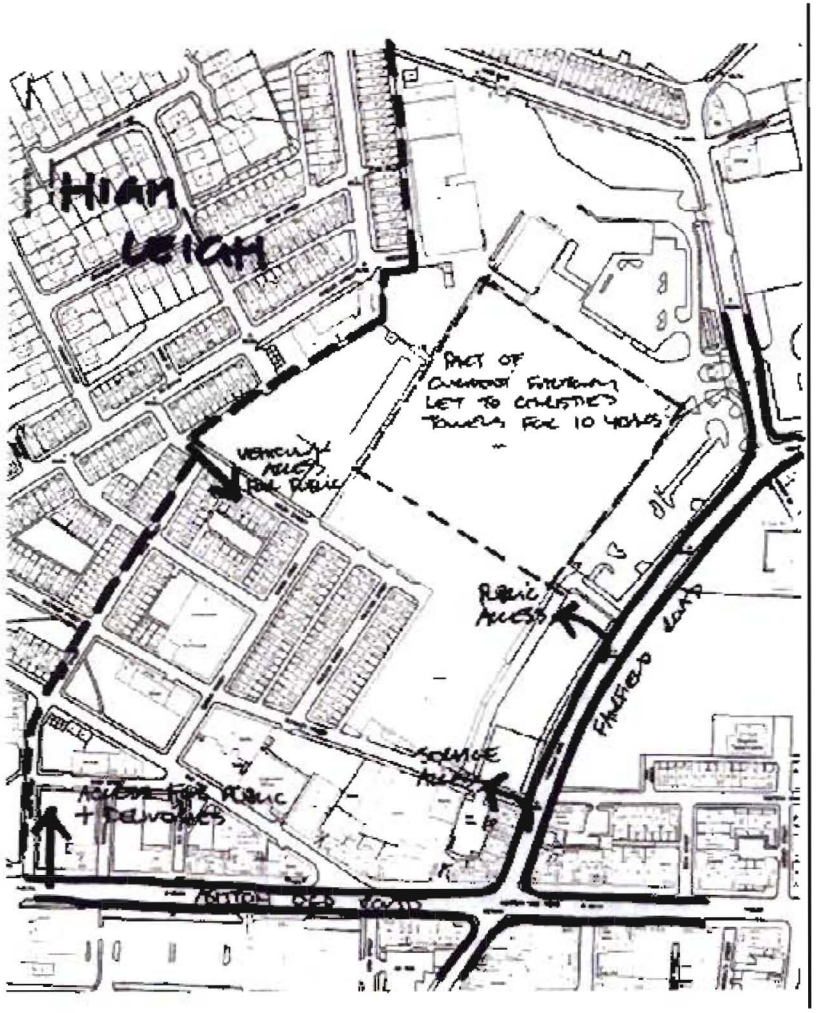
as well as some more modern cladding materials, this then helps blend the scheme in with the adjacent area and therefore, become more sympathetic to its surroundings

Whilst the area is surviving we now need to arrest any further decline and stimulate growth with a large mixed use development which in turn will enhance and uplift the District Centre. All of this will then help to stimulate and regenerate Openshaw as a whole

Upon preparing this document, we have undertaken a considerable amount of research particularly with regards to the Sheppard Robson report prepared on behalf of New East Manchester and established that the overriding factor was the historic street patterns and sight lines and thus linkage with the adjoining housing. In our opinion this document is the most persuasive piece of work in respect of Urban Design upon which we have based our scheme and Design Statement.



6 SITE CONSTRAINTS AND DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

The site must create strong and clearly articulated pedestrian linkage between the existing shops on Ashton Old Road and the proposed development, as well as opening up pedestrian links and vistas through to the Residential properties beyond.

The proposed development must also seek to redefine a clear and structured urban grain to this section of the town centre providing a clear hierarchy of pedestrian routes through, whilst retaining certain desire lines. The vehicular access, which must remain, should be via either Fairfield Road, or Rock Street The proposals through the site seek to prioritise pedestrian movement, therefore, removing fragmented car parking areas and creating safer and improved pedestrian linkages.

The development must link in and be sympathetic to the existing Ashton Old Road as well as the adjacent units. The development will then directly relate to the surrounding urban grain and ensure that the development enhances the vitality and viability of existing retailing within Openshaw District centre.

The main constraints of the site are Ashton Old Road to the South with Fairfield Road to the East Factory which is now in the ownership of St Modwen Developments.

<u>Topography</u>

In detail the following factors effectively drive the levels for the project in no order of importance.

a) Acceptable connection for service vehicles to Ashton Old Road will be via the existing road network
b) Pedestrian entrance from Rock Street and Town Centre must connect at grade or as close as possible to existing footway levels.
c) Acceptable car park access road gradients i.e., less than 1 in 20 so that

pedestrian routes are disabled friendly.

d) Falls across the car park no greater than 1 in 40, client stipulation.

