

2 Vision and Objectives

Vision

2.1 The Vision for Rochdale Town Centre is:

‘An attractive, vibrant and revitalised Rochdale Town Centre that has an excellent range and choice of shopping, leisure, living, working, and cultural facilities that meets the needs of, and provides a focal point for, the Borough. Rochdale will be established as a major sub regional shopping centre and destination in the North West’

Aim

2.2 The Aim for Rochdale Town Centre East in achieving the above Vision is:

‘To achieve the comprehensive redevelopment of the east central part of Rochdale town centre in a way that successfully integrates with the existing centre to create a vibrant and attractive town centre that meets the needs and aspirations of those who live, work, shop in or visit Rochdale. The town centre will offer an integrated range of quality retail, leisure, civic, community, office and residential uses supported by a strong transport infrastructure; all set within a high quality environment of attractive and distinctive buildings and co-ordinated public realm. The development will be of sufficient scale and impact to make a major positive contribution to the regeneration of the whole town centre and the Borough’

Objectives

2.3 The principal objectives are:

- To attract new investment into the town centre which will enhance and promote Rochdale’s role as a sub-regional centre through the provision of new quality retail, leisure, commercial, employment, residential, civic and community uses;
- To considerably improve the quality, range and choice of retail facilities in the town centre to ensure that it meets the shopping needs of its catchments population;
- To encourage an improved mix of complementary uses in the town centre including retail, leisure, restaurants/cafes, housing and public facilities;
- To focus retail investment in the most sequentially preferable town centre locations and restrict edge of centre and out of centre retailing.
- To provide new lively shopping streets with a mixture of uses, that creates a safe and vibrant centre at all times of the day and that contributes to the evening economy. They should be open streets, with some protection from the weather, rather than enclosed shopping malls.

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- To successfully integrate new development, uses, services and facilities into the existing town centre to ensure that it strengthens the whole of the town centre and does not detract from existing areas;
- To improve the existing and create new high quality landmark buildings, public open spaces and urban realm in order to enhance the centre's visual attractiveness, usability and vitality;
- To open up the River Roch frontage to provide public access, a landmark feature of ecological and amenity interest that enhances the attractiveness of the town centre;
- To ensure a high quality of design is achieved in the development of buildings, streetscape, open space infrastructure and servicing;
- To give pedestrians priority by improving and strengthening pedestrian connections within and around the town centre and to neighbouring communities and facilities;
- To ensure easy access to the town centre by providing excellent public transport facilities, rationalising traffic circulation into and around the town centre, facilitating access at the main entry points whilst discouraging through traffic, and providing appropriate levels of accessible short and long stay parking;
- To secure the satisfactory re-location of the bus station, the provision of a Metrolink terminus and public transport interchange with direct and convenient access to and from the town centre;
- To secure the provision of new high quality accessible public and civic facilities, e.g. a relocated Library, Council offices and services for the public, a new health centre offering improved facilities;
- To create major new direct, and indirect, employment opportunities;
- To provide new housing within the town centre, with a diversity of tenure, to offer the opportunity of town centre living in Rochdale and to bring life into, and promote security in, the town centre;
- To thereby secure the future health and vitality of Rochdale town centre.

Design Principles

2.4 A number of overarching 'Design Principles' have been identified that should be applied to the design of the town centre and any development within it, and are considered in more detail in Chapter 5 Design Principles. They are that it should:

1. **'Be Vibrant'** - Creating a lively town centre that has a mixture and diversity of uses for all communities.
2. **'Be Distinctive'** - A development that is attractive and has an identity and character that is distinctive and reflects the character and unique identity of Rochdale.

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3. **'Have attractive spaces and buildings'** - An attractive town centre that has well designed buildings, streets and public spaces that provide a well planned and attractive environment.
4. **Have good access through it'** – Creating a town centre that has good pedestrian links to all those central places people may wish to visit.
5. **'Be Safe'** - Creating a town centre that is welcoming and safe and secure at all times.
6. **'Be easy to get to'** - Creating a town centre that is easy to get into, with good public transport, a well planned road layout and appropriate levels of short and long stay car parking. It should also have good pedestrian links to adjoining retail, residential and business areas.
7. **'Be adaptable'** - It is important that town centre buildings can respond to changes in technology, market conditions and living circumstances. This enables buildings and spaces to have a long life, so creating a flexible and sustainable town centre environment.
8. **'Be Legible'** - Rochdale town centre should be easy to find your way around and have a clearly memorable character and identity.
9. **'Be Sustainable'** - Any comprehensive development of the town centre should use current best practice to make it more energy and resource efficient to help combat climate change. It should also create a town centre of enduring quality that can provide for the needs of current and future residents, businesses, and retailers.
10. **'Have Sustainable buildings'** - Development must use construction methods and materials that are not only fit for their intended purpose and make a positive contribution to design quality, character and appearance, but also contribute to the sustainable use of resources.
11. **'Be Maintainable'** - Consideration must be given at the design stage to the effects of ageing, weather and climate conditions, and normal wear and tear on buildings, streets, spaces and landscape to ensure they are maintainable at a reasonable cost.

Note: All the design principles, apart from the first, are identified as design principles in the Council's draft Urban Design Guide SPD (see Appendix B). The first 6 were also identified as Key Themes in the initial public consultation exercise on the regeneration of the town centre, and were supported and are taken forward through this SPD.

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