

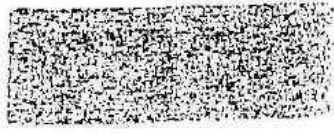


*Northfield
Local Action Plan
June 2000*

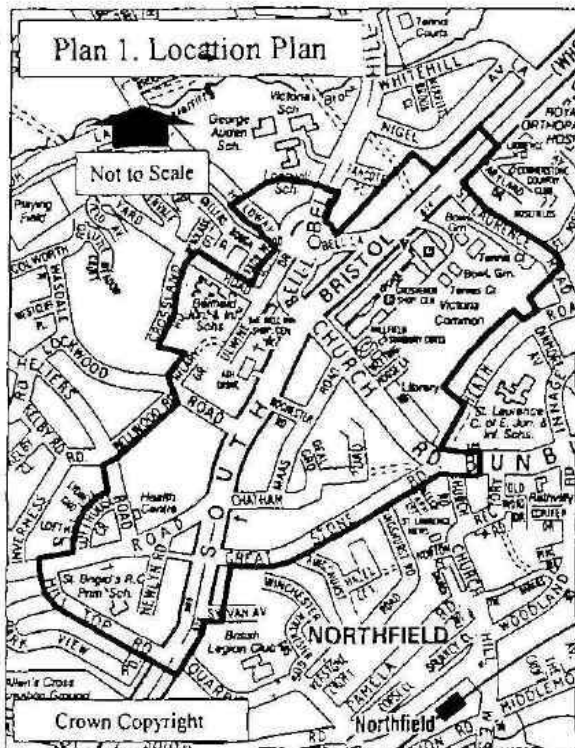




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1. Introduction



Northfield is a busy vibrant centre providing locally accessible shops, services, leisure, education, entertainment and community facilities as well as places of work at the heart of the Northfield community.

In recent years there has been concern that Northfield has become vulnerable to decline and is suffering from a lack of investment.

The Northfield Local Action Plan has been prepared by the City Council following consultation with local residents, traders, members of the Northfield Consultative Group and others having an interest in the area. It sets out the framework for the physical and economic regeneration of Northfield. It aims through a package of measures to stimulate development, revitalise the Centre and create an attractive and healthy environment.

Status of the Plan.

The Northfield Local Action Plan has been prepared within the context of the Birmingham Plan, the City's Unitary Development Plan, and is one of a series being prepared across the City to set out proposals to enhance local shopping centres.

The Plan was adopted by the City Council's Regeneration Advisory Team in June 2000 following extensive consultation with the local community. It has the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Birmingham Plan. It will be taken into account as a material consideration in determining planning applications.

What area does the plan cover?

The Local Action Plan covers Northfield Centre, known as the 'High Street', and the immediate surrounding area. The Centre extends along Bristol Road South between St Laurence Road in the north and Sylvan Avenue in the south, as shown on plan 1.

2. A Profile of Northfield

The plan area is located within part of Northfield and Weoley Wards, within the Northfield Parliamentary Constituency.

Northfield lies on the southern edge of Birmingham and is 9km from the City Centre. The area contains a range of different housing types and tenures, significant industrial activity i.e. Rover and Kalamazoo, and a number of important leisure and community facilities e.g. Northfield Public Baths. The continued use of the Rover site at Longbridge for industrial purposes will be important to the economy of this area of the City.

At the heart of Northfield is the shopping centre which straddles the main A38 Bristol Road South. It is the main commercial centre for residents in the south west of Birmingham.

This Chapter sets out important facts and figures (including population, shopping and transport information) about the shopping centre and the immediate surroundings covered by the Local Action Plan.

The People

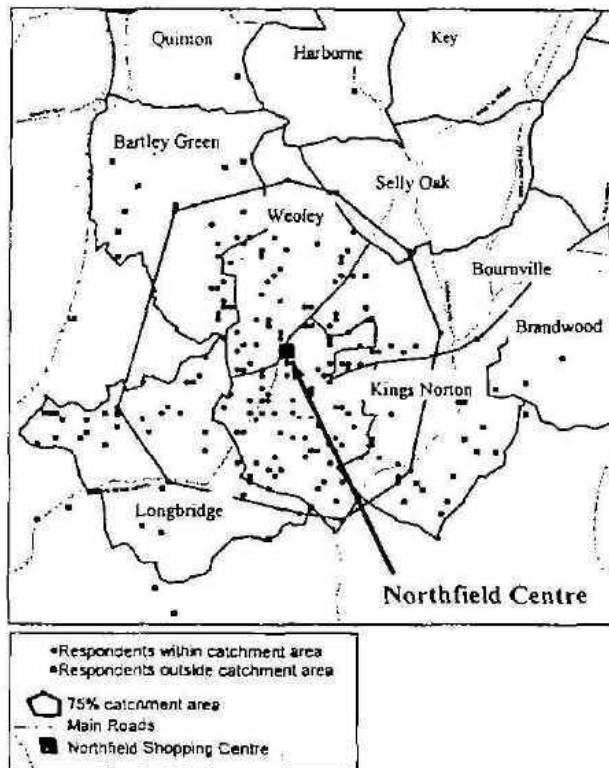
The 1991 census showed that the population of the Local Action Plan area was approximately 3,720 people in 1,512 households. In most respects the population of the Local Action Plan Area is typical of the City as a whole. However there are a few significant differences. The population is predominately white, with only 4% of households from other ethnic groups compared with 22.5% for a City as a whole. Car ownership is above City average 58.1% have at least one car compared with 55% of the City as a whole.

Shopping

Northfield Shopping Centre is one of the largest shopping centres in Birmingham. The 'Shopping in Birmingham' survey published by the City Council in 1996 showed some important facts about the shopping centre.

Floor space Rank in order in City - 4th
Estimated turnover in 1993 - £118 million
Turnover in convenience goods - 53%
Floorspace total at 1993 - 22,300 sq.m
Population within 3km - 99,000
Households within 3km - 40,000

Map showing where people travel from to shop in Northfield Centre



The above map shows that 75% of people using Northfield Centre for their food and grocery shopping come from the immediate catchment area particularly Northfield Weoley, and part of Kings Norton, Bournville, Frankley and Longbridge.

There is a covered shopping mall, the Grosvenor Centre, which has been refurbished in phases since 1994 and an indoor market. Northfield Centre provides a range of both convenience and comparison goods and is home to a number of national multiples such as Woolworths, Boots, Argos, W.H. Smiths, Dixons, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Iceland and Charlie Brown's retail warehouse. There are also a number of important services such as banks, building societies, restaurants and a job centre.

Northfield has long been one of Birmingham's most successful suburban centres. But like other centres, such as Erdington in the north of the City, it has been affected by changes in long established shopping patterns which have seen the greater use of the private car for shopping trips and the growth of out of centre

foodstores and retail warehouses. These trends have seen a gradual shift of expenditure away from the traditional 'high street' shops. In particular, competition from Merry Hill, the Battery Retail Park in Selly Oak, and Safeway at Rubery, the limited modern quality retail development and poor quality environment have affected the vitality and viability of the shopping centre.

Nevertheless, there is significant potential to revitalise the centre. There is marked interest in retail investment and vacancy rates have declined recently.

A survey carried out in April 2000 showed that vacancy rates within the shopping centre were 4.6% compared with 10% in October 1997. There is a new high quality development near the corner of Rochester Road which was completed in 1999, and a planning application has been submitted for a large foodstore (5404 sqm, 58,170 sqft) on the Frankley Beeches Depot site. In addition, there is potential to improve the environment and attract new uses to the Centre.



New high quality development near the corner of Rochester Road and Bristol Road South

Transport

The Centre is well served by road and public transport. The A38 Bristol Road South is a major arterial road carrying a high volume of traffic, linking the City Centre with the M5 and M42 motorways. It is also an important route for local traffic providing access to the centre from the surrounding suburbs. Over 20 bus routes serve Northfield Centre providing frequent links with the City Centre and much of south west Birmingham.



High traffic flows along the "High Street" create problems for the Centre's users

The high traffic flows along the Bristol Road South known as the 'High Street' (current 24 hour traffic flows on this section = 25,000 – 30,000 vehicles) create problems for the Centre's users:

- **High levels of noise, airborne pollution and congestion in the centre:** 70% of users find air and noise pollution to be a slight to serious problem. 90% are unhappy with traffic congestion (70 % find it a serious problem).*
- **Severe difficulties for pedestrian movement within the centre resulting in the high numbers of accidents:** narrow pavements and a limited number of places to safely cross the busy road makes pedestrian movement within the centre very poor. 45% of users find it difficult to cross the road.*
- **Delays for buses and poor facilities for bus users:** because of congestion in the centre bus journey times are delayed which discourages people from using bus services.
- **Parking and access problems for vehicles visiting the Centre:** for example the needs of vehicles servicing shops from the street creates conflict with other users.

*(source: Northfield Transport Survey 1993)

Also there are four busy key roads, namely Frankley Beeches, Church, Great Stone Roads and Bell Lane which cross the 'High Street'. Junctions with these roads cause significant delays, which not only worsen the above problems, but also lead to drivers seeking short cuts through adjoining residential streets. The above transportation problems result in a poor environmental quality which contribute to the Centre's poor image.