Existing Open Space

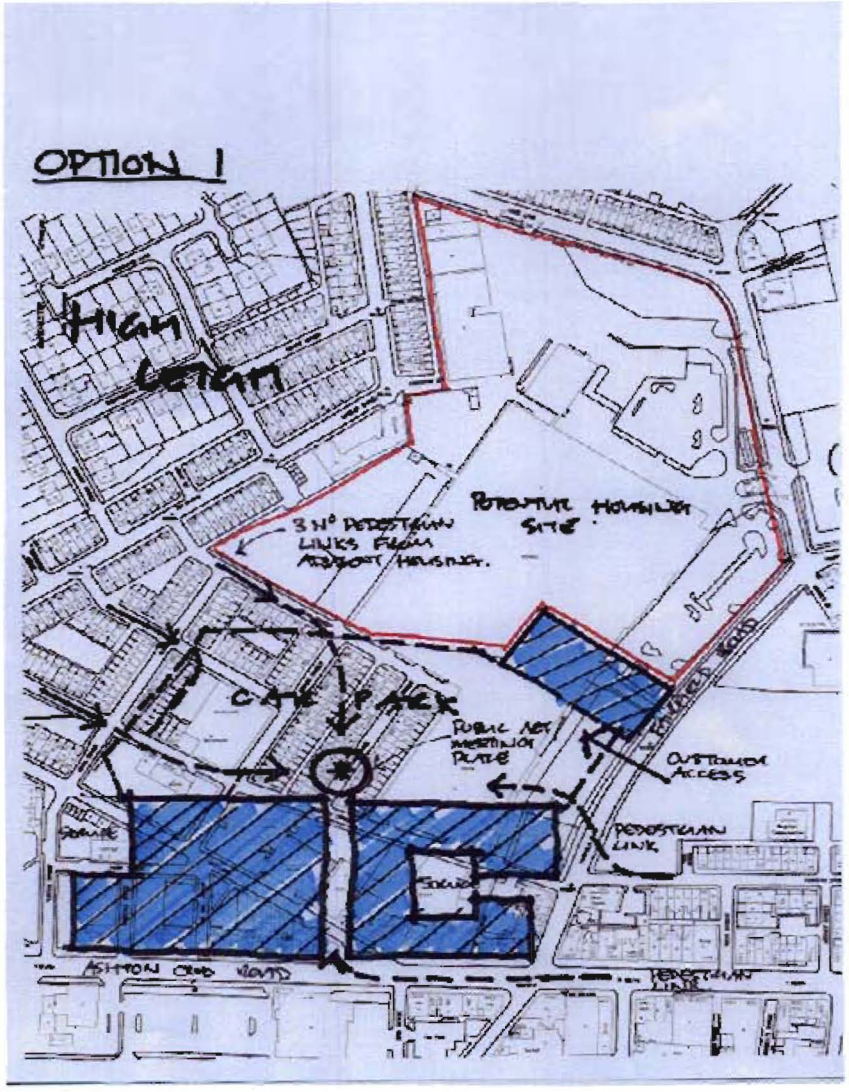
Currently with the red line application boundary there is no provision of open space

Proposed Open Space

Within the proposed development it is anticipated that a series of public open space areas will be provided so to punctuate the scheme and give areas a sense of place and enclosure so to rest and relax.

Within these nodal points the developer has also commissioned a sculpture from Mr. Robert Erskin representing the history of the area (see Section 9 for design).

