

Retail Strategy

Overview

Key Objectives

New 'comparison' retail demand from the new residents should be met in existing town centres - Fulham, Hammersmith, Shepherd's Bush, Kensington High Street and King's Road. In Fulham Town Centre there is an additional opportunity that should be taken to extend the town centre north along North End Road; and

Retail to meet the day to day needs of the new resident and worker population, in addition to the extended Fulham Town Centre, should be clustered around underground stations and in a new local centre within the OA which will also complement the new cultural and visitor facilities.

Context

7.1 This chapter sets out the requirements for the location, capacity and type of retail provision in the OA. For the purposes of this SPD, retail uses are defined as all those land uses within Class A of the Use Classes Order 2010, which includes A1 (shops), A2 (financial and professional services), A3 (restaurants and cafés), A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food take-always).

7.2 There are four designated shopping centres within the immediate vicinity of the OA. These are Fulham Town Centre and North End Road (West Kensington) Key Local Centre in LBHF and Earl's Court Road Neighbourhood Centre and Old Brompton Road (West) Neighbourhood Centre in RBKC.

7.3 Further away from the OA there are several very important and successful higher order centres, such as Shepherd's Bush, Hammersmith, Kensington High Street, and King's Road. In addition to the local convenience function, these centres are also important comparison shopping destinations with a catchment that includes the OA.

Policy Context

7.4 The Mayor's London Plan (2011):

'Retail and Town Centre Development' (Policy 4.7),
'Supporting a Successful and Diverse Retail Sector' (Policy 4.8), and
'Small Shops' (Policy 4.9).

7.5 LBHF's Core Strategy (2011):

- 'Hierarchy of Town and Local Centres' (Strategic Policy C), and
- 'Strategic Site and Housing Regeneration Area - FRA 1'.

7.6 RBKC's Core Strategy (2010):

- 'Earl's Court' (Policy CP10 and associated Vision),
- 'Earl's Court Exhibition Centre' (Policy CA7),
- 'Location of New Shop Uses' (Policy CF1), and
- 'Retail Development within Town Centres' (Policy CF2).

Figure 7.1: Illustrative diagram showing the potential distribution of retail across the OA

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Retail Capacity (Comparison)

Key Principle RS1:

Comparison retail demand generated by the new development should be accommodated within existing surrounding town centres. Any comparison retail that cannot be accommodated within existing surrounding town centres should primarily be provided along North End Road, as an extension to Fulham Town Centre, where the potential for an anchor store should also be explored.

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7.7 The level of retail capacity deemed appropriate within the OA will be based on the ability of existing centres in the vicinity to soak up the identified need. Any retail proposals for development outside of these centres would need to demonstrate that the level of retail proposed is in accordance with the below capacity figures is for the day to day needs of the OA or is complementary to the cultural facilities, and cannot be accommodated in existing centres. Applicants should demonstrate flexibility in terms of scale and scope when showing what capacity the existing retail centres have to provide for the needs of new development in the OA.

7.8 The three authorities commissioned retail consultants, Roger Tym and Partners (RTP), to conduct a Retail Need Assessment for the OA, which reported in December 2010. This assessment considered the scale of existing expenditure and potential expenditure growth, in order to identify whether any new retail floorspace is needed in the wider Study Area (as shown on Figure 7.2). This Study Area includes several existing centres, such as Hammersmith Town Centre and Fulham Town Centre in LBHF and Earl's Court Road, Fulham Road West, Kensington High Street, South Kensington and Fulham Road East (Brompton Cross) in RBKC.

7.9 RTP recognised a "quantitative need for between 34,100 and 38,200sqm gross of A Class (excluding A1 service and A2) floorspace by 2016, increasing to between 62,300 and 71,300sqm gross by 2021" for the entire Study Area. RTP advised that "there is physical capacity for growth in the centres within and outside the Study Area that could be used to absorb the growth identified", which is consistent with the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (PPS4) and the policy context set out above. RTP also advised that "there is an opportunity for growth within the Opportunity Area through the masterplanning process".

7.10 Any comparison retail proposed within the OA should be steered towards North End Road, where it will act as an extension to Fulham Town Centre. The

provision of an anchor store in this location should be explored, which has the potential to draw more of a pedestrian footfall up from the Fulham Broadway end of Fulham Town Centre and help to invigorate the middle section of North End Road, where the vitality and viability of retail has struggled in recent years.

Figure 7.2: Retail Need Assessment Study Area

Location of Local Needs Retail

Key Principle RS2:

Retail to meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers should be accommodated:

- Within and next to Fulham Town Centre;
- Within and next to North End Road (West Kensington) Key Local Centre and around public transport hubs (West Brompton and Earl's Court); and
- a new centre within the OA.

7.11 The primary focus for new retail floorspace should be within and adjacent to Fulham Town Centre. Through the regeneration of the OA, there is an opportunity to repair the existing gaps in the non-residential frontage along the eastern edge of North End Road in order to create a rejuvenated, two sided retail street.

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7.12 Retail should then be steered towards North End Road (West Kensington) Key Local Centre and the areas where the highest levels of pedestrian activity are expected, such as around the Earl's Court (Warwick Road entrance) and West Brompton Underground stations.

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7.13 It is expected that the new centre within the OA will be of a local scale. The authorities would encourage the new centre to be located within the vicinity of the Empress State Building where it is also expected that the cultural facilities will primarily be located. This centre will therefore also have the potential to complement the new cultural facilities (please see Chapter 8).