The Bristol Road (A38) Corridor is also a focus for future developments in the City. The Birmingham Plan identifies a number of specific opportunities including the Rubery / Hollymoor Hospital site (currently being developed for a mix of residential, industrial, business, retail and community use). Other opportunities include Frankley Beeches Depot in Northfield and sites in Selly Oak (suitable for hospital retail and business uses). Increased traffic from these developments will further worsen the problems outlined above. The Northfield Transport Survey also looked at travel patterns of visitors to Northfield Centre and found that:

- 43% of users of the Centre arrived by bus;
- only a limited number of people travel to the Centre by cycle, 83% of those surveyed consider cycling conditions poor;
- access to the Centre on foot is good. Up to 22% of visitors arrived on foot, the majority of whom live to the west of Bristol Road South. The main pedestrian approach routes are Lockwood Road and Frankley Beeches Road, but Vineyard Road and Bell Hill and Church Road are also important;
- 28% of visitors arrived by car on weekdays, increasing to nearly 40% on Saturdays;

The centre benefits from generous car parking provision compared with many other suburban centres. The two large off-street car parks at the Grosvenor Centre and Ulwine Drive tend to be under-used even at peak demand. The quality of much of the off-street parking provision is an issue. Very good use is made of the few on-street parking spaces within the Centre and small off-street car parks at

Lockwood Road and Church Road. Parking also takes place in residential roads adjoining the Centre.

Leisure, Educational, Entertainment and Community Facilities

Within and adjoining the Centre there are a number of important leisure, entertainment and community facilities.

Northfield swimming pool opened in 1937 and is the most used centre in the south of Birmingham, with over 400,000 users per year. It is one of the key facilities in Northfield and it is essential that these facilities are retained and enhanced. However, the building is in need of repair and it is important that swimming facilities within the area meet future customer and user aspirations.

Victoria Common Park provides approximately nine hectares of open space and facilities for football, bowls as well as simple rolling grassland, it provides a well used pedestrian route from the adjoining residential area. It also forms part of the City's linear open space walkway as it links to open space in Bournville. Unfortunately, the lack of management presence and the decline in the quality of changing and shower facilities has led to a decline in use in recent years. The land locked nature of the park and the lack of natural surveillance has led concern that it is unsafe and unattractive for the community to use for recreation purposes.

There are also attractive areas of open space within the grounds of Longwill School on Bell Hill.

Other leisure, educational and community facilities in the local plan area include: -

Northfield Health Centre, Frankley Beeches Road
Northfield Library, Church Road
Northfield Baptist Church, Bristol Road South
Northfield Methodist Church, Chatham Road
Northfield Adult Education Centre, Church Road
Bellfields School, Vineyard Road
St. Brigids School and Church, Frankley Beeches Road.

3. What will the Northfield Local Action Plan do?

The Vision

Northfield is an important local centre. As highlighted in Chapter 2, Northfield has a range of facilities. These facilities are important as they provide a focal point for local community life where people shop, live, work and meet. The quality of Northfield Centre is important in determining the quality of life for the community who live there. It is also important in providing the Centre with a sense of identity and helping to define the area as a distinctive Centre within the wider City.

The vision for Northfield is of a more attractive and vibrant centre. It has three main elements. These are:

- **An attractive shopping centre with a greater quality and variety of uses:** Northfield's shopping role will be maintained and enhanced. Other uses which support this role such as office, leisure, community and educational uses will also be encouraged to add to the diversity of the centre.
- **A high quality environment:** The Centre will have a more attractive, safer and healthier environment for all users. Bristol Road South will be changed from a congested through route to a street where the needs of shoppers and the local community predominate. Through traffic will be removed from the Centre. Pedestrians and cyclists will be able to move around safely and easily. Major environmental improvements will enhance the image and appearance of the Centre.
- **Good access to the centre:** Buses will have greater priority along the A38 Bristol Road South. An appropriate level of attractive parking will be provided. Pedestrians and cyclists will have safe direct routes to the Centre.

The vision is also of a more attractive environment in adjoining residential areas.

A greater quality and variety of uses, better access and a more attractive environment will encourage more people to use the Centre. More people using Northfield Centre will in

turn encourage more investment which will create a more attractive and appealing centre for people to visit. Such investment will also benefit surrounding areas.

To achieve this vision the Plan sets out a package of proposals:

- It encourages high quality investment in new retail, leisure, education, and community facilities and encourages improvements to existing facilities. These include a new pool on the site between 612 - 648 Bristol Road South adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre, or refurbishment of the existing pool, and a new superstore on Frankley Beeches Depot site
- It proposes a set of environmental enhancements and improvements to access including measures to give buses priority and improve conditions for pedestrians

Fundamental to the proposals in this plan is the provision of a relief road to take most of the traffic out of the centre, enabling bus priority measures to be introduced and reducing traffic in residential areas.

The Purpose and Function of the Plan

The plan will be used to guide and manage change in Northfield Centre. The plan focuses on physical changes relating to planning, land use and transport. It will:

- provide a planning framework to guide and stimulate future private sector investment in new development and enhancement of existing developments;
- provide a context for future bids for funding developments including the relief road and environmental enhancements;
- provide the broad framework for the preparation of more detailed proposals and guidance, for example:
 - the detailed design of environmental enhancement measures
 - development briefs and design guidance for specific sites

Policy Context

This action plan has been prepared in accordance with both national and local planning policies particularly:-

- **National Planning Guidance. This includes**
 - **PPG 6 Town Centres and Retail Development - June 1996**
 - **PPG 13 Transport - March 1994 (and revised Draft PPG 13 1999)**
 - **RPG 11 Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands**

One of the main aims of this guidance is to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres by encouraging a range of different uses and services for all the community, which are accessible by a range of different transport options.

The Birmingham Plan

Supporting local centres is a fundamental element of the strategy set out in The Birmingham Plan; the City's Unitary Development Plan adopted 6 July 1993. This Unitary Development Plan is the sole statutory land use document for the City and provides the planning framework for Northfield Centre. The Birmingham Plan is currently subject to review and roll forward to 2011.

The Birmingham Plan seeks 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.**
- **Maximise opportunities for new economic activity.**

The Birmingham Plan recognises the importance of Northfield Shopping Centre as one of the largest suburban shopping centres. To help support and enhance Northfield Centre the Birmingham Plan proposes the construction of the relief road to the west of Bristol Road South, to remove traffic from the 'High Street'. This will provide opportunities for pedestrian and other improvements to benefit local shoppers and reduce congestion.

The Birmingham Plan also identifies the site at Frankley Beeches Depot as suitable for commercial, retail and other uses.



Other City Council Initiatives

- **The West Northfield Area Regeneration Initiative (ARI)**

This covers a wide area of the south west of Birmingham stretching between Bristol Road South and the City boundary including Northfield, Bartley Green, Longbridge, Frankley and Kitwell. The Initiative was set up in 1993/4 to bring about economic, physical and social regeneration of the area. Since then it has co-ordinated a number of schemes including housing regeneration schemes at Bellfields, Egg Hill and Tinkers Farm and a major mixed use initiative at Great Park.

Funding for the initiative has come from Europe (this has accounted for most funding: approximately £8.9 million over the life of the project) and from the local authority for community support initiatives: approximately £800,000 over the life of the project.

- **The Bellfields Strategy**

This joint venture between the City Council, Lovell Homes, Barratts and Sanctuary Housing Association is now underway in the Bellfields area, to the west of Northfield shopping centre. The development is being carried out in close co-operation with the local community.

The regeneration of the area involves the provision of replacement housing and a variety of community facilities including new public open space and a children's play area. More detailed guidance on the development is set out in a development brief which has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

- **LILA (Local Involvement Local Action) - Ward Development Plans**

Local Involvement, Local Action (LILA) sets out the City Council's commitment to involving local people in the way the Council works and in decisions that affect their local areas.



Ward Development Plans have been produced setting out and prioritising the local needs and aspirations of each ward in the City. They also say what can be done to respond to them, given the resources available.

The following broad priorities from both the Northfield and Weoley Ward Development Plans have influenced the Northfield Local Action Plan: -

- Improving the environment and managing traffic (in particular Northfield Shopping Centre and the completion of the Relief Road).

- Improving the quality of housing.
- Developing leisure and community facilities.
- Providing young people, children and those who are most vulnerable with facilities and opportunities they can access and afford.
- Improving community safety and reducing the fear of crime.
- Improving the health of residents and future generations.

- **The Longbridge Planning Framework**

The Longbridge Planning Framework was endorsed by the Regeneration Advisory Team meeting held on 17 April 2000. The Framework highlights how the continued use of the Rover site for industrial purposes is important to the economy of the City and must be protected. A key to achieving this in the long term must be to strengthen access to the site and to reinforce the A38 corridor and its future importance.

4. Supporting Northfield Centre

Overview

The shopping role of Northfield Centre is vital to the success of the whole centre as this is the prime use which attracts visitors and investment. The first part of the chapter focuses on measures to support the shopping role of the Centre to ensure that it can remain viable and can continue to act as the main focus of activity.

