THE ORCHARD PARK SHOPPING CENTRE A guide to the redevelopment proposals and a summary of survey results OPERA Orchard Park Environment Redevelopment Association July 1998

THE ORCHARD PARK SHOPPING CENTRE

A guide to the redevelopment proposals and a summary of survey results

OPERA

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July 1998

The Orchard Park Shopping Centre

Orchard Park is an outer estate built mainly during the 1960s as council housing and lies in the north-west corner of Hull, about 3.5 miles from the city centre. The area's main shopping centre is to be found within a roughly triangular 10-acre site bordered by roads at the eastern edge of the estate. The entire site is under consideration for a programme of redevelopment and, for convenience, is referred to as the Orchard Park Shopping Centre.

Two important clarifications need to be made if the name is not to understate the function of the site.

Firstly, the Shopping Centre is located such that it shares its southern border with the North Hull Estate, known locally as the 'Old Estate'. The Centre therefore not only serves the four 'villages' which comprise Orchard Park but also the northern section of the adjacent estate. The two communities together make up most of the Orchard Park Ward, which contains some 14,500 people living in over 5,700 homes.

Secondly, apart from the main group of shop units, the site contains the following. The St Michael's parish church together with church hall, vicarage, ancillary buildings and land; a health centre; the Orchard Park Community Centre; the Pint and Pot public house; a further group of shops which also contains the Council's estate office; two private hire offices; and a large surfaced area which, each Thursday, is home to an open-air market.

The Orchard Park Shopping Centre is thus in a position to serve as a commercial and social focus to the residents of two communities.

Brief background to the Shopping Centre

During the mid-1980s a comprehensive study was conducted of the Orchard Park Estate by the Centre for Environmental Studies (CES). The subsequent report told how detailed plans drawn up in 1963 for an integrated neighbourhood centre were dropped as a result of political changes within the Council in 1969. The Shopping Centre was finally and belatedly opened in its present form in 1974.

CES were not complimentary about the Shopping Centre in their findings. They found that it had 'a generally grim image' and observed:

The Orchard Park shopping centre is poorly maintained. The Development Company which owns the complex does not employ cleansing or security staff on site. Although an annual standing order with the City Engineer arranges for daily cleaning of the site, large amounts of litter and rubbish remain. Since the centre is subject to wilful damage, shop fronts are protected by mesh grilles and metal shuttering, which make it very dismal and gloomy.

In the summer of 1983, a weekly open market was introduced on the largely redundant car parking expanse near to the Shopping Centre. The market brings trade to the area and acts as a social meeting point. A quarter of a mile east of the boundary of the Orchard Park Estate and adjoining an arterial road, a Tesco supermarket was opened in 1986. Otherwise, local residents are still served by the same facilities described by CES in the mid-1980s.

The Council's redevelopment proposal

With reference to its vision for the entire city, the Council believes that 'it is necessary to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres by making them attractive to both retailers and customers'. The clear intention is that improvements will be funded by private capital.

As far as the Orchard Park Shopping Centre is concerned, the Council has a specific proposal. In its simplest form, this requires that the Council sells its land ownership within the designated site, approximately three-fifths of the total area, to a development company. That company will then build new structures on the site for clients and at the same time will improve the infrastructure of the parts of the site under its control. Other parties having property interests within the site will be encouraged to respond accordingly.

Who's who

Kingston-upon-Hull City Council own some 60% of the designated area. This includes the walkways and covered areas serving the shops, the car parks, and other public areas. The maintenance expenditure for the Shopping Centre comes from the same budget provided for the maintenance of housing on the Orchard Park Estate and, as a consequence, suffers from priority calls on the available financial resources. This would explain the sustained neglect of the Centre and the desire for inward private investment.

An issue of contention surrounding the Council's proposal is that of the destination of the money the Council will receive from the sale. The Council is of course entitled to channel its receipts as it wishes, but a widely held view is that the money will go to the controversial Gypsyville redevelopment programme. Many local residents would like to see it used within the Orchard Park Estate. Others feel the issue should not be allowed to hinder the proposals for the Shopping Centre.

The planning aspects of the redevelopment proposal are being handled by the Council's Technical Services Department.

Pagecolt Ltd, a London based property company, acquired some years ago a long lease from the Council on the shop units themselves. The units are in turned leased on shorter terms to traders. Pagecolt have expressed to OPERA an interest in the general redevelopment intentions and a willingness to consider improvements of their own.

The local agents acting for Pagecolt Ltd are Dennis Chartered Surveyors of Hedon, Hull.

