

Southey Owlerton (SO) Neighbourhood Centres Strategy – Summary

Background

- In 1999 the SO area was awarded a £20.53 million regeneration budget and the Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration (SOAR) partnership was established.
- In 2002 SOAR, working with the Council's Owlerton/Southey Green Area Panel, published the Southey Owlerton Neighbourhood Strategies. This included a strategy to consolidate the shopping and service provision in each individual neighbourhood, underpinned by the proposal to develop a community hub building in each centre.
 - Foxhill – healthy living focus at Wolfe Road
 - Longley – community/enterprise focus at LOCAL on the 4 Greens
 - Parson Cross – adult learning focus at Chaucer/Buchanan
 - Shirecliffe – community/enterprise focus at Busk Meadow
 - Southey – community/enterprise focus at Southey Magnet
- The area is part of Transform South Yorkshire's Housing Market Renewal pathfinder. The future of the neighbourhood centres is seen as a critical factor in changing the housing market in SO.

The Neighbourhood Centres Strategy aims to:

1. Test the Neighbourhood Strategies proposals and recommend a future strategy for neighbourhood centres in the area.
2. Consider the implications of the development of a food superstore at Chaucer School.

Key Findings

- The existing shopping centres are dispersed across the area with other local facilities scattered right across the various estates and neighbourhoods. The centres show mixed trading fortunes and varying levels of quality.
- There is no major food store within the area and most people travel outside of the area to do their main food shopping. A site at Chaucer School has been earmarked as the preferred location for a major food store and district centre.
- There is potential demand for accommodation in the centres from a variety of public service providers, including:
 - Administrative office for Sheffield Homes to accommodate 100 staff.
 - Potential for 'First Point' – one stop shop for council services on either district or local scale.
 - Advanced plans for an adult learning centre integrated with Chaucer school.
 - New library service provision.
 - North Sheffield Primary Care Trust – flagship facilities in North Sheffield.

Considerations

- Ideally neighbourhood centres should be mixed use areas that are easily accessible either on foot, by car or by public transport with adequate parking facilities.
- The presence of other facilities that attract people such as GP's, post offices, schools and Council services promote the success of a shopping centre.
- Some centres offer greater potential to serve wider than 'local neighbourhood' catchments, both in shopping and service terms given their location, road access and public transport connections.
- Although neighbourhood centres are likely to be affected by the opening of a large food store, there is scope for a store given the high proportion of residents who are having to travel outside of SO for main food shopping.

Recommendations

A future strategy should focus on four priority centres in SO which offer the best prospect of creating vibrant neighbourhood centres that can add value to the Housing Market Renewal process. It will be important for each of these centres to have a distinct role and function.

Buchanan Chaucer – a new District Shopping Centre serving the wider SO area, drawing retail expenditure from wider than the immediate neighbourhood. The centre should also include a range of non-retail public service functions. There is potential to develop a learning focus for this centre, which lies next to Chaucer School and will include the proposed Adult Learning Centre and new learning library.

- **Key to establishing a district shopping centre is the location of the food store.** Locating it in the neighbourhood and integrating it with the existing neighbourhood provision would catalyse the transformation of the existing local centre into a new 'district centre'.

Southey Magnet – a new District Service Centre acting as the focus of location for SO-wide public services and local retail provision

Margetson – a "village" centre serving new Parson Cross. There is a need to enhance the quality of the environment and parking arrangements. Integrating services with shops to create a 'mixed centre' is a key objective.

Herries Road – a "village" centre for Shirecliffe and Longley. There is a need to increase linkages between the shops at Herries Road and service providers, including the Four Greens and Busk Meadow Hub proposals, to create a 'mixed centre'. Retention of an anchor food store at Herries Road is critical.

Next Steps

- Roger Evans Associates have undertaken a preliminary master planning exercise to examine how re-configuration of the centres can be best progressed.
- An engagement strategy should be developed with all stakeholders to take the centres project forward as part of a co-ordinated Delivery Plan
- A Delivery Plan needs to be developed to provide the framework for public and private sector investment in implementing the strategy.



English Partnerships

Southey Owlerton

Neighbourhood Centres study

July 2004

English Partnerships

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1 Background and context

1.1 Introduction

AMION Consulting has been commissioned by English Partnerships to undertake a strategic options review of the future role and function of the neighbourhood centres within the Southey Owlerton area of North Sheffield. AMION has been supported by Knight Frank in respect of commercial market analysis of retail and workspace provision within Southey Owlerton.

The study has been commissioned following requests by the agencies leading the regeneration of Southey Owlerton for additional consultancy support to determine options for neighbourhood centre development. The key stakeholders involved comprise Sheffield City Council, Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration (SOAR), the six neighbourhood groups and English Partnerships.

AMION offer previous experience of the North Sheffield area having worked alongside Transform South Yorkshire guiding strategy development and the preparation of the North Sheffield Area Development Framework (ADF), as part of the associated housing market renewal pathfinder strategy for the area.

1.2 Study brief

1.2.1 Core objectives

The study has sought to:

- test the current outline plans for the area with respect to neighbourhood centres, and to prepare a development strategy to consolidate retail, workspace, community and support facilities into recommended neighbourhood centres. Recommendations are to consider the size, content, location, catchments and economic benefits of the centres;
- undertake a market analysis for the commercial elements (retail and workspace) of the centres again to test existing outline proposals;
- use this analysis to inform stakeholder discussions on the non-commercial elements of the centres that other partners wish to develop including community and support facilities with a view to aligning provision of both commercial and non-commercial elements to maximise synergy between the two; and
- propose changes to the Southey Owlerton Regeneration Framework as a result of findings from the above, and to draft masterplans for part of the area which would form the brief for the drawing up of development frameworks for the procurement of these centres.

1.2.2 Recommendations required

A series of key issues have been identified for the review. Recommendations are sought on appropriate ways forward for the following issues:

- the preferred strategy for neighbourhood centres taking into account market potential and regeneration needs;
- implications for the Chaucer district centre proposals; and

- ❑ the nature and preferred locational strategy for key non-commercial activities in neighbourhood centres.

In addition to these key issues the study has taken full account of:

- ❑ the potential of individual centres both in commercial terms and as 'focal' points for key neighbourhoods;
- ❑ the current strategies for the neighbourhoods and centres and their rationale; and
- ❑ the extent to which individual centres can become sustainable and warrant public sector intervention to support private investment as part of a coherent approach to housing market renewal and creation of sustainable local communities.

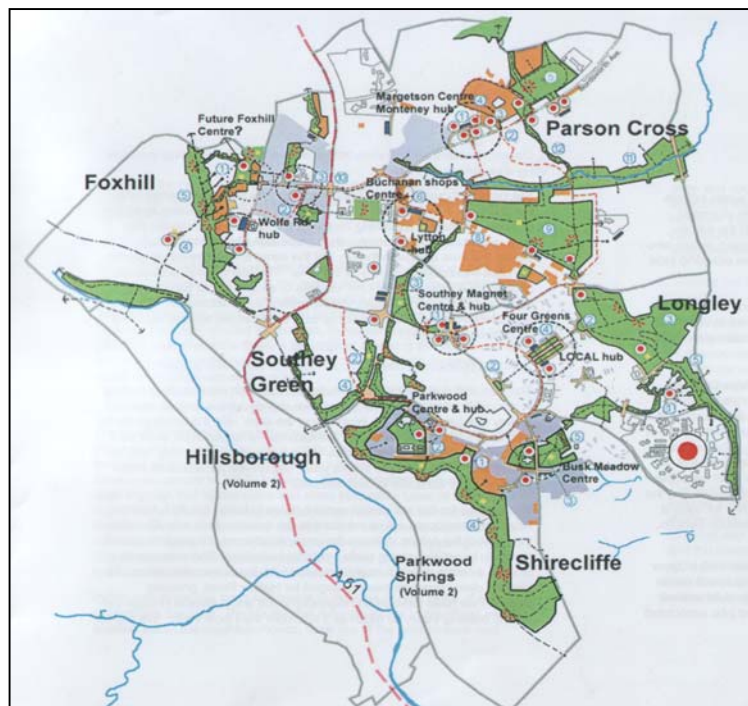
1.3 Description of the Southey Owlerton area

Southey Owlerton is located within North Sheffield. It lies 2 miles north east of the city centre, and covers a wide area accounting for one tenth of the city's area and equally home to one tenth of the city's population (48,000 people).

Southey Owlerton is characterised mainly by council housing located across six discrete residential neighbourhoods, as indicated by Figure 1.1:

- ❑ Foxhill;
- ❑ Hillsborough;
- ❑ Longley;
- ❑ Parson Cross;
- ❑ Shirecliffe; and
- ❑ Southey Green.

