

London Borough of Ealing

A Framework for Southall

Draft

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# 1 Setting the Scene

## 1.1 Why a Framework for Southall?

Southall is very much a place of change. New communities, economic and social change, as well as the pressure from development are all contributing to this process.

This Framework is designed to be a response to these changes and how best to manage them for the good of the community's diverse interests. It is intended to provide a shared strategy for the variety of agencies that operate in the area. It provides a policy context for decisions - responding to existing issues and problems, as well as a guide to inform future development opportunities.

The catalyst for this Framework is the development proposals for a new mixed-use community on the Southall Gas Works (SGW) site. The scale of this development is such that an updated planning framework is required within which decisions regarding the Gas Works site can be made.

However the potential of the Gas Works development is not the solution to all of Southall's problems, nor are its impacts the only issues the area faces. Existing problems in relation to demographic and social changes, the local economy and retail sector, health and education, transport and the environment; are all given a specific approach through this document, in order to provide a shared vision and way forward for decision-makers in order to ensue a prosperous, sustainable future for Southall and its current and future populations.

## 1.2 The Process

The Framework has been developed collaboratively with a number of stakeholders representing the Local Authority, other public sector organisations, community and voluntary groups and representatives of local businesses.

Involvement with these groups was through the medium of a series of topic-based workshops addressing the wide range of issues that the Framework covers. These took place over the summer of 2007 and were:

- Role and Kind of Place
- Retail and the town centre
- Transport
- Housing, public realm and community safety
- Employment and community services.

The aim of these workshops had three elements, all of which have fed directly into the formulation of the Framework. These were:

- 1 To present existing policies, strategies and plans in relation to Southall from each organisation
- 2 To raise and discuss issues facing each organisation in Southall, and discuss wider issues under each topic heading; both now and in the future
- 3 To move toward a shared set of objectives that the Framework should address for each topic.

Part of the discussions centred on how the Gas Works development will affect each topic, how it can contribute towards solving some of these issues, and how possible impacts can be mitigated.

The Workshops acted as part of the research background for the process, and combined with a planning and design analysis of the area, as well as a comprehensive review of the of plans, policies and strategies that cover Southall, formed the background to which the Framework has been written. The report

reflects both the knowledge gained via the workshops and the analysis of the team.

This Framework document contains four main sections.

- The Framework in outline. The Framework combining each element of the work.
- A series of topic based chapters, following the structure of the workshops, addressing in turn:
  - Issues and objectives for the Framework
  - A 'planning for change' section, discussing how these objectives could be met through the framework
- A chapter taking these discussions forward into a set of proposals
- A Chapter addressing specific issues regarding viability and delivery, referring to both the Gas Works development and other elements of the Framework
- And a set of site specific planning guidance notes.

The following figures show the geographical context of Southall and the Gas Works site in relation to the Borough and London.

### **1.3 Contextual Analysis**

**Figure 1-1:Context Within London**

**Figure 1-2:Ealing Context**

**Figure 1-3:Southall Context**

**Figure 1-4:Southall – Character and Place**

**Drawing 1 – Context in London**

**Drawing 2: Ealing Context**

**Drawing 4: Southall/Heathrow Context**

**Drawing 5: Place**

## 2 The Framework in Outline

This section presents a summary of the Framework, linking the objectives set out at the start of the Workshop process with the final product of the Framework which brings together the various layers that are individually addressed in later Chapters.

### 2.1 Objectives for Southall as a Place

A set of ‘headline objectives’ which were the outcome of the workshop titled ‘role and kind of place’. They are deliberately broad in their scope, in order to represent the various delivery partners to which these aims and this Framework apply.

Southall is a very diverse and changing place, in terms of its demographics and the place itself. Its unique ethnic mix gives the place its own character, local pride and diversity within a very diverse city.

The Framework for Southall recognises these characteristics, and sets the context for the future development of Southall to be sensitive to them, both in terms of addressing the issues that Southall is facing, and the potential that can be realised.

The Framework attempts to define a vision, in the form of a set of objectives, to guide the direction of the Framework and the proposals and guidelines within it.

The vision for Southall developed through the Framework is:

- To be a stable yet diverse community;
- To be a place of character, with a strong sense of identity and local pride;
- To be well served by a range of retail and community services, suitable for and accessible to the population of Southall and its environs;
- To be a well-connected place, with easy access between different parts of Southall, and places beyond.
- To be a place that provides a range of housing options in terms of both type and tenure.
- To be a place that provides the conditions for economic growth and prosperity, making the most of the areas assets in terms of both the place and its people;
- To be a place containing a range of good quality parks and open spaces.

This vision is developed in the Framework through a series of topic based chapters, which relate to the Workshops which were used as the main forum for analysing the issues facing Southall, the opportunities for development, and the formulation of how these are addressed. These strands of work are combined to provide a single Framework described below.

### 2.2 The Framework in outline

The Framework contains the following elements

A town centre with 3 distinct components: the unique Asian specialism of Broadway/South Road; a new Western-oriented “main street” on the SGW site; and the local shopping provided by King Street/The Green, south of the railway

- A town centre with a more consistent, higher quality streetscape and public realm
- As well as retailing, an improved array of other town centre services – library, community hub, health centres, plus the identification of additional car parking opportunities
- Major new housing and mixed-use development opportunities: on the SGW site; around the Station to respond to the arrival of Crossrail in the next decade; and as part of a rationalisation of land-uses east of Merrick Road
- New public open space to meet acknowledged deficiencies

- Getting the most out of the two Canal alignments for recreation and attractive waterside development
- A street network which prioritises public transport and movement on foot, but which also has more efficient routes for general traffic: north-south via a new bridge over the railway to connect with Merrick Road, east-west to link the SGW site into the rest of the town and network
- Bus services improved by easing congestion, and reoriented to link more of Southall directly to the Station
- Realising the potential of development opportunities to the east of the town centre through a combination of new development, improvements to existing open space and residential areas and accessibility improvements.

**Figure 2-1: The Framework**

## **Drawing 7: Framework Plan**

## 3 Retail and the Town Centre

### 3.1 Introduction

Shopping and town centre services form an essential component of what Southall offers. This chapter looks at the situation today – the town centre as it is, and the policy context – and then reviews the key issues which must be planned for in the Framework. Two main themes recur: the issue of quality in the existing centre, and the potential of the Southall Gas Works (SGW) site. The predominant focus is on retail – this is the main activity, and where most of the issues lie.

### 3.2 Southall Centre today

Southall town centre is currently divided into two parts. To the north of the station is the prime shopping area. This runs along Uxbridge Road (The Broadway) and south towards the station down South Road. The shopping area south of the station has its focus around The Green and King Street, and tends to be more locally-focussed in its services and catchment. The walk between the two takes approximately fifteen minutes, with Southall railway station half way. They are not really contiguous, as the railway and the intervening sites cause a break in the shopping frontage of over 400 metres.

Total retail floorspace is 55,846m<sup>2</sup> (some 600,000 sq.ft.) The existing retail offer is dominated by independent and BME retailers selling a wide range of convenience and comparison goods. There is also a diverse range of specialist services on offer such as foreign currency exchangers, travel agents and communication shops. The West London Retail Needs Study (2007) reported the following composition of Southall's shopping:

Table 3-1: Southall's Retail Floorspace Composition

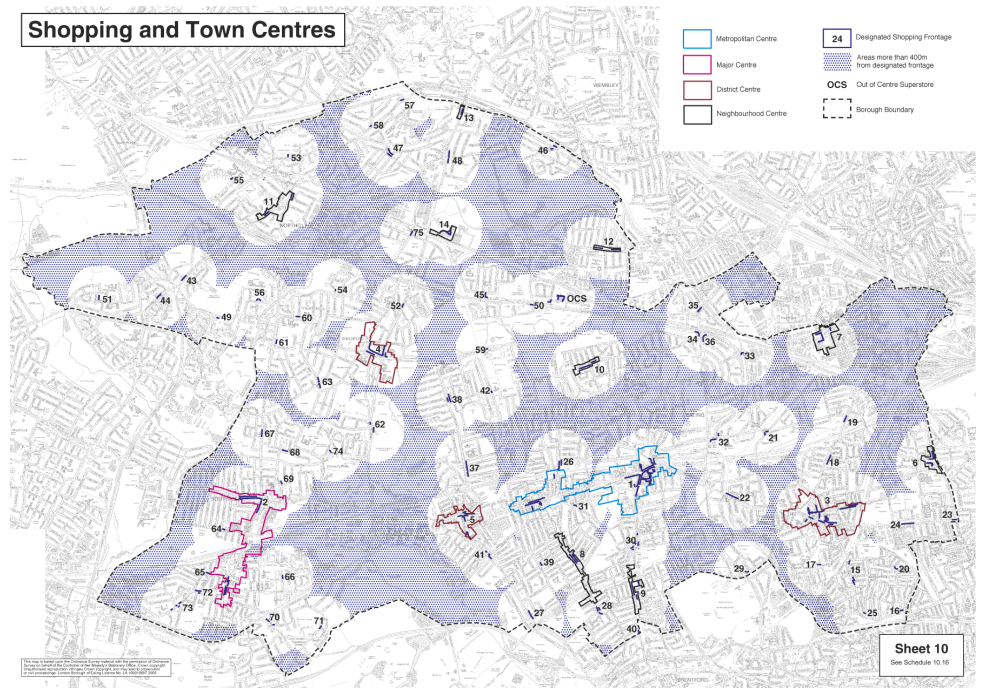
Retail Category	Southall		Ealing Town Centre		Average over 12 West London Study Centres (%)
	Number of Units	Percentage of total floorspace (%)	Number of Units	Percentage of total floorspace (%)	
Convenience	67	14.6	54	8.5	11.0
Comparison	172	37.6	236	37.4	33.7
Service	194	42.4	306	48.6	47.2
Vacant	25	5.5	34	5.4	8.1
Total	458		630		

The format of Southall's retail offer varies from small corner shops to larger purpose-built stores. There are also several shopping centres and bazaars. Of equal importance to the permanent retail units is the market, which operates on a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. As well as contributing to the overall character, vitality and individuality of Southall, the markets are also crucial in providing a "stepping stone" for many local retailers looking to establish their businesses.



Southall can be regarded as being in the third tier of London's town centres – with the West End and Brent Cross at the top, and 10 metropolitan centres (including Ealing and Kingston) in the second tier. Below are smaller places like Hanwell and Greenford. The relative power of the centres is indicated by the floorspace figures: Ealing at 130,000m<sup>2</sup>, Southall at 56,000m<sup>2</sup>, and Hanwell at 19,000m<sup>2</sup>. Southall, as the centre for a town of some 50,000 people, thus serves an immediate catchment comparable to that of a market town – though of course, as the map from the retail study shows, it has many more competitors nearby, and its area of influence is much more tightly bounded.

**Figure 3-1: Retail Centres in LB Ealing**



*Figure 3-1 shows all retail centres in LB Ealing, including Ealing as the Metropolitan Centre, Southall as the Major Centre, and West Ealing, Acton and Greenford as the District Centres, together with a number of Local Centres. It is worth noting the relatively large footprint of the centre at Southall, split as it is between the Broadway, South Road and Southall Green.*

So far, much of this could be describing any middle-sized London centre. But Southall is different and distinctive, essentially because of the multi-ethnic dimension. The Retail Needs Study (RNS) underlines the importance of Southall as a major centre for purchasing ethnic goods such as saris, textiles and jewellery. In particular, the significance of ethnic foods is emphasised – with 83% of those questioned using the centre for purchasing specialist ethnic food, and 23% identifying it as the main purpose for their visit. The rich ethnic retail offer serves both local residents and visitors from across West London and beyond.

### **3.3 Current Policy**

The London Plan stresses the need for town centres to play a wide role in terms of retail, leisure and other related uses. Through the Plan's policy of 'structured choice', the supply of facilities should be concentrated within town centres and should enhance the quality and diversity of retail offer.

In the London Plan and the Ealing UDP, Southall is classified as a 'Major Centre' – positioned in the borough hierarchy below the 'Metropolitan Centre' (Ealing), and above the 'District Centres' (Acton, Greenford, Hanwell) and numerous 'Neighbourhood Centres'. By recognising the distinctive role of each element of the hierarchy, the UDP seeks to maintain and where necessary

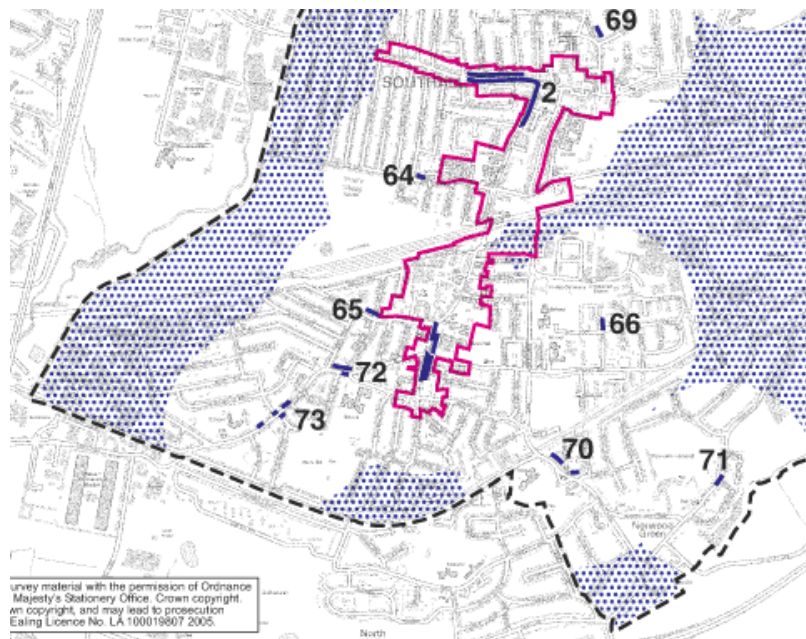
improve the function, character, vitality and viability of the borough's retail offer.

With specific reference to Southall, the Council aims to sustain the vitality of the existing retail centre whilst simultaneously broadening the range of facilities available. During this expansion of facilities, it is of critical importance that the scale remains appropriate to Southall's position within the retail hierarchy as a 'Major Centre'.