Keepmoat Partnerships Ltd, a subsidiary of Keepmoat Holdings plc and until spring 1998 known as Yorkshire Metropolitan Properties, have been granted a second term of exclusive negotiation rights by the Council with regards to the purchase and redevelopment of the Council's land within the designated area. These rights are subject to renewal on a yearly basis. One purpose of such rights is to allow the developer to feel confident enough to carry out preliminary work at the developer's own cost.

Keepmoat Partnerships are based in Doncaster.

Hull & Holderness Community Health NHS Trust run the Orchard Park Health Centre and are the owners. The building is not only now inadequate for the Trust's needs but also has problems connected with its foundations. The Trust, therefore, intends to have a new Health Centre building constructed in the eastern part of the designated area. The present structure will subsequently be demolished.

The Church is by far the largest private landowner within the designated area, possessing about one-sixth of the entire site. Part of the Church property, once a youth centre, lies derelict. The Church is well advanced with its own plans for redevelopment in the form of the Orchard Park Youth Project, for which a new youth centre is proposed.

The 'front' shops, face onto Orchard Park Road in the south-west corner of the designated area. Apart from the Council's estate office, the row of eight businesses is in various private ownerships. The parade, built between the wars, is a listed building. It is understood that a portion of the monies received by the HAT (North Hull Action Housing Trust) from the sale of its Pavilion building is to be spent on improving the frontages and forecourts of these properties.

Mansfield Brewery Ltd are the owners of the 'Pint and Pot' public house, constructed originally as a club. Surprisingly, the pub does not have its own car park, but the Brewery site, which is believed to be leased from the Council, includes a private hire office.

The Orchard Park Community Centre is a prefabricated structure occupying a plot leased from the Council. Despite its relatively small land representation within the overall site, the Community Centre is nonetheless seen as an essential part of the social fabric of the local community. A new location within the designated area is currently being considered by the organizers of the Community Centre, along with the construction of a new, permanent building.

Town & Country Markets Ltd are the current holders of the licence to conduct the open market on a Thursday. The licence is exercised from each June. Following a concern expressed by OPERA that the market might be 'squeezed out' as a result of commercial pressures after the sale of the land it is held on to a developer, the Council have confirmed that the market will be allowed to continue, although its eventual siting is still to be discussed.

Town & Country are based in Sussex.

The current position

No land sale has yet taken place, and no formal overall plans have been drawn up. The developer is in negotiations with the Health Trust regarding the construction of a new Health Centre, the precise location of which has not yet been determined.

Initially, the developer was seeking a client for a new supermarket building of about 10,000 sq ft. The work on this and the Health Centre were to provide the financial "engine' for the entire project. However, strong doubts have been expressed about the desirability of a new supermarket. Not only would it reduce the trade of the existing shops without necessarily introducing a greater range of goods into the area, but it would also have to be built in the middle area of the site. By occupying a central position in this way, such a building would represent the loss of an opportunity of a 'see through' shopping parade, a design which is considered spatially more attractive and better for the implementation of security measures.

So far, a client company for a new supermarket has not been found, and the prospects of attracting one to a location already served by a similarly sized Kwik Save supermarket, and lying so close to a Tesco site, are perhaps slim. The developer is therefore considering alternatives to the composition of retail provision in the form of smaller units.

OPERA

OPERA was started as the Orchard Park Shops Redevelopment Association in early 1997. After a name adjustment, the Association was formally constituted 14 August 1997. The terms of the Constitution allow for representation on the General Committee from businesses and traders, community groups, the Church, the health authorities, people who work in the area, and of course local residents.

The Objects of the Association, as articulated in the Constitution, are:

- (a) to work to retain the existing retail outlets in the Orchard Park Estate and to encourage the expansion and improvement of retail facilities;
- (b) to encourage community participation in plans to improve and redevelop the Orchard Park Shopping Centre;
- (c) to seek the views of local people on the redevelopment of the area, and to represent these views to planners and developers, in order to ensure that the interests of local residents, voluntary and community groups, businesses, health and other workers, and young people are taken into account;
- (d) to monitor any developments, proposed or actual, and planning decisions relating to them;
- (e) to ensure that local people are educated and informed on the planning process.

Since formation, OPERA has conducted a number of surveys among local residents, the summarized results of which appear in this guide. The Association has also established communications with all parties concerned.

A major concern of the Association is the provision of service management at the Orchard Park Shopping Centre once improvements have taken place. By service management is meant cleansing, lighting, maintenance and security of the public areas. Poor service arrangements lead to general decay and, whatever the background circumstances, it is arguably neither inaccurate nor unfair to say that the shopping area has indeed suffered many years of sustained neglect.

Once the Council sells its land to a developer, the responsibility for service management is presumably passed to the new owners. OPERA believes that it speaks for the community when it voices a desire to ensure that, after redevelopment, the process of neglect is not begun all over again.