In order for Northfield Centre to maintain its role as a major centre it is also important that as well as its shopping function it provides a mix of other uses and attractions. This will encourage people to use the Centre at different times of the day creating a more vibrant and safer centre. The second part of this chapter highlights measures to maintain existing service, leisure, entertainment and community facilities and opportunities to improve their provision. The final part of this chapter deals with office uses.

Objectives

- To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole whilst ensuring that the shopping role continues to underpin the Centre.
- To maintain and enhance the diversity and range of functions i.e. offices, leisure, community facilities and services within the Centre, so it can continue to act as the main focus of activity.
- To ensure high standards of design in new developments and help to encourage investment in existing developments.

Policies and Proposals

Shopping

The Birmingham Plan states that proposals for additional retail development / redevelopment in existing centres will normally be encouraged.

The shopping role of Northfield Centre is the foundation of the centre. The range and choice of shopping opportunities on offer is the main reason why people continue to visit Northfield. It is important that this role is maintained and enhanced so the Centre can

continue to provide for the majority of shopping trips for the immediate community and the wider area.

The existing Centre as shown on the proposals map will be supported and enhanced. In particular the Grosvenor Centre provides a major anchor at the northern end of the shopping centre and it is essential that this role is maintained. Within the existing Centre new development, redevelopment and refurbishment of existing sites / buildings for shopping uses will be encouraged.



The Grosvenor Centre

Opportunities for new development within the centre are available at (see proposals map):

- The site of Northfield Swimming pool and adjoining garage (Development of this site will require a land assembly exercise and a replacement swimming pool) (proposal DO3).
- 827-839 Bristol Road South (Formerly Osbornes Furniture Store) and adjoining land (proposal DO4).
- Site of 864-874 Bristol Road South and adjoining land (proposal DO7).
- Other sites may become available e.g. either side of Bristol Road South and sites which are opened up by the building of the relief road i.e. between the relief road and Bristol Road South. The comprehensive development of these sites should provide retail units fronting Bristol Road South, to complement the shopping function with office, community, leisure and residential uses fronting the relief road.

Opportunities for new development on the edge of the Centre have also been identified at (see proposals map):

- Frankley Beeches Depot (proposal DO1).
- 612 - 648 Bristol Road South, adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre (if not required for a new pool) (proposal DO2).

All proposals for new development, redevelopment within and on the edge of Centre must:

- be integrated within the Centre
- be appropriate to the size and function of the Centre.
- have no significant effect on the continued vitality and viability of the existing shopping centre as a whole.

The identification of edge of centre sites for retail development recognises the qualitative and quantitative need for a large, modern developments to enhance Northfield's attractiveness for new investment. There is a current proposal for a superstore on the Frankley Beeches Depot Site.

Other edge of Centre proposals will be considered in the light of PPG 6 and the Birmingham Plans retail policies.

Further guidance on specific development opportunities and general design principles is given in Chapter 7: Development Opportunities.

Changes of use to Service, Leisure, Entertainment and Community Uses.

These uses include professional and financial services and restaurants (within Use Class A2 and A3) and other services such as job centres. They also include community facilities (such as doctors surgeries / health centres, dentists, libraries, religious buildings) and leisure and entertainment uses (such as swimming pools and amusement centres).

These uses can add to the diversity of the centre. They provide useful local facilities in easily accessible locations and attract people and, therefore, activity into the centre. They can also encourage people to use the centre at different times of the day, thereby making it

safer. These uses will, therefore, be supported as complementary to the retail function of the centre, subject to the need to ensure that the main shopping role of the centre is maintained and enhanced.

However, an over concentration of service or other non-retail uses can erode / undermine it's retail function and result in the creation of 'dead frontages'. This is because they do not have window displays, or are closed during normal shopping hours, or attract little passing trade, or do not contain a variety of uses or because different uses group together.

The Birmingham Plan indicates that if the growth of service or non-retail uses is likely to be at the expense of the centre's primary retail function then there is a need to restrict these uses. This is achieved through the identification of primary retail frontages in which proposals for additional service or non-retail uses will normally be restricted.

At present there is limited pressure for change of use from retail to non-retail. Within the primary retail area either side of Bristol Road South from the Grosvenor Centre to Rochester Road approximately 17% (Shop Unit Survey 2000) of all units are in service or non-retail use.

Changes of use from retail to non-retail use will only be permitted where:

- they do not create significant areas of dead frontage.
- they will not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the Centre.
- they can be satisfactorily integrated with the Centre.
- there will be no adverse impact on the amenity of the adjoining residents and adequate parking can be provided.

During the Plan period, market changes and the pressure for non-retail uses will be closely monitored, and the need for a primary frontage policy, where non-retail uses are normally restricted, will be kept under review.

Further policies on hot food take-away shops, restaurants, cafes, amusement centres and car hire booking offices are set out in the Birmingham Plan.

New development for Service, Leisure, Entertainment and Community Use

Proposals for new and improvements to existing service, leisure, entertainment and community uses should meet the following criteria:

- they do not create significant areas of dead frontage.
- they will not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the Centre.
- they can be satisfactorily integrated with the Centre.
- there will be no adverse impact on the amenity of the adjoining residents and adequate parking can be provided.

Sites suitable for new service, leisure, entertainment and community developments include:

- Sites within the shopping centre as shown on the proposals map. These include sites DO4 and DO7 and site of the existing swimming pool, should they be relocated (DO3) and other sites which may become available between the proposed relief road and Bristol Road South and on the east side of Bristol Road South. Such uses will be particularly encouraged as part of mixed use schemes.
- Edge of Centre as shown on the proposals map at Frankley Beeches Depot, 612 - 648 Bristol Road South adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre (proposal DO1 and DO2). The site of Ulwine Drive Maisonettes may also be suitable for small scale community uses (proposals DO5 and DO6).

Swimming facilities in Northfield will be retained and enhanced. The provision of a new pool with associated leisure facilities and car parking is a key proposal of this Plan and is important to securing the regeneration of Northfield.

The preferred site for any future replacement pool is the site between 612 - 648 Bristol Road South adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre (Proposal DO2). Alternatively, if funding does not become available for a new pool, refurbishment of the existing pool will be supported.

Offices

Northfield Centre is identified in the Birmingham Plan as a centre with potential for further office growth. It is the only such centre identified in the south west of the City. The A38 corridor is also identified for further office development use in the Birmingham Plan. Such uses can provide useful local services and can attract further people and therefore activity into the Centre.

New office development will be encouraged:

- As part of mixed use schemes within Northfield Centre including sites DO3, DO4 and DO7, and other sites which may become available within the Shopping Centre.
- On edge of Centre sites identified on the proposals map at Frankley Beeches Depot, 612 - 648 Bristol Road South adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre, and the site of Ulwine Drive maisonettes. The site north of Vineyard Road is reserved for a new neighbourhood office (DO1, DO2, DO5 and DO6).
- In appropriate locations on the A38 in accordance with the Birmingham Plan. (It is likely that these locations will extend outside the Northfield Local Action Plan area).

Proposals for new and improvements to existing office use should meet the following criteria:

- they do not create significant areas of dead frontage.
- they will not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the Centre.
- they can be satisfactorily integrated with the Centre.
- there will be no adverse impact on the amenity of the adjoining residents and adequate parking can be provided.

Changes of use from residential to office and non-residential uses will not be permitted in:

- Small dwellings on Bristol Road South.
- Dwellings in residential areas adjoining the centre.

5. Improving Transportation

Overview

The A38 Bristol Road South is an important and busy radial route forming part of the City's Strategic Highway Network which is identified in the Birmingham Plan. It is an important route for both long distance and local traffic. For most part, Bristol Road South is to dual carriageway standard consistent with the requirement of the Strategic Highway Network to provide high capacity, relatively free-flowing traffic and limited frontage access. However, where it passes through Northfield Centre the Bristol Road South or "High Street" is reduced to two narrow lanes in either direction with limited space for parking and servicing and narrow pavements on either side.

As explained previously in Chapter 2: A Profile of Northfield, the current traffic flows in this section of Bristol Road South create an unpleasant environment and difficult conditions for users of the Centre, particularly buses, pedestrians and cyclists.

In Northfield Centre, therefore, the high traffic flows and needs of the Strategic Highway Network conflict with the needs for:

- safe and easy pedestrian movement to and within the Centre;
- easy use of buses with good interchange and waiting facilities in the Centre and priority for buses over other traffic on the A38 corridor;
- a good quality environment which will attract people to use the Centre and in turn encourage investment in the centre;
- adequate and easy to use servicing and car parking.

This Chapter sets out the proposal for a relief road to take most of the traffic out of the Centre. This will enable major environmental improvements within the Centre to be implemented (see Chapter 6: Improving The Environment) and measures to improve access to and within the Centre.