The UDP defines the boundary of the retail centre of Southall for policy purposes. As Figure 3-2 shows, this extends from the Uxbridge Road, down South Road, across the railway, and as far as King Street to the south. The plan also shows the Local Centres in Southall. These are:

- 64 106-114 Beaconsfield Road, Southall
- 65 2-22 Dudley Road, Southall
- 66 29-41 Hunt Road, Southall
- 69 60-70 North Road Southall
- 70 141-155 Norwood Road, Southall
- 71 19-29 Tentelow Road, Southall
- 72 75-79 Western Road, Southall
- 72- 96 Western Road, Southall
- 73 166-174 Western Road, Southall

Figure 3-2: Southall Town Centre UDP Boundary



### 3.4 Issues & Objectives

The issues which the Framework deals with in relation to retail and the town centre, and the objectives discussed in the process of evolving the Framework, are:

- **Issue: Breadth of offer**

*Objective:* To create opportunities for a higher quality retail offer, and for the new offer to be less one-dimensional adding mainstream, 'western' style shopping to the Asian niche retailing.

- **Issue: Distinctiveness**

*Objective:* Building on the distinctiveness that the Asian retailing gives to Southall.

- **Issue: Quality**

*Objective:* Improve the current conditions through environmental and streetscape improvements, as well as encouraging improvements to the ‘private-realm’ such as shopfronts, displays and signage.

- **Issue: Mixed-use on the Southall Gas Works (SGW) site**

*Objective:* For retail to be part of the mix of uses at the Gas Works, creating a lively urban quarter which is more than just a dormitory suburb.

- **Issue: Scale & Type of retailing at SGW**

*Objective:* That any new retail which is part of the SGW development should be of a type and scale appropriate to the local walk-in catchment and should complement rather than compete with the existing centre.

- **Issue: Linkages between shopping and its hinterland, and between the different elements of the retail offer**

*Objective:* all shopping /town centre services to be accessible by good public transport, walking and cycling; and new town centre retail wherever possible to be at locations with high public transport accessibility - if necessary using land swaps and relocations to achieve a better fit between land use and transport.

- **Issue: Capturing development value for local benefit**

*Objective:* Where appropriate, to use planning gain / Section 106 contributions to gain benefits and minimise impacts.

### 3.5 Planning for Change

#### 3.5.1 Breadth of offer

As noted, ethnic-minority market shops represent a major asset to the retail offer of Southall town centre. But their over-representation within the retail mix is also identified as a limitation. With the exception of a few units in the northern half of the centre (such as Woolworths and Superdrug), there are no national multiples in Southall. The Retail Needs Study reports that 38% of those questioned expressed their desire for larger retailers. The introduction of more mainstream retailing would serve the needs of second and third generation ethnic-minority residents, as well as reducing the “leakage” of shoppers and spend to competing centres such as Ealing, Hounslow and Kingston.

- *Proposal:* The town centre would benefit from the provision of more mainstream ‘western’ style retailing, complementing rather than competing with the existing retail offer, currently mainly focused around the Asian shopping niches. This could be provided initially on the SGW site, but also on redevelopment sites in the town centre which may come forward in the longer term.

#### 3.5.2 Distinctiveness & Quality

Entertainment, fashion, jewellery are all part of the unique Southall offer, though traders have reported a decline in these sectors recently. Concern was consistently expressed at the Workshops that the existing Southall centre was at risk, through a steady decline in the quality of environment, retailing, range and distinctiveness. And compared informally with say Green Street (Newham) or Wembley High Road (Brent), it does appear to be (a) limited in its high-quality specialist comparison traders and (b) over-focussed on convenience goods especially imported food. In addition, there are a number of issues concerning the street-scene within Southall which are beginning to affect the retail offer and its competitiveness. These relate to the public realm such as street furniture, conflicts between users of the street, path and roadway maintenance; as well as issues more closely related with shopfronts, signage and marketing.

The Framework recommends a more coordinated approach to such activities through a formalised approach to town centre improvement, encompassing both capital works improving the street-scene as well as proactive schemes to improve

the management of the retail area to enhance its identity, image and therefore competitiveness. Parking is dealt with at 3.5.6 below.

*Proposals:*

- **Enhancement of the public realm:** elements of the public realm should be of high quality and distinctiveness, incorporating high design standards to add to Southall's retail offer. This should include paving materials, decoration, street furniture and lighting, the branding and design of which could represent the area's identity and multiculturalism. The Streetscape and Liveability Guide (2004) provides some initial context and guidance towards this.
- **Working on quality:** the Borough and Heathrow City Partnership need to consider how they can work with retailers and property-owners to reverse the trend towards smaller, lower-value trading, hold on to the best retailers who do still attract customers from further afield, and improve both the content and appearance of the shopping.
- **Management and Delivery of higher quality:** a partnership approach needs to be taken towards the management and maintenance of the town centre and the public realm. This could involve the Local Authority, Southall Traders, the Heathrow City Partnership and other key stakeholders. There are various options for taking this partnership forward: the establishment of a town-centre forum bringing together key stakeholders to improve town centre maintenance regimes, develop programmes of improvement and marketing roles to improve and promote Southall's image and market presence; and/or establishing a Business Improvement District in Southall, which is an option that would extend the representation many of the businesses have through existing groups - a levy on business rates would provide the group with a dedicated budget to implement projects and solve current issues.
- **King Street / The Green:** whilst this centre is a lower priority than The Broadway / South Road, some of the same approaches could be adopted, perhaps as a minor element of any partnership's remit. In particular, they could be better linked to the station and South Road shopping/services by public realm improvements and, in the longer term, removal of general traffic from the railway bridge.

### **3.5.3 Mixed Use on the SGW site**

The SGW site, at 30 hectares, is by far the biggest opportunity in Southall. It will clearly be a very important housing location, but also offers the potential to make a more varied and active contribution to the life of Southall. Retailing is clearly one of the elements that could add to this range and it forms an important part of the evolving developer proposals for the site. While the need for a wider range of uses is acknowledged, the Gas Works site presents significant challenges in providing such development. These challenges include railway noise and land contamination and other issues, but in particular the issue of accessibility. The area with most development potential lies away from the most accessible area at the eastern end. This is reflected in the fact that existing town centre designation excludes the entirety of the Gas Works site. While this difficulty can be mitigated somewhat by increasing public transport accessibility to the site, and by maximising access on foot from nearby neighbourhoods, the extent and type of retail at the SGW site will inevitably be a matter of balance between competing objectives.

- Food retailing at Southall Gasworks, serving the site itself and adjacent residential areas, would be unlikely to compete with, and could even strengthen the existing food retailing in Southall centre. Its competitors are outside the town itself, and not particularly well located for locals residents.
- Comparison shopping can be justified by reference to the nature of Southall being very different – as per 3.5.1 above, the breadth of conventional retailing needs expanding, whilst continuing to support the centre's wider catchment.

- Variety and mix can be achieved on the site by more than just conventional retailing. The range of additional uses which could be part of the Gas Works could include leisure uses, canal-related uses, a hotel, Asian trade centre, banqueting, small business or office units, faith and community centres. There is potential within the Gas Works for uses demanding larger floor areas, such as entertainment and mainstream retailing, but the availability of land must be weighed against the accessibility objective for the town centre as a whole.

*Proposals:*

- The potential for new sectors should be explored, whether for the SGW site or elsewhere in Southall; for example this could include the conferencing, banqueting, and the arts and media sectors.
- A certain flexibility of approach should be taken to permitting uses on the SGW site, in terms of form, scale, content, use and phasing; to allow the development to evolve and respond to changes in market conditions and so that policy constraints or inflexibility of planning do not threaten the viability or delivery of the development of what is undoubtedly a difficult and constrained site.

### 3.5.4 The Nature and extent of the retail

What sort of retailing should be envisaged on the SGW site?

**Scale:** in terms of scale of retail development, the RNS suggests that Southall's quantitative need for significant amounts of new floorspace is quite limited. Projecting existing market share, it calculates a "retail capacity" – i.e. new floorspace required to handle any new spending-power – as only about 1,500m<sup>2</sup> of comparison shopping and an over supply of between 900-2,900m<sup>2</sup> of convenience shopping over the next decade. Effectively this is saying that the centre is under-trading at present, and could handle more spending without new floorspace. It should however be noted that this is a simplistic calculation, which takes no account of any special features of a centre, its offer, or circumstances, such as size of units available.

So the case for retail expansion is a qualitative and special one, not primarily a quantitative one. Apart from purely local provision, as the scale of retail and other non-residential provision increases, the more it would run into three sorts of problems:

- Traffic: large-scale shopping or other uses would attract shoppers from a wide catchment, which cannot easily be served by public transport and which therefore would attract shoppers by car, creating additional traffic problems on a very congested road network (both east and west of the site);
- Policy: new major out-of-centre shopping is clearly counter to both the London Plan and Ealing planning policy for retail and town centres, and the "special case" argument could not possibly be extended beyond a certain point;
- Commercial: although some clawback of the current "leakage" of spending is possible, higher-end comparison-goods spending will continue to go to other centres: that is how London shopping works. With limited access potential and a lot of competition, the site is not actually ideal for such a development anyway.

The retailing should therefore concentrate on serving the Southall market, adding to the range of offer in a controlled way.

**Type:** as for the type of retail content, and within an overall aim of adding mainstream retailing but remaining within the scale appropriate to Southall's position as a 'Major Centre', we note that Uxbridge (the next closest 'Major Centre') contains Debenhams, M&S and BHS. Central Uxbridge is of course rather better connected by all modes than the SGW site's shopping would be, so it is not a straight comparison. But it does suggest that, as well as a medium-sized food store, the site could offer modern mid-range retail units to attract "high street" operators, and including perhaps one larger unit as the anchor.

**Relationship with site potential in the existing centre:** the Framework also considers the interaction of SGW with the existing centre's potential development sites – in terms of the prospect for increasing range and quality. There are undoubtedly promising sites, and groups of sites. But they have been of little interest to the conventional development market, despite being allocated in Ealing's UDP for many years now. The judgement is that they can and should be brought forward (see 3.5.7 below), but that they do not offer the short-medium-term potential of attracting modern retailing that SGW concept does.

Conceptually, the SGW retail provision will be similar to the King Street area, namely: linked with but physically separate from the established town centre core.

*Proposals:*

- Retail expansion on the SGW site should be encouraged, but should be capped a level which is judged to be capable of being handled by the transport system, is acceptable within a "special case" variant of existing policy, and adds no more than about 30% to the existing floorspace in Southall centre. The "cap" should be an additional 15,000m<sup>2</sup> (gross) maximum, of which approximately 5,000m<sup>2</sup> would be a food store.
- The units would be predominantly modern high street units in the range 90m<sup>2</sup> to 200m<sup>2</sup>, to provide a good but not excessive range of shopping.

### **3.5.5 Linkages: connecting SGW retailing to the existing centre and to its walk-in catchment**

In design terms retail centres generally work under the following conditions:

- When there is the footfall created by the retail and other services generated by through-movement;
- There is legibility – people can find the shops, such as on high streets – related to a large walk-in catchment population;
- Or where they are a separate destination serving a more dispersed catchment, predominantly car-borne trade: not a policy objective here.

There is therefore an urban design response required in order to achieve the first two conditions to create a credible centre for Southall, incorporating both the new and existing retail.

#### **Shopping linkages**

Looking first at the issue of linking the shopping areas: as shown in Figure 3-2 the current shape of the designated town centre is one of a loose T-shape, stretching along the Broadway and down South Road, into Southall Green. The actual retail frontage is clearly split between The Broadway and The Green – a good fifteen minute walk. The Broadway acts as the focus for the Asian retailing whereas the Green acts much more as a local centre for its walk-in catchment – the two areas do different jobs. New retail development on the Gas Works site effectively creates a third node, and this split is a feature that we believe will continue. The consultant team and the Workshops considered the possibility of physically linking the existing and new retail areas with new development, but this was not judged not to be feasible in the short to medium term. The links will depend on attractive routes on foot, on signage, and on people's willingness to make linked trips.

#### **Catchment linkages**

Turning to the issue of linking the shopping to its hinterland:

- The existing Broadway/South Road centre is embedded in its walk-in catchment in the historic way, and it has good if slow bus connections into it; car-borne shoppers must struggle with access and parking constraints;
- King Street / The Green is almost entirely reliant on its walk-in trade;
- A third group of shops on the SGW site can serve the residential hinterland to the north (Beaconsfield Road area) and south (Featherstone Road area), and its own residents; it can be linked by bus to some of the rest of the catchment; and it will also draw car-borne trade from the rest of Southall. That balance will be crucial to its acceptability; and the design of the links to South Road still present a considerable design challenge.

*Proposals:*

- To link the new retail to the north of the Gas Works site. This means providing direct access from the new retail into the existing residential area to the north.
- Linking the Gas Works to the residential areas south of the railway line. This requires upgrading of the two underpasses.
- Providing a workable solution to the eastern access, connecting the new retail to South Road to work for all modes of transport. The quality of this connection must be good enough to encourage shared trips between the retail nodes.
- **Section xxx** provides more details on these proposals].

### 3.5.6 Parking

As in all London centres, the issue of parking is both difficult and contentious. Parking problems may be acting as a constraint on the performance of Southall's retail centre. The general issue is one of demand for both parking and loading for the retail along the Broadway, due to its niche offer having a much wider than walk-in catchment. Although public transport is good, the parking supply is too small to serve more than a small proportion of trade. There is only one large off-street car park, and on-street parking is limited. Parking restrictions on nearby residential streets rule them out for use in serving the town centre. This lack of parking, together with congestion, is seen by stakeholders as beginning to bite on trade, so that business, especially for the specialist Asian retailers, is being lost to other competing centres such as Wembley.

The Framework therefore attempts to provide possible solutions to parking issues through an identification of sites which could provide a solution through increasing the supply of parking.

The Southall Gasworks site is too remote to provide parking for the Broadway retail activity, being mostly beyond a 800 metre (10 minute) walk (see figure Figure 8-1).