Figure 1.1: Southey Owlerton, North Sheffield



The Hillsborough neighbourhood has not been considered within this report as it is not an integral part of the Housing Market Pathfinder study area.

Built upon a series of hills, Southey Owlerton is a typical 'garden city' styled area, a product of inter-war planning in which the key priority was to provide affordable housing within a countryside setting. Council housing dominates the landscape, built originally to house the city's steel and engineering workers. The topography has contributed to

neighbourhood identity, providing natural boundaries between the five 'villages'. The legacy of the past has led to a range of present day problems, including:

- a lack of community facilities and office/workspace due to the focus on housing;
- high unemployment rates due to the decline of the steel industry;
- deficiency in identity and distinctiveness with a landscape predominantly of identical housing estates;
- a sense of seclusion and isolation from the other neighbourhoods within Southey Owlerton and also from the rest of the city because of the area's topography.

Despite these problems it is important to note that the development of Southey Owlerton along garden city principles has given the area its most positive attribute - large open green spaces with spectacular views from the ridgelines.

1.4 Regeneration activity in Southey Owlerton

1.4.1 *Community led from the outset*

Regeneration activity within the Southey Owlerton area has been underway for many years. The local community has been positive and persistent in driving a regeneration strategy, and significant progress was achieved towards the end of the 1990s when local people undertook a 'peoples' audit' of the estate, and completed what they referred to as a Health Needs Assessment. This highlighted an area suffering significant deprivation, and provided the basis for lobbying for assistance. This was the key for Sheffield City Council focussing an SRB Round 5 bid on the area. This was successful, and in 1999 the area was awarded £20.53 million to be spent on regenerating the neighbourhoods of Southey Owlerton. SOAR (Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration) was established as the SRB partnership between the local community and the Council to oversee the development of the regeneration strategy and to ensure the funding is well spent and distributed.

1.4.2 *SOAR's strategy*

SOAR's strategy and action area relates well to the later Transform South Yorkshire, housing market renewal pathfinder boundary. The Southey Owlerton neighbourhoods were included within the Pathfinder area because of their poor quality and low housing demand issues, which have negatively impacted upon the physical fabric of the area. This has meant that physical change is a key priority within SOAR's regeneration strategy.

The commissioning of a Physical Development plan was one of SOAR's first projects, although the emergent strategy proposing widespread demolition and clearance was not received well locally, and was rejected by the SOAR Board in November 2000. In its place, SOAR, in partnership with the Council's Owlerton Southey Green Area Panel sponsored the preparation of "Neighbourhood Strategies", with the lead very much taken by local people with support provided by the partners and a select team of consultants. This process ran between January 2001 and May 2002, and included local events (e.g. Shirecliffe's 'Big Tent Event'), fun days, walkabouts, workshops, as well in parallel, the more formal housing condition and demand surveys undertaken by the Council's Housing Service. The objective has been to identify clear priorities for action which will address local concerns.

SOAR intended that the Neighbourhood Strategies process would provide:

- ❑ an overarching 'Regeneration Framework' for the Southey Owlerton area that will guide the allocation of future funding and feed into parallel planning activity;
- ❑ individual reports ('Neighbourhood Strategies') for each of the six neighbourhoods, identifying priorities at the neighbourhood level;
- ❑ a positive identity for the area and its individual neighbourhoods; and
- ❑ an ongoing process that will ensure the ideas get implemented.

The Neighbourhood Strategies seek to promote an agenda for the next 10 years that will focus on economic, social and physical transformation to change the image of Southey Owlerton. The strategies have recommended that facilities should be consolidated and strengthened into a clear lead 'centre' within each of the neighbourhoods. Each 'centre' should have a particular function and identity, providing the focal point for services, economic activity and investment. The centres will therefore bear the responsibility for creating and projecting a positive image for the whole neighbourhood.

One of the key proposals developed through the Neighbourhood Strategy process was the decision to focus on the delivery of 30 key interventions across the Southey Owlerton area – projects which when combined together could offer a real chance to achieve the step change in the image of the area.

In principle, these 30 projects divide between 4 strands / themes:

1. redevelopment sites (for new housing and non-housing uses);
2. a community 'hub' building in each centre;
3. street scene improvements focused on centres; and
4. green spaces (an integrated network of open spaces across the area).

Work is progressing across all 4 strands, and resources are allocated against 27 projects – most of these will impact upon the strategy to consolidate provision and facilities within defined neighbourhood 'centres' (although match funding is required in some cases – e.g. the 'hub' projects to enable these to go ahead).

An important issue for the neighbourhood strategies is to develop coherence with each other so that the whole of Southey Owlerton is developed as an integrated, sustainable community. The Neighbourhood Strategies process, however, left open the question of whether a larger 'district' service centre is needed for Southey Owlerton – for example, for supermarket shopping, residents of Southey Owlerton travel to either Ecclesfield or Hillsborough. During 2003, Sheffield City Council commissioned White Young Green (WYG) to prepare a "Retail Study", the findings from which would be used to develop the city's retail policies as part of the emerging Sheffield Development Framework. As part of this study, WYG were asked to identify whether there is a need for additional convenience retail in North Sheffield, and if so to advise upon appropriate sites. WYG's study concluded that there is justification for the creation of a new district centre and evaluated a number of possible sites – recommending the site at Chaucer School as the appropriate location for a new superstore of approximately 4,500sq.m gross, upon the back of which a new district centre could be established.

1.5 Study focus

The focus for this study is the five neighbourhoods in Southey Owlerton that fall within the Transform South Yorkshire Pathfinder boundary (i.e. as identified above, Hillsborough has been excluded):

- Foxhill;
- Longley;
- Parson Cross;
- Shirecliffe; and
- Southey.

These neighbourhoods were incorporated within the Transform South Yorkshire boundary as it was recognised that these 'villages' have been hit hard in recent years by the decline of Sheffield's steel and engineering sectors, poor quality housing and poor provision of community services and facilities.

The five neighbourhoods are physically very similar in terms of the problems they face. However, each has the potential to create a distinct identity from the other, based upon their location, their centre's characteristics and the view that the residents hold regarding their area. The following provides a brief description of each of the five neighbourhoods.

1.5.1 **Foxhill**

The Foxhill neighbourhood is located on the north west side of the Southey Owlerton area, as clearly shown in Figure 1.1 above. Foxhill is to some extent 'out on the edge' and is isolated from the rest of the area by Halifax Road (the A61). This causes problems for the residents of Foxhill in accessing services available within Southey Owlerton's other neighbourhoods. However, its 'greenness' and proximity to the surrounding farmland and countryside, along with its 'visible history' of mixed periods and styles of building, are very distinctive characteristics of the neighbourhood.



The 'old' Foxhill estate at Wolfe Road currently suffers from a lack of services and a very poor physical appearance. Wolfe Road is particularly in need of development that will re-introduce services and facilities which will re-connect the area to the rest of Southey Owlerton. Problems of poor housing quality, few employment opportunities, inadequate accessibility and connection with its wider area have all been identified as issues which need to be addressed.

1.5.2 **Longley**

Longley is located on the eastern side of Southey Owlerton, and to the south of Parson Cross. The boundaries to the Longley neighbourhood have been readily defined by prominent slopes and hollows that have helped to create a feeling of 'shelter and seclusion'. 'Four Greens' is an area where green space, community buildings and sub-urban residential homes have been successfully integrated and this is naturally considered the centre of the Longley neighbourhood. Longley has been successful in attracting people from across the city.



Longley exhibits many of the socio-economic issues and difficulties that characterise some of the other neighbourhoods of Southey Owlerton. However, the area is arguably more sustainable in terms of access to services, business and housing, and it benefits from a better identity and higher environmental quality. Nevertheless, the area does need modernising to keep pace with recent demographic changes to cater more for young people and to enhance its role as a location in which to bring up a family.

1.5.3 **Parson Cross**

Parson Cross is the largest neighbourhood in Southey Owlerton and borders Southey, Longley and Shirecliffe and is the largest of the five neighbourhoods, making it a relatively central part of Southey Owlerton. The neighbourhood is divided into 'New Parson Cross' to the north and 'Old Parson Cross' to the south, broadly following the route of 'Tongue Gutter'.

New Parson Cross is typified by a comparatively high housing demand and a successful retail and service centre focussed around two local 'centres' of Buchanan and Margetson. By contrast, Old Parson Cross has suffered low housing demand, poor environmental quality, which is at its worst around Lytton. Work undertaken through SOAR's 'Neighbourhood Strategies' has identified Buchanan/Lytton as having the potential to provide a new service centre for the neighbourhood. This proposal has been re-considered as part of this study.

