevelopment	Site is currently on a short-term lease to Erdington Market Traders for use as off-street car park. The site will be included in the Barnabas Road Development Brief
(vi) Land at 122-132 Gravelly Hill North	Car parking pending redevelopment	This site is affected by a Highway Improvement Line
(vii) Car parks at the rear of The Square Shopping Centre, the Co-op Superstore and the rear of 94-106 High Street	Measures to allow/improve traffic circulation between these three separate car parks. Surfacing, lighting and landscaping improvements	This proposal will require further discussions with the relevant landowners
Cycling		
Plan-wide	Improved cycling facilities: - better crossings at road junctions - additional cycle stands in the shopping centre	To be delivered in conjunction with new development, highway alterations and environmental improvements within the centre

SITE LOCATION	PROPOSAL	COMMENTS
Pedestrianisation		
High Street	Explore potential for further pedestrianisation of High Street to its junction with Barnabas Road. Alternative parking/servicing arrangements to be resolved	The original plans to pedestrian High Street from The Green to Six Ways were first drawn up in May 1966. A lack of funding and concerns about servicing and community safety issues have meant that this scheme has never been fully implemented.
Environmental Improvements		
(i) Pedestrian areas	Poor condition and inconsistent treatment of pavements contributes to poor physical image of the centre - carry out improvements	Proposals to dovetail with other environmental and transportation proposals of the plan
(ii) Within the Shopping Centre	New seating, street furniture and hard and soft landscaping	Opportunities to be identified in further study
(iii) The Pergola, High Street	Retain or remove The Pergola?	The City Council has received a petition from residents requesting the removal of The Pergola. Options to be considered as part of the Village Green refurbishment project
(iv) Shop fronts within the Shopping Centre	Re-introduce 'traditional' shop fronts in accordance with the City Council's Shop Front Design Guide	Businesses and traders encouraged to improve quality of shop fronts. To be dealt with when planning applications are submitted
(v) The Village Green	Improvements to the setting of the Village Green. Introduction of a new mini-roundabout on Orphanage Road and changed traffic priorities	Funding approved by Birmingham City Council in 1998. Detailed options to be the subject of further consultation
(vi) Land at the junction of Oakfield Road and Wood End Road	Improvements to existing area of public open space	This site is affected by a Highway Improvement Line
(vii) Sutton New Road Corridor	Develop vacant land and strengthen street frontage. Supplemental tree planting and landscaping where necessary	
(viii) Upper floors of shops	Encourage conversion of vacant upper floors of shops for residential or commercial use	



erdington
action plan

November 1998