The new owner may propose to fund service management through the imposition of charges onto existing and future tenants within the site, additional to their lease rents. The level of such charges, and the quality of the services provided from them, are matters that would need to be addressed should this course be adopted.

Another way of providing the funding for sustainable service management would be through some of the rents received from new shop units. At present, OPERA is examining this idea of community based service provision.

The future

Despite the unappealing state of the shopping area as it now greets the visitor, there is a widely held conviction that the site has substantial potential. As the Shopping Habits Survey at the rear of this guide suggests, the Centre in its present form may be attracting only about half the weekly shopping done by the residents of the surrounding estates. A realistic and committed programme for a clean, bright, safe and integrated environment would be a start to winning over some of the other half. It would also be a means of encouraging more ranges of goods and services to the area.

Already, movement is evident. Specifications for a new Health Centre are being drawn up. A new, purpose-built brick Community Centre is under proposal. The Church is well on with its Youth Project. The parade of shops facing Orchard Park Road is to have a facelift. Improvements to the roads surrounding the site are imminent. As regards the main shops themselves, the owner awaits the brief of a general design so that he can consider his own input.

OPERA is well placed to add some orchestration to these and future activities. To act, if required, as a conduit between the various parties, and between them and local residents. To pass on the wishes and opinions of the public to the improvers, and to explain to the public the practical and financial limits by which the improvers are bound. The members who make up OPERA's elected committee have no wish to be a mere cry in the storm. On the contrary, they look forward to being asked to play a key role in the process of redevelopment at the Orchard Park Shopping Centre.

The General Committee of OPERA

Elected Honorary Officers:

Chair - Carol Howell	802249
Vice-Chair - Gordon Rogers	441045
Secretary - Brian Williams	855365
Treasurer - Brian Beck	320052
Press Officer - Barbara Rogers	441045
Membership Secretary - Iris Fletcher	801408

Elected Representatives:

Full Members	
Ray Duffill	806336
Janice Edmonds	809170
Rita Halls	851868
Margaret Pearcy	809731
Dave Rust	
Group Members	
Rev David Walker	803375
Ann Wilson	858462

Address details

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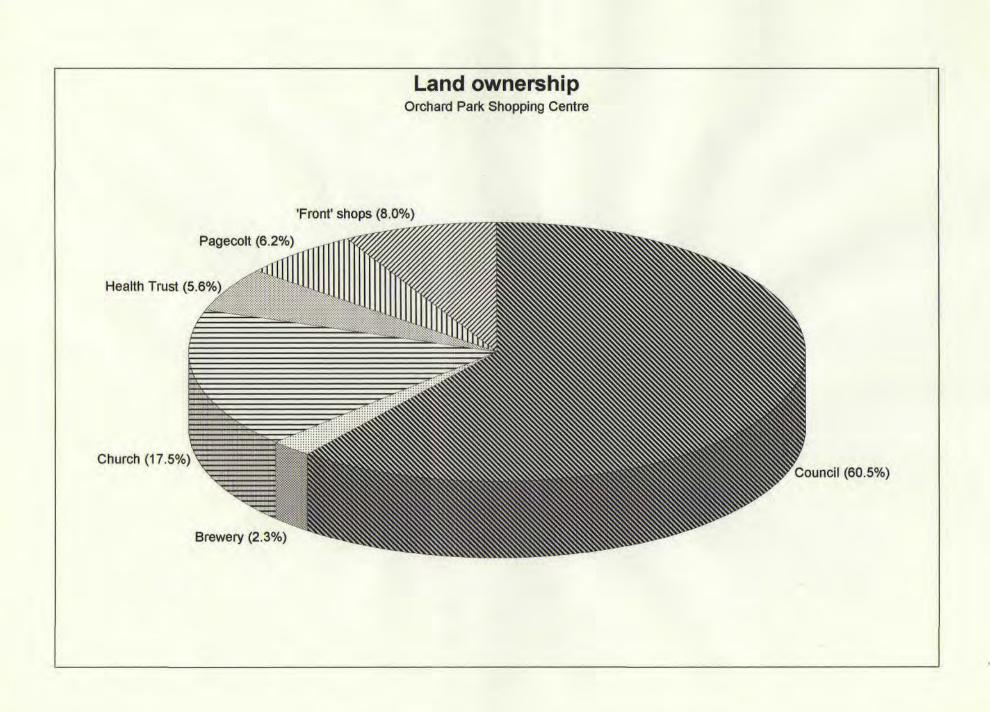
E-mail: B.Williams@econ.hull.ac.uk

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ADDENDUM - Page 3

The exclusive negotiating rights held by Keepmoat Partnerships Ltd were withdraw by the Council on 7 September 1998. This means that there is now an open field for any development body (including Keepmoat) to tender ideas for the site.