Design Statement



7 THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS – APPROACH TO URBAN DESIGN

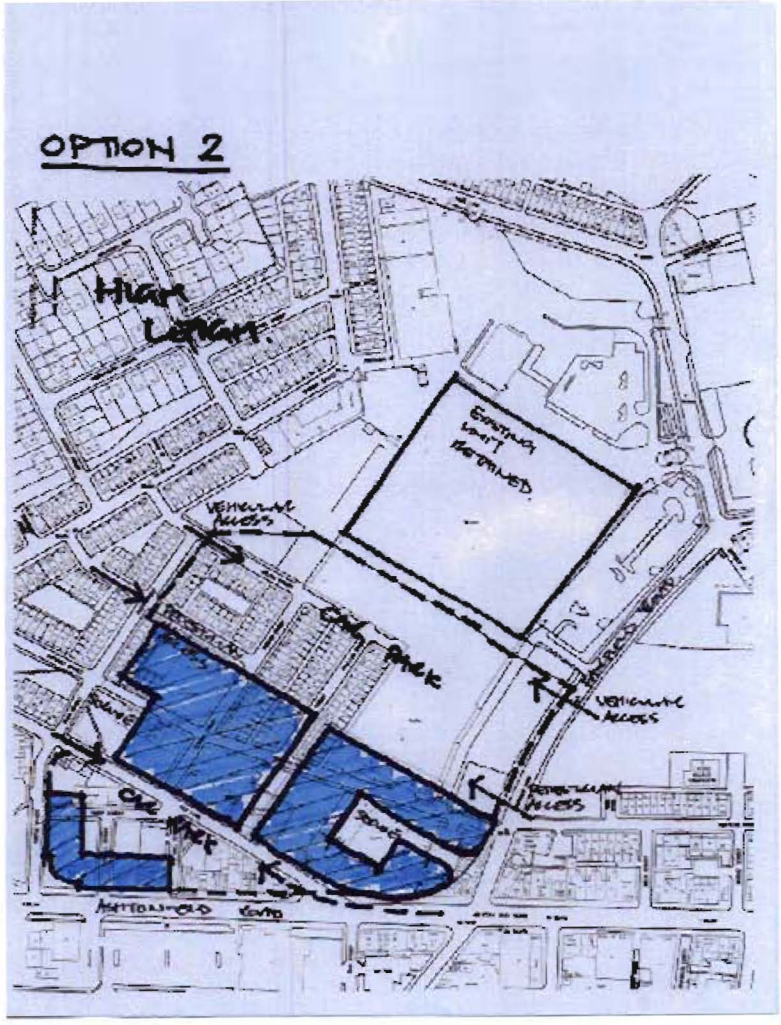
Introduction

A variety of factors have influenced the approach to the design of the application proposals. The proposed scheme is based around a central Mall, where we are looking to create a pedestrian friendly retail environment focused around shopping and other mixed use interests and also creates a good urban space dominated by the pedestrian. Car Parks will be provided so to feed in car-borne shoppers to each end of the mall so to create a busy pedestrian thoroughfare. The fact that the scheme is mixed use and will include offices will only increase the developments sustainability The scheme comprises of a series of non food retail units of with provision for offices above and a corner office unit on Ashton Road frontage. The remaining uses are a leisure unit and a foodstore with a feature café / restaurant on the corner of Ashton and Fairfield Road Incorporating comments from Stakeholders the design approach has been to introduce a certain amount of modern designs, blended with traditional materials to produce a well proportioned comprehensive design solution.

Optional Layouts

During a public open day in March 2005, 3 alternative schemes were presented showing artists impressions, as well as before and after views of the site. The presented schemes were based around consultation with New East Manchester, Manchester City Council and Shepperd Robson, Option 1 was prepared so to provide a continual built frontage to Ashton Old Road with all the car parking facilities 'hidden' behind. Whilst this continued the architectural grain of the area it was felt by Shepperd Robson to curtail pedestrian links from the adjacent residential areas. It was then brought to our attention that the lines of the existing road network were at a slight angle to that of Ashton Old Road. As a consequence Option 2 was prepared so to provide and prioritise pedestrian movement through to the existing district centre Upon the rotation of the

Design Statement



development we have now been able to split the car park and provide same to the front of the scheme, but by introducing a feature building on the corner of Ashton Old Road and Turton Street and a feature boundary wall still maintain a sense of enclosure to the development.

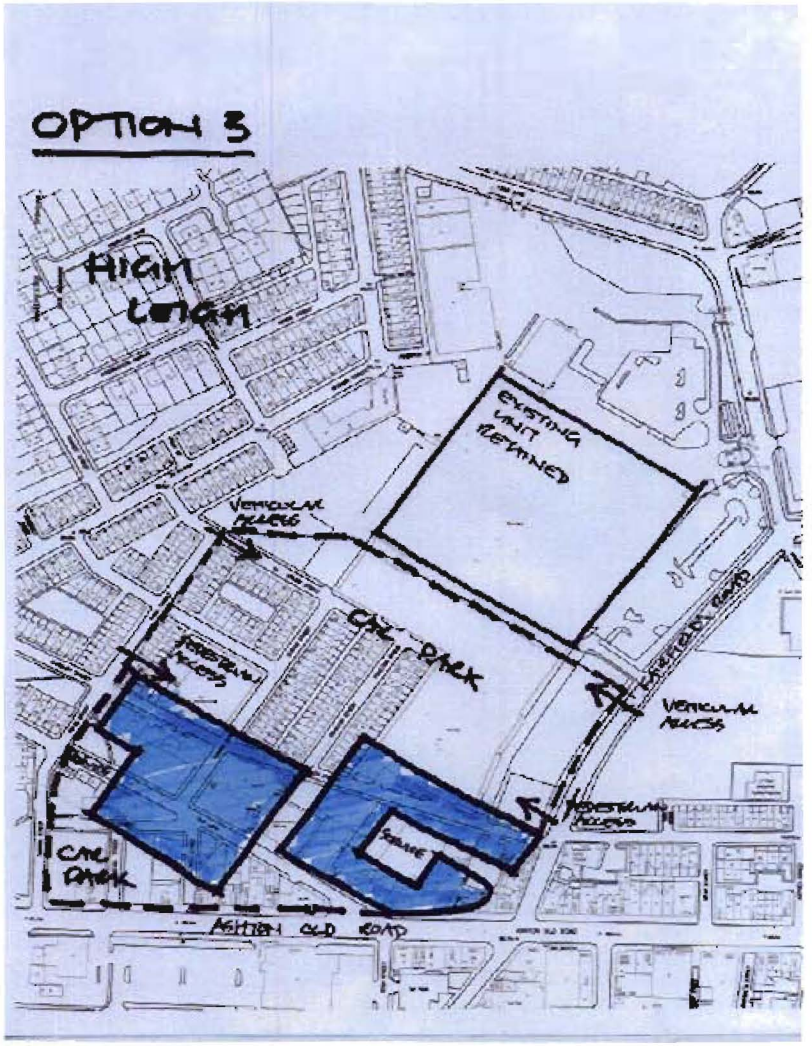
Option 3 was similar to Option 2 except the food store element was to be pulled forward to Ashton Old Road. This once again severed clean and clear pedestrian routes through to the centre and very few residents also found this option any favour, as a result of which after discussions it was agreed to proceed with Option 2, which has emerged out of a detailed urban design exercise which flagged up the need to create an identifiable centre and a sense of arrival.