In terms of proposed plans for development, arguably Parson Cross has been the most ambitious of the five neighbourhoods and it is for this reason that a radical transformation in the image and layout of the area is likely and that major changes, including the closure of Parson Cross College (and redevelopment for new housing and local services) and expansions on the Chaucer School site are already underway. This neighbourhood, given its location and size is the prime location for a major food superstore investment by the private sector. Ambitious proposals for a new combined Learning Centre and library facility are also well advanced.



Margetson retail parade



Buchanan shops

1.5.4 **Shirecliffe**

Shirecliffe is the most southerly of the Southey Owlerton neighbourhoods and is the closest neighbourhood to the city centre. It is situated upon a hill, making it visible to other parts of the city. Therefore creating and projecting the right image at this location that best represents Southey Owlerton is important. Like other parts of Southey Owlerton, Shirecliffe has some unexpected remnants of countryside which includes 'secret' ancient woodland, bluebells and stone walls. To other parts of the city however, Shirecliffe is not known for these attributes, but rather its image is dominated by the "Dumpit" re-cycling site, poor street scenes and tired-looking shopping area (although well used) along Herries Road.

As such it is considered that development should complement these physical qualities, enhancing the woods and meadows, and representing the countryside theme throughout Southey Owlerton.

Through their Neighbourhood strategies, SOAR have identified that improvements are needed to both Busk Meadow and Parkwood centres, as Shirecliffe currently lacks adequate community services and facilities.



Herries Road retail parade

1.5.5 Southey

Southey Green is located at the centre of Southey Owlerton strategy area. The neighbourhood has a generally poor image, generates a feeling of being 'unsafe', and it lacks any significant form of identity.

The magnet area around Southey roundabout, although on the edge of the neighbourhood provides a focus for the retail and community facilities for the area. It is also an important confluence of roads into and through Southey Owlerton. The centre is unusual in that it provides a base for retail outlets which serve a wider catchment than simply Southey Owlerton (e.g. dancewear). Many of the buildings though, are rundown and in poor condition. The key development site is referred to locally as the "Magnet site", which has now been acquired by a local businessman. The site does have significant development potential and could become a successful and attractive focal point for services and activities. In fact, the whole centre holds great potential for improvement as a large part of the area is currently not in use. Harnessing this potential is likely to require modifications to traffic flows and improvements to internal and external accessibility and connectivity.



1.6 SOAR's community hub projects

Underpinning the strategies developed for each neighbourhood is the proposal for a community hub building that will further enhance the role of the neighbourhood centres. Hub projects were first identified in the Neighbourhood Strategies as developments that could meet local community requirements for local services / facilities and provide the asset base for the 6 neighbourhood groups. SOAR has linked up with CABE¹ to ensure that design quality is a high priority for these projects. Each hub project is intended to provide a landmark building at the heart of each neighbourhood to help establish and act as a catalyst for neighbourhood identity and to provide access points for local services.

1.7 Integration with Transform South Yorkshire

As part of the delivery of its Sustainable Communities Plan, the Government has established nine national housing market renewal pathfinders to tackle the difficulties associated with housing market failure (low demand, low turnover) and to transform declining neighbourhoods into attractive, safe and popular places to live. The South Yorkshire Pathfinder ('Transform South Yorkshire') covering parts of each of the four local authority districts (Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley) is the largest.

The strategic aim of Transform is:

"to build and support sustainable communities and successful neighbourhoods where the quality and choice of housing underpins a buoyant economy and an improved quality of life."

As part of the delivery of its strategy in North Sheffield, Transform South Yorkshire published its North Sheffield Area Development Framework (ADF) in December 2003. The ADF aims to achieve 'sustainable communities and successful neighbourhoods, to underpin economic growth' in South Yorkshire, by targeting issues of low housing demand. The ADF proposes a strategic plan of action for housing and neighbourhoods

¹ The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

across North Sheffield to help to transform North Sheffield into a more desirable place to live and work.

In response to this aim a series of objectives and associated key themes are identified. These are as follows:

1. Achieve a radical improvement in the character and diversity of neighbourhoods, helping to secure a more sustainable pattern in the sub-region.

Key themes: Sustainable pattern of neighbourhoods and communities; high quality successful neighbourhoods.

2. Grow the area's housing range, increasing housing choice in order to meet the aspirations of existing, emerging and incoming households.

Key themes: Access and choice; land and site acquisition.

3. Improve housing quality, ensuring that all tenures capitalise on the opportunities created through innovations in design, standards and efficiency.

Key themes: Sustainable homes; quality and design.

Southey Owlerton accounts for approximately half of the area covered within North Sheffield's ADF. Southey Owlerton has however been selected for early investment through the Pathfinder because its plans were well advanced and because the area currently has no district centre. The Pathfinder has identified this as a rationale for intervention within its Urban Neighbourhoods typology. Transform has indicated that some HMR funds are in place to act upon the findings of this review for English Partnerships in order to help improve the viability and attractiveness of the neighbourhood centres.

Regeneration in Southey Owlerton is therefore integrally linked with the objectives of Transform South Yorkshire. The interventions proposed by the Neighbourhood Strategies based upon the four strands of 1) redevelopment sites, 2) community hub projects buildings, 3) street scene, and 4) green spaces, are aligned with the objectives of the Pathfinder and are supported within the ADF. The opportunity to integrate HMR, EP and SRB resources consequently offers a real opportunity to fully implement the neighbourhood strategies within Southey Owlerton.

1.8 Other important policy initiatives

Regeneration in Southey Owlerton is supported within a wider policy context. The area's qualification for both SRB5 and Objective 1 Priority 4 funding, situates it within the milieu of European and national policy frameworks, particularly because of Southey Owlerton's focus on community empowerment to address social exclusion.

1.8.1 Closing the Gap

The ADF area is to be fuelled with resources as part of Sheffield City Council's '*Closing the Gap*' policy. This targets the disparities which exist between the most deprived areas of North and East Sheffield and the more affluent areas of South and West Sheffield. In this respect, the policy focuses resources on the areas in the north and south of the city that suffer most from deprivation. The implementation of the four physical strands of the Southey Owlerton Neighbourhood Strategies have been proposed as one of the transformational projects of the City's '*Closing the Gap*' policy. SOAR is located in the Council's Neighbourhoods Directorate which is responsible for implementing '*Closing the Gap*'. Southey Owlerton Neighbourhood Strategies are therefore directly supported and are influenced by the '*Closing the Gap*' project.

1.8.2 'In-Person' Access strategy

The development of a hub building in each of the five neighbourhoods fits well with Sheffield City Council's 'In-Person Access' strategy, which seeks to expand 'First Point' council services (currently operating from Howden House on Union Street close to the city centre) to a network of local centres. The 'in person' strategy is based on four levels of service access: -

- ❑ First Point at Howden House with access to a comprehensive range of all council services with the potential to include other statutory organisations;
- ❑ District Centres where there will be as broader range of access to services as is practical, based in district centres serving large populations;
- ❑ Neighbourhood centres serving a smaller community; and
- ❑ Information points where other public access buildings would be fitted with kiosks or electronic self service delivery points primarily for accessing information.



City Centre First Point
(from Sheffield City Council website)

Three local *First Points* are being delivered during 2004/05 in other parts of the city (Chapelton, Manor Top and Hillsborough). Plans for Southey Owlerton are at an exploratory stage, but there appears to be the opportunity to develop both a local *First Point* and Information Point(s) as part of SOAR's community hub projects.

1.8.3 Connections to the Cultural Industries Quarter

The development of non-housing uses within Southey Owlerton Regeneration Framework would create opportunities to connect local employment with the wider economic agenda. Connection to Sheffield's Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ) would be a particularly important linkage to make and efforts are already underway to achieve this. The Creative Exchange project has specifically been established by the CIQ Agency to create links with priority communities throughout South Yorkshire.

1.9 Key issues driving decision making within Southey Owlerton

1.9.1 Does Southey Owlerton need a district centre ?

At present there is no single centre within Southey Owlerton which could be described as a district retail or service centre. Services and retailing outlets are distributed throughout the area among a series of small 'centres' in each neighbourhood. There is no main food supermarket that serves the area, most food shopping being done either outside of Southey Owlerton at superstores in either Ecclesfield or Hillsborough or within Southey Owlerton at one of the many small convenience stores. The area also offers no significant employment opportunities - again most residents have to travel outside the area to work.

The arguments in favour of a district centre for the area include:

- ❑ less mobile residents would have access to services they may not otherwise be able to reach;
- ❑ there would be less leakage of expenditure from the area;

- ❑ more revenue would be attracted into the area from people coming in to use facilities in Southey Owlerton;
- ❑ improved employment opportunities will arise; and
- ❑ the area would be given a better sense of identity creating a more positive external image.

