

Local Development Framework

Bolton's Core Strategy

Background Document – BD4B

Prosperous Bolton (retail & leisure)

December 2009

Shaping the future of Bolton

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	BACKGROUND	2
	LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY	2
	LINKS TO THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	3
3	CONTEXT	4
	NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY STATEMENTS AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS	4
	<i>PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development</i>	4
	<i>PPS6 Planning for Town centres</i>	4
	REGIONAL POLICY AND EVIDENCE	5
	<i>North West Regional Spatial Strategy</i>	5
	OTHER PLANS, STRATEGIES AND EVIDENCE	6
	<i>Bolton Retail and Leisure Study</i>	6
	<i>Redevelopment of Church Wharf, Drivers Jonas</i>	7
	<i>5 Year Tourism Strategy (2006)</i>	7
4	COUNCIL APPROACH	8
	CORE STRATEGY KEY ISSUES	8
	CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS	8
	CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTIONS	9
	SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL	9
5	CONCLUSIONS	11
	SUMMARY OF POLICY FORMULATION	11
	SOUNDNESS	11
	APPENDIX 1 – NETWORK AND HIERARCHY OF CENTRES	13

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Background Document is one of sixteen produced by Bolton Council to provide evidence to support the publication version of the Bolton Core Strategy.
- 1.2 This Background Document covers the **Prosperous** theme for **retail policy**, and also area based policies which deliver that theme. This Background Document also covers policies relating to **leisure and tourism** from the area based policies.
Prosperous Theme Policy:
- Policy P2 – Retail
- 1.3 Area Based Policies
- Policy TC1 – Bolton Town Centre (Retail and Civic Core)
 - Policy TC2 – Bolton Town Centre (St. Helena)
 - Policy TC3 – Bolton Town Centre (St. Peters)
 - Policy TC4 – Bolton Town Centre (Trinity – Bolton Innovation Zone)
 - Policy TC5 – Bolton Town Centre (Westbrook – Bolton Innovation Zone)
 - Policy TC6 – Bolton Town Centre (Cultural Quarter – Bolton Innovation Zone)
 - Policy TC7 – Bolton Town Centre (Deane Road – Bolton Innovation Zone)
 - Policy TC8 – Bolton Town Centre (Church Wharf)
 - Policy TC9 – Bolton Town Centre (Little Bolton)
 - Policy TC10 – Bolton Town Centre (Merchant's Quarter)
 - Policy RA1 – Renewal Areas (Inner Bolton)
 - Policy RA2 – Renewal Areas (Farnworth)
 - Policy RA3 – Renewal Areas (Broughton)
 - Policy OA1 – The Outer Areas (Horwich and Blackrod)
 - Policy OA2 – The Outer Areas (Retail and leisure use at Middlebrook)
 - Policy OA3 – The Outer Areas (Westhoughton)
 - Policy OA5 – The Outer Areas (North Bolton)
 - Policy OA6 – The Outer Areas (Little Lever and Kearsley)
- 1.4 Each Background Document is structured to provide information, which demonstrates the soundness of the Core Strategy as a whole:
- Conformity with national and regional guidance;
 - Specific evidence on which the policy approach is based;
 - How the policy approach was developed at each stage of the plan making process and a summary of representations at each of those stages;
 - Information and guidance provided by the Sustainability Appraisal;
 - A statement that shows how the policies contribute to the effectiveness of the Core Strategy as a whole considering deliverability, flexibility and ability to be monitored;
 - Conclusions on soundness.
- 1.5 All documents referenced are held within the Public Examination Core Document Library.

