Development Sites

7.47 The detailed site redevelopment proposals are shown on Plan 12. This follows the principles of high quality, mixed use and dense development, providing a number of urban development blocks (i.e. sites for development of buildings), spaces and places, flexible enough to allow future changes. Within the core area, proposed new development is organised in a number of development sites. The majority of these, and the key generators of activity, are located to the north and east sides of Fair Green, this being the area currently suffering the most acute decline, yet the most central element of the town centre. The sites are numbered and shown on Plan 12. The proposals for each site are expanded on below.

Site 1:
MIXED USE FOOD RETAIL ANCHOR, LONDON ROAD (SOMERFIELD)

7.48 This is the largest site and is located in the northeast corner of the town centre. It is subdivided into a large northern segment and two smaller segments to the south. These three elements are connected by covered pedestrian routes. The large northern segment of the block accommodates a retail anchor store on the ground floor (and possibly first floor also) with a principal frontage in London Road and secondary access onto the new Market Square. Development of this site requires moving St. Mark’s Road further to the north. This also provides the opportunity to create a new pedestrian/cycle street from the corner by the Baptist church to Armfield Crescent, creating a direct route from the housing estate to the anchor store and bringing more activity to the under used St. Mark’s Road.

7.49 Above this are two levels of single aspect residential units wrapped around the car park above the retail use, and 1-2 more levels of double aspect residential development above that, with an internal courtyard providing amenity space. This block should be serviced from St. Mark’s Road, with residential entrances on all four sides. The two smaller block segments to the south have smaller retail and café/bar/restaurant units on the ground floor and residential units above. Although this site can be developed as a single building, the frontages should provide gaps to mark the pedestrian routes and break up the bulk of the frontages. Opportunity also exists on this site to provide underground parking if necessary. Active frontages should be provided on St. Mark’s Road where possible.

7.50 The issue of presentation of active frontages to, and informal surveillance of, the public domain, in relation to supermarket development, can often be problematic. It is therefore important to consider other uses which may “clad” what would otherwise be blank or flank walls of the supermarket, where they front onto public spaces and streets. For this purpose small retail units, or single aspect residential flats may provide the urban design solution.

Site 2:
MIXED USE GATEWAY, LONDON ROAD & HOLBORN WAY (242-234 LONDON ROAD)

7.51 The road layout makes this an awkward shaped site, but provides the opportunity, by means of its location, to provide a striking landmark building as a focal point at the end of the long straight London Road to the north. This will provide a positive gateway feature to the town centre whilst providing additional floorspace. Being adjacent to the wide Holborn Way, it is appropriate to provide a taller building at the north end of this site.

7.52 The ground floor should provide new retail units facing all sides - London Road, Holborn Way and a re-established Sibthorp
An element that is going to set Mitcham town centre apart from other centres in nearby areas. This building will ensure a community element to regeneration of the town centre and provide a sense of ownership and strengthened sense of community to the function of the town centre. It will provide a dynamic mix of uses that will make the town centre a more welcoming and inclusive place to be.

The design of the block should reflect this prominent civic and community role. It is recommended the building be three storeys in height to reflect the scale and character of Fair Green. The main entrance to the building should face the new market square and the design should reflect this, and could rise a further storey at this point.

Public car parking and servicing should be provided to the rear, the car park being accessed from St. Mark’s Road. The Council may require that the design of this site also offers the opportunity for underground parking and/or servicing. Should underground servicing be provided then this should include a link to the site on the north side of Sibthorp Road.

Site 3: LARGE MIXED USE SITE, LONDON ROAD & HOLBORN WAY (SIBTHORP ROAD CAR PARK)

7.53 Following the retail anchor, this is the next largest site in the town centre. It needs to accommodate within it the existing buildings of the King’s Arms PH and garden, and the existing buildings facing Fair Green at Nos. 8-9. The ground floor should provide new retail units facing Fair Green, London Road, Holborn Way and a re-established Sibthorp Road. Above there is potential for a further 2-3 storeys of residential units.