Despite these advantages, the problem of the area's topography for residents in terms of impact upon mobility will persist. It is for this reason that the need to create self-sustaining centres, or as described in the Neighbourhood Strategies "*Walk-in Neighbourhood Centres*" is important and that basic community services should be provided in every neighbourhood rather than focussed exclusively in a single district centre.

1.10 Study Approach

The approach to the study has involved:

1. Commercial market analysis of existing retail provision by Knight Frank;
2. Non-commercial market analysis by AMION investigating demand for service provision within the Southey Owlerton area across the range of Council and other public service providers;
3. Strategy development and further masterplanning input as appropriate from Roger Evans & Associates;
4. Presentations to the project steering group and workshops with key community representatives; and
5. Preparation of strategy report.

1.11 Report Structure

The remaining sections of this report are arranged in accordance with the four stages / steps of the study. These sections are therefore structured as follows:

- ❑ Section 2: presents a summary of Knight Frank's commercial analysis;
- ❑ Section 3: presents a summary of the 'non-commercial' analysis undertaken by AMION;
- ❑ Section 4: presents strategic options and strategy recommendations;
- ❑ Section 5: defines next steps.

2 Commercial analysis

2.1 Introduction

Knight Frank (KF) have supported AMION by leading the analysis of the commercial provision – predominantly retail and workspace within the various neighbourhood centres in the Southey Owlerton area.

Specifically, KF have undertaken:

- an overview of the existing commercial facilities within the study area looking at both retail and other business uses;
- an overview of demand for commercial facilities within the area focussing upon retail and other business uses;
- a more detailed examination of the existing retail centres; and
- consideration of the potential effects of a proposed district centre at Chaucer School.

This section provides a summary of KF's recommendations. KF's full report is provided at Annex 1.

2.2 Existing Retail provision – general picture

2.2.1 Overview of supply picture

- Southey Owlerton's neighbourhood centres are a product of their time and are based upon 'garden city' principles (developed predominantly between the 1930's – 1950's). It was developed away from the industrial areas of the city which were generally located in the valley bottoms close to the River Don;
- in general terms, the principle was that people would travel away from the residential area to work – this has changed little in recent years – the closest business use being the industrial area located along Claywheels Lane;
- as a result, and also reflecting the area's hilly topography, the centres are dispersed across the study area, with local facilities scattered right across the various estates and neighbourhoods. the centres exhibit mixed trading fortunes and varying levels of physical quality;
- the strongest centres tend to have a branded convenience store (e.g. Tesco at Herries Road, and Co-op/Spar stores at Margetson and Magnet); and
- there is no major foodstore within the study area – the closest major stores outside the area being Morrisons at Hillsborough and Ecclesfield (both thought to be trading strongly and the Netto at Sheffield Lane Top.

2.2.2 Overview of demand picture

White Young Green undertook the Sheffield Retail Study on behalf of Sheffield City Council in October 2003. The main findings from this study are as follows:

- there are high levels of leakage of retail convenience expenditure from the study area (estimated at around 55%, equating to around £28.4m of main food shopping expenditure from the study area to adjacent areas);

- ❑ a relatively high proportion of residents (more than 30%) shop by modes other than car (principally bus and by foot);
- ❑ despite the high levels of leakage, sufficient trade is retained within the neighbourhoods to support strong trading at Herries Road Tesco (accounting for 10% of trade), and Co-op/Spar stores at Margetson and Magnet. Overall, top-up shopping patterns are very dispersed throughout the area; and
- ❑ trade draw to existing centres is a function of convenience shop availability and other social infrastructure.

Conclusion: Southey Owlerton's centres are surviving despite the demand picture – i.e. the high proportion of local people are going out of the area for their main food shop.

2.2.3 Summary of WYG's Sheffield Retail study

WYG's study concluded that there is a need for a new food store within the north Sheffield area. It examined a number of potential sites, namely:-

- ❑ Sheffield Wednesday Training Ground, Middlewood Road, Hillsborough (planning has now been refused for ASDA);
- ❑ Kilner Way Retail Park, Halifax Road (the Council has received some months ago an outline application for a large foodstore redevelopment on this site);
- ❑ a site at Penistone Road North, Herries Road South and Herries Road; and
- ❑ a site fronting Chaucer School on Halifax Road right on the edge of the Southey Owlerton area.

WYG concluded that the Chaucer School site was the most appropriate location and should be allocated as a District Centre. It recommended that the store's gross floor space should be limited to around 4,500 sq m (with no more than 20% of the store area to be dedicated to non-food goods), and that the food store should be accompanied by five or six smaller units designed to provide comparison goods retailing or retail services (e.g. dental or doctors surgeries).

The study acknowledged that such a development would represent a potential threat to certain local centres - and it picked out Margetson Crescent, Halifax Road and Buchanan Road and to a smaller extent Herries Road.

Having considered the findings of the WYG study, KF's view is that the Chaucer School site is not ideal from an operator's viewpoint as:

- 1) it only allows a food store of a limited size; and
- 2) residential properties to some extent mask the frontage to Halifax Road.

However, given the intense competition amongst food store operators, KF have stated "*their desire for market share will undoubtedly enable them to overcome the disadvantages of the site*". Discussions held by KF with various food store operators have indicated "serious interest in the Chaucer School site" from Tesco.

2.2.4 Key success factors for future neighbourhood retail provision

KF have indicated that it is clear that certain retail parades are trading better than others. Predicting future trading prospects depends upon:

- visibility/prominence;
- sufficient walk-in catchment and public transport connectivity;
- the presence of other footfall generators / facilities (e.g. school, GP surgery, dentist, childcare);
- *“ideally neighbourhood centres should be mixed use areas that are easily accessible either by car or public transport and provided with adequate parking facilities”.*

On balance, KF have indicated that although the neighbourhood centres are likely to be affected by the opening of a large food store, they do believe that there is scope for such a store given the high proportion of residents who are having to travel outside of Southey Owlerton for the main food shop. They are also clear that residents are unlikely to want to see all retail provision concentrated within a single centre, and that it will be important to secure a number of neighbourhood centres in the area, although KF do point to the need for some rationalisation given the number of retail locations spread across the area (they reviewed provision at 14 locations across the area).

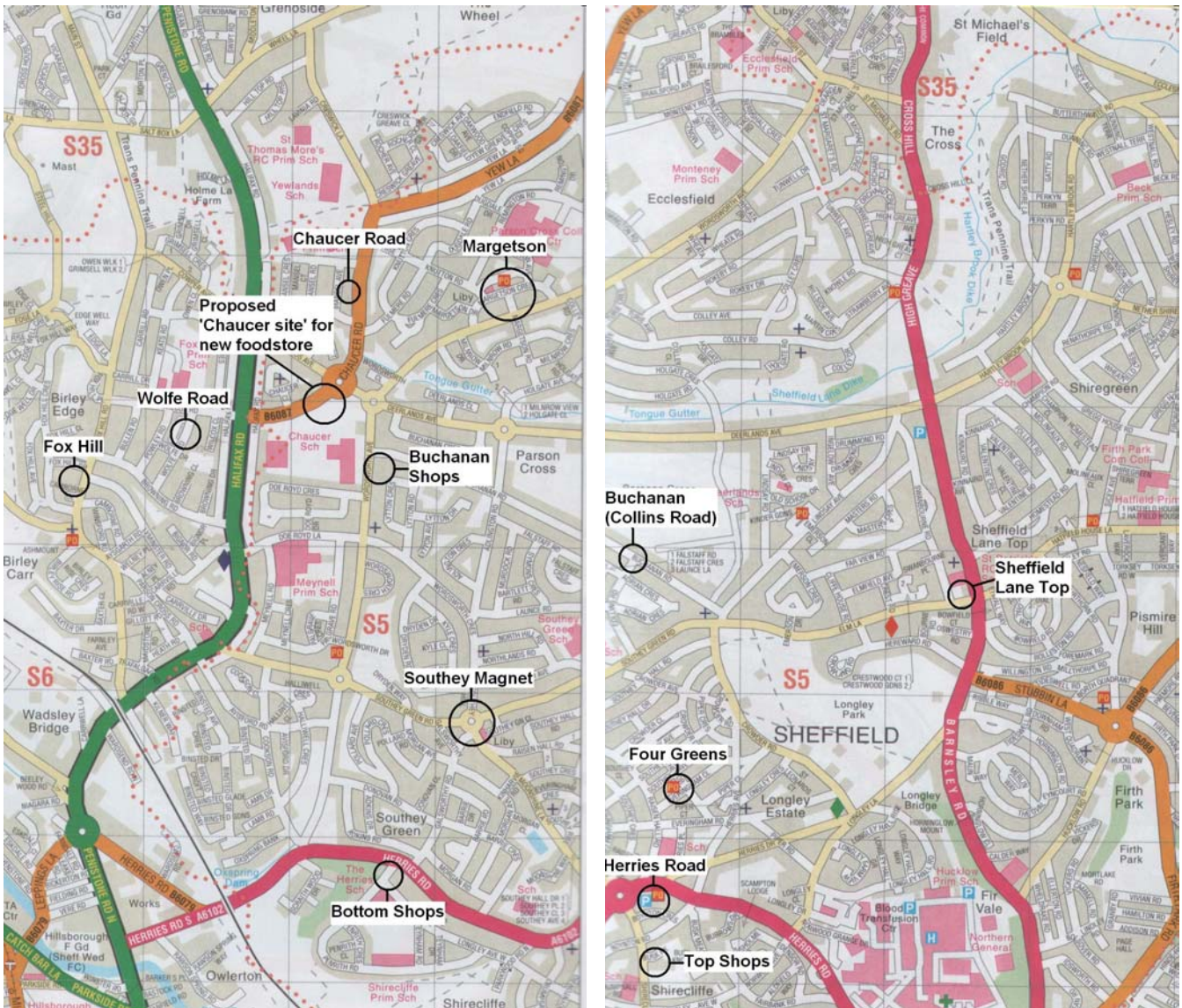
KF concluding comment on centre potential:

“There are a number which offer good future potential from a retailing viewpoint and for this reason, with the possible exception of Buchanan Road, we do not consider it appropriate to look at creating retail centres on sites which are currently not in retail use”.

2.3 Analysis of existing neighbourhood retail provision

KF’s review of existing retail provision is summarised below. Figure 2 overleaf identifies the relative locations of each of the retail parades referred to with KF’s report.

Figure 2: Location of retail parades / centres across the Southey Owlerton neighbourhoods



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2.3.1 Parson Cross

Current provision

- there are 5 different retail locations (Chaucer Road, Copin Square, Wheta Road, Margetson Crescent, Buchanan Road);
- the 2 main centres are Margetson Crescent and Buchanan Shops; and
- KF's view is that only Margetson and Buchanan have potential as sustainable 'centres'.

Margetson Crescent

- Clearly, a community focal point (church, working men's club, health centre, dentist, library)
- Turnover of £2.2m p.a. (£1.4m Co-op according to Nathaniel Litchfield & Partners study).

Positives

- Accessible, well known locally, good range of local retail offer, good social infrastructure;
- Sites available (2 have been acquired by SOAR);
- Could integrate well with development proposals for Parson Cross College site.

Negatives

- Low visibility – lacks frontage to a main road;
- Would benefit from physical improvement;
- Lack of integration between uses; and
- Limited car parking.



Possible future role: as a local retail and service centre for New Parson Cross

Buchanan Shops

- A large centre that has developed in two adjacent parades (Buchanan Road frontage and Wordsworth Avenue frontage);
- Unattractive development that lacks quality retailers;
- Unlikely to survive as a retail location if a large food store locates on the site fronting Halifax Road.

Positives

- Important, highly visible location benefiting from its close proximity to Chaucer School;
- Well integrated with existing social infrastructure (Chaucer School, SPELL);
- The development opportunity on the Chaucer School site could support Buchanan shops if it is integrated / in proximity (i.e. re-locate the food store proposal away from Halifax Road, closer into the neighbourhood on the site fronting Wordsworth Avenue; and
- Close to Margetson but with discrete catchment

Negatives

- Poor environment / design and offer;
- Buchanan Road frontage does not appear to trade well (2 units are vacant)



Possible future role: as a district retail centre (subject to food store outcome)

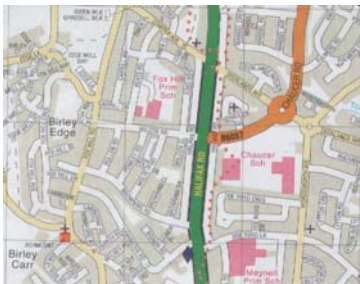
2.3.2 Fox Hill / Wolfe Road

Current provision

- ❑ comprises 2 small retail parades (Wolfe Road and Fox Hill Road);
- ❑ little potential for expanded retail provision; and
- ❑ new doctors' surgery will generate footfall, linked with Healthy Living Centre, but unlikely to re-position retail offer.

Fox Hill Road

- ❑ A busy vehicular route linking Grenoside to Halifax Road (A61);
- ❑ Parade of low quality retail units – would benefit from cosmetic improvement;
- ❑ No potential for further expansion, with exception of a development opportunity on Fox Hill Road opposite the junction with Wilcox Road. KF view is that this is a possible potential location for a local convenience store (e.g. Co-op, Spar) (but dependent upon the medical centre locating here – see Wolfe Road).



Wolfe Road

- ❑ A very uninviting location with weak retail offer;
- ❑ Whilst Phase 1 of the Healthy Living centre has been constructed, the existing retail units represent an unattractive retail proposition;
- ❑ Phase 2 will result in the demolition of the shops and replacement with a new medical centre, pharmacy and newsagents;
- ❑ Not ideal as retail location as lacks prominence

Possible Future role: as a local community health focus with limited local retail function



2.3.3 Longley – Sheffield Lane Top / Four Greens

Current provision

- ❑ comprises 2 retail parades (Sheffield Lane Top and Four Greens);

Sheffield Lane Top

Positives

- ❑ Relatively large scale/accessible;
- ❑ Anchored by Netto.

Negatives

- ❑ Fringe of the area;
- ❑ Not a driver of housing market renewal across Southey Owlerton.



Possible future role: as a sustainable local retail centre – no change

Four Greens

Positives

- ❑ Distinctive environment;
- ❑ Some potential for community enterprise (Northern Clusters), but not commercial office space

Negatives

- ❑ Limited potential as a 'centre' – some limited scope to rationalise existing provision;
- ❑ Remote retail location/low visibility; and
- ❑ Limited catchment – immediate walk-in only.



Possible future role: as a community enterprise focus, with retail focus on Herries Road

2.3.4 Shirecliffe

Current provision

- ❑ comprises 3 retail locations (Herries Road, Longley Avenue ('Top Shops') and Longley Avenue ('Bottom Shops');
- ❑ Only Herries Road has potential as a 'centre'.

Longley Avenue Shops

- ❑ '**Top shops**' in decline and show neglect, with exception of 1 shop refurbished for therapy centre;
- ❑ Only 50% occupied;
- ❑ Limited scope for growth / sustainability;
- ❑ KF recommend alternative provision be provided.



- ❑ '**Bottom shops**' – no growth potential, but possibly sustainable;
- ❑ Units are fully occupied and appear to provide a service to the local community;
- ❑ However not a significant neighbourhood centre.

Herries Road

Positives

- ❑ Good visibility on major vehicle route linking the A628 A61;
- ❑ Anchored by Tesco (750 sq.m)– accounting for 10% of main food shopping trips from Southey Owlerton;
- ❑ 50% of Tesco shoppers walk for their main food shop;
- ❑ Location offers case for expanding the centre – need to examine options for centre expansion in the area



Negatives

- ❑ Limited range of social infrastructure in-centre;
- ❑ Centre would benefit from physical improvement;
- ❑ Rumours in recent years that Tesco intend to close this store, although WYG's retail report suggests this store trades strongly. Discussions held by KF indicate that other operators would be interested in trading from Herries Road if Tesco vacated;
- ❑ Requires better linkages to Busk Meadow Hub proposal.

Possible future role: as a local retail centre for Shirecliffe and Longley

2.3.5 Southey Green

Current provision

- the main focus for the Southey Green neighbourhood is at Magnet roundabout, but Southey Green is also served by:
 - a small parade of Wordsworth Drive – no growth potential, possibly sustainable;
 - Halifax Road – the largest and most successful centre with direct access into the A61, Halifax Road. The retail area comprises 29 units (the largest being Lidl of c. 10,000sq.ft). These units are however, on the fringe of the Southey Owlerton area. The units are fully occupied. Further development is planned on the site of the former BP petrol station. Lidl are understood to be considering expanding their store;
 - Halifax Road clearly operates as a sustainable commercial centre. It does not however function as a neighbourhood centre, and it is not a housing market driver.

Magnet

Positives

- Important crossroads at the heart of the area, occupying a prominent position on a busy through route
- Accessible with potential for district service offer;
- Established retail base with extended catchment (In Step dancewear and martial arts);
- Potential to expand the existing Co-op store;
- Mix of uses makes Magnet a 'destination' rather than neighbourhood centre;
- Key opportunity sites offer expansion potential - need to be brought into public sector control to help maximise redevelopment potential.