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7.14 Other non-residential uses such as offices, hotels and cultural and community uses would be appropriate in any of the retail locations identified above.

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Impact of Retail

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Key Principle RS3:

Applicants must demonstrate that any retail proposed within the OA has a minimal impact on existing centres surrounding the OA.

7.15 The location and scale of retail considered appropriate within the OA should be determined through a Retail Impact Assessment, prepared in accordance with PPS4 or successor national policy guidance and Policy 4.7 of the Mayor's London Plan (2011). This must assess the amount of retail development that may be accommodated in particular locations, without having a negative impact on the existing centres in the wider area, and which will allow the existing centres to benefit from a significant proportion of expenditure growth.

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Key Principle RS4:

The provision of retail floorspace should reflect the phasing of the development and be related to the day to day needs of those living and working in the OA at each phase.

7.16 New retail should be provided in a way that reflects the phasing of the redevelopment, taking into account the day to day needs of the rising residential and worker population. Too much retail provided too early in the development might harm existing centres. The phasing and timescales of the retail floorspace should be developed accordingly.

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Figure 7.3: Retail on North End Road (northern end)

Retail Controls

Key Principle RS5:

The authorities will control the nature of new retail proposed in the OA by securing a binding Retail Management Plan as part of any planning agreements.

7.17 The authorities will control, through Section 106 agreements and planning conditions, the scale, nature and character of any retail proposed in the OA, in order to ensure that it does not have a detrimental impact on the existing centres and that it responds appropriately to the existing character of the OA and its surroundings. The primary mechanism that the authorities will employ in order to achieve this is to require the applicant to submit a Retail Management Plan, which through a planning agreement, would be a binding document within the terms of which the applicant would be required to operate. The Retail Management Plan will control issues such as:

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- phasing,
- unit sizes,
- convenience/comparison split by floorspace,
- limitations on other retail-related uses (A classes),
- range and number of independent shops,
- triggers and sanctions to ensure delivery of an applicant's retail concept,
- prohibition on mezzanines; and
- active frontages.

Figure 7.4: Local retail offer with active frontages

Key Principle RS6:

The priority in terms of retail typology should be the provision of narrow fronted ground floor units that create a legible streetscape and provide in-built flexibility for expansion and reduction depending on market demands.

7.18 The retail units in the three existing retail centres in the vicinity of the OA primarily consist of ground floor premises within Victorian properties. As a consequence, the unit sizes within these premises tend to be relatively narrow, except where more than one have been combined. These narrow shop fronts create a varied and lively streetscape that is not overly dominated by one or two excessively large retail premises. The authorities wish to see this existing character used as a design precedent for any retail proposed within the OA. In order to create mixed and diverse communities, the upper floors should be predominantly residential, although

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some may be appropriate for offices. The width of the shop fronts should be reflected in the upper floors, providing vertical emphasis to the buildings.

7.19 The exception to this rule is in the extension of Fulham Town Centre in North End Road, where larger format retail units would be appropriate if commercially viable. Careful attention must be paid to their design to ensure they complement the existing character of the street.

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Key Principle RS7:

A number of small units will be secured as affordable shops to provide accommodation for retailers deemed essential for a good retail offer, but that are not able to afford full rents.

7.20 Smaller retail units tend to be occupied by independent retailers or 'local' shops, which both Councils encourage through any development proposals. Policy 4.9A of the Mayor's London Plan (2011) para. 7.24 of LBHF's Core Strategy (2011) and Policy CF2 of RBKC's Core Strategy (2010) set out an expectation that affordable retail units should be secured as part of any large scale retail proposals. The authorities will expect an element of affordable retail to form part of any retail offer within the OA, which will be secured through any planning agreement.

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Figure 7.5: An independent retailer in the local area

North End Road Market

Key Principle RS8:

Any application for comprehensive redevelopment of the OA should allocate land, with a North End Road address, for the potential relocation of North End Road street market.

7.21 North End Road Market currently operates as an on-street market on North End Road in Fulham Town Centre. Although the market currently creates a bustling atmosphere, its on-street location also increases traffic congestion on North End Road and reduces public safety. LBHF's Core Strategy (2011) Policy FRA states that *"relocation (of the market) to an off-street location should be sought, but dialogue should take place with street traders to ensure a logical solution that contributes to the wider regeneration of the area as a whole. The potential regeneration of the Opportunity Area may present new opportunities for relocating the market in the long term"*.

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7.22 Redevelopment of the OA provides an opportunity to consider relocating the market to within the OA, enhancing its attractiveness and securing its future provision, whilst maintaining its links with North End Road. Space for the relocated market could either take the form of a market square, a wider footway alongside a street or a covered market provided on a major pedestrian thoroughfare through a building. As part of this relocation, adequate facilities should be provided for the auxiliary needs of the market, such as the storage of temporary stalls, the collection of waste and the needs of delivery vehicles so that they do not clutter streets or inhibit other movement and permeability.

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7.23 Any decision to relocate the market would be predicated on discussions between LBHF Council and street traders in order to ensure a workable solution. Were the decision to be made to not move the market to this location, the applicants would have the opportunity to put the allocated land to an alternative use. In this instance, LBHF would need to be satisfied that any alternative use would not impact negatively on the vitality and viability of the existing North End Road market.

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Figure 7.6: North End Road Market