PUBLIC SURVEYS CONDUCTED REGARDING THE ORCHARD PARK SHOPPING CENTRE

OPERA

Orchard Park Environment Redevelopment Association

SURVEYS CONDUCTED DURING 1997

During the course of 1997, various surveys were carried out by DOC (Developing Our Community) and by OPERA's own members. The method used was the participatory appraisal technique. Most of the surveys were conducted at the Shopping Centre itself, but one took place at the Sir Henry Cooper School.

ENVIRONMENT

The questioning was directed towards what people would like to see in the way of improvements to the Shopping Centre. The most popular opinion was that the Centre should be altered to an arcade style plan. Cleanliness featured highly, as did a desire for safer floor surfaces, notably within the paved areas. Better decor and lighting, and the provision of seating, were other suggestions. Some emphasis was placed on toilet facilities and on full access for the disabled. There was also a feeling that car and cycle parking arrangements could be improved.

RANGE OF GOODS

This section reflects the type of retail businesses that users of the Shopping Centre would like to see. The wish for a café is prominent, though many types of retail businesses appear in the survey results. Banking facilities are also called for.

It is significant that, after the general environment, the range of goods available within the Orchard Park Shopping Centre represents such a strong theme.

SECURITY

The installation of CCTV came out as the prime issue in some of the surveys, and featured highly throughout. A greater police presence was also felt to be needed.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Perhaps because the surveys were aimed essentially at eliciting information on the Shopping Centre itself, social issues were not well defined. However, facilities for teenagers were mentioned, and there was reference to problems experienced with drug abusers.

1997 SURVEYS: TOP TEN ISSUES

The following lists represent the highest scoring issues in the various surveys conducted during 1997.

June and September

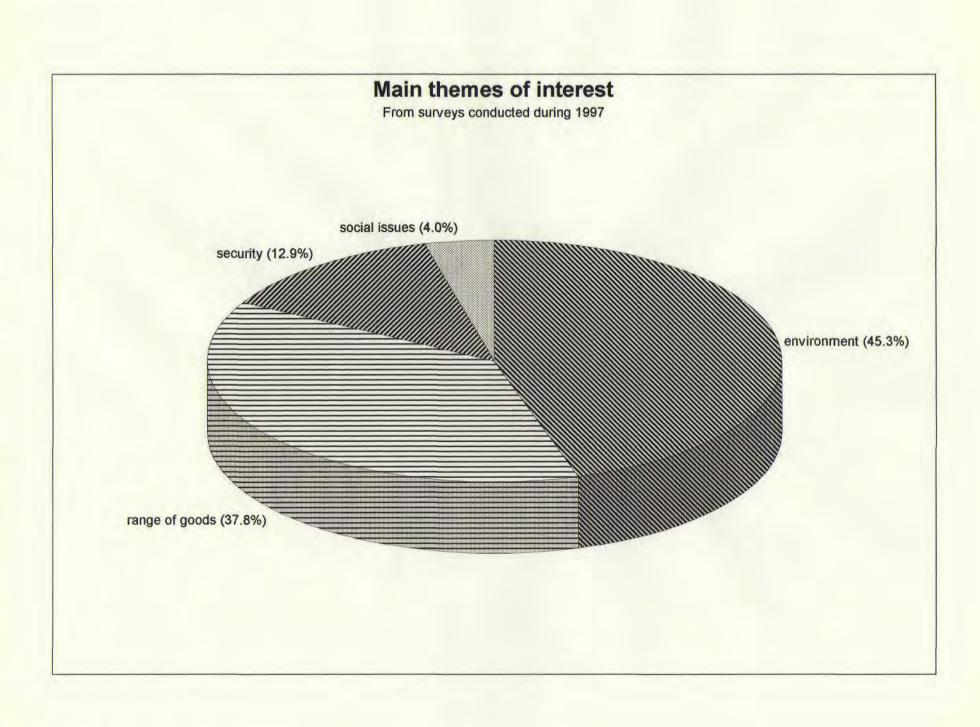
- 1. Installation of CCTV
- 2. Opening of a café
- 3. A better supermarket
- 4. Regular cleaning of the Centre, including during opening hours
- 5. Opening of a department store similar to Boyes
- 6. Alterations to the Centre to an arcade style plan
- 7. Introduction of banking facilities
- 8. Provision of new toilet facilities, with an attendant
- 9. A more visible police presence
- Opening of a clothes outlet