*Proposals:*

The parking strategy advocated in the Framework is therefore one combining:

- New parking on the Gasworks site to serve the new retail and other uses, arranged and managed to allow shared use and hence to limit the number of spaces required; plus
- The identification of sites within or near the Broadway and South Road which could be developed as public short-term car parking sites. These sites are described later

### 3.5.7 Potential Development Opportunities

Some sites within the existing UDP "Town Centre" designation are already identified as having potential to fulfil retail expansion and other purposes. As noted, few have come forward for development. Others currently not identified in this way could also be brought into play. New elements which could impart more dynamism include the commitment to Crossrail serving the station,

progress on the SGW site (generating more spending power), and potential restructuring of the road system as proposed in the Transport chapter. If this can be combined with proposals for site assembly which might create better opportunities, the logjam may start to loosen.

The Framework study has reviewed the central area sites and identified considerable opportunity for development within the town centre. See Figure 8-2.

There are a number of potential options for the use and development of these sites.

- Retail development: one “gap” between the current generally small-scale Asian retailing and the more “Western” concept for the SGW site is more modern / upmarket shopping aimed at a sophisticated Asian-origin market. This may be especially appropriate where the development sites are larger than the current units, more suitable for this kind of retail development. Proposals for SGW’s eastern access, and for major road /transport improvements over the railway (see section 4.2.2) may provide these kinds of opportunities, and also have the advantage of extending the currently retail frontage down from the Broadway nearer to the station and the SGW retail, making the town centre function better as a integrated, coherent whole.
- Development sites may allow the creation of residential units on upper floors adding the vitality of the town centre and increasing the mix of uses.
- There may be opportunities to provide additional dedicated town centre car parking, a lack of which has been identified.
- There may be opportunities to introduce new or replacement community facilities in the town centre, putting them in a location providing an accessible location, near to other facilities and public transport routes, also adding to the town centre.

### **3.5.8 Planning Policy Implications**

New retail on the Gas Works site, designed to be accessible to its walk-in catchment and complementary to the existing town centre, has obvious implications on planning policy. This is partly in relation to the “special case” argument for significantly more comparison retailing (sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.4 above); and more specifically for the definition of Southall town centre in the LDF, which is currently being prepared.

There are a number of broad approaches that could be taken to deal with this issue:

- (1) Extend the town centre boundary to include the new retail in SGW and improve links with the current centre
- (2) Extending the town centre boundary to include SGW, and de-designating some of the current town centre
- (3) New town centre designation on parts of the Gas Works site including housing areas as well as retail.

De-designation is not seen as a viable option, as this would mean excluding some areas of Southall from being covered by town centre-focused policy despite fulfilling the role of a town centre by providing shops and other services. Option 3 is also not seen as being viable in policy terms. An extended town centre would cover a large geographical area, out of scale with its function, and town centre policies would cover areas that are more suited to residential, open space and employment policy designations.

*Proposal:*



- The preferred option is therefore Option 1, to extend the town centre boundary to include the new retail, subject to improving the links and accessibility with the existing town centre and its catchment as well as recognising the inherent separation of the three components of the wider centre.

Figure 8-2 accompanies the proposals, providing a spatial dimension to the ideas described.-

## 4 Transport

### 4.1 Issues and Objectives

Making the transport network in Southall work better is key to making future development viable, both on the SGW site and elsewhere. It is also an important part of the strategy to improve current conditions by reducing congestion, improving connections, and increasing the reliability of traffic and public transport movements. This goes beyond basic transport planning, and suggests a new way forward, linking new development to improvements in accessibility.

#### Issues and Problems

The issues for transport in Southall relate both to the accessibility of the town centre, and to the impact of transport activity (rail services, road traffic, parking) on the quality of the environment of the town centre and its environs.

The issues can be summarised as follows:

#### Access to and from the town centre

- Gaps in the network of bus routes serving the town centre;
- Overcrowded bus services at peak times, especially on Uxbridge Road and Broadway;
- Excess bus passenger waiting times due in large part to delays to buses caused by traffic congestion;
- Poor quality interchange facilities between buses and between bus and rail at Southall station;
- Unreliable journey times and delays to private motorised traffic (including delivery and freight vehicles) due to excess demand over capacity, and intensity of street activity in Southall town centre streets;
- Difficulty of parking and servicing in the town centre.

#### Impact of transport activity on the town centre:

- Overcrowded footways, especially on Uxbridge Road west of junction with South Road;
- Difficult walking conditions elsewhere in the town centre, especially at junctions and crossing at other locations;
- Noise pollution from both road and rail traffic, especially on Uxbridge Road, Broadway, South Road, High Street, and alongside the railway main line;
- Air pollution, especially along the main streets (above);
- Dangers from road traffic especially along the main routes and also residential roads used to access commercial sites;
- Difficulties of on-street parking and servicing for Southall residents, businesses (and their trade) and institutions due to intensity of demand in relation to space available.

#### The Policy Context

Many of the choices facing the future of land uses and possible development opportunities in Southall are tied up with the relationship between land use and transport, especially in the context of current planning policy expressed through the London Plan. It is therefore worthwhile reiterating the main thrust of these policy documents, as they provide some of the planning context for the choices and proposals that follow.

#### The London Plan

Section 3c of The London Plan (2004), entitled 'Connecting London', provides the policy basis for transport planning in London. Centred on Objective 5 of the

Plan – ‘improving London’s accessibility’ – the Mayor aims to take an ‘integrated approach to transport provision and development’ in order to achieve the vision of an ‘exemplary, sustainable, world city’ (section 3.158).

The focal point of the plan is the creation of a transport system that reduces the need to travel by car (Policy 3C.1) through the improvements of conditions for walking (3C.20) and cycling (3C.21). The West London Sub-Regional Development Framework (2006) builds on the strategy of the London Plan whilst providing a more localised context. The framework aims to improve accessibility to, from and within the sub-region, as well as providing the strategic public transport capacity to meet the forecast growth.

The London Plan also places significance on Opportunity Areas, with regard to transport this entails ‘improving public transport capacity and accessibility for areas designated for development and regeneration’ (3C.1). The plan emphasises that any development or intensification of Opportunity Areas must be supported by upgraded public transport. Such an approach is reiterated in The West London Sub-Regional Development Framework where Southall is identified as one of five areas for substantial growth in West London. The Framework states that “a core principle in allocating growth will be to optimise the relationship between the intensity of development and the existing and potential capacity of the public transport system” (Para. 118). Both the London Plan and the Sub-Regional Framework underlines the importance of planning transport and Opportunity Areas in a coordinated fashion, in order to ensure major growth areas are accessible and interlinked.

### **The Mayor’s Transport Strategy**

Alongside the London Plan is the Mayor’s Transport Strategy. It sets out key priorities in order for transport to meet the needs of London’s growing population and economic activity in sustainable manner. These priorities include, amongst others, reducing traffic congestion; investment in bus, tube and national rail services; and increasing the overall capacity and quality of London’s transport system. There is also a focus on integrating the various initiatives – both transport and non-transport focused - in order to provide a more coherent transport strategy.

### **The Ealing Economic Development Strategy**

The Ealing Economic Development Strategy (2006) also emphasises the role of transport in Ealing’s regeneration, explaining that the areas ‘principal opportunity’ is the Heathrow-Paddington Sustainable Growth Corridor (Section 4.1.1). The corridor is a transport-dependent economic growth passage that, through the construction of a new Crossrail link, will provide Southall with fast, frequent, high-capacity rail connections to Central London, Heathrow, and other key economic drivers of London. If Southall fully captures the value of the new physical and economic links, the potential for growth is considerable.

### **The Local Implementation Plan**

In order to ensure that each borough is complying with The London Plan and the Mayor’s Transport Strategy, the GLA requires a statutory document - the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) - to be submitted for the Mayor’s approval. Whilst addressing all the Mayor’s key priorities, the LIP also pays particular focus to issues that are most relevant locally. Such issues are set out in the Borough’s UDP, whose transport objectives are:

*“To provide sustainable access from homes to jobs, shops and services, and from business to business, by integrating land use and transport planning, restraining car traffic, promoting improved public transport and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and making freight distribution more sustainable. In addition the council will have regard to the impacts of international air travel from Heathrow airport, in respect of surface access, business and employment, environmental impacts and sustainability in general”.* (Chapter 9)

The LIP illustrates the action necessary to address the objectives of the various planning documents. Ealing's LIP places particular emphasis on the following issues:

- **Road Danger Reduction (Section 5)**
- **Traffic Congestion (Section 6)**
- **Bus Improvement Plan (Section 7)**
  - The council has for some years had an active bus priority programme.
  - Further 'whole route' projects are planned on nine routes as a key part of its move to promote the bus as a feasible option to the car.
  - An active programme of bus stop clearway and kerb works is underway to make bus services accessible to all.
- **Rail Strategy (Section 8)**
  - Emphasis on provision for cycles in order to make train service an integrated part of public transport
  - The Council welcomes TfL's financial commitment to station security measures.
  - Station access is an integral part of encouraging people to travel by rail and the Council has a programme for the period of the LIP to improve station walking and cycling access routes, for which it is seeking TfL funding.
- **Walking (Section 10)**
  - The Council's new Streetscape Design Guide will lead directly to an enhanced pedestrian environment in town centres.
  - Station access, safer routes to school and bus stop accessibility programmes will all contribute positively to improving the walking environment, including personal safety and security.
  - A particular problem is the need to provide pedestrian phases at some of the busiest signalised junctions in the borough. This has implications for traffic flow which have to be designed for in an integrated way.
- **Cycling (Section 12)**

In addition, Transport for London is pursuing overall improvements to bus services in London, including frequency and route enhancements as well as better reliability through bus priority and other measures.

### **Current Provision of transport in Southall**

Figure 4-1 shows Southall's main transport links in a London context.

**Figure 4-1: Major Transport Connections**

## **Drawing 11: Major Transport Connections**

### **Objectives**

A number of working objectives have been identified through the workshop and consultation process. These objectives are to achieve a better resolution of the issues identified above. Specifically they include:

- 1 New developments, including at SGW, should not make the problems of access and transport impacts disproportionately worse (i.e. rates of traffic and parking generation at new developments should not be higher than the rates at existing developments in central Southall);
- 2 Public transport should be improved sufficiently to deliver mode shift away from the car, as a means of reducing transport impacts and delays, including a more comprehensive route network and service upgrades;

- 3 Rail service improvements including Crossrail, and the associated improved accessibility of the Southall station area, should be fully exploited through greater intensity of development;
- 4 New developments (including at SGW) should match the pattern of public transport accessibility in the respective areas. Intensive development requiring in-bound accessibility should be located where PTAL levels are 4 or better.

## 4.2 Planning for Change

Four main groups of issues are the subject of discussion and proposals in the Framework. They are, in summary:

- The high-accessibility core of the centre, essentially along South Road from The Broadway to the station, and the station area itself;
- Access to the SGW site and the implications for development intensity;
- Public transport improvement;
- Recommendations on three other issues: the Gateway Link Road concept, Glade Lane area, and industrial access in the western industrial area.

Matching land use and density with the pattern of accessibility by public transport is the key principle that should govern development in the Southall area, and which underlies the suggested approach in this document. This is called for and fully supported by the land use and transport policies at London, sub-regional and Borough levels.

### 4.2.1 The core of the town centre

Town centre activity is characterised by the “destination” function, where non-residential activities attract large numbers of people, requiring good “inbound accessibility” by public transport as well as a substantial walk-in catchment population.

Currently the PTAL measurement places the Broadway/South Road junction as the most accessible area in Southall, with Southall station the second most accessible location. Strengthening Southall as a major centre therefore requires development to be focused at these accessible locations (within, say, 800 metres of them).

The Southall station area presents a special opportunity to reinforce the town centre. Already a location with good public transport accessibility, this will be even more the case as rail services are improved, to Paddington and Heathrow, and especially when Crossrail services are introduced giving direct and speedy access to the West End, the City and Canary Wharf. The accessibility will be enhanced further if bus routes and services are improved and interchange with rail services is made easier and more direct. The proposals for the station area development are devised with these objectives in mind.

The station area also has the potential to provide a focus or “anchor” for Southall town centre, providing a counter point to The Broadway and South Road focus. By intensifying activity and improving the environment in the vicinity of the station, the perceived separation of the retail areas will be diminished. This concept will be best realised in the longer term if development opportunities within 800 metres (10 minute walk) of the station bus-rail interchange are targeted at uses that can make best use of the local and sub-regional accessibility, i.e. uses that require good in-bound accessibility. Within this scope the following uses would be appropriate

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## Proposals

- Prepare a station area design and plan (see below);
- High density residential (apartments), especially on sites shielded from railway noise, will make use of commuting opportunities by rail;
- Person-attracting (destination) land uses, such as offices, services, shopping, entertainment, will make use of the high in-bound accessibility. High densities will be appropriate to the scale of physical infrastructure envisaged for the station area.

### **A new bridge for Southall centre**

The development opportunities in the station area will require remodelling of the street infrastructure, and options for the interim period and longer term are shown on the accompanying drawings. The basic concept is to provide a new road bridge over the railway to the east of the station, to align with Merrick Road. This will release the existing bridge for use as a bus-only route and interchange, together with a better quality environment for pedestrians and cyclists. (Licensed taxis would also use this link.) The realignment of the north-south route will disadvantage vehicle traffic between King Street and South Road, but will provide a relative advantage for buses, pedestrians, cyclists and taxis. The much improved pedestrian environment will reduce the perceived gap between South Road and King Street areas, which can be further patched with retail and other frontage uses.

At present Merrick Road is under-used, while the station bridge is inadequate to cater for the volume of existing and future movements, and has an unsatisfactory junction with The Green. The new bridge will encourage a higher proportion of north-south vehicle traffic to use Merrick Road rather than The Green and King Street. This will provide some relief for the intensive activities along the relieved route.

### Proposal

- Provide a new road bridge over the railway to the east of the present station, linking South Road with Merrick Road.

### **Station area design framework**

The station area will become the focus of high-density development and higher intensity activity, using sites that become available as a result of the re-structured road network (above), increased public transport, and raised land values as a result of these changes. Low intensity uses within a 400-500 metre catchment of the station/South Road can be encouraged to relocate beyond this area in order to maximise the potential of existing and planned public transport accessibility.