2 Background

- 2.1 In Policy P2 the Council establish the quantum of new retail floorspace to be developed and the broad spatial distribution in the period up to 2026. It is proposed that:
- Up to 130,000 square metres of comparison goods floor space will be allowed between 2016 and 2026, concentrated in Bolton town centre.
 - Bulky goods retailing will be concentrated on the edge of centres, especially Bolton town centre.
 - Up to 10,000 square metres of convenience goods floor space will be allowed in town, district and local centres where communities have good access.
- 2.2 Policies TC1-TC10 continue to support the civic and retail core as the principal location in the borough for retailing whilst encouraging retail and leisure use in other specific Bolton town centre locations supporting aim of creating a vibrant town centre.
- 2.3 Policies RA1-RA3 establish the appropriate scale and spatial distribution of retailing within renewal areas.
- 2.4 Policies OA1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 establish specific locations within the outer area where retail and leisure use should be allowed and areas where it should be limited.

Links to the Sustainable Community Strategy

- 2.5 The prosperous retail policies have a clear link to the two main aims of Bolton's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) - narrowing the gap between the most and least well off and ensuring economic prosperity. How the retail policies help deliver these aims, as well as the specific aims of the "Prosperous Bolton" section of the SCS is outlined below:
- 2.6 Policy P2:
- Supports the aim of reducing the gap between the least and most well off by concentrating new comparison retail floor space in Bolton town centre which is highly accessible by public transport.
 - Supports the aim of ensuring economic prosperity by identifying a range of new sites for comparison good retail floor space of up to 130,000 square metres in the period between 2016 and 2026.
 - Supports the aims of building a transformed, vibrant town centre and raising/improving the profile of Bolton by concentrating most new retail floor space in Bolton town centre.
- 2.7 Town Centre Policies (TC1-TC10):
- Support the aim's of narrowing the gap between the least and most well off and matching jobs and investment to those most in need by focusing investment in Bolton town centre which is highly accessible by public transport.
 - Support the aim of ensuring economic prosperity, building a transformed and vibrant town centre and raising and improving the profile of Bolton by concentrating retail development in specific locations of Bolton town centre.

2.8 Renewal Area Policies (RA1-RA3):

- Support the aim's of narrowing the gap between the least and most well off, matching jobs and investment with those most in need and ensuring economic prosperity by focusing local shopping/specialist retailing in existing district centres within renewal areas.

2.9 Outer Areas (OA1, 2 3, 5 and 6):

- Support the aim of matching investment to those most in need by allowing the centres of Westhoughton, Little Lever and Bromley Cross to expand if sites for additional convenience retail floor space become available. These areas were identified in the Roger Tym Retail and Leisure Study as having a deficiency of convenience retailing.

Links to the Strategic Objectives

2.10 The basis to the Councils strategic approach and vision is explained in BD1. Of the 16 strategic objectives the following are relevant to the prosperous retail and leisure policies:

- Strategic Objective 3 – to take advantage of the economic opportunities presented by Bolton Town Centre..... and ensure that these opportunities benefit those people living in the most deprived areas.
- Strategic Objective 4 – to create a transformed and vibrant Bolton town centre.
- Strategic Objective 5 – to ensure that Bolton takes full economic advantage of its location in the Greater Manchester City Region.

2.11 The retail and leisure policies have been framed to deliver the achievement of the vision and Strategic Objectives 3, 4 and 5 “on the ground”.

2.12 The objectives inform the proposed spatial distribution, in Policy P2 and the area based policies. These policies concentrate new comparison retail development, leisure and tourism facilities in Bolton town centre and plans for additional convenience floor space in town, district and local centres where communities have good access.

3 Context

- 3.1 This section identifies the context against which the Prosperous retail and leisure policies have been prepared. It shows how the issues, guidance and information have been used to inform the final policies.

National planning policy statements and guidance documents

- 3.2 The Core Strategy was prepared in the context of national policy and the following guidance is relevant to the Prosperous theme.

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development

- 3.3 The prosperous retail and leisure policies are in conformity with PPS1 in that they are positive and pro-active in achieving sustainable development objectives, mainly due to the accessible town centre location of most future retail and leisure development.