7.54 This block faces Fair Green and in order to respect the scale and character of the space the building height is a maximum of three storeys. There may be scope for increasing this to a fourth storey on the Sibthorp Road and part of the Holborn Way frontage. New development wraps around the corner of Fair Green and Holborn Way to provide a positive corner building and entrance into Fair Green in place of the existing blank wall. This should be facilitated by the removal of bus stop H and the redesign of the road junction at the south end of Holborn Way (see Paras. 8.20, 8.27 & 8.37 below).

7.55 Servicing is provided within the block, and accessed from Holborn Way. This courtyard may also accommodate some residential parking. This site also offers the opportunity for underground parking and/or servicing.

Site 4: TRIANGULAR MIXED USE SITE, MAJESTIC WAY (SOMERFIELD)

7.56 This is a smaller site with potential for either new smaller retail units or a single large unit. As it is surrounded by streets and spaces on all sides, it should have active frontages on all sides also, as blank frontages will be particularly noticeable and unattractive. The ground floor provides retail space and office space on two floors above this. It is recommended that the building be three storeys in height, as it must respect the human scale of buildings around Fair Green (and thus the character of the Green) and the network of pedestrianised streets and spaces around it.

Site 5: WHITE LION PH, LONDON ROAD (REAR OF BUILDING)

7.57 Creation of the new market square makes this building a major focal point when viewed from Fair Green. However, the rear will become a new frontage with the creation of streets around it. Sensitive redevelopment of the remainder of the south side, the east, and part of the north side of the pub should be undertaken to create a new development block, with active frontages where possible, particularly on the south and east sides. Redevelopment should create smaller retail units on the ground floor with other commercial uses above. This is also a potential alternative site for storage of market stalls.

Site 6: COMMUNITY FACILITIES BUILDING, MAJESTIC WAY & FAIR GREEN (FORMER SAISBURY’S BUILDING)

7.58 An important element of the town centre regeneration is the creation of a new communities facilities building facing the east side of Fair Green. This is one of the major drivers of regeneration in the area and an element that is going to set Mitcham town centre apart from other centres in nearby areas. This building will ensure a community element to regeneration of the town centre and provide a sense of ownership and strengthened sense of community to the function of the town centre. It will provide a dynamic mix of uses that will make the town centre a more welcoming and inclusive place to be.

7.59 The design of the block should reflect this prominent civic and community role. It is recommended the building be three storeys in height to reflect the scale and character of Fair Green. The main entrance to the building should face the new market square and the design should reflect this, and could rise a further storey at this point. The building occupies a long frontage to Fair Green. This bulk should be broken up through sensitive architecture and design of the frontage, so as not to dominate the Green. Public car parking and servicing should be provided to the rear, the car park being accessed from St. Mark’s Road. The Council may require that the design of this
The community focus of the building is to be a new relocated town centre Library, replacing the existing facility on London Road (separate redevelopment guidance is provided for this site in Section 9. Other community facilities the building should provide are Council offices, public toilets, business training & support facilities (offices & IT), community recreation & leisure facilities (meeting hall & studios), health advice centre (consulting rooms), and offices for local service providers such as the Police, town centre manager and town centre wardens. In addition to this, the building should be able to accommodate complementary commercial facilities such as a café, bookshop and pharmacy. These uses, the toilets and Police office should each have their own frontage to Fair Green or Majestic Way.

**Site 7:** MIXED USE SITE, FAIR GREEN SOUTH-WEST SIDE (ICELAND)

This relatively large site provides for larger scale retail units on the ground floor with an additional two floors of residential accommodation above. Again, redevelopment provides the opportunity to replace one of the least attractive buildings in Mitcham. Active Frontages should be provided on all sides of this site, with the retail entrances onto Western Road and residential entrances to Raleigh Gardens. The south side of the town centre also requires a public car park. This site has the opportunity to provide parking on upper levels with single aspect residential units wrapped around the parking. Parking and service access should be from Raleigh Gardens or Love Lane.

**Site 8:** MIXED USE SITE, WESTERN ROAD (BLOCKBUSTER & NETTO)

This underdeveloped site has the opportunity to provide residential units and/or public parking. This is a sensitive location in close proximity to existing flats to the south. A solely parking option will have to be of a high quality external design, respecting the adjacent flats privacy and amenity regards siting and height, and employ a high security management regime to prevent anti-social behaviour. A mixed residential and parking scheme will have to have similar characteristics, with additional regard also given to the layout of the car park. Residential units should face Raleigh Gardens at street level. A wholly residential scheme should also have frontages addressing Raleigh Gardens and the access road to Glebe Court, with gardens to the rear. Given the scale and sensitivity of the surrounding development, no building should be above four storeys in height.