The station forecourt area should be remodelled as a high quality interchange and pedestrian link between the King Street and South Road parts of the town centre, thus creating a more integrated centre. Multi-level new developments on the north and south sides of the existing station can be devised to provide high quality links between the bridge, the ground and station platforms, integrated with the Crossrail station facilities.

The new eastern bridge will create a need for integration of development at bridge level and ground floor level. This can be met with adjacent multi-level developments, with lower levels providing parking capacity for the more intensive town centre land uses around the station (although not for station park and ride, which is contrary to strategic transport policy).

## Proposals

- Transformation of South Road bridge as bus/taxi only area with rail interchange facilities and high quality pedestrian environment;

- High density three-dimensional development integrated with Southall station, South road bridge, and the proposed new road bridge;

### **Southall Southwest**

The area to the southwest of Southall station has potential for greatly increased intensity of use, and proximity to high intensity public transport means that it could also support destination activities requiring good inbound accessibility. Railway noise suggests that such non-residential uses should be located adjacent to the railway to form a noise shield, but high-density residential development could also be supported behind this.

### **Southall Gasworks development**

The development has the potential to have a large impact on travel and traffic conditions in Southall. It is therefore important that such a large scheme should be designed and managed in a way that promotes and supports travel on foot, by bicycle, and on public transport, and which minimises the need to use private motorised transport. All levels of policy advocate this approach. The Transport Assessment for this major development will need to include measures to achieve the overall objectives, prior to the specification of “residual” vehicle movements and mitigation measures.

These measures should be incorporated in residential and commercial use Travel Plans as part of the s106 planning agreements. There is scope for innovative measures to maximise environmental quality and minimise traffic generation and parking. LB Ealing should expect the package of measures to include, for example, the provision of a Car Club (as at other sites in Ealing such as Grand Union Village) and corresponding (low) levels of residential parking; provision of communal parking rather than individually allocated parking; infrastructure and financial support for a specified range of bus routes and services; cycle parking and routes; and inducements to residents and other occupiers for use of public transport and the Car Club. Parking management will also be important, for example to deter all-day commuter parking, and to avoid indiscriminate on-street parking.

### **Proposals**

- Sustainable transport proposals as an integral part of the Southall Gasworks site development, including planning conditions and s106 agreements and contributions to deliver measures on and off-site;
- Such measures to include infrastructure within the site, bus route provision, enhancement and pump-priming, and connections for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Travel Plans for both residential and commercial components including individualised Travel Planning and Car Club provision.

#### **4.2.2 The Southall Gas Works site: access and connections to the existing centre**

Because of its off-centre location (compared with the high-accessibility core), SGW’s non-residential (shopping, offices, services) element is bound to attract significant car traffic: even if “capped” as suggested in the preceding chapter, the nature and volume of its trade will be larger than can be supported by the walk-in catchment and public transport alone. This can be mitigated to the extent that public transport within SGW can be improved. The provision of new or diverted bus routes through SGW will increase the inbound accessibility, and the inbound accessibility will be dependent on the number of routes, their quality, and the directions served. Bus access from only the southwest (Pump Lane, Hayes direction) and the east (South Road, central Southall) will only provide limited inbound accessibility; additional access from the north west (towards Uxbridge Road) would improve the situation. The specific provision and the resulting accessibility level should be assessed to provide a key criterion for assessing the land use development proposals at SGW. Working Paper 4 (Savell Bird and

Axon, March 2006) indicates five routes through SGW, including one using the north-west access, discussed below.

To link the SGW site with the existing town centre, and with the concept of a more intensive station area development, three accessibility pre-conditions are necessary:

- Connections between SGW and the station area and South Road that are legible, direct, comfortable and convenient for all users;
- High inbound-accessibility by public transport for those parts of the SGW site that will have “destination” land uses (current PTAL level of 1-2 raised to 4 or more);
- Frequent connections to surrounding areas (housing, employment, recreation areas) for pedestrians and cyclists.

The current SGW proposals (late 2007) satisfy the third of these preconditions, but not the first two.

The access points are considered in turn below.

#### **4.2.3 Eastern access**

The most critical access for the SGW site is without doubt the eastern access to the station area and South Road. In order for SGW to be integrated with existing Southall, it is crucial that vehicle access is provided from the east and the west (and less critically, from the north also). An option of confining vehicle access to the southwest and north only is rejected on two grounds. First, it would place intolerable pressure on connections to the existing residential streets north of SGW, and second, destination uses on SGW would be associated with car access from Hayes by-pass rather than with non-car access related to Southall town centre.

Given the need for vehicle access to South Road, the design of this access needs to be considered in relation not only to the access requirements of SGW, but also to the longer term potential of the station area (as discussed above). The phasing and funding of the eastern connection is arguably the most difficult and crucial aspect of the entire project. The physical aspects of the connection are compounded with the need to phase development in a way that is financially workable.

#### **Proposal**

It is proposed to phase development of the eastern access as follows (see also Figure 8-3). Note that these “access phases” are not necessarily the same as eventual development phasing on the SGW site itself:

- **Access Phase 1:** Early stage of SGW development to be accessed via Beaconsfield Road and existing streets to the north of SGW;
- **Access Phase 2:** Construction of a link to the South Road bridge from SGW, as an alternative route to Beaconsfield road, and to incorporate bus access to SGW;
- **Access Phase 3:** In the longer term to provide a wholly new route between SGW and South Road, connecting at a cross-roads with the proposed new bridge access to the east of the station. This would be integral with complete redevelopment of the existing housing area lying between South Road bridge and the SGW site. This third phase is seen as crucial for the integration of SGW with Southall town centre.



#### 4.2.4 Western access

- The western access, though not without its own complexities, is the least contentious of the possible ways of opening up this constrained site. The developers' concept is broadly acceptable to the consultant team and the Borough; L.B. Hillingdon are of course also important stakeholders. This link will be for pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles. This access will provide one of the three possible routes into the site for public transport.

#### Proposal

- Support the proposed connection from the SGW site to the Hayes By-pass (A312) via a new bridge over the Grand Union canal and Yeading Brook at the southwest tip of the site.

#### 4.2.5 North Western access

Access to the SGW site from the northwest (the Uxbridge Road/Hayes area in the borough of Hillingdon) is proposed in the master plan (October 2007) as being for pedestrians only. A possible second pedestrian link to Minet Country Park is also indicated, aligned with the Dudley Road railway underpass.

Limiting the northwest connection to pedestrians only (with, presumably, cyclists allowed) will reduce the possibilities for public transport access both to the SGW area and to the station area. The absence of direct bus connections to the station area and South Road from the northwest direction has been highlighted in the workshops and public consultations. The northwest SGW connection provides the opportunity to open up a new bus link from the Hayes/Uxbridge Road direction, via the substantial employment area north of Minet Country Park and the destination activities within SGW itself. Without this connection public transport serving SGW will be limited to access from the southwest and east only, considerably reducing inbound accessibility, and hence the ability of SGW to be integrated with the station area and South Road activities.

#### Proposal

- It is therefore recommended that the northwest access should provide for public transport as well as pedestrians and cyclists. This might best be achieved in relation a new link serving the areas on either side of Yeading Brook (including the site of the formerly proposed depot for the West London Tram). This means that the route would also serve a potential new development site, albeit in the borough of Hillingdon;
- Providing sufficient bridge height over the Grand Union Canal will require careful design of the north-western corner of the SGW site.

#### 4.2.6 Connections to adjacent residential areas

There will be connections with the residential area to the north of the SGW site by extending existing or creating new street or path connections. The masterplan as at October 2007 indicated five pedestrian connections and three pedestrian and vehicle connections. If these routes are designed to be well over-looked, and if they are aligned with the SGW internal street and path system, this will provide good permeability and integration between the new and existing areas. To the south there are only two possibilities for connections for pedestrians and cyclists only, via the two existing subways under the railway. [=Proposal?] While these connections are valuable, both need enhancement to provide a more pedestrian-friendly environment, and in particular more visibility between the two sides.

#### Proposals

- Provide direct access between SGW site and Beaconsfield Road to create permeability between existing and new development, with at least two accesses being for vehicular traffic and all accesses being suitably designed for pedestrian and cycle access;

- Enhance existing subways under the railway to the residential and commercial areas south of SGW to meet appropriate standards of safety and quality for pedestrian and cycle access.

#### 4.2.7 Public Transport upgrades

The transport workshop identified two important public transport issues:

1. The station area, and the South Road/King Street parts of the town centre lack direct bus connections to western parts of Southall; and
2. Good bus services are required through the SGW site to raise the PTAL level and thus to support the mixed use development.

Initial suggestions by Transport for London (TfL) for bus services through the SGW development addressed the second of these issues, but not the first. Later versions of the concept masterplan for SGW have shown the north-west access as pedestrian and cycle only, but the potential remains for a direct bus route between Southall station and areas to the west of Southall in the London Borough of Hillingdon, thus filling a gap in the current route network. This would also provide a more comprehensive range of directions serving the SGW site itself, which is important for raising the level of inbound accessibility.

The bus service and accessibility issues will need to be refined prior to finalisation of the SGW scheme to take full account of the proposals in this Framework. This should include routes through SGW and the associated infrastructure within the development as well as identification of bus priority and other measures external to the site that are needed to enhance public transport capacity and quality in the wider Southall area. This will be important in determining appropriate s106 contributions and planning conditions related to on-site infrastructure, both at SGW and developments elsewhere in Southall, such as those recommended in this Framework.

#### Proposals

- Plug missing link(s) in the bus network, especially between west Southall and Southall station area;
- Create new and diverted bus routes to create links between major developments to the east and west (SGW) of Southall station;
- Use new and diverted bus routes to maximise the inbound accessibility of SGW, as well as providing for the outbound accessibility required by SGW site residents;
- Create a bus-only South Road bridge in the longer term to improve the quality of bus-rail interchange, and to improve access on foot to and from Southall station.

#### 4.2.8 Gateway Link Road Concept

A pre-existing proposal was for a link road to serve as a by-pass for Uxbridge Road, and the Broadway (coming off the A312 Hayes Bypass, through the Gas Works site, with various options for connecting back into the road network east of South Road/Merrick Road). This is inappropriate for the vision of future Southall. A road which has as its prime objective the movement of through vehicular traffic would encourage such movement, would reduce development opportunities, would counter efforts to secure a reduction in travel by car, and would increase the area affected by adverse traffic impacts of noise, pollution, danger and visual intrusion. This report is therefore based on the assumption that this link road will not be built. However, it is the scale and design purpose that is the main problem, and removal of the Link Road proposal does not undermine the case for “in scale” new roads designed to open up sites for development, or

to improve the operation of the traffic system in line with priorities for bus services, pedestrians and cyclists.

#### Proposal

- Drop the Gateway Link Road proposal.

#### **4.2.9 Glade Lane**

The Glade Lane area is beyond the station area catchment and is relatively isolated from high density public transport routes. It is thus not suited to development that attracts large numbers of people. It is, however, capable of supporting medium density housing and low employment density commercial uses. The recommended direction of change is to consolidate and improve the existing housing, and transfer some existing open space to employment and housing. The new employment would be primarily for relocation of existing employment from sites that are close to the Southall station area that are suited to high intensity development. The land reallocation should include provision of higher quality open space that is better related to the housing areas. This discussion is taken forward into the set of proposals contained in Chapter 8.

#### Proposals

- Land use reallocation to better match the pattern of existing and potential public transport accessibility
- Use the development potential of the Glade Lane to Merrick Road area to create through bus links serving SGW and Southall station.
- Enhance the quality and directness of walk and cycle routes to the area to reduce its isolation.

#### **4.2.10 Industrial area links**

The International Trading Estate area currently generates considerable commercial traffic (including HGVs) through residential streets in the south west corner of the Borough. A proposed new link road will enable this industrial area to be linked via Hayes Road to the A312 Hayes by-pass, providing the opportunity to reduce the impact of commercial traffic on residential streets.

The industrial estate east of Merrick Road has the potential to be consolidated further east, releasing land for higher intensity development within the 800 metre catchment of Southall station. The impact of industrial traffic generated by the area could be mitigated by the provision of direct access from the existing Barratt Industrial Park served from Windmill Lane.

#### Proposals

- Support new link to the International Trading Estate;
- Consider a new link for industrial traffic between Windmill Lane (Armstrong Way) and existing and potential future commercial uses south of the railway.

## **5 Housing, Public Realm and Community Safety**

### **5.1 Issues and Objectives**

The three topics of Housing, Public Realm and Community Safety are intrinsically interlinked and together, through good design and planning, can be pivotal to Southall's development trajectory. In order to ensure the successful and sustainable growth of Southall, it is crucial that a strategy is adopted which;

- Provides the correct housing mix;
- Maximises the availability and quality of open space;
- And, through good design, promotes a community able to enjoy freedom from crime.

Of equal importance is that the three issues remain entwined, enabling design and planning that acknowledges and then utilises the advantages of a coherent strategy, building towards a robust and cohesive community.

It is worth stating the current context in relation to housing and public realm within which this Framework operates. This includes current housing policy, as well as issues with the current supply and demand sides of the housing market, and issues with the current supply of the public realm.

#### **Housing Policy**

- The local housing policy context is provided in a number of documents, principally The Ealing Housing Strategy 2004-2009, which was updated in 2006. its three key aims and priorities are:
  - To increase choice and access to affordable housing;
  - To improve the quality of housing and related services across all tenures;
  - To tackle social exclusion and to promote mixed and to create sustainable communities.
- Central to this strategy is the importance placed on providing affordable housing, echoed by the LBE Housing Study which places an emphasis on maximising the amount of affordable housing from a range of sources.