Negatives

- Lack of focus – layout lacks cohesion given retail development in 4 'quadrants' around Magnet Roundabout; and
- Existing development is relatively unattractive.



Possible future role: as a district service centre (subject to agency alignment)

2.4 Summary of Knight Frank conclusions

The following points summarise KF's main concluding comments:

- **There is clear demand from the food store operators for a large food store development in North Sheffield.** If the Chaucer site is not made available, then they are likely to pursue other sites a short distance away, for example Kilner Way;
- There is a good prospect that the Chaucer School site will be developed with a large food store. However, KF recommend that the strategy for the neighbourhood centres should be able to incorporate scenarios either with or without a food store on this site;
- **The current pattern of neighbourhood retail is widely dispersed** throughout the Southey Owlerton area **and is wide ranging in its quality. The better centres offer a range of retail offer and other public services;**
- **The future strategy should include a focus on consolidation,** with intervention focussed upon a limited number of neighbourhood centres. **Accessibility and prominence will be important factors in future success;**
- It is important that the regeneration strategy for the area ensures that public transport adequately serves the retail areas and also that adequate provision is made for car parking;
- Retail centres need footfall and this is enhanced when the more facilities / services are grouped together. **Wherever possible therefore, other facilities such as medical centres, community facilities etc should be grouped with the retail facilities;** and
- The provision of **new or improved retail facilities is likely to need public sector assistance,** either through funding or direct investment. The private sector is unlikely to develop on a speculative basis.

3 Non-commercial analysis

3.1 Introduction

To sit alongside Knight Frank's analysis of the commercial supply and demand picture across Southey Owlerton, AMION have led a process of consultations with the key public service providers responsible for service provision within North Sheffield in order to integrate the commercial analysis with the current non-commercial demand and supply position.

3.2 Consultation process and mechanisms

The consultation process undertaken has been led by AMION, although the assistance of the SOAR team has been invaluable for facilitating engagement and encouraging participation from the service providers. The objective of the process has been to establish a better understanding of:

1. existing public service provision / facilities within the Southey Owlerton neighbourhoods;
2. any ambitions / plans for service provision within the area;
3. if there are plans / ambitions for new project(s) within Southey Owlerton, where are the favoured locations, and why ?

Information has been collated through the issue and return of a questionnaire / proforma in June 2004 to all service providers and others interested in the process (for example, neighbourhood workers). SOAR has assisted in encouraging the completion of these proformas, and the completed documents were then used to facilitate a discussion session at a workshop session held on the 1st July 2004 at SOAR's offices. Other, related information has been gathered through:

- a discussion meeting with the PCT on their emerging plans for a new 'flagship' district GP centre with other primary care functions (health visitors / district nurses / day clinics);
- SCC's emerging "Extra Care Housing Strategy" for a retirement village in north Sheffield; and
- the community hub projects – discussions held with hub workers.

3.2.1 Key Consultees

The key public service consultees have been:

- Housing / Sheffield Homes;
- Social Services;
- Libraries;
- First Point;
- North Sheffield Primary Care Trust;
- Adult Learning (SPELL);
- Hub workers; and
- Others (SOAR / Sheffield Wildlife Trust / North Sheffield Regeneration Team).

3.3 Key service provider requirements

The following table distils the principal findings from the consultations undertaken. Full copies of the completed proformas are included at Annex 2.

Housing / Sheffield Homes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sheffield Homes (RSL) currently operate from 2 offices (Wordsworth Avenue and Moonshine Lane). Wordsworth Avenue office is affected by the retail proposition at Chaucer school. Short term relocation requirement from Wordsworth Avenue. Medium/longer term aspiration for new centralised administrative office facilities, capable of accommodating 100 staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred location is at Buchanan (considered to be central for tenants and near bus routes). However, would also consider Magnet as alternative location. <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Service – it is anticipated that the Housing Service will move to call-centre access provision for tenants. This would not be based within Southey Owlerton – there is therefore no intention to locate a housing service centre within any of the neighbourhoods. <input type="checkbox"/> Provision could however be made for tenants to pay rents etc through access points – e.g. within the hub buildings, or at the supermarket, or post office. Clear integration with First Point.
Social Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2001 census shows a high number of older people in north Sheffield. <input type="checkbox"/> Sheffield CC housing strategy for older people: “<i>Extra Care Housing Strategy</i>”. This has identified the need for up to 11 extra care schemes, including at least one “retirement village” (capable of housing c. 200). Possible location is the site of Longley Hill Farm. Extra care scheme planned at Busk Meadow, Shirecliffe. <input type="checkbox"/> No proposals for Social Services admin function within Southey Owlerton. <input type="checkbox"/> No requirement for children’s homes within the area. <input type="checkbox"/> Network of ‘Sure Start’ facilities (childcare) is being planned throughout the area (e.g. facilities now provided at Southey Magnet,).
First Point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Public access to all council services, described as “one-stop shop” provision. The strategy is evolving. Local centres are currently being planned at Chapel Town, Manor Town and Hillsborough as part of Sheffield CC ‘In-person access’ strategy, rolling out local access provision following on from the success of “First Point” run from Howden House in the City Centre. <input type="checkbox"/> Potential for range of access facilities across Southey Owlerton including core provision in either a ‘district’ or ‘local’ First Point centre, supported by smaller ‘access/information’ points. <input type="checkbox"/> Integration with Sheffield Homes is important – an evolving idea is that Sheffield Homes might provide the First Point service on behalf of Sheffield City Council. <input type="checkbox"/> Location requirements: prominent location with good transport links, preferably co-located or close to other local service providers, and locations where people shop, work. etc.

Adult Learning

- ❑ Plans for a new Adult Learning Centre (in part due to the withdrawal of Sheffield College from the Parson Cross College site) are now well advanced as part of SOAR's community hub strategy.
- ❑ The original concept for the ALC was proposed for a site at Margetson. However, the initial cost estimate of £4.6m led to a review of the project. Scale of the proposed centre has been scaled down in consequence. Linkage with Chaucer School has become more integral to the concept. As such, the preferred location has switched to Buchanan/Chaucer.
- ❑ Integration/shared facilities with Chaucer School is considered to be a key success factor.
- ❑ The intention is to attract other services within the ALC
 - e.g. link with the City Council's plans for a new 'learning' library facility (as a much improved replacement for the existing library at Margetson);
 - and Eventus' (a voluntary, Sheffield-based organisation specialising in partnership working on devising and implementing creative projects) requirement for an outreach centre in North Sheffield (likely to be arts and crafts based facility).
 - Discussions have been held with Sheffield Homes as possible joint occupier, but not viewed as critical to the ALC concept. Discussions described as "tentative".

Libraries

- ❑ Sheffield City Council has indicated that its aspiration is to modernise its library service provision.
- ❑ Parson Cross library at Margetson is in need of replacement – a building in very poor state of repair and subject to repeated vandalism, anti-social behaviour.
- ❑ The Library Service's aspiration is to re-locate Parson Cross library within the hub concept for the Adult Learning centre, and as a result to significantly improve the library offer, capitalising on joint footfall. Ambition has been described as "Learning library" integrated with the Adult Learning Centre.
- ❑ The Service wishes to move the Parson Cross provision, but is currently constrained by financial issues. Options are being explored over summer 2004 with a view to resolving funding issues by September 2004.
- ❑ Subject to further feasibility analysis, the discussions suggest that the Service consider that a traditional 'lending' library facility will be sustainable at Southey Magnet.

North Sheffield Primary Care Trust

- ❑ The PCT has the ambition to build a new 'flagship' district GP centre with associated primary care functions (health visitors / district nurses / day clinics, pharmacy in North Sheffield).
- ❑ The PCT is seeking to improve the attractiveness of Southey Owlerton for the 'new generation' of GPs – some concern that the existing GP 'workforce' is operating from old, fairly rundown surgeries, a number with negative equity, and which simply do not represent attractive business opportunities for new GPs to buy-in to existing practices.
- ❑ Requirement for large central site – no preferred location but driven by centralising existing practices. Focus to date has been on Buchanan / Chaucer, but prepared to consider Magnet.
- ❑ The PCT has clarified that the strategy will be to retain and refurbish the 'best' of the existing local surgeries. PCT expects full strategy in place by December 2004.

Other

- ❑ SOAR, the North Sheffield Regeneration team, and Sheffield Wildlife Trust have all indicated requirements for new office accommodation. The discussions held suggest that these requirements may be met as part of the strategy for the community hub project proposed for Southey Magnet.