PPS6 Planning for Town centres

- 3.4 The prosperous retail and leisure policies are in conformity with PPS6 because they:
- Plan for the growth and development of existing centres by concentrating new comparison retail floor space in Bolton town centre, allowing additional convenience floor space in centres where a deficiency has been identified and focusing local shopping in local and district centres;
 - Encourage a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all. This has been achieved encouraging a mix of uses in Bolton town centre, district centres and local centres.
 - Develop a hierarchy and network of centres (see appendix 1)
- 3.5 In developing the Prosperous theme retail and leisure policies the council have followed the PPS6 requirement to:
- Assess the need for development: This was assessed through the Bolton Retail and Leisure Study (2008).
 - Identify the appropriate scale of development: Policy P2 states that up to 130,000 square meters of comparison floor space will be allowed after 2016 and that 10,000 square meters of convenience floor space will be allowed. These figures are over and above existing commitments and are based on the Bolton Retail and Leisure study (2008)¹. The policy is based on the study's projections up to 2026, however,

¹ At the time of the Roger Tym and Partners (2008) Bolton Retail and Leisure Study the Central Street Scheme was an existing commitment. However, this application has now lapsed. The Central Street scheme does, however, remain in the retail and leisure schedule, and should still be classed as an existing commitment, on the basis that the applicant continues to work in partnership with the Council towards the delivery of this important major development and a fresh application will be submitted.

para 5.80 states that “whilst a considerable amount of further quantitative need for comparison goods is likely to arise in the longer term, from 2021 to 2026, such long-term forecasts are fraught with difficulty and provision for needs after 2021 should be the subject of a plan, monitor and manage approach”.

- Apply the sequential approach to site selection: New comparison floor space will be concentrated in Bolton town centre while new convenience floor space will be concentrated in town, local and district centres where local communities have good access.
- Assess the impact of development on existing centres: The Retail and Leisure Study (2008) concluded that the preferred approach was to meet most of the comparison retail and commercial leisure needs in Bolton town centre rather than a combination of Bolton town centre, the smaller town centres and the Middlebrook Retail and Leisure Park.
- Ensure that locations are accessible and well served by a choice of means of transport: Comparison retail will be concentrated in Bolton town centre which has good accessibility by public transport. Convenience floor space will be located in centres where local communities have good access.

Regional policy and evidence

North West Regional Spatial Strategy

- 3.6 The Prosperous retail and leisure policies have full and proper regard to the North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) 2008, including Spatial Principles DP1 – DP6. It also has full and proper regard to the following RSS Policies:
- 3.7 RSS Policy RDF1 states that the third level of priority for development should be towns including Bolton. Policy P2 supports this by concentrating retail and leisure development in Bolton town centre.
- 3.8 Policy W5 (“Retail Development”) states that plans and strategies should promote retail investment where it assists in the regeneration and economic growth of the North West’s town and city centres. It goes on to state that comparison retailing facilities should be enhanced in Bolton town centre to ensure a sustainable distribution of high quality retail facilities. Policy P2 achieves this by focusing most comparison retail development in Bolton town centre.
- 3.9 W5 goes on to explain that in other centres retail investment of an appropriate scale should be encouraged in order to maintain and enhance vitality and viability. Policy P2 allows for additional convenience goods floor space in town, district and local centres where local communities have good access. The area based policies allow for the expansion of centres for convenience retail where a deficiency has been identified.
- 3.10 Policy W6 (“Tourism and the Visitor Economy”) states that plans should seek to deliver improved economic growth and quality of life, through sustainable tourism activity in the North West. This will be achieved through focusing most tourism and leisure attractions in Bolton town centre whilst also recognising the value of Bolton’s countryside in attracting visitors and allowing tourism facilities to be developed, as long as they do not affect the rural character and open nature of the countryside. Policy W6 recognises Bolton as a destination with emerging potential for heritage related tourism development, and states that tourism supports and complements its status as a historic town. This is recognised

through, for example, Policy TC9 which states existing buildings within the conservation area should be retained.