#### **Issues**

##### **Housing Supply Issues**

- Southall's total stock of social housing is 3,029 units, with a net need for 1,035 affordable housing units.
- The housing trajectory (part of the LDF) for Southall stated that there were 5,091 new units in the planning pipeline, including those under construction, those with planning permission and those allocated in the UDP.
- In the forthcoming LDF, Southall offers 31 sites for residential or mixed use development, which collectively will make an important contribution to meeting Ealing's housing allocation.
- Southall is characterised by a high number of terraced houses, and a low proportion of flats in comparison with the rest of the Borough
- In terms of tenure, Southall has a slightly higher proportion of households in the social sector, but a low number of people in the private rented sector. Perhaps surprising due to the levels of deprivation and Southall's role as a destination for new immigrant communities.

##### **Housing Demand Issues**

- The demand for affordable housing in Southall can be partly attributed to the relative deprivation in the borough. There are 40% more people claiming unemployment benefit in Southall than in the Borough as a whole, and there are 13 LSOAs within the 20% most deprived in the country.
- Ealing's house prices are 50% higher than the national average, but below the London average, with price increases over the last 5 years below the national and regional equivalents.
- Overcrowding is a serious issue in Southall, with around 7.5% of all households classified as overcrowded.
- Figures show Southall has 64,470 people in 19,623 households, giving an average household size of 3.28, higher than the national average of 2.36.
- Southall contains 577 Houses in Multiple Occupation, 30% of the Borough's total, though there may be many more that are unlicensed and therefore unregistered.
- Ealing is the third most ethnically diverse Borough in London, with Southall the most ethnically diverse area within Ealing. 83% of the population belong to an ethnic group other than white.
- Asian households are most likely to be large in size, with lower levels of incomes and savings. Overcrowded households are most likely to be occupied by Pakistani, Black African or Black (other) households.
- Over 75% of the Housing Register is from BME communities, and so BME housing needs are the focal point of the Housing Strategy.

### Public Realm and Community Safety

- Southall town centre is a unique, vibrant and multicultural place. its distinctive feel created by a strong sense of place. its tight communities, family run businesses and distinctive buildings.
- Despite these qualities there are a number of weaknesses with the offer of public realm and open space. There is a need to improve both the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space.
- Large areas of Southall are deficient in terms of open space. These include the streets north of Beaconsfield Road and those near Featherstone Road do not have an open space larger than 2 hectares within 400 metres, with the Featherstone Road area also not currently within 400 metres of a District Park.
- Weaknesses in the streetscape and pavements are caused by expansive street trading, congested and polluting streets, a lack of streetscape amenities and an untidy appearance. this creates an overcrowded and claustrophobic feel and a dilapidated urban structure.
- In terms of crime and community safety, the main problems are drug-related offences, robbery, prostitution and car crime. Particular hot-spots for crime are around near Southall Green and The Broadway/South Road junction.

Figure 5-1 shows the various types of housing and character within the study area.

Figure 5-1: Housing Character & Analysis Plan

## Drawing 15: Housing character Plan

### Objectives

There are a number of objectives relating to housing, public realm and community safety, which arose from both an analysis of the issues presented in the previous section and through the rounds of stakeholder involvement held prior to the preparation of the Framework.

These objectives encompass both things that can be achieved as part of, as well as independent of, the delivery of the SGW scheme. It can contribute to providing much needed open space in Southall and meeting some housing needs, but despite the scale of the development the Gas Works site is not the only answer to all of Southall's needs in relation to this topic, nor the cause of all its problems.

The objectives for this set of issues is therefore a combination of principles relating to future housing development (of which the Gas Works is the main thrust) and specific projects which will collectively contribute to rebalancing the housing market and improving public realm and community safety. The objectives are therefore:

- To unlock the potential of the canal through appropriately located development and accessibility improvements
- To improve connections from the Gas Works to the Beaconsfield 'Grid' of streets, through a limited number of good quality links
- For new housing developments to meet 'secure by design' standards
- For affordable housing to be 'tenure-blind' and pepper-potted throughout new development where possible
- To address the shortage of family housing through a mix of house types in new developments.
- For new developments to meet Lifetime Homes standards
- To address the under provision of open space in Southall by providing functional open space overlooked by development
- Public realm improvements to specific areas identified as having weak or problematic streetscape.
- Explore opportunities to link the Havelock Estate back into the area through improving accessibility and connectivity
- Improve the relationship with the Minet Country Park
- Improved private sector housing stock

The following section describes the approach taken toward achieving these objectives.

## **5.2 Planning for change**

The discussions presented here relate to both setting principles to influence the kind of development that comes forward in Southall in the future (including both the Gas Works site as well as other significant development opportunities arising through the LDF process), and other more site-specific projects.

### **Housing mix and tenure issues**

Our analysis, which draws upon sources such as the Housing Needs Survey, shows that there is a shortage of affordable housing within Southall. The response to this is therefore one of maximising affordable housing opportunities on new development, and lobbying for increases in the build of larger, family housing in order to ease issues of overcrowding and HMOs. This is reflected in the LB Ealing Housing Strategy.

Development on the Southall Gas Works represents a substantial chunk of forthcoming new housing development in the area, and in principle could therefore begin to address some of these issues (the supply of affordable housing through the SGW scheme may in unit terms be similar to current net requirement, but would be phased over 10-15 years and would not tackle future need). However, demands on the amount of affordable housing to be expected on the site, and the amount of family/larger housing puts a strain on the developments financial viability and any such demands need to balance the degree to which issues can be addressed on the Gas Works site with the overall aim of delivering development.

## Potential Development sites and Change of Use

The SGW site is not the only development site within Southall. The Framework suggest other opportunities exist within the wider area on which social housing in particular may be suitable as part of the mix. Such sites include development sites include the Glade Lane area, for which comprehensive land use changes are suggested, or within the town centre itself, on the Southall West site. Both these areas currently contain employment land designations, but may in the future be more suitable for a wider range of uses. Sites the Framework suggest may be suitable to provide housing include:

- Land near Southall Station:
- The Glade Lane/Havelock Area:
- The Southall West site
- Southall Gas Works (SGW).

Further details of the proposals for these sites are provided in section 8 and section **Error! Reference source not found..**

## Open space

There are a number of issues relating to open space and the weakness of the offer in Southall. As well as deficiencies of open space within large areas of Southall, there are also issues of quality on the existing open spaces; both at District Park level as well as smaller play areas and local parks.

There are three strategic approaches to tackling these issues of both supply and quality. These are:

- Using the development of SGW to reduce the deficiencies in open space
- Improving the quality of the current supply of open space; and
- Identifying opportunities for the development of local open space or play areas.

The SGW development offers the opportunity for a new high quality, accessible open space serving both the new and existing residents of Southall provided it is well designed and well located. It also offers the opportunity for a mix of provision, from small-scale play space, to green park-type areas, to hard open space providing a new civic space for Southall. A series of design related guidelines and principles are provided in section 8.5 to ensure that needs are met and the new open space is functional and well designed, suitable for the variety of users it needs to serve.

There are a number of other open spaces within Southall that are currently subject to improvement, or in need of investment. These include the Manor House Gardens, Glade Lane Park and the play area on Featherstone Road.

- **The Manor House Gardens.** Despite investment in 2002 through the Single Regeneration Budget, the Manor House Gardens on The Green could play a more significant role in providing a green space within the old part of Southall. Parts of the site are currently underused and attract crime and anti-social behaviour. Groundwork has proposals to carry out refurbishment of the grounds with a new café and new playground. This Framework endorses and supports this project.
- **Glade Lane.** The Glade Lane Park suffers mainly as a result of its location, bound by a Canal on one side and the rail line the other, making it isolated from its residential catchment. A suggested strategy to remedy this through a more strategic approach to the wider Glade Lane area, including the Havelock and Toplocks estates, as well as the Middlesex Business Centre is proposed in section **Error! Reference source not found..**

- **Featherstone Road Play Area.** This small play area is currently underused, partly due to its quality and perception of insecurity caused by a lack of natural surveillance. Improved security by rethinking its design could go somewhere to making it a more useful resource for the neighbouring residential areas which suffer a shortage of such space. An alternative proposal to immediate investment is to wait for the development of the Gas Works site, by which the play area would benefit from a larger immediate catchment, increasing its use. This may be a more appropriate time to make necessary investment.

## **Public Realm**

The Retail and Town Centre section picked up on some issues of the weakness of the public realm, particularly focusing on the Broadway and South Road. The majority of streetscape related problems occur here, especially due to the conflict between various users of the street including retailers, pedestrians, buses and passengers, delivery vehicles and cars. Proposals relating to these public realm issues are therefore contained in the Retail and Town Centre sections.

## **Community safety**

The approach to addressing community safety fears is twofold, relating to both ‘designing out crime’ to ensure new developments are planned in a way to discourage and reduce the risk of crime, for example by providing natural surveillance on open space, avoiding blank street frontages and so on, and also tackling crime through pro-active means such as community policing or wardens in Parks.

Greater awareness and promotion of the principles contained within ‘Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention’ during the design of new developments can help ingrain good design to help negate crime and the fear of crime into new developments. These principles are incorporated into the design guidance provided for SGW in section 8.5.

A greater presence of Community Safety Teams may also help reduce the fear and perception of crime within Southall, especially along the Broadway and South Road where most crime occurs. Initiatives could include a dedicated Community Safety office within Southall or the Gas Works site to give Community Support Officers, Police, youth workers and other partners a presence in Southall. Park Wardens can also be effective in patrolling open spaces and discouraging crime and anti-social behaviour. This is generally an under-funded resource and a dedicated Warden for Southall, covering the redevelopment of Manor House Gardens, Southall Park as well as the new open space on the Gas Works could be a good investment.

A potential source of revenue for these projects, as well as those in the public realm section, could be through the Business Improvement District, should this option be pursued.

## **Unlocking Assets – The Canal and Minet Country Park**

The Grand Union Canal, its towpath and the Minet Country Park are assets that are currently under performing for Southall. Development on the SGW site presents the opportunity to link the town with these assets, providing the area with additional amenity value and leisure and tourism opportunities. This can be achieved by providing development along the canal front itself, including both residential and commercial, connections across from the Gas Works into the Country Park and possibly funded improvements to Minet as part of the Planning Gain package.

The design and layout of these uses, and ensuring connections are part of the wider movement network to provide good accessibility for new and existing



residents are essential precursors to making the most of the untapped potential the Canal can provide.

# 6 Employment and the Local Economy

## 6.1 Issues and Objectives

This sections reviews current issues in relation to the supply of employment land in Southall and some context in relation to the labour market.

### Policy

- The London Plan projects a requirement for West London to create 62,000 jobs between 1997 and 2016, whilst providing 59,400 additional homes in the same period. Southall, as a central node on the Heathrow-Paddington Growth Corridor, is expected to be pivotal in this growth.
- Southall is also designated as an Area of Community Regeneration, which promotes the town centre as a location for new and expanding businesses and local employment opportunities.

### Employment Land

- Employment land in Ealing is under considerable pressure from other uses, in particular housing.
- The supply of employment land in Ealing (491 hectares) makes it one of the most important Boroughs in terms of its contribution to the economy.
- Land use strategies must therefore strike a balance between housing and employment needs. Planning guidance at regional (London) level advises that if employment land is outside regeneration areas and is deemed not to be meeting economic needs then it should be released for housing or mixed uses.
- There are three Major Employment Locations (MELs) in Southall. These are the Great Western Industrial Park, the International Trading Estate and Southall West (also know as Southbridge Way). The Great Western site is identified as a Strategic Employment Location in the London Plan.

### The Labour Market

- Of the West London Boroughs, Ealing contributes the highest share of the workforce (25%). Collectively these provide 82.1ha of employment land and 5,232 jobs.
- The decline of the manufacturing sector has affected the land use pattern of employment land in Southall, with former industrial estates shifting to other uses - towards retail, office and other tertiary sector jobs.
- As an employment centre, Southall has benefited, and will continue to benefit, from improved transport links such as the Heathrow Connect service.
- Unemployment levels are higher for Southall (2.6%) than the Borough (1.8%), London (2%) and national (1.5%) figures.
- 15.3% of Southall's resident workers are in the transport, storage and communication sectors, compared to 8.1% in Greater London and 7.1% in England. This largely reflects the area's proximity to Heathrow.
- 21.2% of Southall's workers are employed in the retail/wholesale/repair trades, compared with 14.4% in Greater London and 16.9% nationally.
- In contrast, in the 'higher' end employment sectors, such as financial intermediation, real estate and business activities, 18.7% of Southall's residents are employed in them, compared to a London-wide figure of 28.2%.
- Many of Southall's residents, including but not limited to recent arrivals, experience difficulties in accessing employment opportunities due to a variety of barriers including language and skills.

### Objectives

In terms of employment there are a number of balances to be struck. The amount of employment land and industrial sites in and around Southall is important to the local economy as both creators of wealth and a source of labour, but we also need to question their future – are they the most appropriate land uses? How many jobs are they providing? There are other questions around economic regeneration. What programmes are required for the local labour force to be more competitive? Can Southall's niche as an Asian gateway play a more important role in the economy? The objectives attempt to plot a way through these questions and result in a set of proposals to answer them.

The Framework's objectives in terms of employment and the local economy are:

- To maintain a sustainable supply of employment land and floorspace within Southall to meet both the needs of local labour market and enterprise;
- For the Asian Gateway concept to be part of the mix at SGW, but being realistic to realise it is not the central plank of the development strategy
- To resolve access issues at industrial estates especially where there are conflicts between users
- To explore the potential of re-designation of employment land where appropriate
- To complement physical proposals with skills and access-related (in the broad sense) solutions.

## **6.2 Planning for Change**

To plan for a sustainable, competitive and growing economy in Southall means, in planning terms, making decisions regarding the best use of the land available, capitalising on the strengths of the area, and maintaining the competitive advantage it has in some sectors. This section discusses some of these choices and suggests a way forward, leading to the set of proposals suggested in section

### **The future of employment sites in Southall**

There are a number of employment sites within Southall, significantly the Great Western site, Southall West, the Windmill Business Park and the International Trading Estate.

In general terms, these sites are performing reasonably well. There are few voids and there are signs of recent investment on the various sites around Southall. This does not suggest therefore that there should be large scale re-designation of employment land to other uses, as in other areas of London such as the Thames Gateway.