3.4 The role of the community hubs

Section 1.6 introduced the concept of the community hubs - underpinning the Neighbourhood Strategies as developments that could meet community requirements for local services / facilities. As noted, each hub project is intended to provide a landmark building at the heart of each neighbourhood to help establish and act as a catalyst for neighbourhood identity and to provide access points for local services.

From the discussions / consultations held with hub workers, it is clear that:

- ❑ There are five hub proposals across the Southey Owlerton area with potential for integration of service access, alongside retail uses;
- ❑ Each proposal is intended to deliver key facilities for neighbourhood focus / identity;
- ❑ Landmark designs are evolving. The hubs are intended to drive area image enhancement / act as a catalyst for physical change within their neighbourhoods.

Current hub proposals

The hub proposals can be summarised as follows:

- ❑ Fox Hill (Wolfe Road) – healthy living focus;
- ❑ Parson Cross – adult learning focus;
- ❑ Shirecliffe (Busk Meadow) – community / Sure Start focus;
- ❑ Longley (Four Greens) – community / enterprise focus;
- ❑ Southey (Magnet) – community / enterprise focus.

The following tables indicate the proposed plans (and in some cases e.g. Parson Cross – evolution in thinking) for each hub project and the possible community role it could provide.

Table 3.1: Fox Hill Community Hub project		
Location	Proposals	Role in the community
Wolfe Road	Development of a Healthy Living Centre. Creation of green spaces around the Healthy Living Centre for children and teenager sport and play activities. Provisions for different youth age groups, such as Surestart nursery.	<u>Health focus</u> - provision of additional services in support of the Healthy Living centre, e.g. Chiropodist. <u>Leisure Focus</u> - services that encourage sport and recreation, also in support of the Healthy Living Centre.

Table 3.2: Longley Community Hub project		
Location	Proposals	Role in the community
LOCAL at Four Greens	<p>To further build on the community facilities and services already provided by LOCAL.</p> <p>To reinforce Four Greens as an area for families, introducing activities for all age groups.</p> <p>To integrate office space within the building to ensure financial sustainability.</p>	<p><u>Enterprise focus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - create opportunities to develop community enterprise within existing commercial properties, complementary to the hub proposal.

Table 3.3: Parson Cross Community Hub project		
Location	Proposals	Role in the community
EITHER: 1) Montenev at Margetson Crescent	<p>Existing services plan to invest in their premises within the centre or to develop new plans. Services include Colley Club, Library and Health Centre.</p> <p>Use the natural layout of the crescent and introduce the city's nature-technology ethos to create a market garden square.</p>	<p><u>Community focus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improve upon the success of its existing community services and upgrade its small scale retailing into a market place to serve the community.
Or: 2) Lytton at Buchanan Road	<p>Radically transform the area with a major overhaul of activity and layout.</p> <p>Expand the Chaucer School site, creating opportunities for the development of a Learning Centre that will serve Southey Owlerton and beyond.</p> <p>Learning Centre to accommodate other services, e.g. Library, IT suite and Sheffield Housing access point.</p> <p>Develop a large supermarket that will serve the whole of Southey Owlerton. The store may provide a First Point service desk and complement the hub.</p>	<p><u>Learning focus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide an area for adult learning and training that individuals and businesses can use. - integrate other learning services within the building; Library, IT suite and Events activities. <p><u>Retail focus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - integrate hub with accessible and nearby supermarket for the whole area, retaining more of Southey Owlerton's shopping expenditure.

Table 3.4: Shirecliffe / 'Busk' Meadow Community Hub project		
Location	Proposals	Role in the community
Busk Meadow	<p>Base the hub building on the countryside theme of the neighbourhood, i.e. locate it within meadow glades.</p> <p>Particular focus on providing community services for the elderly, so as to complement the proposal for the building of Extra Care housing.</p>	<p><u>Community focus with countryside theme</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the hub building is to conform with the natural setting of the neighbourhood - services to support the elderly as well as providing for children and people of disability.

Table 3.5: Southey Community Hub project		
Location	Proposals	Role in the community
Magnet	<p>Develop the roundabout site into a high quality urban environment, with the hub building designed to be a landmark feature for the whole neighbourhood.</p> <p>Develop a mixed-use building with areas for community congregation and separate areas for businesses.</p> <p>Create local employment and training opportunities</p>	<p>Community role with an urban theme</p> <p>- building is to carry out the roles of an urban area but on a local scale i.e. accommodate local businesses and local community activities.</p>

4 Options analysis

4.1 Defining priority centres

Based on the commercial and non-commercial analysis of centres we conclude that future strategy should focus on four priority centres:

- Buchanan / Chaucer;
- Margetson;
- Herries Road; and
- Southey Magnet.

We consider these locations to offer the best prospects for creating focussed neighbourhood centres that can add value to the Housing Market Renewal process across the area. Other existing retail centres/parades may well continue to trade and offer local services. However, the four identified locations we believe to have the attributes and potential to contribute most to the wider regeneration strategy for the area.

4.2 Establishing a hierarchy / distinctive centre roles

While the four identified priority locations are all important for an effective centres strategy, each will need to evolve a distinctive role and function that reflects its trading catchment potential and the balance between commercial retail and non-commercial service provision that occurs in each. Some centres offer greater potential to serve a wider than 'local neighbourhood' catchment, both in retail and service terms given the locational attributes, road access and public transport connections. Others will be most effective in serving more localised neighbourhood needs.

We have therefore proposed the following typologies for centres based on the extent of anticipated catchment and the mix of retail and service provision:

- District retail centre** – serving the wider Southey Owlerton area, drawing retail trade from a wider than local catchment. This would represent the highest order retail centre serving the area, but would also include a range of non-retail public service functions that were complementary to the district level retail function and that reflect the opportunities of the location for particular service providers;
- District service centre** – serving the wider Southey Owlerton area, acting as the focus location for public services serving wider than local catchment. This would include retail provision principally serving the local neighbourhood;
- Village centres** – serving local neighbourhood catchments with a mix of local retail and service facilities. These centres would act as a focus for the local neighbourhood and seek to achieve an integrated offer for a primarily walk-in catchment.

4.3 The implications of the Chaucer retail proposals

A critical factor in determining the future roles of the key centres will be the outcome of deliberations on the proposals for a major food store at Chaucer.

Based on the WYG recommendations, the City Council is considering the opportunities for accommodating a major food store on surplus land at the Chaucer School. At present, the option being progressed is to identify a site fronting Halifax Road. While this may have strong appeal from a food store operators perspective, we do not believe that in this location such a major new facility for the wider North Sheffield catchment would deliver

maximum regeneration benefits to Southey Owlerton. It will act principally as a car borne facility rather than as a neighbourhood asset for Southey Owlerton.

If developed as a free-standing store, with no associated district centre functions, then while we would anticipate some local impacts on existing food store operators, these would be mitigated by the fact that much of the new store's turnover would be derived from 'clawback' of convenience expenditure currently leaking out of the area. To that extent, a free-standing store could conceivably complement existing provision across Southey Owlerton.

However, if the store was developed with a range of new district centre functions and, in effect, became the district retail centre for Southey Owlerton, its effect would, in our view, be more competitive rather than complementary to existing provision, particularly at Buchanan and Margetson.

On this basis, we believe that the option of locating the new food store closer into the neighbourhood and integrated with existing neighbourhood retail provision would be a more effective approach in regeneration terms. Using the food store investment as a catalyst to transforming an existing neighbourhood centre into a 'district centre' would seem to offer greater regenerative potential than seeking to establish a new free-standing district centre.

In our view, integration with a re-configured Buchanan centre would be the preferred approach. This is a recognised existing centre with the potential to serve a wider than local catchment and whilst the existing facilities are of poor quality, the location alongside Chaucer school already acts as a major draw for the area. This view of the preferred locational approach to the Chaucer food store proposal has been instrumental in respect of our recommendations on the future roles for the priority centres.

KF have held preliminary discussions with agents acting for Tesco who have expressed strong interest in the Chaucer opportunity. Whilst retailers would express a preference for a larger, more prominent site, the relocation would not present a major issue in commercial terms. Clearly, this will require further validation as part of the marketing process for the site. What is clear, however, is that if proposals come forward on Kilner Way, this would offer significant competition to the Chaucer site. Therefore, the strategy is ultimately dependent upon the ability of the Council to successfully defend a planning case against major food store development at Kilner Way.

4.4 Recommended roles for priority centres

Taking account of the commercial and non-commercial analysis and our views on the Chaucer school proposals, we set out below our recommendations in respect of each priority centre.