- 3.11 The approach of focusing most tourism and leisure related development in Bolton town centre while recognising the value of Bolton's countryside in attracting visitors supports the principles outlined in Policy W7 ("Principles for Tourism Development").
- 3.12 Regarding the RSS Policy MCR1 ("Manchester City Region Priorities") - Policy P2 supports the aim of achieving a significant improvement in the sub-regions economic performance by encouraging investment and sustainable development.
- 3.13 Policy P2 supports RSS Policy MCR5 ("Northern Part of the Manchester City Region") through the transformation of the local economy, the regeneration of communities and enhancement of the environment.

Other plans, strategies and evidence

Bolton Retail and Leisure Study

- 3.14 The prosperous retail and leisure policies are informed by evidence gathered and analysed in the Bolton Retail and Leisure Study (2008) by Roger Tym & Partners. The key findings of this report are outlined below:
- 3.15 Existing comparison goods retail and convenience goods retail commitments will meet the demand likely to arise before 2016. However:
 - A considerable amount of comparison goods need, over and above existing commitments, is likely to arise between 2016 and 2026 requiring comparison goods floor space of between 74,300 and 134,600 sq. m gross².
 - A further need in the convenience goods sector, over and above existing commitments, arises between 2016 and 2026. This is between 9,200 sq. m where no allowance is made for over-trading and 11,000 sq. m with an allowance for over-trading. However, there is a short term, urgent requirement to meet the localised deficiencies which exist in Westhoughton, Little Lever and Egerton/Edgworth.
- 3.16 In terms of leisure, expenditure in the Bolton catchment area is expected to increase by £198.9 million in the period up to 2021. More information is outlined below:
 - Eating and Drinking: 60% of the increase in expenditure will be in eating and drinking establishments. Capturing a sizeable proportion of this growth in expenditure through the provision of a better and more appealing choice of restaurants, cafes and bars/pubs will be vital to the future health of all the town centres within the catchment area. This is recognised through Policy TC1, TC3 - TC6, TC8 - TC10, RA2, OA1, OA3,

² At the time of the Roger Tym and Partners (2008) Bolton Retail and Leisure Study the Central Street Scheme was an existing commitment. However, this application has now lapsed. The Central Street scheme does, however, remain in the retail and leisure schedule, and should still be classed as an existing commitment, on the basis that the applicant continues to work in partnership with the Council towards the delivery of this important major development and a fresh application will be submitted.

- Cinemas: Currently both cinemas in the borough are located at out of centre/out of town developments, which are difficult to access for certain groups, for example, young people. The Roger Tym study is supportive of a cinema in Bolton town centre.
- The study suggests that the increased expenditure on leisure is sufficient to support a range of other commercial leisure developments and that these should be concentrated in Bolton town centre.

3.17 The study supports Policy P2 and the relevant area of Bolton Policies in recommending a strategy that involves:

- Meeting most of the comparison retail and commercial leisure needs, including food and drink, in Bolton town centre.
- Channelling needs in the convenience, services and food and drink sectors to the local town centres of Farnworth, Horwich and Westhoughton, whilst rectifying local deficiencies in Little Lever and Egerton/Edgworth and providing small top-up stores in areas of deprivation.
- Strictly limiting the amount of any further retail and commercial leisure development at Middlebrook, whilst recognising the popularity of this out-of-town facility through encouragement of further improvements to public transport and by encouraging residential and employment uses on any land with development potential.

Redevelopment of Church Wharf, Drivers Jonas

3.18 This study backs up the Roger Tym and Partners support for a cinema in Bolton town centre and demonstrates that the Church Wharf site is the optimum location.

5 Year Tourism Strategy (2006)

- 3.19 The approach adopted in the areas of Bolton policies is to concentrate tourism and leisure attractions in Bolton town centre whilst recognising the value of Bolton's countryside in attracting tourists. Tourism facilities will be allowed to develop provided they do not affect the rural character and open nature of the countryside.
- 3.20 This approach will help deliver the aims of the Tourism Strategy (2006) including strengthening Bolton's tourism product, making it easy – accessing Bolton and providing a quality experience.

4 Council Approach

- 4.1 This section charts the policy and strategy formulation process through the stages in order to demonstrate how the current proposals have been developed.