There may be areas however where the potential from other uses is greater than for conventional employment uses on existing lines - such as Southall West which is a town centre site, close to transport links, and therefore possibly more suitable for mixed use development rather than purely employment.

Other parts of the town include sites that would benefit from a more strategic approach to the location of employment land in relation to residential areas and open spaces, such as the Middlesex Business Centre, close as it is to the Glade Lane Park and Havelock estate.

These choices have to be balanced with economic development strategies and planning policies which are focused around providing local employment and local economic growth. Therefore there is less mileage in suggesting major change for other areas, such as the Great Western site for example, identified as it is as a Strategic Employment Location. Suitable proposals here are around making the area work better and encouraging the local labour force to access the jobs available there.

The strategy for these sites, leading to the proposals in Chapter 8, is provided below.

- **Southall West:** The site is currently designated variously as a major employment site, employment site and some undesignated areas. It occupies an important location close to the centre of 'old' Southall, close to the railway station and near a number of bus routes. It currently does not fulfil the potential of such a strong town centre location. There are opportunities here to redevelop the site as a mixed-use opportunity providing community facilities and residential development, in a way that is much more integrated into the town centre than the current occupiers and plays a more positive role in terms of the town centre environment. These possibilities are explored further in the proposals section (section 8) and the Site Specific Development Opportunities section (Chapter **Error! Reference source not found.**).
- **Middlesex Business Centre:** the cluster of employment uses to the south of the rail spur west of Southall town centre occupy significant areas of land, but due to their use (some manufacturing, distribution) do not provide a significant amount of labour to the local community. It also acts as a barrier between the Havelock Estate and the town centre, and between Glade Lane open space and the town centre. Consolidation of these sites could release some land for development, link the Havelock Estate and Glade Lane open space back into Southall and unlock the potential the canal plays in terms of benefiting local communities.

### **Access issues on current Southall employment sites**

There are a number of issues around Southall where conflicts are apparent due to the location of the employment land, causing conflicts or severance with nearby. Improved access may help solve such problems. The framework suggests two such locations.

- **International Trading Estate:** Brent Road is currently used as the main access into the Brent Park and Great Western Industrial Estates. These are residential streets and the commercial traffic using them is a blight on the local neighbourhood. Alternative access is suggested which would prevent this conflict in traffic use providing a better environment for local residents and a dedicated, improved access for the businesses.
- **Windmill Lane/Great Western:** This area would also benefit from improved access into these areas and between them, as the railway spur currently acts as a significant barrier between these two employment areas.

### **The role of the Asian Gateway concept**

The Asian Gateway concept is one that has a number of strands. It has a role in acting as a stakeholder agency with an economic development remit to encourage links between local businesses and potential markets, specifically in the Asian sub-continent, using Heathrow nearby as a conduit for doing so. It also has expressed an interest in creating a hub within the area to provide a location for Asian businesses focused around the creative sector, again capitalising on the Asian link. The Framework considers what role these two elements can play in the economic development of Southall.

Capitalising on the links Southall can have with Asia through Heathrow has some economic rationale behind it, providing there are the conditions in place to make this viable, such as targeted growth sectors, markets and products.

The idea of a media arts facility, or a location for the incubation of media related business again is a good concept but many other forces are influential in kick-starting the growth of a media clustering. It often happens organically or as a result of conditions being in place unaffected by institutional help. However there may be opportunities for small, flexible office space as part of the Gas Works development to encourage entrepreneurialism and the growth of local

business. This could be successful as one part of a wider development strategy, rather than its sole rationale.

Some office space could potentially be part of the mix of uses on the Gas Works site, providing it is of the right type and of the right amount. Options include providing accommodation to new businesses, linking with the Asian Gateway concept explored above. There is unlikely to be a market for large-scale, speculative office development, but there may be the viability for smaller offices with a front door, for local businesses and services such as solicitors, accountants and so on. A degree of flexibility should be incorporated into this space to allow for changes in use and fluctuations in the market.

### **Labour Market Issues**

In policy terms one of the justifications of having local employment land is as a location for local labour. However there are some concerns that some of the businesses located in these areas are not industries that supply a large number of jobs (for instance distribution or logistics), or jobs that are not filled by local people (perhaps as a result of skills deficits among local people).

Therefore improving access to jobs is not just related to transport, other issues may be more important such as improving language skills, improving skills or linking prospective employers to those looking for work via a third party such as Job Centre Plus or other agencies.

## 7 Community Services

### 7.1 Issues and Objectives

The success of a sustainable community is grounded in its provision of suitable, accessible and high quality neighbourhood services. This can be achieved via clearly structured and comprehensive provision planning that addresses the location, type and standard of local services. It is also crucial that planning accurately assesses the level of demand for various types of services, and considers how this demand may shift over time.

#### Health Issues

- Health and primary care is under severe stress in Southall. There are over 78,000 people registered with GPs, despite the official population being under 70,000 residents.
- The average GP list size is 2,378, over 30% higher than the average for Ealing.
- Southall has 22 GP practices, 19 pharmacies, 8 dental practices, 4 opticians and 2 health centres. Of the GP premises, 8 are classified as being below minimum standards, and all are too small to provide the full range of primary care services.
- The general health of Southall's population is poor in comparison with the rest of the Borough. Life expectancy is lower, a higher proportion of the population report suffering from long term illnesses, and a higher rate of Coronary Heart Disease.
- The policy context for primary health provision in Southall is provided by the 2006 White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: A New Direction for Community Services'. This puts an emphasis on increased care outside the Hospital, with local services providing a greater range of services.

#### Education

- Educational provision is also under stress in Southall. The area currently has 14 primary schools and 3 state secondary schools. With high levels of migration and rising birth levels, new educational facilities are needed as a matter of priority, especially in the Primary Sector.

#### Libraries

- There is need for new library provision in Southall south of the Broadway. The library at Jubilee Gardens serves the northern part of Southall, and the Osterley Park Library is no longer suitable for needs, as it is unable to accommodate the range of services required of a modern library.
- A new library, perhaps co-locating with other services, could foster adult learning and create a usable community space. Provision of IT and multimedia services should also be included.

#### Community Centres

- Southall's community centres are well used by a diverse range of local groups. The centres play an important role in providing affordable rentable space for local groups. However Southall Community Centre is poorly maintained and has a number of health and safety issues, is not DDA compliant and is in a poor location, and so is to be disposed of by the Council.

## Sports Facilities

- Current sport provision in Southall includes the Southall Sports Centre on Beaconsfield Road, the MUGA site at Villier Park, a swimming pool at Dormers Wells and outdoor facilities at Swift Road. All these facilities are well used. This is especially true of the Southall Sports Centre, and there are concerns as to whether it will be able to absorb the demand of new population. There are also questions over whether there should be a swimming pool in a more accessible location than Dormers Wells.

## Objectives

The Framework addresses these issues through recommendations regarding the form and location of a number of new services where current provision needs increasing or improving, both as a result of current need and future need arising from the Gas Works development and the wider demographic changes Southall is experiencing.

- **Additional GP/Primary Care provision is needed:**
  - To meet both new and existing demand
  - Provision needs to be made to meet need in both the northern and southern parts of Southall, either side of the railway line.
  - The need for new facilities could potentially follow the Polyclinic model, co-locating primary health care with other health services, on an accessible site ideally close to transport links and other services.
- **Education**
  - New primary provision is needed in both the short and longer term due to both the new population and rising birth rates
  - Contributions for secondary and other schools may also be required from the Southall Gas Works development.
- **Libraries**
  - A new library (plus additional facilities) is needed in a town centre location
  - The library could co-locate with other services
- **Community centres:**
  - Need to provide space for both small, informal community groups plus larger space for weddings or functions
  - Need to provide office space for community groups
  - The space offered needs to remain affordable for range of users
- **Community Hub**
  - The Framework is to consider the suitability of a community hub providing a range of services in an accessible location within Southall
  - Potential locations include, but are not limited to, the Featherstone Rd. car park site and the Dominion Centre
- **Phoenix House**
  - To ensure that the community facilities included in the approved proposals for Phoenix House meet the Framework strategy in terms of their function.

## 7.2 Planning for Change

The preferred model for the delivery of a range of community services in Southall is one of shared provision, with a range of services from a small number of facilities. This concept of a 'Community Hub' is explored in this discussion,

presenting and analysing the various ways in which it could work, and importantly, where.

The concept of the Community Hub would potentially bring together not just Council services, but also other community assets such as library and cultural services, and possibly health and other social services. The form, function and location require careful consideration to ensure services are accessible to their target catchments.

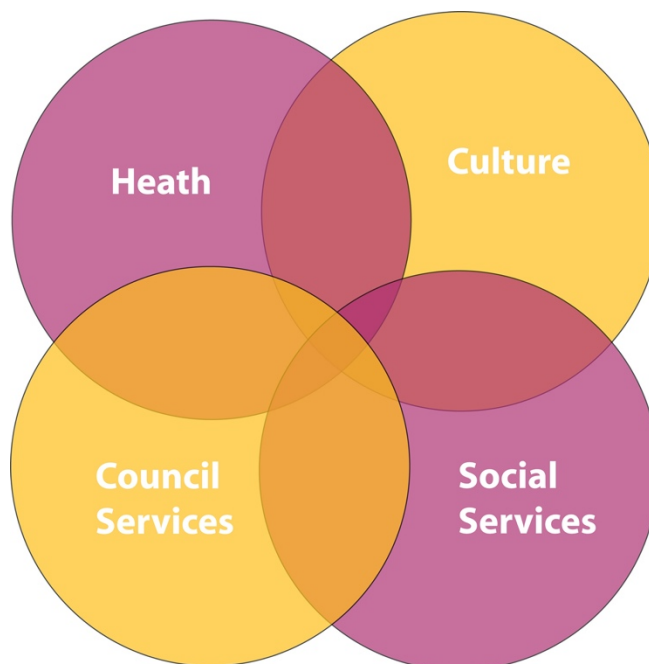
#### **The Provision of new community services – the Community Hub concept**

The Community hub concept could potentially include a wide range of services including:

- **Health Services**
  - Primary Care
  - Opticians
  - Dentists
  - Outpatient services
- **Social Services**
  - Adult and Children’s Care
  - Mental Health services
  - Older peoples services
- **Culture**
  - Library
  - Multimedia facilities
  - Learning or training space
- **Council Services (and other public services)**
  - ‘One-Stop’ location for Council services (parking, rent, bills etc.)
  - Drop-in point or local base for Community Safety Officers.

This is summarised on the diagram below:

**Figure 7-1: The Community Hub concept - potential service provision**



There are a number of ways in which these services can be delivered and located, for example separately on four sites, co-locating some services, or all in one place.



In considering services and their location, there are a number of services of which are only required **once** in Southall (of which the Council services idea is the most obvious example), and some services which could be provided **once** or **twice** depending on the requirements of the population and the availability of sites (such as primary health care).

We would suggest that health and social services could be provided together, across **two** locations, and council and cultural services could be provided together, in **one** location.

The grouping shown on the diagram is selected for 2 reasons:

1. They complement each other in terms of the nature of the service;
2. They complement each other in terms of the catchment they serve (which leads into considering their locations). i.e. the findings of the research indicated that Primary Care services should be provided both north and south of the railway line as they have a smaller catchment and need local access, whereas the cultural and council services have a much wider catchment, and so its location in terms of which part of Southall (though it needs to be in an accessible location) is less critical.

The Southall Gas Works site itself is not deemed suitable for the location of the Community Hub, for two main reasons. The first being timing – there is a need and opportunity to develop the Community Hub in the short or medium term, to both meet the council’s corporate strategies and to respond to need in terms of the services that will be offered. The Gas Works will not be developed within this timeframe and can be discounted from the potential list of sites. In addition the Gas Works site is not a preferable location due to its relative inaccessibility. Such a development needs to be within the town centre, accessible to nearby communities by both foot and public transport. The Gas Works site does not provide the same level of accessibility as the sites under consideration in Southall town centre.

The proposed locations for these community facilities are given in section 8.

### **Education provision**

Current demographics indicate that there will soon be a shortage of primary school places in the Southall area. These services may be put under more pressure as the Gas Works development adds more people to the area.

The requirements for secondary provision are less acute, and the opening of the new school at ... will provide new provision, however there is a potential need for some contribution from the development of the Gas \works towards secondary school provision.

The strategy for education in the Framework could therefore be based on the following:

- New primary school services on Southall Gas Works
- Additional primary provision in the short term
- Contribution to secondary services elsewhere

The need for a new primary school on the Gas Works site has been identified and recognised. This will provide new primary school places from around 2012-2014. however there is a need to provide extra places prior to this. Options include: ... ..

## 8 Proposals

### 8.1 Areas for Change and Improvement

There are a series of areas that through the previous chapters have emerged as being the main focus of the Framework and therefore the main focus for change in Southall.

These areas, for which specific proposals have developed from the thematic discussions above, and include both guidance which plans for change, as well as more short term suggestions for improvement or investment. These areas include:

- The existing town centre, including both the Broadway and King Street/The Green
- The Southall Gas Works site
- Southall Station and its immediate environs
- The Suterwalla/TRS site to the west of King Street
- Housing around Featherstone Road
- The wider Glade Lane area, including the open spaces, residential areas and industrial areas between the Canal and the Railway.

These proposals are introduced thematically, linking them directly back to the discussions in previous chapters which form the evidence base and justification for many of the proposals and opportunities that follow.

Figure 8-1: Areas for Change and Improvement

## Drawing 6: Areas for Change Drawing

### 8.2 Retail and Town Centre Proposals

Figure 8-2: Town Centre Development Ideas

## Drawing 10: Town Centre Development Ideas

### 8.3 Transport Proposals

This section draws together a set of proposals for transport and accessibility improvements in relation to development opportunities. Figure 8-3 and Figure 8-3 accompany these proposals.