4.4.1 Buchanan/Chaucer – a new 'district retail centre'

- Buchanan/Chaucer should be promoted as a new district retail centre, with an anchor food store integrated with a re-configured central focus in the vicinity of the Buchanan shops and Chaucer school;
- The redevelopment and relocation of the existing Buchanan shops should be progressed alongside the food store development to achieve effective integration and an improved overall retail offer;
- The critical mass of the new district centre should be enhanced through the redevelopment/enhancement of housing provision around the centre to achieve maximum focus and market potential;

- ❑ Given the importance of Chaucer school as a 'learning asset', the Adult Learning Centre should be accommodated within the district centre to add to its appeal. This should integrate with the 'Hub' provision which could include a 'First Point' Information Resource and, potentially a new 'Learning Library' to emphasise the education focus of service provision within this new district centre;
- ❑ Subject to site availability, consideration should be given to integrating the proposed 'retirement village' and the district GP centre with the new district centre to add to the vitality and viability of the centre in the longer term.

4.4.2 Margetson – a revitalised 'village centre'

- ❑ Margetson should be strengthened as a 'village centre' through improved visibility, environmental quality and public realm, including improved car parking provision;
- ❑ Margetson should be promoted as local centre serving New Parson Cross and have a more localised catchment than Buchanan;
- ❑ Existing social provision, including the library, church and Working Mens club should be more integrated with the retail parade to establish a more focussed centre, with shared parking facilities and reduced demarcation between facilities;
- ❑ New housing should be configured to maximise 'walk-in' catchment for the village centre;
- ❑ Key sites in public ownership should be promoted for uses which enhance the vitality and viability of the centre, which could include additional local service provision, such as community workspace.

4.4.3 Herries Road – an integrated 'village centre'

- ❑ Herries Road should be enhanced as a 'village centre' for Shirecliffe and Longley. Improved linkages between the centre and the Busk Meadow and Four Greens 'Hub' proposals should be established to create a 'virtual' mix of retail and service provision for these neighbourhoods;
- ❑ Retention of an anchor food store is critical. Improvements to the operational context of the centre should be promoted, including improved/safer car parking arrangements and new public realm features to signal the importance of the centre. This should include modifications to the streetscape to highlight the level of pedestrian activity in the area;
- ❑ Opportunities to extend retail provision at Herries Road should be kept under review, given the potential for the catchment to be extended based on main road access.

4.4.4 Southey Magnet – a new 'district service centre'

- ❑ Magnet, as the name implies, should be enhanced as a focus for Southey Owlerton-wide service provision. A broad mix of services should be focussed in the centre. This should include consideration of:
 - Sheffield Homes centralised offices;
 - 'First Point' core provision, linked to Information Points, such as proposed at Buchanan;
 - improved 'lending' library provision;
 - potential for district GP provision;
 - other area-wide service providers.

As far as possible such provision should be integrated with the Southey 'hub' proposals.

- Existing retail provision should be consolidated and improved to complement the district service centre role. This may require significant redevelopment of existing provision, subject to commercial considerations;
- A more integrated centre layout should be considered to breakdown the 'barrier' effect of the existing roundabout to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment conducive to movement between the existing 'quadrants' in the centre.

4.5 Preliminary master planning proposals

4.5.1 Applying the key principles

Based on the principles identified above, Roger Evans Associates have undertaken a preliminary master planning exercise for each of the priority centres to examine how re-configuration could be progressed to best effect. The critical questions that formed the brief for this exercise were as follows:

- Can the Chaucer retail opportunity be configured to integrate with Buchanan shops as a new 'district centre'? What other services could be focused at Buchanan to enhance district centre potential?
- Can Margetson be re-configured to improve visibility and passing trade (relocation of WMC)? What other services could be located at Margetson to support footfall?
- Can Herries Road retail/Busk Meadow and Four Greens hubs be better linked to establish a more integrated centre?
- Can Magnet become a more focused centre, through securing key development opportunities for area-wide services provision and improved retail offer to enhance destination potential?

The preliminary master plans are illustrated in Annex 1.

4.5.2 Preliminary consultation

An options workshop was held on 21st July 2004 to which a full range of stakeholders were invited to discuss the preliminary options for the centres. The overall response was positive and a range of suggestions have been taken into account in refining the illustrative plans.

Further consideration will be required as the proposals progress, including with existing operators in each centre. In respect of Buchanan/Chaucer, the proposals represent a significant variation on those under consideration through existing consultation mechanisms. This will clearly need to be managed effectively to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the basis for the changes proposed.

5 Next steps

5.1 Confirming the strategy principles

During this study we have engaged with a wide range of stakeholders and therefore we are confident that the strategy principles that have been put forward will receive broad support within the agencies operating in Southey Owlerton. Nevertheless, it will be important to continue with the engagement process to broaden the support to include local retail operators and to secure confirmed support from Sheffield City Council and EP as key partners in strategy delivery.

An engagement strategy should therefore be developed to take the centres projects forward as part of a co-ordinated Delivery Plan.

5.2 Developing a delivery plan

At this stage this study has provided a set of strategy principles but has not examined delivery mechanisms in any detail. **The delivery plan will need to be evolved** but at this stage we would highlight the following delivery issues:

- **Buchanan / Chaucer** – This project is clearly dependent on securing planning approval and commercial operator/developer support. Levels of public sector funding requirement will need to be examined in full in the Delivery Plan. While a detailed valuation exercise has not been undertaken KF has advised that in general terms the disposal proceeds for a food store as proposed at Chaucer could be in the order of £5m, based on the currently proposed store size. This could increase considerably if a larger store could be accommodated. This potential receipt will need to be set against the costs associated with public realm provisions and any additional funding required to support the other housing and retail development as well as the major non-commercial facilities such as the proposed adult Learning Centre. In this respect, consideration should be given to the mechanisms for securing developer partners for the scheme, including the ‘packaging’ of the food store and other development proposals for the centre.
- **Margetson** – This project is primarily focussed on delivery of public realm and other environmental improvements. A ‘Streetscape Strategy’ is being developed by SOAR and this should take into account the proposals at Margetson. In terms of funding, it will be critical to make the case for public realm improvements on the basis of their contribution to economic objectives for the centre and the link to housing market renewal rather than as environmental improvements in isolation. This study provides a key input to making that case. In addition, the Delivery Plan will identify the future development intentions for the sites on Knutton Road and Margetson Crescent acquired by EP for SOAR to strengthen the centre through workspace, new housing and other complementary uses.
- **Herries Road** – The same comments apply as per Margetson. The ‘Streetscape Strategy’ will need to include specific reference to the delivery of linkage improvements between Herries Road and the Busk Meadow/Four Greens ‘hubs’ to support the Herries Road centre strategy. The Delivery Plan will provide the framework for co-ordinating the hub projects, which will provide the non-commercial elements of this more ‘virtual’ centre, with the enhanced quality of the commercial offer.
- **Southey Magnet** – The scale of change envisaged at Southey Magnet will require a longer term approach than for the other centres. This may have implications for the delivery timescales of the Southey ‘hub’ proposal. In particular, it is envisaged that the remodelling of the centre will require land assembly, which clearly has the

potential to extend timescales if Compulsory Purchase powers are to be used. It is anticipated that a phased approach to the delivery of the Southey Magnet strategy would be required based on a more detailed master plan.

5.3 Identifying specific projects and priorities

Each of the centre strategies will be delivered through a series of individual projects, including public works, site assembly and specific development projects. **The Delivery Plan will develop the outline master plans will further to enable a 'project programme' to be established as a basis for detailed designs, costings, development appraisals and phasing.** Phasing will need to be based as a clear prioritisation of the individual projects within each centre strategy. The Delivery Plan will seek to identify funding availability and delivery programme for each centre.

It is anticipated that SOAR will lead the delivery of the Margetson and Herries Road/Four Greens/Busk Meadow centre strategies, utilising available SRB funding (due to be completed by March 2006) along with funding support if available from EP. The Chaucer/Buchanan and Southey centre strategies require more complex delivery arrangements involving the Council, EP and the private sector given the scale of change envisaged. Delivery timescales for these centres are likely to extend beyond SRB expenditure timeframes and would require all agencies to commit to hub delivery as part of the wider strategies proposed.

5.4 Promoting a more integrated approach

The centre strategies should provide a framework for more effective integration between the range of agencies involved in regeneration across Southey Owlerton. The Council, the Owlerton/Southey Green Area Panel and the SOAR Board need to take a proactive role in ensuring that the range of interventions underway or proposed are effectively co-ordinated. This should include:

- The 'hub' projects;
- Transform-led housing interventions;
- Service provider-led projects;
- City Council land disposals.

The Delivery Plan will provide the framework for securing effective co-ordination of public and private sector investment across the centres.