Objectives

- To support the regeneration of the Centre by removing through traffic from the 'High Street'.
- To reduce the levels of noise, air pollution and congestion to improve the environment of the Centre.
- To ensure that access to and within the Centre is maintained and enhanced for all users of the Centre, in particular, pedestrians, cyclists and people with special needs.
- To improve access to and through the Centre by public transport and encourage it's use
- To maintain accessibility by car and provide adequate parking to maintain the viability of the Centre.
- To improve safety for all users of the Centre.

Proposals and Policies

The provision of a relief road capable of removing through traffic from the Centre and bringing about environmental improvement within the Centre is a key proposal in the Birmingham Plan and is important to secure the future regeneration of Northfield.

The Relief Road

It is proposed to construct 1.3 km of dual carriageway road between the existing dual carriageway of the A38 to the south of the

Centre at Great Stone Road and Bell Lane to the north. It would run through the Ulwine Drive maisonettes and part of the Ulwine Drive car park. (see proposals map).

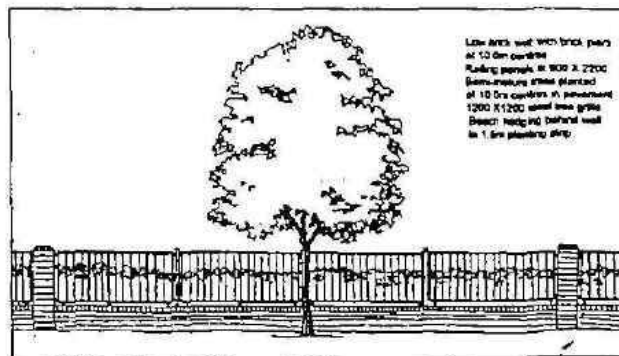
Design Principles for Road

The relief road will have:

- Junctions as shown on the proposals map controlled by traffic signals.
- Pedestrian crossings as shown on the proposals map linked to traffic signals to allow people to cross the road and prevent the separation of Northfield Centre from the surrounding residential areas. Appropriate crossing facilities will also be provided for cyclists.
- Public transport priority facilities linked to traffic signals to allow buses priority access into the Centre and speed up average journey times for public transport users.
- In order to maintain the function of the relief road as a high capacity road, access directly from the relief road will be limited to locations specified on the proposals map and at main junctions. Provision will also be made for access to the site off Bristol Road South, adjoining the Grosvenor Centre from the relief road.
- Junctions will be designed to discourage through traffic from taking a short cut along the "High Street" whilst providing facilities for cyclists and buses.

There will be also a need to consider the design of landscaping and treatment of land adjoining the relief road. This should provide a high quality setting with frontage development consistent with the role of Bristol Road South as a major route into the City.

Tree planting along the relief road will be required as part of new development schemes to provide a high quality frontage on those development sites fronting the road shown on the proposals map. Elsewhere, where new development next to the road is not likely in the short term, a wall with railings should be built at the back of the footway. Trees should



Boundary Wall to Northfield Relief Road

be planted in front of the wall and a hedge behind the wall as shown in Fig x. This will be particularly important where the relief road exposes rear elevations and service yards of existing buildings Plans A and B. Northfield Environmental Enhancements in Chapter 6 shows the extent of treatment along the relief road.

Buildings and landscaping along the relief road will be designed to protect the amenities of adjoining residents and other noise sensitive uses. Such measures must however be in keeping with the character of the remainder of Bristol Road South.

Other specific measures to reduce the effect of traffic noise include:

- Some properties adjoining the road in Bell Lane and Lockwood Road would qualify for the installation of double-glazing;
- acoustic fencing provided to Bellfields School;
- access road and landscaped buffer provided in front of Bell Lane houses.

Access to Northfield Centre

The implementation of the relief road should be accompanied by improvements to public transport, pedestrian access, parking and traffic management measures. It will also create the opportunity to carry out environmental enhancement works within the 'High Street'.

Access for buses, taxis, cycles and emergency vehicles into and through the Centre will be encouraged and facilities for these improved. Access for other vehicles visiting the Centre (service vehicles, residents and shoppers cars) will also be permitted, however, through traffic will be discouraged. Any traffic which

Environmental enhancements outside Grosvenor Centre: Concept Drawing



passes through the Centre should move relatively slowly so that pedestrian and cycle movement is as safe and easy as possible. Permitting limited vehicular access will also keep the centre alive outside normal shopping hours and help to ensure a safe environment.

Public Transport

Northfield Centre is located in A38 Bristol Road 'corridor' offering a high level of bus provision. Many bus services also cross Bristol Road South linking Northfield centre to adjoining residential areas. It is important that this provision is maintained and enhanced to ensure better integrated, more attractive and reliable services. This will encourage the greater use of public transport reducing the reliance on the private car.

Measures to assist bus and taxis include:

- bus slip lanes where the relief road leaves and joins Bristol Road South to give buses priority over cars. Traffic management within the Centre to give priority to buses e.g bus boarders or other arrangements to ensure traffic waits behind buses;
- frequent, conveniently positioned bus stops which are well lit and designed to allow better pedestrian links between the bus stop areas and the Centre;
- improved bus interchange facilities, including a bus interchange on Bristol Road South outside the Grosvenor Centre,

to minimise walking distance between bus stops on differing routes;

- new taxi ranks in convenient locations throughout the Centre.

Northfield Centre is within a 10 -15 minute walk from Northfield Railway station which is situated on the Cross City Line between Redditch and the City Centre. Trains run throughout the day at a frequency approximateley four per hour in each direction. Pedestrian routes between the centre and station need to be addressed. Opportunities to improve signage and footpaths between the two will be taken.

Traffic Management Measures

In designing the relief road, and environmental enhancement scheme for the Centre there will be a need for the following measures:

- **To discourage through traffic from taking a short cut through the Centre:** directional signs and traffic lights phased to favour traffic on relief road. Road narrowing at entrances to the centre.
- **To ensure traffic moves slowly through the Centre:** substantial narrowing of the existing A38 Bristol Road South through the Centre to one lane in either direction, traffic calming measures and frequent pedestrian crossings.

The environmental enhancement scheme for

the Centre (see Chapter 6: Improving the Environment) will also be designed to discourage through traffic and make traffic move slowly.

There will also be a need to give careful consideration to the Church Road and Bell Lane junction with Bristol Road South. This should include traffic calming measures and should aim to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and buses. There will be a need to retain traffic signals at this junction.

Pedestrian Access

In designing the environmental enhancement scheme (See Chapter 6: Improving the Environment), pedestrian safety and ease of movement within all parts of the centre will be prime concerns. There will, therefore, be a need for frequent pedestrian crossings throughout the Centre, appropriate surface treatments, removal of uneven pavements / forecourts to provide level access into shops, and clear delineation between traffic and pedestrian areas.

To assist access to the Centre pedestrian crossings will be provided across the relief road. The main locations are shown on the proposals map. Additional measures to assist pedestrians will be encouraged on Church Road to improve access to the library and the adult education centre.

Attractive, direct, safe and convenient pedestrian routes to the centre will also need to be provided along the relief road. Other opportunities to improve existing pedestrian routes and provide new routes to the Centre are shown on the proposals map. Improvements to pedestrian routes in adjoining residential areas will be carried out as opportunities arise.

Cycle Access

Bristol Road is being developed as one of the City's Strategic Cycle routes. This is partly laid out, although further work is required to improve and extend the route through Selly Oak and Northfield Centres, and beyond Northfield Centre to the City Boundary. In addition, opportunities should be taken to lay out other cycle routes to the Centre as shown on the proposals map.

In designing the relief road and environmental scheme for Northfield Centre, the need to provide safe and attractive cycle routes into and through the centre will be a prime concern. There will therefore be a need for appropriate surface treatments and measures to give cyclists priority.

The environmental enhancement scheme will need to provide well lit, secure and well designed cycle parking at convenient and prominent locations throughout the centre, including locations close to bus stops. All new developments will also be required to provide adequate good quality cycle parking for staff and visitors.

Car Parking

In order to maintain the economic viability of the centre, it will be necessary to ensure that an adequate supply of safe and convenient public car parking is available.

Car parking will be enhanced through improvements to existing car parks and provision of new public parking in new developments.

• Improvements to Existing Car Parking to Encourage Better Use

Improvements will include:

- improving the layout and extending existing car parks;
- improving access to and encouraging use of existing car parks which have spare capacity;
- ensuring parking is available to the public rather than reserved for private use;
- encouraging short stay and discouraging long stay;
- encouraging car parks that serve the centre as a whole rather than dedicated to individual developments, ie dual use parking;
- ensuring car parking is clearly signed.

Specific measures include:

- Improved access to the existing Grosvenor Centre car park to increase its attractiveness and encourage use of spare capacity. This could include two-way traffic movement at both existing accesses. The continued refurbishment of this car park by the owners will also be encouraged.

- The remaining area of the Ulwine Drive car park will be enhanced and access provided from the relief road. Adjoining parking areas to the rear of Northfield House and the Bell Shopping Centre will also be enhanced. Opportunities will be taken to link these with the Ulwine Drive car park. This would also improve service access to the rear of shops and reduce the need for some vehicles to use the shopping street. However, should this area in the longer term be developed as part of a comprehensive scheme then any car parking lost will have to be re-provided.
- Environmental enhancement of the Lockwood Road car park
- Improved on-street parking on Bristol Road South as part of the environmental enhancement scheme.