October and November

- 1. Opening of a café
- 2. Alterations to the Centre to an arcade style plan
- 3. Installation of CCTV
- 4. Opening of a pet shop
- 5. Opening of a clothes outlet
- 6. A better supermarket
- 7. Regular cleaning of the Centre, including during opening hours
- 8. Provision of new toilet facilities, with an attendant
- 9. Opening of a department store similar to Boyes
- 10. Improvements to the flooring, especially within the paved areas

Sir Henry Cooper School (12-13 year olds)

- 1. Opening of a café
- 2. Opening of a pet shop
- 3. Opening of a cycle shop
- 4. Alterations to the Centre to an arcade style plan
- Opening of a clothes outlet
- 6. Opening of a video hire centre
 - (Improvements to the flooring, especially within the paved areas
- 7. (Improved security arrangements
 - (Provision of a security officer's operations room
- 10. Provision of a children's playground



'PLANNING-FOR-REAL' SURVEY ORCHARD PARK SHOPPING CENTRE

OPERA

Orchard Park Environment Redevelopment Association

'PLANNING-FOR-REAL' SURVEY

On Thursday 5 February 1998, OPERA carried out a Planning-For-Real public consultation at the St Michael's Church Hall, Orchard Park. Thursday is the day of the local outdoor market and is also one of the busiest days of the week for the Shopping Centre.

Method

The Planning-For-Real exercise involved the construction of a 3-dimensional model of the Centre and its immediate surrounds. The model, large enough (6ft x 4ft) to enable people quickly to recognize the representation and thus orientate themslelves, was built with the assistance of the pupils of the Sir Henry Cooper School.

Colour-coded opinion cards were available for people to place on the model. Many of these cards were designed by OPERA and were based on the experience of previous survey work. Each card represented an opinion or a suggestion on the Shopping Centre. The cards covered five themes of interest: shops, community facilities, environment, health, and security. In total, 229 people attended the event during the course of the day, and 1284 cards were placed on the model.

SHOPS

It is apparent from the results that there is a need for a wider range of goods within the Centre, and for an improvement in supermarket facilities. Slightly over a third of all cards placed related to the shops issue.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A desire for a general rebuild along the lines of the North Point Centre at Bransholme ('arcade' style) featured the most prominently. One important issue that emerged from this part of the survey is the problems faced by the disabled.

ENVIRONMENT

General improvement along with a call for a cleaner area were the main items here, and there were some useful suggestions that had not appeared in earlier surveys.

HEALTH

Desires for the availability of various specialized medical and health related services were expressed. As in the Community Facilities section, difficulties experienced by the disabled were registered.

SECURITY

This drew, marginally, the third largest number of cards, a greater police presence being considered the most important requirement, while lighting and CCTV also featured highly.

General conclusions

The Planning-For-Real day was successful in a number of ways. Not only does the methodology of PFR allow a greater degree of freedom for the public to express their opinions than - say - if they are asked questions from a prepared list, it can also highlight some basic and relatively simple needs. In this case, several ideas were recorded that had not emerged from previous research work.

As regards the Orchard Park Shopping Centre itself, there would seem to be no lack of room for improvement, but at the same time no lack of suggestions on what changes to make. Some ideas of course may be desirable but are not practicable. Others, like those regarding the types of shops that people would like to see at Orchard Park, are subject to the market forces of commercial viability and cannot be ordered. Even so, a trader, or indeed a specialized health-related practitioner, who would not consider opening in the area as it now exists, might well reconsider in the light of the prospect of an improved environment.

The Planning-For-Real event demonstrated a willingness by local people to come along and have their say in what they regard as an important component of their daily lives. The findings of such an exercise can be a valuable help in gauging a community's detailed needs and wishes, and should thus be a tool in any design process. In the larger picture, however, it would seem clear enough that the needs and wishes of residents of Orchard Park and the adjacent areas are for a shopping centre that has a wider variety of shops and is both clean and safe.

PLANNING-FOR-REAL SURVEY: TOP TEN ISSUES

The following list represents the highest scoring issues in the various categories during the Planning-For-Real exercise conducted 5 February 1998.

Shops and shopping facilities required

- 1. Wallpaper shop
- 2. A better supermarket
- 3. Banking facilities
- 4. Hardware/DIY store
- 5. Clothes outlet
- 6. Electrical goods supplier
- 7. Pet shop
- 8. Café
- 9. Wet fish shop
- 10. Video hire centre

Community facilities required/suggested

- 1. Alterations to the Centre to an arcade style plan
- 2. Provision of new toilet facilities, with facilities for the disabled
- 3. Telephone box
- 4. Neighbourhood advice and self-help shop
- 5. Full access for the disabled
- 6. Crèche facilities
- 7. Regular cleaning of the Centre, including during opening hours
- 8. Care for the elderly
- 9. Welfare rights bureau
- 10. Retain the Community Centre