**Site 9: RESIDENTIAL & PARKING SITE, RALEIGH GARDENS (RALEIGH GARDENS CAR PARK)**

This underdeveloped site has the opportunity to provide residential units and/or public parking. This is a sensitive location in close proximity to existing flats to the south. A solely parking option will have to be of a high quality external design, respecting the adjacent flats privacy and amenity regards siting and height, and employ a high security management regime to prevent anti-social behaviour. A mixed residential and parking scheme will have to have similar characteristics, with additional regard also given to the layout of the car park. Residential units should face Raleigh Gardens at street level. A wholly residential scheme should also have frontages addressing Raleigh Gardens and the access road to Glebe Court, with gardens to the rear. Given the scale and sensitivity of the surrounding development, no building should be above four storeys in height.

**Site 10:** MIXED USE SITE, WESTERN ROAD (VARIOUS INDUSTRIAL USES)

This site contains some valuable employment use (as well as a larger amount of lower grade employment uses) yet is very inefficiently used for its town centre location. It is also the most suitable site to provide the high quality family housing that Mitcham needs. Redevelopment of this site (which includes UDP proposals sites 9.MI and 10.MI) provides an opportunity for development that may be seamlessly connected to the adjacent residential area. Westfield Road should be continued to provide a new street with building frontages facing this, Love Lane and Western Road, although it will not be for through vehicular traffic. The backs of buildings should be used for private gardens in a traditional layout similar to the adjacent existing housing. Opportunity should be taken through design or layout of buildings, if possible, to improve natural surveillance over Field Gate Lane. Suitable building heights are 2-3 storeys, with three storey elements fronting Western Road.

**Site 11:** MIXED USE SITE, FAIR GREEN SOUTH-EAST SIDE (LANGDALE PARADE & 225 LONDON ROAD)

This underdeveloped site, consisting of shops and storage space above, should be...
redeveloped for continued retail use with residential units on a further two storeys above. The building itself is plain and of no architectural note. This site occupies a pleasant tree-lined street environment and is suitable for smaller independent shops and restaurant/café uses. At the corner with London Road is the unattractive blank wall of the end of an otherwise attractive Edwardian terrace of shops. This end building should either be opened up to provide an active frontage (at all levels) facing Fair Green, or the site redeveloped to provide a new landmark corner building.

Site 12: NEW MARKET SQUARE, SOUTH OF WHITE LION PH (McDONALD’S)

7.67 A new square is proposed in the heart of the town centre, adjacent to the Fair Green between the existing pubs and the new library. This will be a well designed, hard landscaped space of high quality, durable materials. It will be a strictly managed and flexible space with purpose designed market stalls and a Market Manager. The Market will be managed from Mitcham Link offices and stalls stored in the community facilities building or other appropriate location. The space will be used for a regular outdoor market on a couple of days a week.

7.68 In addition it is recommended the space be used for visiting or themed markets, arts and crafts fairs and community events related to the library and community facilities. An alternative arrangement to accommodate the market would be use part of one of the new development sites as a covered market. This could then provide space for smaller independent traders and those wishing to start new businesses. This would also have the benefit of being in a purpose-built, managed space. Should this approach be adopted, the new ‘market square’ should be retained as a town square and continue to be used for other local events and community activities.

Site 13: FAIR GREEN EXTENSION & ENHANCEMENT, UPPER GREEN EAST & WEST (GENERALLY AND FRONT OF NOS. 29-51 UPPER GREEN EAST & COMMUNITY FACILITIES BUILDING)

7.69 Mitcham Fair Green, as the defining characteristic of the town centre, is to be enhanced as a well-defined, well designed public open space. It will be a strictly managed and flexible space with purpose designed market stalls and a Market Manager. The Market will be managed from Mitcham Link offices and stalls stored in the community facilities building or other appropriate location. The space will be used for a regular outdoor market on a couple of days a week.