Siting of the Building

Direct liaison with stakeholders via a series of meetings hosted by New East Manchester and further reference to Planning Policy has led to this application featuring an urban design approach to compliment the surrounding area.

The buildings are sited in such a way to open up the site to provide safe, clear pedestrian and cycle routes through to the adjacent residential properties whilst maintaining a substantial built frontage to Ashton Old Road. This will also provide a sense of enclosure inside the development itself, drawing on the existing urban grain

When approaching from the East the buildings on the junction of Ashton Old Road and Fairfield Road announces the transition point when entering a new area and reinforces an importance of the junction. This junction should be described as the gateway to Openshaw and therefore, be emphasized by developing a feature corner building in contrasting materials From the West the building on the corner of Turton St and Ashton Old Road performs a similar function announcing the commencement of the District Centre



Design Statement

Whilst the design prioritizes the movement of pedestrians and cyclists along established routes we realize that to retain the urban feel, a hard edge needs to be provided along Ashton Old Road. To provide this, we have designed a feature building on the junction of Ashton Old Road and Turton Street. This is linked with a feature perforated boundary wall and entrance point (close to the Fairfield Rd junction) all on the back edge of footpath. Within this perforated wall we have incorporated landscaping and features to create occasional views into the site providing a boulevard feel to the edge of the boundary.

With good modern pedestrian linkages around and through the site, we are encouraging linked shopping trips between the established centre and the new development and for the car park to act as a District Centre facility. This will be particularly enhanced by the improved pedestrian links through the development to the existing shops, together with high quality public open space and public art.

Care has been taken with the design and positioning of the buildings to reinforce the character of the area and to enhance the urban grain.

The Development Design

The design of this development has been carefully considered in the context of the adjacent environment. The buildings have been designed utilizing a mixture of traditional and modern materials to compliment the surrounding area. Brickwork has been used together with glazed shop frontages and deep overhanging canopy and roof above. Feature canopies have been designed to identify entrance areas and to draw visual interest into the new development. The Health and Fitness unit continues this theme of architecture and leads to an exciting stepped wall feature on the junction of Ashton Old Road and Fairfield Road.

Design Statement

As part of these proposals it is essential to retain good quality pedestrian links across Fairfield Road so to retain the viability of the existing district centre shopping area This is achieved by retaining/maintaining current pavement widths.

We consider this design to be of high quality which also reflects the urban grain of the area in both layout and material usage. Multiple areas of active frontages have been provided to give a large amount of architectural interest as you enter Openshaw both from the East and the West The quality of the design will enhance the area and therefore increase the vibrancy and standing of Openshaw

Design Statement

Other Design Constraints

In addition to this fully integrated mixed use scheme adjacent to the centre, the development will substantially improve the visual character of the area Full and part time jobs will be provided in addition to the jobs associated with construction and multiplier effects through the rest of the local economy, this will in itself bring greater prosperity to the area, as most staff are likely to be recruited from the immediate locality. Adjacent business will also be boosted by the introduction of the development, which will act as an anchor for the centre, encourage linked trips and act as a catalyst for further investment. Openshaw enjoys a good community spirit at present and this development will provide the missing ingredient that the area needs.

We therefore, consider the proposed design will create a sense of place and focal point for the centre in addition to the obvious benefits of regeneration, establishment of the new town in the community and the sense of rejuvenation that will accompany the development.

PLANNING
- 1 FEB 2010
INIT. | REC'D | DATE