Environment issues

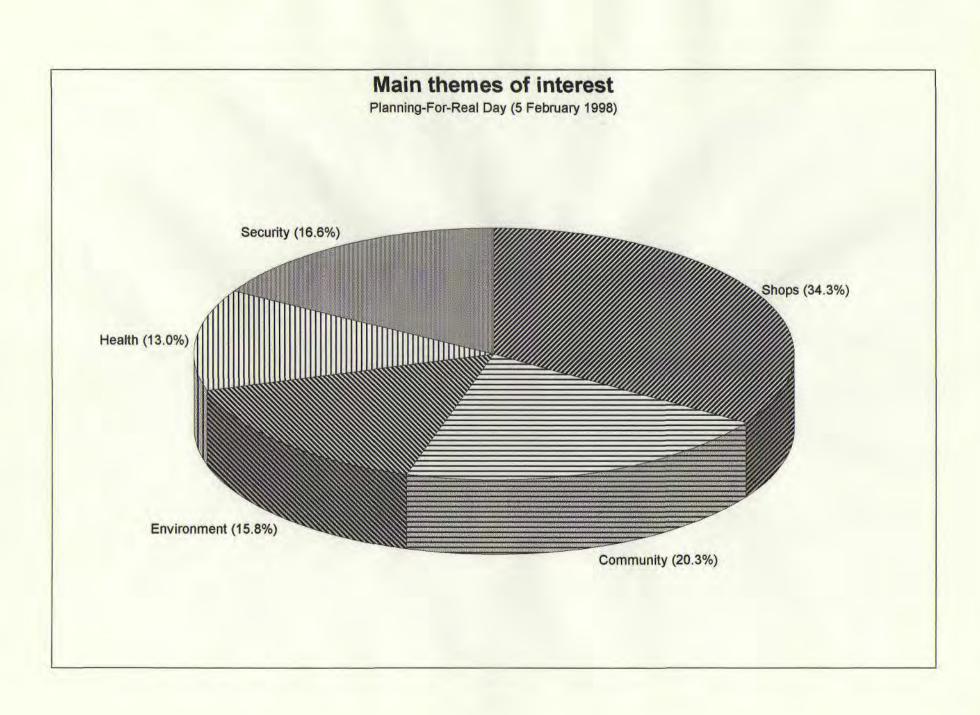
- 1. Improvements to shop frontages
- 2. Clean up of the entire area
- 3. Improvements to the flooring, especially within the paved areas
- 4. Vandal-resistant street furniture
- 5. More litter bins
- 6. Facilities for depositing dog mess
- 7. Recycling collection area
- 8. Improved drainage
- 9. Dog walking area
- 10. Improved car parking facilities

Health facilites required

- 1. Eye testing facilities
- 2. Assisted shopping for the disbaled
- 3. A new health centre
- 4. Dentist
- 5. Bereavement councelling
- 6. Chiropodist
- 7. Mental health support and councelling
- 8. Health and fitness centre
- 9. Minor accident unit
- 10. Blood donor service

Security recommendations

- 1. A more visible police presence
- 2. Security lights
- 3. Better general lighting
- 4. CCTV
- 5. Address the problem of vandalism
- 6. Address the problem of drug abuse
- 7. Address the risk of mugging
- 8. Address the problem of solvent abuse
- 9. Security gates to the Centre, closed at night
- 10. More security guards



SHOPPING HABITS SURVEY ORCHARD PARK SHOPPING CENTRE

OPERA

Orchard Park Environment Redevelopment Association

SHOPPING HABITS SURVEY

Venue: Planning-For-Real Day held Thursday 5 February 1998 at

St Michael's Church Hall, Orchard Park.

Sample: 229 persons, members of the shopping public.

Method: Table-top question boards at entrance to event. Assistance

available.

Objects: 1. to identify main draw (catchment) areas of the Orchard Park

Shopping Centre

2. to estimate market share captured by the Shopping Centre

3. to ascertain criteria for choice of shopping venue

WHERE FROM?

There was possibly a small amount of bias introduced into the survey as a result of the distribution patterns of the OPERA Newsletter announcing the Planning-For-Real event. However, there can be little doubt that, although the Shopping Centre is sited in and named after Orchard Park, the northern part of North Hull Estate (north of Greenwood Avenue) represents a very important segment of the Centre's total draw area.

The slenderness of the 'other areas' slice (see pie chart) would suggest that very few people are attracted to the Centre from beyond the two local estates, even on a market day. Of individuals who entered themselves under this category, it appeared from conversations that the majority work within the area.

SHARE OF THE WEEKLY SHOP

The questions were applied to normal regular shopping requirements, not to special or infrequently sought items. By providing a chart of popular venues and asking the degree of shopping conducted there (little, half, most, all), it has been possible to offer an estimate of the way in which the shopping potential of the locality is divided.