- **Provision of New Public Parking in New Developments**

It will be important to ensure that all new development provides adequate car parking for employees and visitors to the Centre

All on and off street public parking will include provision for people with disabilities in convenient locations.

Further guidance is given in Chapter 8.

Servicing

New development should provide adequate off-street servicing wherever possible. In addition, improvements to existing rear access and servicing facilities will be encouraged where opportunities arise. All off-street servicing provision will be subject to the need to protect the amenity of residents.

Where there are no existing off-street servicing facilities or opportunities for new rear access facilities, appropriate on street service facilities will be considered as part of the environmental enhancement scheme.

6. Improving the Environment of the Centre

The Centre has a number of environmental problems. The heavy traffic flows along the 'High Street' dominate the Centre creating a noisy, unattractive shopping environment and difficulties in crossing the road (see Chapter 2). The quality of the physical environment has deteriorated due to lack of investment. This has affected footways, street furniture, car parks and public spaces. The Centre has not attracted substantial investment in new development and suffers from a poor image.

Improving the environment of Northfield Centre is important to secure its long term economic regeneration and vitality. The image and identity of the centre is crucial to attract new users and maintain the loyalty of existing customers.

Objectives

- To improve the image and appearance of the Northfield Centre.
- To provide a safe environment with attractive facilities which meet the needs of all users.
- To ensure traffic using the 'High Street' moves relatively slowly, safely and gives priority to buses, pedestrians and cyclists.



The opportunity will be taken to enhance access to Victoria Common Park

Through the successful development and implementation of these objectives, the image and appearance of Northfield Centre will be improved. A more attractive and useable centre will in turn attract more users, encourage regeneration and help secure investment to provide a range of shops and services.

Policies and Proposals

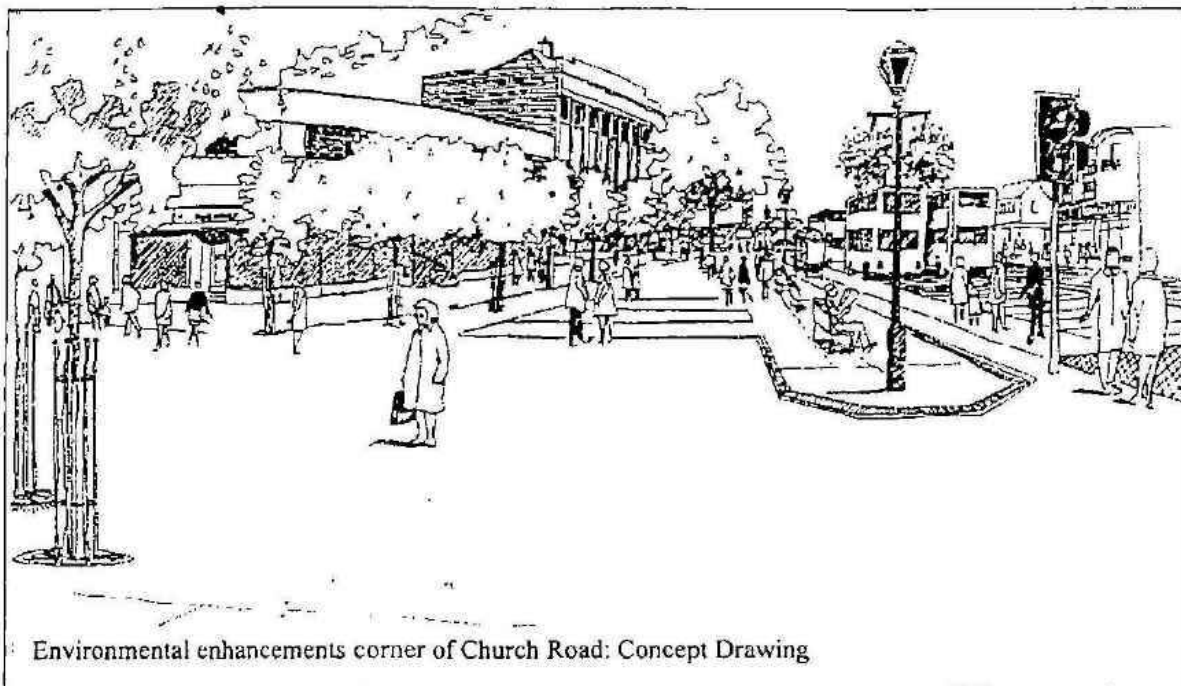
The implementation of the relief road will remove through traffic from the 'High Street' (See Chapter 5: Improving Transportation). This will provide the opportunity to implement a range of environmental enhancements and traffic management improvements which will secure the above objectives.

Broad principles for environmental enhancements are given below. Plan A illustrates one way in which these principles may be implemented. Plan B and C show in more detail how this may be followed through. These plans merely provide an example of how the Centre may look in the future. A detailed scheme will be drawn up and will be subject of further consultation with local traders and other interested parties.

Environmental Enhancements In Centre

Design principles:

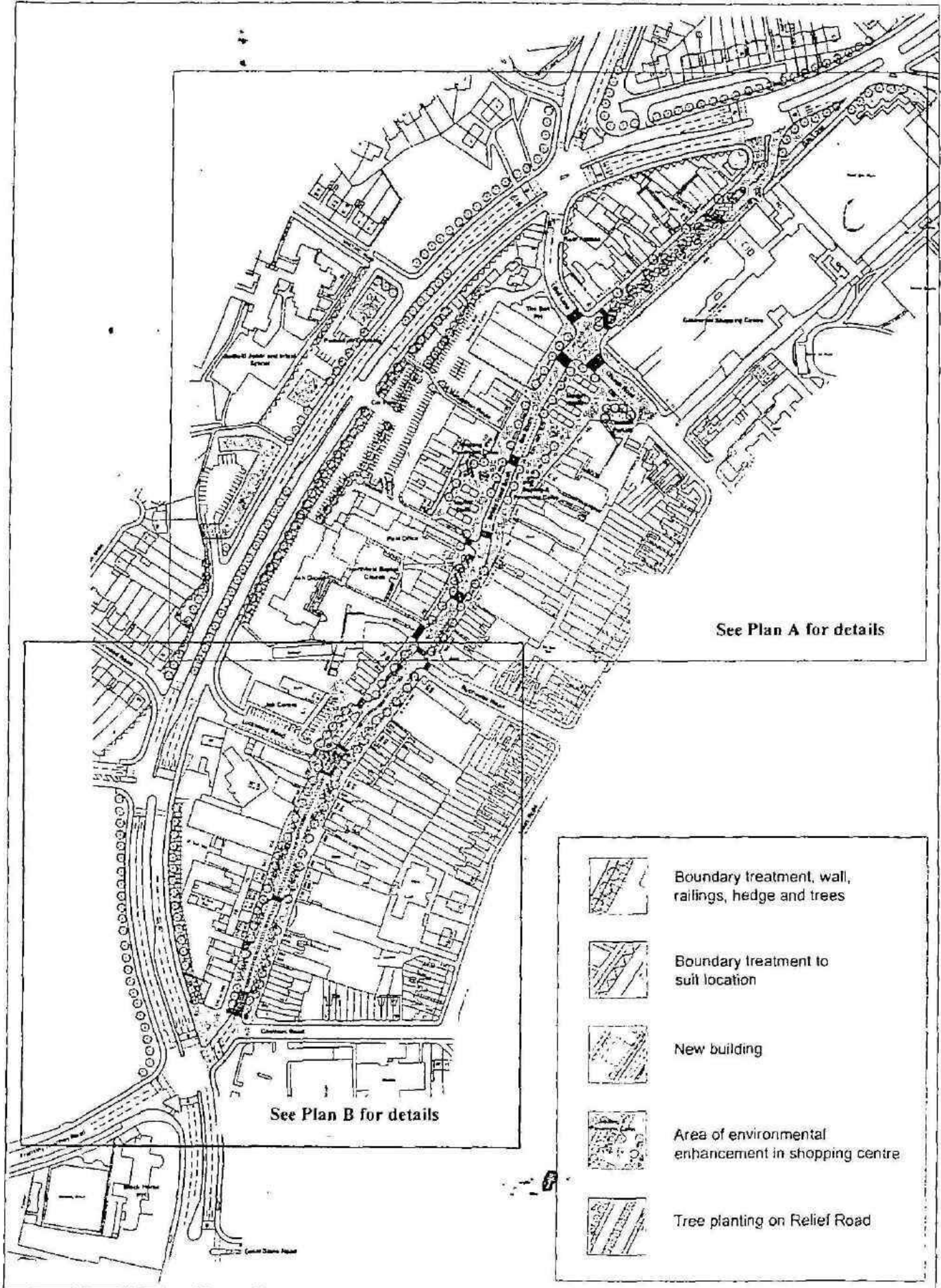
- At the northern and southern entrances or 'gateways' where the 'High Street' meets the proposed relief road, appropriate hard and soft landscaping or buildings will be used to mark entrances to the Centre. These features should provide a sense of arrival and discourage through traffic.
- Widening pavements to give greater space for pedestrian movements along the 'High Street' and to allow room to position new, carefully located street furniture, lighting, tree planting and landscaping. In the detailed design of any environmental enhancement scheme it will be important to consider the appropriate location of new street furniture. A high quality of material will be used throughout any environmental enhancement scheme. This will contribute to a more attractive streetscape.