#### Proposals for Southall Station area

- Prepare a station area design and plan for integrated land use and transport solution;

- High density residential (apartments), especially on sites shielded from railway noise, to make use of commuting opportunities by rail;
- Person-attracting (destination) land uses, such as offices, services, shopping, entertainment, will make use of the high in-bound accessibility. High densities will be appropriate to the scale of physical infrastructure envisaged for the station area.
- Provide a new road bridge over the railway to the east of the present station, linking South Road with Merrick Road.
- Transformation of South Road bridge as bus/taxi only area with rail interchange facilities and high quality pedestrian environment;
- High density three-dimensional development integrated with Southall station, South road bridge, and the proposed new road bridge;

### **Proposals for SGW development**

- Sustainable transport proposals as an integral part of the Southall Gasworks site development, including planning conditions and s106 agreements and contributions to deliver measures on and off-site;
- Such measures to include infrastructure within the site, bus route provision, enhancement and pump-priming, and connections for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Travel Plans for both residential and commercial components including individualised Travel Planning and Car Club provision.

### **Proposal for eastern access to SGW**

- **Access Phase 1:** Early stage of SGW development to be accessed via Beaconsfield Road and existing streets to the north of SGW;
- **Access Phase 2:** Construction of a link to the South Road bridge from SGW, as an alternative route to Beaconsfield road, and to incorporate bus access to SGW;
- **Access Phase 3:** In the longer term to provide a wholly new route between SGW and South Road, connecting at a cross-roads with the proposed new bridge access to the east of the station. This would be integral with complete redevelopment of the existing housing area lying between South Road bridge and the SGW site. This third phase is seen as crucial for the integration of SGW with Southall town centre.

### **Proposal for western access to SGW**

- Support the proposed connection from the SGW site to the Hayes By-pass (A312) via a new bridge over the Grand Union canal and Yeading Brook at the southwest tip of the site.

### **Proposal for north-western access to SGW**

- The northwest access should provide for public transport as well as pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Proposals for connecting SGW with adjacent residential areas**

- Provide direct access between SGW site and Beaconsfield Road to create permeability between existing and new development, with at least two accesses being for vehicular traffic and all accesses being suitably designed for pedestrian and cycle access;
- Enhance existing subways under the railway to the residential and commercial areas south of SGW to meet appropriate standards of safety and quality for pedestrian and cycle access.

### Proposals for public transport

- Plug missing link(s) in the bus network, especially between west Southall and Southall station area;
- Create new and diverted bus routes to create links between major developments to the east and west (SGW) of Southall station;
- Use new and diverted bus routes to maximise the inbound accessibility of SGW, as well as providing for the outbound accessibility required by SGW site residents;
- Create a bus-only South Road bridge in the longer term to improve the quality of bus-rail interchange, and to improve access on foot to and from Southall station.

### Proposal for Gateway Link Road

- Drop the Gateway Link Road proposal.

### Proposals for Glade Lane area

- Land use reallocation to better match the pattern of existing and potential public transport accessibility and proximity to town centre;
- Use the development potential of the Glade Lane to Merrick Road area to create through bus links serving SGW and Southall station;
- Enhance the quality and directness of walk and cycle routes to the area to reduce its isolation.

### Proposals for industrial links

- Support new link to the International Trading Estate;
- Consider a new link for industrial traffic between Windmill Lane (Armstrong Way) and existing and potential future commercial uses south of the railway;
- Alternatively enhance link from Merrick Road to provide appropriate access to employment and mixed use activity.

Figure 8-3: Detailed Transport Development Ideas

Figure 8-4: Transport Development Ideas

## Drawing 13: Transport Development Ideas

## Drawing 13a: Detailed Transport Development Ideas

### 8.4 Housing, Public Realm and Community Safety Proposals

The responses to the issues presented in the discussions regarding housing and public realm issues in section 5s have led to two forms of proposals. The first set

are a collection of spatially located proposals, some of which take the form of Site Specific Development Guidance at the end of the Framework.

The second set of proposals are a series of development guidelines which it is suggested should be applied to future developments, in some cases as part of the delivery of the Gas Works scheme.

### Potential Opportunity Areas

There are a number of ‘opportunity areas’ within Southall that could provide housing development opportunities. These include:

- **Station Area Design Framework:** with residential opportunities as part of the Southall Area Design Framework, see section 8.3.
- **Havelock/Glade Lane:** the wider Glade Lane area has been identified for major change, which would include residential development opportunities. Proposals can be found in Chapter **Error! Reference source not found.**
- **Southall West:** Chapter **Error! Reference source not found.** provides the development proposals for this site, which in the future could be of more value as a mixed use opportunity than its current employment designation.
- **SGW:** A set of design principles for the redevelopment of the Gas Works are included in Section 8.5.

Figure 8-5: Housing Opportunities

## Drawing 16: Housing Opportunities

The Site Specific Development Guidance section (Chapter **Error! Reference source not found.**) provides more detailed guidance on these sites.

### Public realm Improvements

There are a number of locations in Southall that should be prioritised for upgrades to the streetscape or public realm. These are:

- **Pedestrian upgrades around and to the station:** The Transport section suggests proposals aimed to create a better transport interchange in Southall linking Rail, Bus and potentially Crossrail services. Part of this scheme is to create a better pedestrian environment providing legible, convenient, safe routes in the area for pedestrians together with safe crossing points and clear signage.
- **Pedestrian upgrades in the town centre:** public realm upgrades are also proposed for the town centre. These are shown on Figure 8-2.

### Improvements to open space

Redressing the weaknesses in the supply of open space for Southall’s residents includes improving the current areas of open space as well as increasing the current supply.

- **Glade lane:** The open space improvements proposed in the wider Glade Lane area are detailed in section **Error! Reference source not found.**
- **Manor house gardens:** the Framework supports the proposals to improve the Manor House Gardens through the development of new facilities such as a café and playground. This is being progressed by Groundwork West London with LB Ealing.
- **Featherstone Road play area:** we have not made any specific proposals for this area, but when development of the Gas Works happens this area will have a wider catchment, and its relatively isolated location abutting the

railway line will be tempered by being near to new development of the Gas Works, effectively improving its location and doubling its catchment. At this point improvements may be more appropriate.

- **Canal / Minet Country Park:** Improvement of the canalside footway, links to Minet Country Park, capitalising on increased use unlocked by development on the Gas Works.

Figure 8-6: Public Realm Proposals Plan

## Drawing 16a: Public Realm Improvements

### Private sector housing management

There are a number of issues related to the private housing stock in Southall, mainly around environmental quality and housing management. These proposals therefore reflect the need for more responsive and proactive reactions to these problems.

- To tackle the problem of unauthorised buildings in Southall through enforcement
- Establish a better relationship with the private rented sector and encourage accreditation and registration through liaison with the Housing, Planning and Environmental Health
- Greater enforcement and a review of waste management procedures to discourage and prevent flytipping.

### 8.5 Design Principles for SGW

Suggested Urban design principles for SGW:

### 8.6 Employment and Labour Market Proposals

#### Areas identified for Change

##### Southall West

Much of this area is currently designated as employment land. It is proposed that other uses may be of more value on a town centre site close to other amenities and with good (possibly improving) transport accessibility. Proposals are made in section **Error! Reference source not found.** for the development of this site.

##### Glade Lane Area

The Site Specific Guidance section (chapter **Error! Reference source not found.**) takes a more strategic view of this area encompassing some of the currently designated employment area. In terms of the employment land, the proposals involve consolidating the Windmill Business Centre to release some land for alternative forms of development, and improving the access between the Great Western Industrial Park and the Windmill Business Centre.

#### Station Area Design Framework

It is proposed that the slither of employment land to the north of the station be re-designated as an area of mixed use development, and be part of the site specific proposals in Section **Error! Reference source not found.**

### **Access Improvements**

#### **International Trading Estate**

Access improvements to the International Trading Estate will separate residential traffic from the commercial traffic. A dedicated access will be provided for commercial traffic, via a new road and bridge from Hayes Road and over the canal at the south of the Trading Estate.

#### **Middlesex Business Centre / Great western Industrial Estate**

Improved access arrangements are proposed by providing a link between these two areas of employment land, a link that does not currently exist. This will be via a new bridge across the railway line.

**Figure 8-7: Employment Sites Identified for Change**

## **Drawing 18: Changing Employment Sites**

### **Labour Market Issues**

There are a number of labour market issues that should be approached in order to ensure a greater participation in the job market. These should be progressed by a range of partners including local FE and HE providers, the Learning and Skills Council, Job Centre Plus and community groups.

### **8.7 Community Services Proposals**

Following the discussions in section 7 regarding the distribution and location of community services in Southall, the Framework makes the following recommendations:

That the health related services should be split into two locations to provide services in both the northern and southern parts of Southall. Options here are:

**North** of the railway line:

- The 'Horse yard' site (site 1 on the plan below)
- The supermarket site (site 2)
- The Post Office/Methodist Church site (site 3)

**South** of the railway line:

- Featherstone Terrace Car Park (site 7)

It is clear that the need to deliver extra primary care facilities is acute, with both shortages in relation to the current local population, not just as a result of forthcoming increased need. There is therefore a requirement to identify a site in the shorter to medium term for primary care use. The Featherstone Road Car Park could provide an answer to these shorter terms questions.

This site could be delivered before the other options. There are however concerns that this site doesn't offer presence in terms of its relationship to the town centre, as it does not have a street frontage.

However, if the site was linked with the Dominion Centre, then it could be designed in such a way as to have a more positive impact on this part of Southall, adding to the vitality of the streetscape.

The cultural/council services could be in one location, either north or south of the railway:

- At Phoenix House (site 5)
- The Gurdwara site. (Site 4)
- The Dominion Centre (site 6)

The availability and deliverability of these sites is a key consideration in determining the best location for each kind of provision. Recent proposals for the development of Phoenix House include some provision for a new library and additional community space. These proposals are fully endorsed by the Framework, as it provides a new location for library, with additional community space to widen its offer, in an accessible town centre location.

The Phoenix House site may not provide the amount of community space and facilities required in Southall to meet the objectives set out in this Framework. Additional community space is therefore required. This could be provided on the site of the Dominion Centre. This would form the ‘front’ to the health-related services on the Featherstone road Car Park site, solving the problem of this site lacking presence on the street. Delivery of this would require careful handling in layout terms, alongside site assembly.

In addition, the Gurdwara site in the future could also provide a valuable location for a range of community uses in addition to those within Phoenix House, should the site be available for redevelopment in the longer term.

Figure 8-8: Potential Locations for the Community Hub

## Drawing 20b: Locations of Community Hub

### Education Provision

TBC following info from Ealing

### 8.8 Suggested Phasing

The following table sets out, in broad terms, the proposals above and their suggested phasing.

Table 8-1: Suggested Phasing of Framework Proposals

Proposal	Short Term (0-5 years)	Medium Term (5-10 yrs)	Long Term (10 years +)	Potential Funding Source
New Bridge for Southall				TfL/LBE LIP
Station Area Design Framework				LBE/Private Sector



Station area South West				LBE/Private Sector
Havelock/Glade Lane				LBE/Private Sector
Southall West				LBE/Private Sector
Open Space improvements – Manor House Gardens				LBE/Groundwork
Open Space improvements – Featherstone Road Play Area				LBE
Private Sector Housing Management				LBE
Access Improvements – International Trading Estate				LBE – LIP/TfL
Access Improvements – Great western/Middlesex Business Centre				LBE – LIP/TfL
Community Facilities – Phoenix House				LBE/Private Sector
Community Hub – Health related Services (Featherstone Road Car Park)				LBE/PCT
Community Hub – community related services (Dominion Centre)				LBE

## 9 Delivery and Viability

### 9.1 Market, Constraints & Delivery

This chapter considers - in relation to Southall generally, but with particular reference to the SGW site:

- Salient features of the property market
- Some of the specific constraints on development
- Steps that need to be taken to improve delivery overall, and viability at SGW in particular.

### 9.2 The Property Market

#### 9.2.1 Residential Property Market

At present, residential values in Southall are lower than in some of the surrounding areas within L.B.Ealing. Table 1 below compares prices derived from Land Registry data with those found in neighbouring W5 and Northfields.

Table 9-1: Property Prices Around Southall in Mid 2007

Property Type	Southall	Northfields	W5
All	£237k	£505k	£420k
Detached	Few sales	£726k	£1150k
Semi Detached	£292k	£348k	£526k
Terraced	£241k	£302k	£470k
Flat	£161k	Few sales	£289k

The comparison with adjacent areas in other Boroughs is more favourable. Prices in Southall appear to be marginally higher than in Yeading and only just below those in Heston. It needs to be kept in mind that these relate to existing properties. New homes will normally be priced by reference to local market levels with a premium added. In areas where prices are relatively low but where comprehensive development is possible, it is sometimes possible to achieve a higher sum because the scale of the scheme permits the creation of a new environment and immunises it to some extent from the factors dragging prices down in the surrounding area. That will be the developer's goal on the SGW site.

In terms of house price trends, the RICS Housing Market Survey (September 2007) provides the best short term 'lead data' on market conditions since it polls agents for views on the level of enquiries. The experience in London was generally that there was no movement in prices, and declining levels of new enquiries.

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) provides information on land values based on transactional data from selected locations. This can be compared with Land Registry data to indicate in broad terms the land values that can be achieved at particular levels of residential values. Their report in July 2007 suggested that residential land values were around £9.25m hectare for larger sites in Ealing / Hanwell and around £7.5m in nearby Ruislip. In both areas house prices are higher than they are in Southall. In places like Redbridge where current house prices are only marginally higher than those in Southall, land values are reportedly nearer £5.7m.

In London, these figures are not reliable value guides for specific sites, but they provide useful benchmarks. Given the scale of the potential development, its proximity to higher value areas and the value of waterside frontage a reasonable assumption might be that the land at SGW might currently be worth between £6m and £8m per hectare (gross of the cost of exceptional remediation and planning requirements).

Looking longer term: over time the price of housing land before taking planning requirements into account has increased faster than the price of houses. This is the result of the cumulative and compound effect of the positive historic difference between the rate of house price inflation and the rate of building cost inflation. The impact of this difference on land values is disproportionate. The Barker Report illustrated this effect which can be seen in the Valuation Office data on historic trends. Over the next few years, this pattern might go into reverse if residential prices stagnate while building costs rise reflecting higher environmental standards. The VOA publish land value forecasts which show steadily continuing upwards trend which seems unlikely not least because of increasing planning requirement. But in the long term you might expect the pattern to reassert itself driven by the fundamental imbalance between some client demand housing in the economy as a whole.