Core Strategy Key Issues

- 4.2 Background Document BD1 describes the Key Issues Report process.
- 4.3 A series of issues were identified for consideration at the Key Issues stage. The report highlighted the need to ensure that:
- Bolton town centre fulfils its potential for a range of development including retailing;
 - The right amount of out-of-centre retailing around Bolton town centre is allowed;
 - Facilities for recreation and sport are provided.
- 4.4 The following responses on prosperous theme were noted and influenced the development of the Core Strategy Issues and Options Report:
- Improve the visual aspect of district centre shops;
 - Improve the retail offer in the town centre;
 - There needs to be a clear definition of the role of centres;
 - The Core Strategy should set out a clear retail hierarchy;
 - Only use Brownfield sites to build on/protect open space in urban areas.

Core Strategy Issues and Options

- 4.5 The Issues and Options report set out 3 Spatial Options with differing approaches to locations for retail development:

RF A – Consolidating the quantity of retail floor space in Bolton town centre and other town centres at about the same level as now;

RF B – Increasing the quantity of retail floor space in Bolton town centre, and other town centres where there is capacity to do so;

RF C – Increasing the quantity of retail floor space, concentrating mostly in Bolton town centre.

- 4.6 Responses to public consultation were as follows:

- 18% of respondents supported option FR A
- 55% supported option RF B
- 9% supported option RF C
- 18% suggested another option.

Core Strategy Preferred Options

- 4.7 The Councils preferred spatial option for retailing was RFC: Increasing the quantity of retail floor space, concentrating mostly in Bolton town centre. Although Option RF B was the most popular option among respondents the council considers that the closer fit of RF C with the Regional Spatial Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy, as well as factual evidence, meant that this option was chosen as the preferred option. Nevertheless, the council will take into account the development proposals of other town centres by allowing more local retailing there.
- 4.8 Policies were drafted under the Prosperous Bolton theme, and consulted upon throughout the Preferred Options.
- 4.9 Responses were generally in support the councils approach to retailing, however, the issues raised are summarised below:
- It was suggested that Middlebrook should be designated as a town centre, however, 4NW state that RSS policy supports the rejection of Middlebrook as a town centre.
 - Although there was general support for the approach of concentrating retail development in Bolton town centre it was felt that development should be allowed in smaller centres where need was identified.
 - It was felt that Bolton town centre shouldn't just be a retail centre but should contain a vibrant mix of uses including leisure and financial and professional services.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.10 The results of the Sustainability Appraisals are outlined below:
- 4.11 The Preferred Option:
- RF C – Increasing the quantity of retail floor space, concentrating mostly in Bolton town centre.
- 4.12 This option would make a good contribution to improving the image and pride of the borough and improve the quality of the built environment, landscape and urban environment.
- 4.13 This option makes a good contribution to the objectives of the Prosperous Bolton theme due to the positive impact more shopping facilities in Bolton town centre will have on the local economy. It will make a contribution to promoting Bolton as a desirable place to investors, visitors and residents. It will also allow more opportunities for recreation (shopping).
- 4.14 Bolton town centre is well served by public transport, therefore concentrating new retail floor space in Bolton town centre may reduce the need to travel as many facilities will be located together. More shopping facilities will also reduce the need of people to travel further afield to centres such as Manchester or the Trafford Centre.
- 4.15 It was recognised that increasing the quantity of floor space would have an impact upon the environment through the use of natural resources, more waste being produced, increased pollution etc, however, this impact can be minimised through the inclusion of

sustainable design and construction principles in any developments required through the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

- 4.16 More retailing in Bolton town centre will not make a significant contribution to the objectives of the “Healthy”, “Safe” or “Cleaner and Greener” Bolton themes.
- 4.17 The Rejected Options:
- RF A – Consolidating the quantity of retail floor space in Bolton town centre and other town centres.
- 4.18 This option would be a missed opportunity to improve the vitality and profile of Bolton town centre. Also this option would not contribute to boosting the local economy or providing investment/job opportunities.
- RF B – Increasing the quantity of retail floor space in Bolton Town Centre, and other town centres where there is capacity to do so.
- 4.19 Although increasing capacity in other centres may help support local businesses and reduce the need to travel it would have a smaller impact than the preferred option on promoting Bolton as a competitive sub-regional centre and the higher profile and increased investment that will follow.
- 4.20 Overall options RFB and RFC performed better in the sustainability appraisal. Option RFC was chosen as the preferred option due to its closer fit with the Regional Spatial Strategy, Sustainable Community Strategy and factual evidence.