According to the survey, although the Orchard Park Shopping Centre takes unquestionably the greatest share of the locally generated volume, the fact that the Centre attracts only one half means also that 50% of the potential is lost to other venues. The nearby TESCO supermarket takes almost a quarter of the total trade.

CRITERIA FOR CHOICE OF SHOPPING VENUE

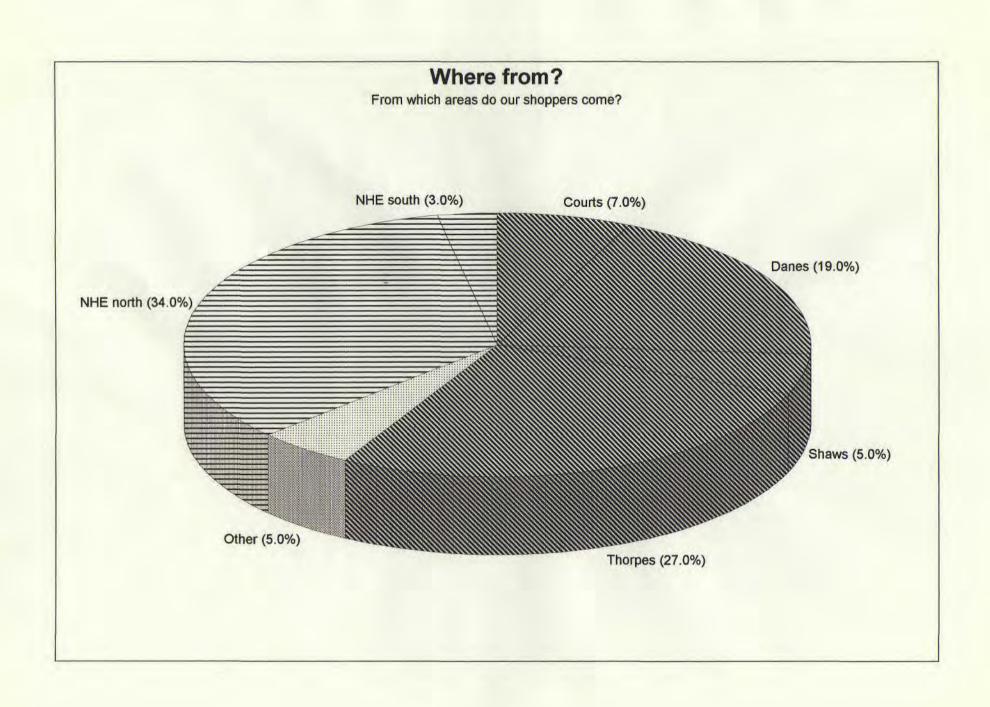
Proximity (convenience) produced the greatest response, although not overwhelmingly so. Interestingly, range availability (choice) of goods was slightly ahead of price. It cannot be altogether a statistical anomaly that the

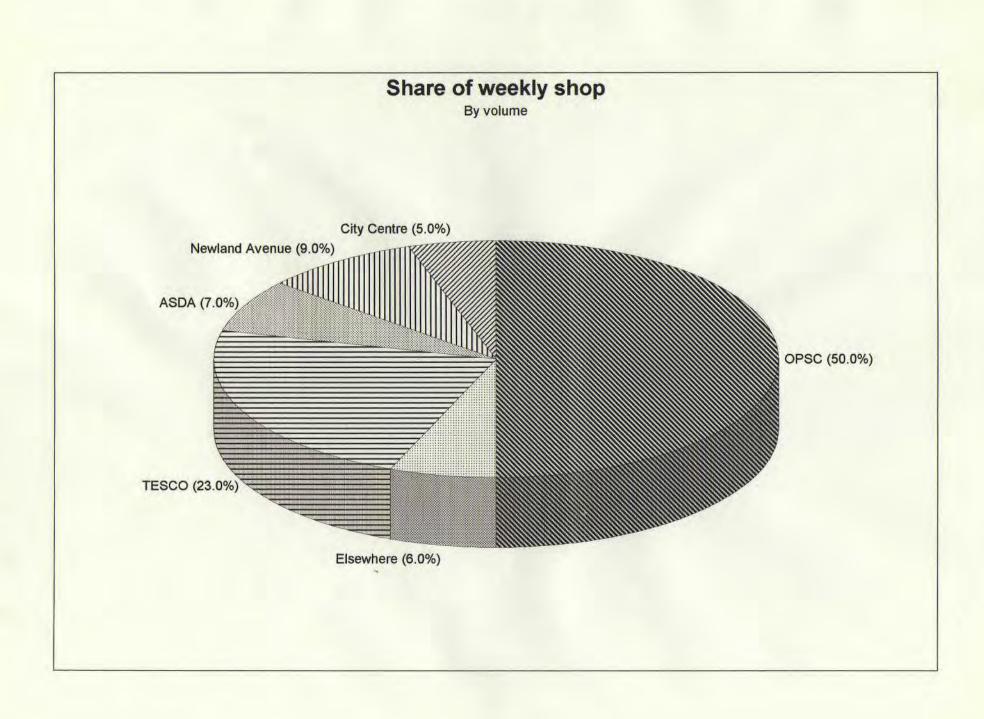
importance attached to range is almost exactly equal to TESCO's estimated share of the local market potential. The environmental factor - the surroundings in which people are expected to shop - would appear to be at least as important as the service customers hope to receive.