Environmental enhancements corner of Church Road: Concept Drawing

- Creation of dual purpose spaces at Church Road Junction and Prices Square (area in front of 735 – 771 Bristol Road South). The use of both spaces should encourage activity and provide a sense of identity for the Centre. These spaces could provide opportunities for relaxation and be suitable for a variety of uses e.g. market stalls or road side cafés for part of the day / week. In order to achieve this, the design of this space and the positioning of any additional street furniture should be flexible. Specific measures should be positioned to ensure that traffic along Bristol Road South travels slowly and its impact on these spaces is minimised.
- Any environmental enhancement scheme must meet the needs of all users including the elderly, people with disabilities and young children. In addition, measures to help deter crime should form an integral part of any scheme, for example, improved lighting and by placing seats, bollards, bins, where they can deter ram raiding, but without obstructing pedestrians.
- Provision should be made for public art as an integral part of the design of any environmental enhancement scheme.
- Measures will be introduced along the whole length of the 'High Street' as set out in Chapter 5 to:
 - Calm traffic
 - Improve bus access and facilities
 - Improve pedestrian movement and safety
 - Improve cycle, taxi and car parking facilities
 - Give priority to needs of pedestrians, cyclists and buses.

Northfield Environmental Enhancements



Plan A Environmental Enhancements in Centre and along Relief Road

The design of this junction as well as the environmental enhancement measures will discourage through traffic entering the centre

Access road and landscape buffer in front of housing

Potential for new development at gateway to Centre

Tree planting and the provision of car parking in the centre of the road should calm traffic accessing and passing through the area

Acoustic fencing and other appropriate measures to protect Bellfields

Buses will enter from Bristol Road South via a bus gate controlled slip road and priority turning lane from the relief road

Indicative layout of new development on site of Ulwine Drive maisonettes

Bus Interchange outside Grosvenor Centre

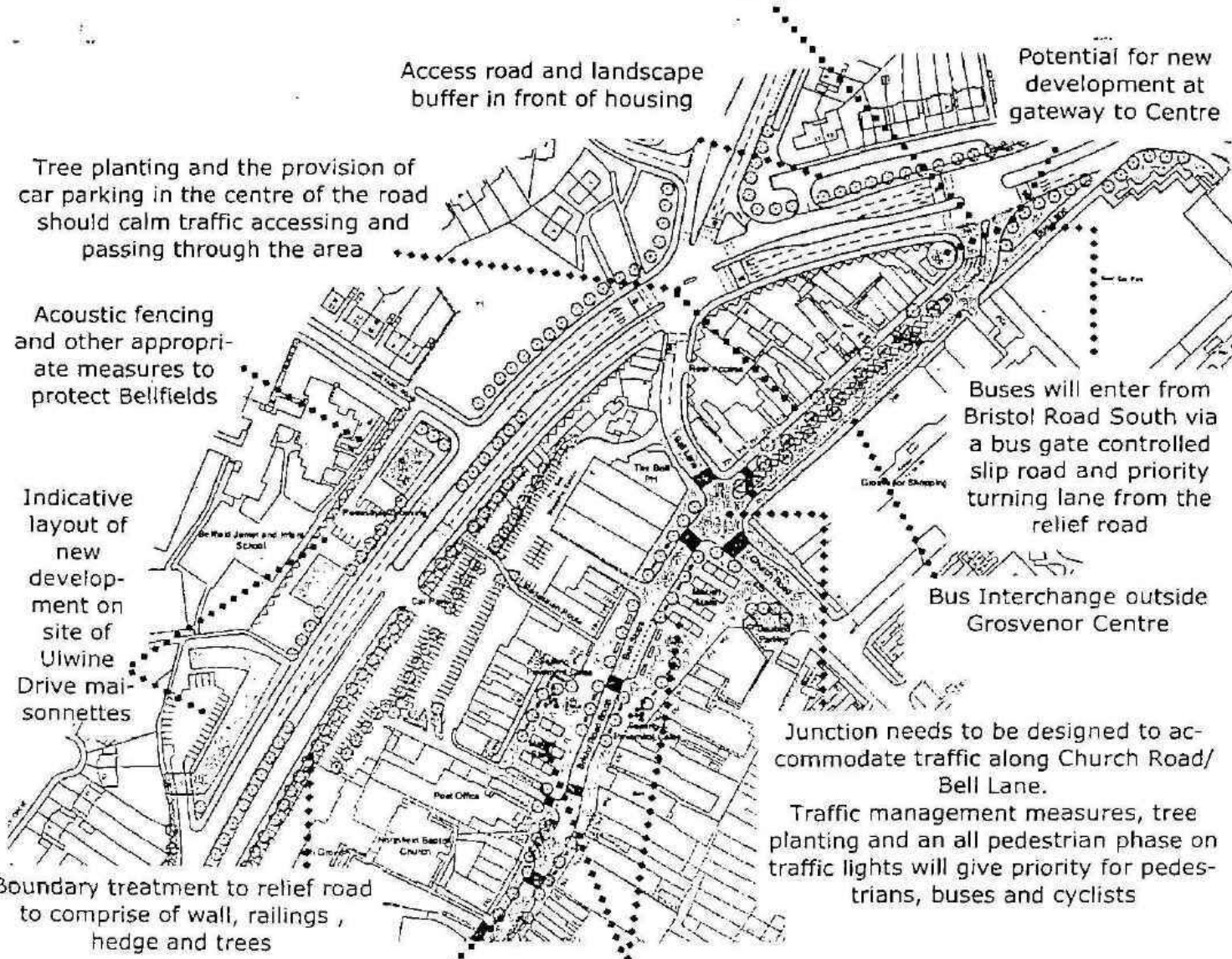
Junction needs to be designed to accommodate traffic along Church Road/Bell Lane.

Traffic management measures, tree planting and an all pedestrian phase on traffic lights will give priority for pedestrians, buses and cyclists

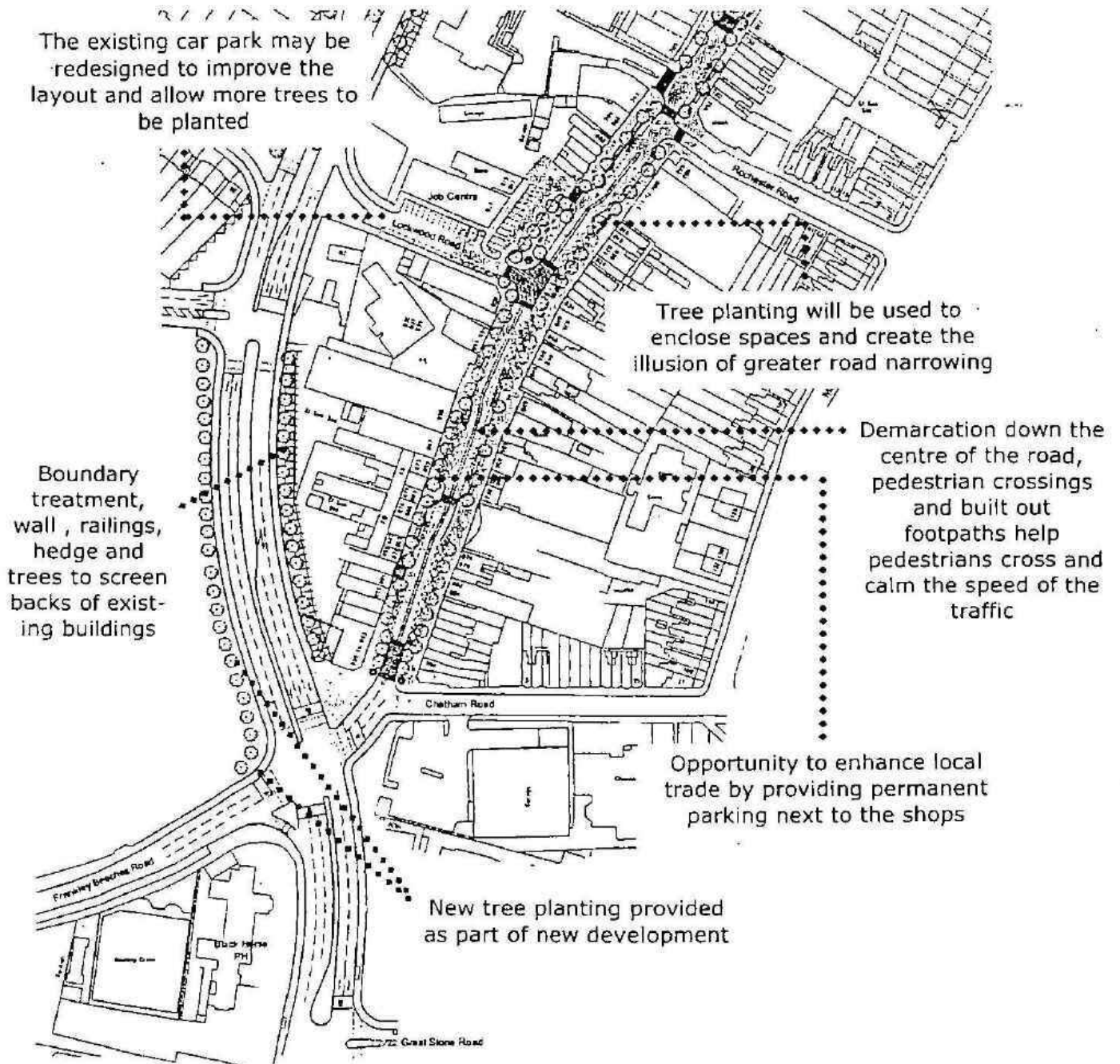
Boundary treatment to relief road to comprise of wall, railings, hedge and trees