5 Conclusions

Summary of policy formulation

- 5.1 The Key Issues report highlighted the need for Bolton town centre to fulfil its potential for a range of uses including retail. Three spatial options for retail development across the borough were then put forward. The preferred spatial option was to increase the quantity of retail floor space, concentrating mostly in Bolton town centre. This spatial option was the basis of policy P2 in the publication version of the Core Strategy. Various mechanisms have been influential in policy development and formulation including the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy, the requirements of national and regional planning policy, locally produced evidence, sustainability appraisal and public consultation.

Soundness

- 5.2 The Council considers the policies and their contribution to the overall Core Strategy sound as they:

Justified

- **Founded on a robust and credible evidence base**

- 5.3 This Background Document shows that the prosperous theme retail and leisure policies are based on a robust and credible evidence base including factual information, studies, strategies, consultation and sustainability appraisal.

- **Most appropriate alternatives**

- 5.4 This background document shows that the Council has put forward different options and has chosen prosperous theme retail and leisure policies that best reflects the available evidence. It also shows that the Council has developed policy through a process of putting forward possible options based on the Community Strategy, and then adjusted them to reflect consultation responses and to ensure they are based on spatial planning.

Effective

- **Deliverable**

- 5.5 The delivery of the Core Strategy prosperous theme retail and leisure policies will be by funding from Bolton Council and its partners in the private, public and voluntary sectors, through the allocations Development Plan Document and Supplementary Planning Documents. The Councils key partners in implementing the prosperous theme retail and leisure policies are developers, land owners and retailers/leisure operators. The use of section 106 agreements will be considered where appropriate.

- **Flexible**

- 5.6 The Core Strategy prosperous theme retail and leisure policies are flexible in that although most new retail floorspace will be concentrated in Bolton town centre:
- They recognise the local deficiencies in convenience shopping in Westhoughton, Little Lever and the northern part of the borough around Egerton/Edgworth (Bromley

Cross), as well as the need to identify easy access to facilities by people facing social exclusion.

- They recognise that Farnworth, Westhoughton, Horwich and Little Lever town centres play an important role in serving their parts of the borough and that there could be some limited additional floor space in these centres. New shops to serve local communities will also be concentrated in the defined district and local centres.
- Some large, specialist shops selling bulky goods have special requirements in terms of retail space and parking provision that make them inappropriate to be located in centres. In these cases edge of centre sites, especially around Bolton town centre, will be favoured over other sites.

- **Capable of being monitored**

5.7 Core Strategy monitoring will be carried out through the monitoring of individual policies as outlined below:

Measuring Delivering – Prosperous - Retail and Leisure (Policy P2)
Strategic Objectives met: SO3, SO4, SO5
Indicators (and targets)
Total amount of comparison retail floorspace developed (65,000 sq m of additional floorspace in each five year period after 2016) Amount of retail floorspace completed in, and out, of defined centres Bolton and Farnworth town centres prime yield data
Flexibility and phasing
There should be minimal additional comparison retail floorspace constructed before 2016, and there will then be a constant level of development from 2016 to 2026, but monitoring will establish whether this will be the case.

Appendix 1 – Network and Hierarchy of Centres

Sub-regional town centre	Bolton
Town centres	Farnworth Westhoughton Horwich Little Lever
District centres	Chorley Old Road Astley Bridge Brightmet Harwood
Local Centres	Deane Road Derby Centre Tonge Fold, Daubhill and St Helens Road Halliwell Road Tonge Moor Road Blackrod Bromley Cross Kearsley