7.68 In addition it is recommended the space be used for visiting or themed markets, or other elements of landscape design. Improved provision of footpaths and seating will encourage people to use and spend time in the space.

7.70 Provision of the community facilities building will provide the opportunity to remove the service access road intruding into the green space of the Fair Green. Servicing can be provided at the rear of the building either via Montrose Gardens or the surface car park. The ‘pinch point’ between the Fair Green and the Three Kings Pond isolates the nearby pond from the Fair Green. This link will be strengthened by extending the green space of the Fair Green towards the pond. This will be achieved by realigning the road towards Langdale Parade to provide a wider pedestrian space in front of Nos. 29-51 Upper Green East. Montrose Gardens will be realigned to pass in a straight alignment onto Upper Green East.

Long Term Aims

7.71 The longer term aims of the regeneration strategy are twofold. Firstly to see the successful development of the sites outside the core area as identified in Section 9 of this SPD; and secondly to improve the wider accessibility to the town centre within the 10 minute walking radius (800m). Housing estates to the northwest and northeast of the town centre present significant barriers to convenient pedestrian movement. The area to the southeast of the town centre also presents similar barriers which could be more easily overcome by reconnecting existing streets. Plan 13 shows these areas and Plan 17 shows the sites with future development potential.
7.0 Development Brief | Mitcham Town Centre | January 2006

7.0 Pedestrian Accessibility Model

7.72 Accessibility and footfall are critical elements in the economic success of any regeneration strategy. Therefore, in order to better understand the pedestrian accessibility of Mitcham town centre a computer model of Mitcham and its urban context was constructed by Space Syntax (see Plan 14). The model calculated spatial accessibility values, which are colour coded, with red lines representing high spatial accessibility, through orange, yellow, green, light blue and dark blue for low spatial accessibility. The model provided a basis from which to develop design proposals, to assess the likely impact of the proposed new routes and connections on pedestrian activity and therefore test the success of the regeneration proposals in terms of pedestrian accessibility. This is shown on Plan 15.

7.73 The model calculates a spatial accessibility value for each street or part of street based on the complexity of routes and how they link with each other. Therefore a long, centrally located street, connected directly with many other well-connected streets in its surroundings, will be relatively easy to reach from everywhere else and as such will have a high spatial accessibility value. At the other end of the scale, a cul-de-sac at the edge of the area is likely to be more difficult to reach from the rest of the network and as such it is likely to have a low spatial accessibility value.

7.74 The spatial accessibility values correlate well (to an average of 70%) with the observed pedestrian activity levels on the ground (see Plan 7). The higher the spatial accessibility value of a street, the more activity it is likely to attract. This confirms that the urban layout – the way the streets and public spaces are laid out and linked into a network – is directly responsible for the functional performance, and pedestrian accessibility of the public realm.

7.75 Mitcham town centre lies at a strategic location within the road network of south London. This is the main reason for the large volumes of vehicular traffic passing through the area every day. However, the town centre’s importance in the large-scale road network is not matched by its role in more local pedestrian and vehicular networks. This is due to the poor links between the town centre and its immediate surroundings. This is particularly the case with the pedestrian movement network, which has low spatial accessibility levels in many sections, most notably in the very core of the area. This is caused by the large urban areas devoid of streets or through access, the barriers created by busy vehicular routes (with poor pedestrian crossings) and the complicated nature of pedestrian routes or absence of through routes in some of the surrounding residential areas.

7.76 Thus this regeneration strategy proposes new and re-established routes through Mitcham town centre, providing simple and direct links between streets and spaces. The most significant changes include the new east-west route linking St Mark’s Road directly with a re-established Sibthorp Road and Sadler Close to the west and simplification (straightening) of the pedestrian crossings within and around the town centre. The proposed changes result in significant increases of spatial accessibility in the entire area, especially in the pedestrianised core. This means that higher levels of ‘natural movement’ will be established, creating a more active and economically stable town centre, and enhancing the natural surveillance of the public realm by the pedestrians passing on their way to and from the surrounding areas.

7.77 Pedestrian Accessibility Model – Existing

Plan 14 Pedestrian Accessibility Model – Existing

Plan 15 Pedestrian Accessibility Model – Based on Redevelopment Proposals