Road narrowed to one lane in each direction. Pedestrian crossings and wider pavements help pedestrians cross and calm traffic

Open spaces will be designed to create a pedestrian friendly environment where markets could be held, cafes spill out onto the pavement and seating areas created. These areas also provide particular opportunities for public art which should be an integral part of the design of any scheme



Plan B Environmental Enhancements in Centre and along Relief Road



A Safer Place

Particular areas within the centre feel unsafe and unattractive. This does not encourage residents and shoppers or visitors to use the centre. Although the fear of crime is often worse than reality, fear is enough to stop people using the area freely.

The City Council will work with the Police, local traders and business and other interested parties to reduce crime within Northfield Centre. Opportunities will be investigated for funding a Closed Circuit Television scheme (CCTV).

Opportunities for improved lighting and designing buildings to increase natural surveillance will also be encouraged.

Listed Buildings

The Black Horse and 5 Bell Lane (both Grade II) will be protected and their restoration encouraged. Detailed policies on development affecting listed buildings are contained in the Birmingham Plan.

Several Buildings are being considered for inclusion in the local list of buildings of Architectural and Historic Importance. These are Northfield Library, Northfield Institute and 721 Bristol Road South (currently Universal Travel). These buildings provide focal points within the centre and should be retained.

Improvements to Existing Buildings

The maintenance and refurbishment of properties and shop frontages will be encouraged and new development should seek to improve the quality of the streetscape. The City's Shopfront Design Guide provides advice and guidance on good shopfront design including security measures and roller shutters. Any shop refurbishment schemes should take the opportunity to make it easier for all users to gain access into and through the shops.

New Development

Chapter 8: Development Opportunities sets out general design and development principles and policies for specific sites which are likely to become available during the plan period. Individual development briefs will be prepared for the major sites. However, smaller redevelopments or alterations / extensions to existing buildings / developments should adhere to these principles.

Open Space

Existing open spaces identified on the proposals map will be protected. Opportunities to improve the value of Victoria Common park will be encouraged. Chapter 8: Development Opportunities highlights the need to protect and enhance the open space at Victoria Common Park through the creation of a new pedestrian entrance from Bristol Road South and to improve recreational facilities.



5 Bell Lane

Adjoining the 'High Street' there are a number of residential areas which include a variety of housing types. There are also additional residential units above shops in the shopping centre.

Objectives

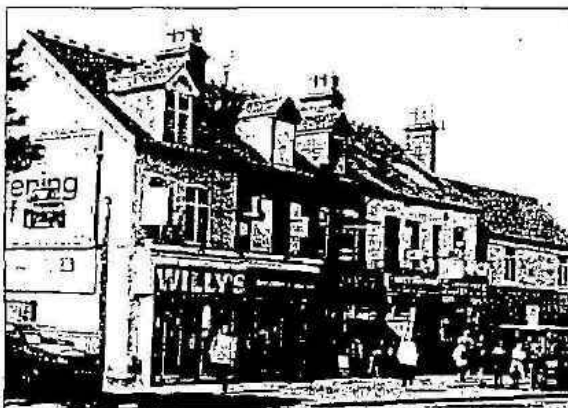
- To protect and enhance the quality of the environment of residential areas
- To improve the condition of the housing stock
- To encourage diversity in the provision of new housing.

Proposals and Policies

Housing Provision

Initiatives for council owned properties which require improvement and / or renewal will be drawn up separately to this Local Action Plan, but in close consultation with the communities affected.

'Living over the shop' is an essential element to maintain the vitality of the centre outside business hours. Proposals to bring underused upper floors back into residential use will be supported. The incorporation of further residential accommodation as part of any mixed use developments will be encouraged wherever possible.



Opportunity for "Living over the shop"

Further guidance is provided in Chapter 4: Supporting the Centre on the conversion of residential use to office and non residential use.

Outside of the plan area the Tinkers Farm Centre (former Northfield School) has been identified for redevelopment with affordable housing and associated open space to complement the regeneration proposals for the Bellfields Estate. This is significant to the Local Action Plan as it is proposed that the existing Neighbourhood Office and Housing Office at Tinkers Farm Centre will be relocated to a site at Ulwine Drive adjoining the proposed relief road. (Proposal DO5)

Parking and Traffic Management in Residential Areas

Chapter 5: sets out policies and proposals to improve transportation within the Local Action Plan area.

There will be a need to ensure that the impact of the relief road on adjoining residential properties is minimised.

Problems of traffic using other residential roads as short cuts currently affect many roads including Maas, Rochester, Chatham, Vineyard, St.Laurence and Hill Top Roads. There is, therefore, a need to ensure that all traffic without a destination in the Centre uses the relief road. Schemes addressing local needs for traffic management will be developed in consultation with residents.

There is also a need to monitor the impact of shoppers parking in residential streets. The need for controlled parking zones will be kept under review.

Improvements to Great Stone Road/ Church Road junction will be sought improve safety and reduce the attractiveness of rat running routes.

Finally, opportunities will be taken to improve to pedestrian and cycle routes through residential areas.

Development Opportunities

A key function of this Plan is to encourage developments of high quality design which support and enhance Northfield's role as a focal point for the community. This Chapter sets out general design and development principles appropriate to all developments, and guidance for specific sites which are identified on the proposal map:

This Chapter also sets out guidance on further sites which may become available during the Plan period. For example, on completion of the relief road sites at the backs of properties fronting Bristol Road South.

If appropriate development briefs will be prepared for the major sites.

General Design and Development Principles

- All developments will be expected to be of high quality design which contributes to the quality of the street scene and the enhancement of the area. Developments should create a strong sense of presence particularly at entrances and gateways into Northfield Centre where landmark buildings may be appropriate. The design of any new development should have proper regard to its relationship with its surroundings should be appropriate to both Northfield Centre and the wider area. Any new developments should front onto roads and pedestrian routes. Building heights will relate to adjacent buildings.
- It will be important to secure a lively attractive mix of uses in all developments for example, within the Shopping Centre, retail on the ground floor with office or residential above. In order to maintain and enhance activity along the 'High Street' and existing pedestrian routes and to create activity along new pedestrian routes and the relief road, developments which result in blank frontages will not be allowed.
- New development within or on the edge of the shopping area should front Bristol Road South and be integrated with the centre. Development should be positioned at the back of pavement, have safe direct, level and attractive routes to the Centre. It should help to improve the continuity and attractiveness of the shopping frontage.
- New development which fronts the relief road should provide an attractive elevation to the relief road. Good quality landscaping and boundary treatment will be essential and parking and servicing areas should be screened. Uses such as car sales/ storage uses will not be permitted. Excessively large advertisement signs will not be permitted at the rear of premises or where visible from the relief road.
- The amount of parking required for any new development will be dependent on the developments' size and location and analysis of existing levels of parking in the Centre. Car parking levels will be designed to help reduce the car dependency of new developments and promote sustainable transport choices. In all new developments emphasis will be on dual-use parking to serve the Centre as well as the proposed development. The design of car parks should also take account of the guidance on safety issues, environmental impact etc, contained in the City Council's Car Park Design Guide.
- In all developments, including refurbishment and extension of existing premises, the following will need to be taken into account:
 - The need to provide access and other needs for all sectors of the community including the elderly, people with disabilities, parents with pushchairs and children.
 - The need to provide a safe environment which minimises opportunities for crime.
 - The need to provide pedestrian and cycle access to the development.
- Alteration to existing retail units will have to take into account the City Council's guidelines on Shop Fronts.
- Existing advertisement hoardings along the route of the relief road and at gateways to the Centre should be removed. New hoardings will not normally be permitted in these locations.

- Where appropriate, developers will have to enter into planning agreements/obligations to address the impact of their development on the area, enhance the development and secure the objectives set out in this Plan.

Appropriate matters for agreements/obligations could include:

- Environmental enhancements
- Public parking in lieu of on-site provision including improvements to existing car parks
- Contribution to replacement of facilities affected by development e.g. the reprovision of any car parking lost through the redevelopment of sites
- Public transport provision e.g. bus facilities
- Physical measures to alleviate the impact on the environment and loss/impact on amenity of immediate surroundings e.g. traffic management, landscaping, noise insulation.
- Pedestrian access to and through the development
- The provision of public toilets, parent and child facilities
- Provision of public art, crèches
- Contribution to off site access improvements

Other appropriate matters for the development sites identified in this Plan are set out below.