On the gas works site, the primary form of development will comprise blocks of flats. This form of development is declining in popularity among buyers and developers at present due to:

- Excessive supply in some locations
- Concerns about the impact of any decline in the buy to let sector
- Increasing resistance to declining space standards.

Clearly, in areas like London where house prices are relatively high, developers benefit from the increase in site density that can be achieved by developing flats instead of houses. But the relationship is not linear. The cost of building flats is generally higher, especially when measured by saleable floor area; and phasing (which helps developers to manage risks and reduces the capital tied up in the scheme at any point in time) becomes more difficult to achieve. In any event there is a limit on the number of units which a developer might expect to sell on any given site.

The smaller sites in Southall will not achieve the scale of development at which this becomes a serious problem but at SGW, where sales might average between 2 – 4 per week over a number of years in reasonable conditions, it will be a brake on progress and slower sales would have a significantly adverse impact on the developer's cash flow.

### **9.2.2 Retail Property**

The retail market in Southall as a whole was the subject of the West London Joint Retail Needs Study in 2006 (see Chapter 3 above). We will not repeat the conclusions of that report here. The methodology used for studies of this type is not without its problems. In particular it can struggle to predict:

- Demand for floorspace arising from *qualitative* change in retailer demand.
- Demand for retail units from within the *local market* rather than from national chains.

A more fine-grained approach is necessary to make sense of patterns and trends in individual centres.

In Southall itself, the small number of empty units in the main retail frontage is evidence that there is no shortage of demand. But low standards of maintenance and presentation are a concern. There are relatively few national multiples, which is a distinguishing feature but deprives the centre of one source of pressure to improve standards. A contributing factor will be the configuration of the existing retail stock. Many national multiples require larger units than are commonly available in traditional high streets, and it can prove quite difficult to remedy this by amalgamating units or constructing new ones of appropriate size in infill schemes.

On the SGW site, the proposal is to incorporate a food store and comparison shopping. The former is straightforward and should produce a significant receipt at an early stage in the overall development, which will be particularly valuable in relation to cash flow (see below). The comparison retailing is more problematic. It is generally held that a comparison shopping centre needs to have an anchor store and a certain critical mass. The problem is (a) that it takes costly inducements to attract a suitable anchor store - impacts negatively on land values - and (b) that it can be quite difficult to ascertain exactly what the critical mass is: which increases the risk of getting the mix wrong. At SGW, it has been suggested it might be between 10,000 and 20,000m<sup>2</sup>. Even leaving aside issues of the extent to which it complements or competes with the existing centre, much more careful consideration needs to be given to likely demand for retail space at SGW, in terms of both quality and quantity.

Looking longer term: unlike for residential, there is no intrinsic macro-economic reason why retail property values should improve in the long term. And in addition, we would have expected estimates of investment value to have fallen by around 10% over the past few months as the impact of the repricing of risk in global financial markets impacts on the funding and returns expected from property investment.

### **9.2.3 Employment-related Property**

The commercial, industrial and distribution space around Southall varies in quality. Most of the space comprises distribution units, and a proportion is used as trade counters and for service activities such as the motor trade. There are few larger office blocks.

Throughout West London, the demand for functional *industrial and distribution* premises is fairly strong with competition for suitable sites and demand partly driven by the continued demand to use industrial sites for new housing. In some cases the quality of the existing stock is at best mediocre, but many users do not require anything better and are still prepared to pay levels of rent which make redevelopment uneconomic. Development opportunities thus primarily occur when property cannot be let because it has clearly reached the end of its functional life. In Southall, one would expect new schemes to primarily be standard sheds, sometimes embellished with higher quality cladding or increased office content.

The *office market* is more problematic. Any substantial development in Southall itself, or at SGW, would have to compete with schemes in West London as a whole. The West London and Thames Valley office market as a whole spent the first part of this decade in the doldrums with low demand. There has been general improvement in the last couple of years, but local experience has been mixed.

At the top end, Stockley Park and Chiswick Park are being developed on a scale which allows the developer to create a new and attractive environment in an area that originally seemed unpromising. Both benefit from good access to the trunk road network and have now become established locations. Stanhope have recently secured lettings on Chiswick Park at £35/sq.ft., a level which would support a significant land value. But even at Stockley Park, the current application's office content of only 12,000m<sup>2</sup> suggest considerable caution. And at the more recent First Central scheme at Park Royal, progress has been slow and the viability of office development at this stage probably remains marginal. Overall, then, the development of larger office blocks of office space in and around Southall must be regarded as a risky proposition given its location and weak demand at present.

In contrast to the larger schemes, there appears to have been continuing levels of demand for small buildings and better quality suites of offices throughout London, particularly where these are made available on either a freehold or flexible terms. On the SGW site, the developers have been proposing the development of small self-contained units. Based on current trends we would expect a healthy demand for these - both at SGW and elsewhere in Southall. It is

worth noting that the development of purpose-built buildings to provide small office units to let on a flexible basis is a far less commercially attractive proposition. It is noticeable that most privately financed development of this sort involve the conversion of existing buildings.

Looking longer term: while it is possible that there might be a marginal improvement in the value of industrial and distribution space in the longer term due to constricted supply, there is once again no macro-economic reason to assume that commercial values will rise in the long term.

### **9.3 Development constraints**

#### **9.3.1 The existing Southall centre**

Earlier chapters have noted that despite favourable site allocations, there has been little development in the centre of Southall. From the point of view of the development industry, a number of obstacles can be identified:

- The fragmentation of land holdings and the difficulty in assembling large enough sites to develop on any scale.
- The value of existing buildings: when they can still be used, this will usually be worth more than the development value of the underlying land, particularly if there are requirements for the provision of affordable housing without grant support.
- The nature of the local property market, where a lot of the activity is grounded in the local community and there is a lack of commercial transparency - which might discourage external investors.
- The environment, and in particular the lack of off-site parking, a congested road network and environmental issues and the high number of fast food and similar outlets, which are seen by retail investors as being undesirable neighbours.

As a result, it is difficult to envisage a planning- defined, market-led transformation of the retail and commercial environment in the existing Southall centre *without* considerable public sector intervention. WE deal with the possibilities in that connection in the next section (9.4 below).

#### **9.3.2 The SGW site**

The obstacles to the development of SGW are very different. Clearly, there are significant land assembly issues with ransom strips and adjacent owners who might prove difficult to deal with, not least public sector concerns such as British Waterways Board. High remediation costs are unavoidable, and there is a well-documented need for investment in access works etc., some of which will necessitate an agreement with L.B Hillingdon which might be expensive to obtain.

One impact of these is a major requirement for investment at the outset. There may be scope for phasing remediation, but this is more difficult for key access works and the timing of payments to landowners. The developer has to achieve a reasonable annual return; it is not enough simply to ensure that the scheme as a whole is worth more than it cost to build. We have not undertaken formal appraisals of the scheme, but our general impression - informed in part by costs discussions with the developer - is that the economics are marginal, and that the main threat to viability is the cash flow implications of the need for heavy early investment. There will be a lot of pressure to maximise early receipts (e.g. the sale of land for a food store) and to minimise costs (in which context, a requirement for early CHP installation is unhelpful; and the timing of off-site access works will need flexibility too).

One factor which will impact significantly on margins, though to a lesser extent on cash flow, is the requirement for affordable housing. The availability of grant funding will be key. We would expect the Housing Corporation to back it simply

because the scheme appears to be only marginally viable: to that extent, it should meet their criterion of clearly adding value - simply because without their assistance, the scheme might not go ahead at all. But they may take a negative view if they perceive that viability is substantially and adversely affected by planning requirements that do not relate directly to the scheme itself. We would expect the developer to be considering proposing a 'cascading' arrangement with the actual amount of affordable housing on offer depending on the amount of grant funding available.

## **9.4 Overcoming constraints (1) - on the Southall Gas Works Site**

### **9.4.1 The problems in summary**

As far as the SGW site is concerned, the developer currently faces three inter-related problems. They need to:

- Secure planning permission and settle a Section 106 Agreement.
- Finalise arrangements with third parties (such as L.B Hillingdon and BWB) to acquire necessary enabling rights and land.
- Finalise a configuration of the scheme that appears to be viable in the context of returns, risks and deliverability.

### **9.4.2 Approach to negotiation**

Our advice to LBE on the content of a Section 106 Agreement has been dealt with separately but it is worth reiterating at this juncture that:

- The marginal viability of the scheme means that the prospects of achieving it might be adversely affected by an overly aggressive approach to determining the mix of development or maximising planning gain.
- Viability will be promoted if a real effort is made to use mainstream public money for investment in social infrastructure where it is possible with the aim of focusing funds raised through the Section 106 Agreement on facilities and programmes that cannot be funded by any other means.
- It would also assist in the context of the cash flow problems if Section 106 requirements for investment at the outset were minimised.
- There would be real advantages in a co-operative approach to securing Housing Corporation funding to improve viability.
- This is a long term scheme, and we recommend some form of review mechanism, after an agreed lapse of time, to renegotiate S106 requirements so as to rebalance evolving value from the residential element with any initial sacrifice of S106 benefits that LBE may have accepted in order to assist viability.

We would expect that the developer would also welcome active support from LBE in its dealings with third parties.

## **9.5 Overcoming constraints : (2) - in the rest of central Southall**

### **9.5.1 The need for intervention**

As noted earlier (9.4.1), the record of recent years leads to a scepticism that a planning-led approach alone will lead to desirable development in the rest of Southall on a scale commensurate with aspirations. Coupled with the real and perceived constraints on market reaction, our view is that active interventions in the land market might be necessary.

### **9.5.2 Possible approaches**

There are several ways of structuring and organising an institutional and financial response to the need for intervention. They are not in general mutually exclusive.

- *Dedicated team*: one possible approach might involve the establishment by LBE of a team tasked with brokering land assembly and sale deals. While this could be based solely on the use of third party funds (e.g. trying to facilitate purchases by RSLs and through 'back to back' CPO deals with developers of all types), it is unlikely that this would achieve the required impact. Dedicated funding would improve the chance of success. However, at this stage we regard the possibility of significant capital funding from the LDA to support such an initiative as being unlikely.
- *Developer involvement*: As an alternative, agreement with the SGW developer could be sought: for a contribution from the developer (perhaps in the form of an subordinated interest-free loan) towards a 'rolling programme' of site assembly, rationalisation and sale within a defined area and with the purpose of facilitating complementary development. Co-funding could be provided by LBE perhaps using 'prudential borrowing' repaid from a first call on sale proceeds. To have an impact this fund would probably have to be at least £5m and to be focused on sites that could be sold on fairly quickly.
- *BID*: In our view, the Council and partners should also consider a BID (Business Improvement District) scheme covering both parts of Southall Town Centre. We are aware that BIDs can be expensive to set up, and that where there are a lot of small retailers in an area with relatively low rateable values they are not economic to run. The advantages in this case are that the new development will have fewer retailers and relatively high rateable values. If the developer wants to present the retail scheme as a logical extension of, or complement to, the existing town centre retail offer, then there is no reason to resist the implementation of a requirement for tenants to join the BID scheme. The financial burden will fall on the tenant rather than the developer. It could be used to generate some of the funds for the improvement proposals in the next section.

### 9.5.3 Deploying public funding

The only constant feature of public funding streams is change. So it is of course possible that new funding streams might appear in time. The key factors are to get dedicated staff resources at the outset to team together, with an agreed approach to the use of CPO powers and the availability of initial capital funding.

But not all of the change sought in Southall requires major capital expenditure. A lot is required to improve the presentation, marketing and environment of the existing centre. A set of proposals responding to this approach is set out in **Error! Reference source not found..**

**Table 9-2: Short Term Projects**

Proposals	Timeframe						
	Year 1		£££	Year 2	£££	Year 3	£££
Detailed Public Realm Appraisal, Design Development and Implementation Strategy	This should Include: Public Realm Appraisal, Furniture Audit, Identify Hot Spots for further action, Required Management Program, Signage and Place Marketing, Public Art Opportunities		150 000 (inclusive)	Implementation	See individual budgets	Implementation	See individual budgets
Public Realm Appraisal	Audit, Intervention's and Implementation Strategy		(inclusive)				
Furniture Audit	Audit, Intervention's and Implementation Strategy		(inclusive)	Roll out new furniture through Hot Spots campaign	See Hot Spots	Roll out new furniture through Hot Spots campaign	See Hot Spots
Pavement Upgrades	Audit, Intervention's and Implementation Strategy		(inclusive)	Roll out new furniture through Hot Spots campaign	See Hot Spots	Roll out new furniture through Hot Spots campaign	See Hot Spots
Signage/Place Making	Audit, Intervention's and Implementation Strategy		(inclusive)	On going Implementation	50 000	On going Implementation	50 000
	Commision a community engagement project (Link to Public Art - Investigate alternative sources of funding)		40 000 /20 000			Commision a community engagement project (Link to Public Art - Investigate alternative sources of funding)	40 000 /20 000
Mangement Program	Audit, Intervention's and Implementation Strategy		(inclusive)	Consultation/ Implementation of program with retailers and local businesses	60 000	On going consultation/ Implementation of program with retailers and local businesses	20 000
Public Art Opportunities	Audit, Intervention's and Implementation Strategy		(inclusive)				
	Comission an artist for an individual project		15 000	Construction	50 000		
	Comission an artist for an individual project			Comission an artist for an individual project	15 000	Construction	50 000
Hot Spots Interventions	Comission a community engagement project (Link to Place Marketing - Investigate alternative sources of funding)		40 000 /20 000			Comission a community engagement project (Link to Place Marketing - Investigate alternative sources of funding)	40 000 /20 000
	Audit, Intervention's and Implementation Strategy		(inclusive)				
	Design Development for High profile localised intervention sites. (Investigate alternative sources of funding - see SCIPs Program)		40 000	Construction of 2 Hot Spots	200 000		
				Design Development for High profile localised intervention sites. (Investigate alternative sources of funding - see SCIPs Program)	40 000	Construction of 2 Hot Spots	200 000





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