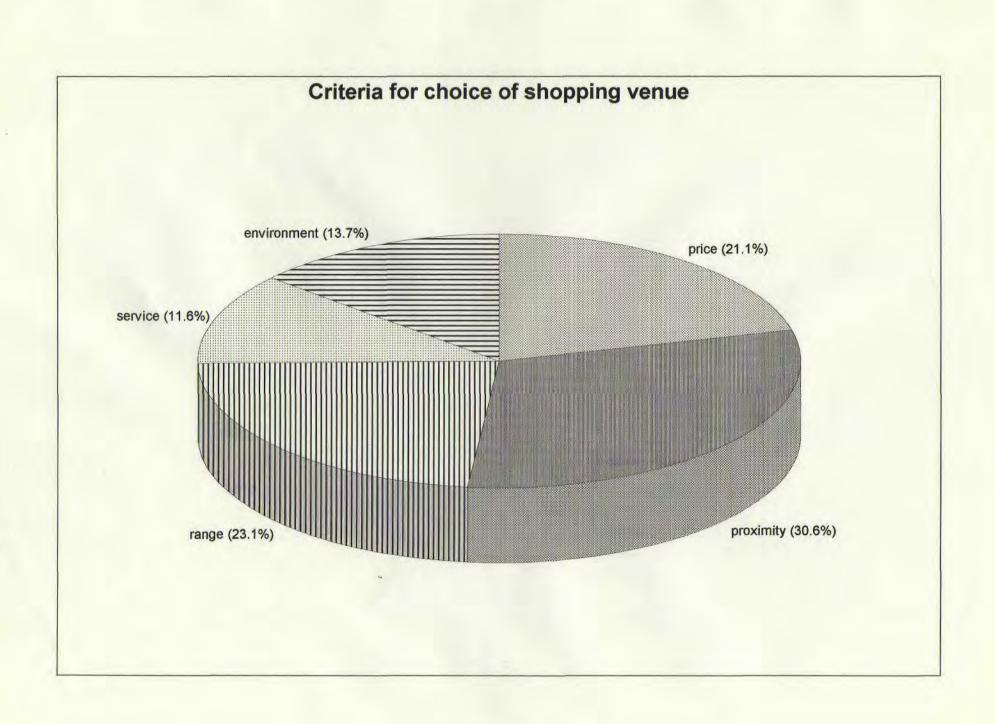
General conclusions

This survey makes no claim to be definitive. All the same, there has to be some validity in the findings if only because the survey was conducted, not by pavement researchers, but by virtue of members of the public purposely coming along to an indoor event.

The overall picture that emerged from the survey may be summarized as follows. The Orchard Park Shopping Centre taps only about half the available local business for food and domestic consumables, and draws very little custom from outside the area. The half that is won is secured largely on grounds of convenience and price. If the other, 'lost' half is to be attracted to the Centre, then it would seem clear that there has to be a better selection of goods and a more inviting environment.







OPERA

The Orchard Park Environment Redevelopment Association, or OPERA, was formed in January 1997 and formally constituted 14 August the same year. The General Committee is made up of elected officers and representatives drawn from a wide range of backgrounds which include business, community and voluntary activities, the Church, and academic affiliations. Total membership exceeds 500.

The General Committee

Honorary Officers:

Chair - Carol Howell	802249
Vice-Chair - Gordon Rogers	441045
Secretary - Brian Williams	855365
Treasurer - Brian Beck	320052
Press Officer - Barbara Rogers	441045
Membership Secretary - Iris Fletcher	801408

Representatives:

Full Members -	
Ray Duffill	806336
Janice Edmonds	809170
Margaret Pacey	809731
Dave Rust	
Group Members -	
Rev David Walker	803375
Ann Wilson	858462
Trader Members -	
Haydar Koc	801632
Junior Members -	
Trevor Watson	856585

Telephone numbers are all within the 01482 dialling code area.

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