Development opportunities within the shopping centre

- **Northfield Swimming Pool and/or Adjoining Garage (Proposal DO3)**

Should this site become available through the relocation of the existing swimming pool, it would be suitable for retail and office use. The site is located at the southern gateway to the centre and a high quality landmark development consistent with its prominent location will be essential. Enhancement of the landscaped frontage and the protection of the amenity of the adjoining residents will also be important. The main access for the site should be from Great Stone Road.

- **835 – 839 Bristol Road South (formerly Osbornes Furniture Store) and land at the rear. (Proposal DO4)**

This could be redeveloped for a 2-3 storey building in keeping with the street scene with it's main frontage at back of pavement on Bristol Road South and secondary frontages to the relief road. Pedestrian links across the relief road will be important. Opportunities could be taken to improve access/servicing to adjoining premises or include adjoining premises in any redevelopment scheme.

- **Site of 864-874 Bristol Road South and adjoining land. (Proposal DO7)**

This could be developed for a 2 - 3 storey building in keeping with the street scene at back of pavement on Bristol Road South. Opportunities should be taken to improve servicing for adjoining premises.

Development opportunities on the edge of the shopping centre

- **Frankley Beeches Depot (Proposal DO1)**

This 2.25-hectare site is located to the rear of properties on Bristol Road South and Frankley Beeches Road adjacent to Northfield Shopping Centre. The draft alterations to the Birmingham Plan highlight the site as one of the largest development opportunities in the south west of the City. It occupies a prominent location with a frontage to the proposed relief road.

This site would therefore be suitable for a variety of uses including

- Offices
- Hotel
- Leisure
- Other commercial uses
- Food and non food retailing
- Primary health care and medical services.
- Dwellinghouses, nursing home/rest home
- Community and religious uses

The allocation of this site for food and or non-food retail and leisure use recognises its location at the edge of Northfield Centre. This is in response to government guidance, PPG6 Town Centres and Retail Development.

Proposals for retail, leisure and commercial uses will be subject to the need for measures to integrate development with Northfield Centre and to protect the vitality and viability of Northfield Centre.

Uses which will not be permitted include industry, warehousing and open storage uses e.g. open car sales, builders yards.

Car parking should be made available for visitors to Northfield Centre. It will also be necessary to provide parking facilities for the adjoining health centre. There will also be a need to relocate the Council's storage depot before the site can be developed.

A high quality design and layout will be required which:

- Provides an attractive public frontage to the relief road, Frankley Beeches Road and Bristol Road South and provides a high quality landmark building appropriate to its prominent location.
- Addresses the relationship between new development and the adjoining Black Horse Public House which is a listed building. Development should seek to preserve and enhance its setting.
- Relates in terms of massing and scale to the adjoining buildings and takes into account the proximity of adjoining dwellinghouses and health centre.
- Provides a high quality landscaping scheme which includes trees along the relief road.

The main vehicular access to the site should be from the relief road. Proposals should therefore provide for development of the whole site and for appropriate contributions to the relief road. Temporary access may, however, be permitted from Frankley Beeches Road to allow the development to proceed in advance of the relief road.

Provision of safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes, into and around the site with links to Northfield Centre are essential.

Developers will be required to enter into an appropriate planning agreement/obligations.

This site was reserved for a new pool in the Draft Local Action Plan. However, an alternative site has been identified between 612-645 Bristol Road South adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre. In order to release the Frankley Beeches Depot contributions will be required from the developers to make the alternative available for replacement pool. Developer contributions towards the refurbishment of the existing pool may be another option if funding for the new pool is not forthcoming.

A full development brief has been prepared for this site setting out more detailed guidance on design, layout, access and requirements for a planning agreement.

• **612- 648 Bristol Road South adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre. (Proposal DO2)**

The site includes all properties from 612-648 Bristol Road South adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre and Victoria Common Park. Subject to the satisfactory acquisition and relocation of the existing premises, this prominent location will provide the opportunity for a new high quality development. This is the preferred site for the replacement pool and will be reserved for a pool pending the outcome of feasibility studies. Should a pool not be feasible the site would be suitable for the following uses:

- Retail use, particularly an extension to the Grosvenor Centre, or specialist shopping.
- Offices
- Leisure uses including a public house

It is essential that development also provides for the creation of a new frontage and pedestrian access to the park from Bristol Road so that the park becomes an integral part of the Centre. The preferred location of the park entrance is adjacent to the Grosvenor Centre as shown on the proposals map.

There will also be a need to protect the amenity of adjoining residents to extend and enhance the tree screen on the boundary of the site and to replace any sports facilities lost within the existing park. The opportunity should also be taken to improve existing facilities within the park. (It will be necessary to seek the views of the Sports Council on any application. It will also be necessary to advertise the loss of open space).

Appropriate matters for planning obligations will include provision of sports facilities within the park.

- **Site of the Ulwine Drive Maisonettes North of Vineyard Road (Proposal DO5)**

This site fronts the proposed relief road. Any development on this site should be orientated so that it is parallel to the proposed relief road. This should be a 2-3 storey building and should be in keeping with the immediate residential character whilst recognising the scale of the proposed relief road. Appropriate boundary treatment will be required to protect the amenity of the adjacent residential properties fronting Vineyard Road and Saxon Wood Close. Access will from Vineyard Road. The site has been reserved for a neighbourhood office. However should this not be feasible acceptable uses would be:

- Office
- Community /leisure
- Residential

- **Site of the Ulwine Drive Maisonettes South of Vineyard Road (Proposal DO6)**

This site extends from Vineyard Road to the back of properties fronting Hilary Grove. This site will be accessed directly from the proposed relief road. (see proposals map). Any development of this site should provide adequate protection for the adjacent Bellfields School and the amenity of adjoining residents. An indicative layout for this site is shown on Plan A in Chapter 6.

Acceptable uses would be:

- Office
- Community/Leisure
- Residential

Other potential sites between Bristol Road and the proposed relief road

The completion of the proposed relief road will open up the back of properties fronting Bristol Road South. This will provide the opportunity for sites to become part of comprehensive redevelopment schemes which front both the proposed relief road and existing Bristol Road South. New buildings should be of a height and mass that compliments nearby properties but also recognises the scale of the road. Vehicular access to new development could be from the points on the relief road indicated on the proposals map or from Bristol Road South.

Within such sites shopping uses should front onto Bristol Road South to complement the shopping area with other non-retail or office uses to the relief road.

Where public parking is lost appropriate replacement provision should be made within the development.

Proposals for land between Ash Grove and the relief road to be incorporated into the Ash Grove boundary will be supported. Any proposal should provide additional amenity area for residents and allow the internal reorganisation of facilities within the adjoining Northfield Baptist Church.

The aim of the Northfield Local Action Plan is to guide future developments and environmental improvements. The plan has focused on three main themes:

- Supporting the role of Northfield Centre as a focal point for community life.
- Removal of through traffic and improved accessibility for all users of Northfield Centre
- Improve the quality of the local environment

The City Council will not be able to change Northfield on it's own. This will require the help of all people with an interest in Northfield; local residents, the private sector, retailers, developers and other public bodies. Many public and private sector funding sources will be needed.

The Local Action Plan will provide a context for future bids under a variety of Central Government, European Community and other funding including private finance initiatives. It will also provide guidance for the City Council when preparing it's own expenditure programmes. This public investment can play a vital role in leveraging further private sector investment.

Private sector investment will have a key role in refurbishing existing buildings and in bringing forward schemes for the redevelopment of underused/redundant sites/buildings for new uses.

In appropriate circumstances the City Council will seek planning obligations towards securing the transportation and environmental improvements in this plan.

When proposals have the benefit of planning permission the City Council will assist where appropriate by the use of Compulsory Purchase powers in site assembly to deliver the type, quality and scale of development appropriate in its location.

It is important that all the elements of the regeneration package including the relief road, environmental enhancements and a new pool are secured together in order to stimulate private sector investment. However if funding

is not available for the whole package then elements of the package could be implemented in phases.

For example, the nature of the relief road scheme will enable it to be implemented in stages. A possible interim scheme would involve building the southern end of the full scheme from Great Stone Road to Lockwood Road. A one way system would operate using Ulwine Drive and Bell Lane for northbound traffic and Bristol Road and Lockwood Road for southbound traffic. Buses would continue to have access to the Centre in both directions. This would involve a 'contra flow' bus lane in the northbound direction.

If the relief road is implemented in stages then any environmental enhancement scheme will also have to be implemented in stages, with works being carried out to the southern end of the 'High Street' in the areas where the through traffic will be removed as a first stage.

Monitoring

This Plan has been prepared to provide a framework for managing change and development up to 2011 in line with the current draft alterations to the Birmingham Plan. However, there will be a need to monitor this Local Action Plan once it is adopted. If there are any circumstances which require adjustment to policies and proposals, the Plan will be reviewed. This will ensure the Plan remains relevant and up to date.



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