MITCHEAM

5.68 The following policies have been formulated to underpin Mitcham town centre’s role as a District Centre and to support its future development as an Urban Village. To arrest its decline as a shopping centre it is considered important to encourage the development of a mixed use centre providing a diverse range of shops and services. Its appearance and image will be improved by the development of high quality shops and an expansion of its resident population.

POLICY MI.1: URBAN VILLAGE

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE REGENERATION IN MITCHEAM TOWN CENTRE, THE SITE PROPOSALS LISTED IN SCHEDULE 1, AND ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL BE DEVELOPED ONLY FOR THE TOWN CENTRE AND MIXED USE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THEY ARE IDENTIFIED.

DEVELOPMENT ON OTHER SITES WILL BE REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE A BALANCE OF MIXED USES, INCLUDING THE USE OF UPPER FLOORS OVER SHOPS FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES.

Justification

5.69 Mitcham is a potentially attractive district shopping centre with a unique character and is an important community focus. Its relative retail importance and its retail catchment area have declined particularly because of the Savacentre at Colliers Wood and other retail developments. Mitcham has good bus services but no rail facilities and lacks some town centre uses such as entertainment and office employment.

5.70 Accordingly, the Council wishes to stem the decline of the town centre and encourage the development of a mix of sustainable uses that will reinforce existing retail facilities and promote its Urban Village Characteristics. A key requirement in the promotion of Mitcham as an Urban Village will be increasing its resident population and the introduction of measures to improve its accessibility, especially by public transport walking and cycling, and the introduction of measures to substantially enhance its pedestrian environment. The Council’s Supplementary Planning Guidance Note for Sustainable Development provides further guidance on this subject.

5.71 The Schedule of Proposals and the Proposals Map identify seven sites in Mitcham suitable for a range of development proposals.

POLICY MI.2: CORE FRONTAGES

THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT AN INCREASE IN RETAIL DEVELOPMENT, MARKET STALLS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT OF THE CORE SHOPPING FRONTAGES.

Justification

5.72 The Centre of Mitcham generally consists of single sided shopping streets and is relatively dispersed with long walking distances between shop frontages. The core frontage area identified on the Proposals Map contains the main pedestrian flow in the centre. The Council aims to retain shopping uses generating and dependent on high footfalls. To provide maximum retail opportunities the Council will encourage market stalls to be located between and along these frontages; will ensure that pedestrian flow is smooth and will introduce measures to improve the pedestrian environment. In
secondary shopping areas changes from A1 uses to other town centre uses will be considered. Areas will be identified for food and evening entertainment. “Magnet” uses which encourage pedestrian movement into secondary shopping areas will be retained as far as possible at the following locations:

(i) Mitcham Post Office, for Upper Green East.
(ii) Tesco.
(iii) Iceland, Netto and the proposed Tramlink station at Upper Green West.
(iv) London Road.

5.73 Pedestrian crossing facilities will be located to encourage direct pedestrian flow between shops. Pedestrian crossing opportunities will be reviewed in Mitcham Town Centre for existing signal installations and other pedestrian crossing points.

POLICY MI.3: RE-USE OF UPPER FLOORS
THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT THE REUSE/REFURBISHMENT OF UPPER FLOORS OF PROPERTY IN THE TOWN CENTRE FOR RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION.

Justification

5.74 There is substantial floorspace in the upper storeys of town centre property suitable for re-use or refurbishment as residential accommodation. Increasing residential floorspace and occupation in the town centre would make a significant contribution to promoting sustainable development in Merton, an Urban Village at Mitcham and an increase in the stock of flatted ("affordable") housing provision in the Borough.

POLICY MI.4: GATEWAYS
THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE GATEWAY IMPROVEMENTS AT KEY ENTRANCE POINTS TO THE TOWN CENTRE TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO ENTRY FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS, PROMOTE THE TOWN CENTRE, ADVERTISE SHOPS AND ATTRACTIONS AND PROVIDE INFORMATION.

Justification

5.75 The walk-in catchment population is particularly important for Mitcham. Gateway improvements reduce obstacles to access by sustainable modes of transport and improve the image of Mitcham as a well-managed centre. Priority locations are:

(i) 209 London Road where a town entrance arch, improved landscaping, short term parking and a landscaped square and rationalised advertising space will be considered.
(ii) 12-28 St Marks Road where a safe route to school using reallocated highway space will be considered.
(iii) Raleigh Gardens/Holborn Way junction where pedestrian and cycle routes into the centre and a change of pedestrian crossing priority is proposed.
POLICY MI.5: MITCHAM FAIR GREEN AND STREET MARKET

THE COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE MAXIMUM COMMERCIAL, SOCIAL, MARKET AND LEISURE USES OF MITCHAM FAIR GREEN COMPATIBLE WITH ITS STATUS AS TOWN GREEN AND WILL UNDERTAKE FURTHER PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS TO INCREASE ITS ATTRACTIVENESS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITY BODIES.

Justification

5.76 Mitcham Fair Green is the major open space asset of the town centre and its pedestrianisation was a major benefit. Since that time it has developed a market use, new and improved footpaths have been created and a successful café has been established at its centre. A Merton Tramlink light rail station is proposed and there will be a need to safeguard Town Green activities. The Council will therefore review its current uses, including market use and consider establishing partnership management arrangements with community groups to encourage Mitcham residents to derive direct benefit and take responsibility for this major commercial and social asset. These measures should contribute to the regeneration of the town centre.

MORDEN

5.77 The following policies have been formulated to underpin Morden's continued evolution as a District Centre. The policies encourage the development of Morden as an accessible town centre appropriate for regeneration initiatives based on its shopping and public transport interchange functions. The policies also encourage Morden to develop with a diverse range of shops and additional shopping floorspace catering largely for a stable, local catchment population. Its viability as a district centre will be strengthened by the policies which encourage an expansion of its resident population.

POLICY MO.1: REGENERATION OF MORDEN TOWN CENTRE

THE SITE PROPOSAL 1MO LISTED IN SCHEDULE 1, AND ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL BE DEVELOPED ONLY FOR THE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE, TOWN CENTRE AND MIXED USE PURPOSES FOR WHICH IT IS IDENTIFIED.

DEVELOPMENT ON OTHER SITES IN MORDEN TOWN CENTRE WILL BE REQUIRED TO CONTRIBUTE TO ITS DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION AS A TOWN CENTRE.

Justification

5.78 Morden is a District Centre with limited potential development sites. Its retail potential is limited by competition with adjacent out of centre development at Colliers Wood and the major centre of Wimbledon. Its strengths are its public transport interchange facilities and employment within the Civic Centre which generates local day-time expenditure. It is not generally regarded as an environmentally or visually attractive centre, partly because of heavy town centre traffic. Morden town centre is envisaged as appropriate for the development of town centre and related uses such as leisure, entertainment and employment with retail development. New development will only be acceptable if it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the centre. Typical early “modern” development from the 1920's and 1930's (Art Deco) contribute to the Centre's character. The Schedule of Proposals and Proposals Map identify land to the rear of Morden Underground Station (site IMo) as suitable for major mixed use development.