



Maghull District Centre Health Check Assessment

Centre Overview

Maghull is the smallest district centre within Sefton in terms of the number of retail units. The centre is focused along Westway (B5422) between the junctions with Northway (A59) and Liverpool Road North (A5147). The majority of the district centre's retail units are located on the north side of Westway at the Central Square Shopping Centre (44 Units), at the Red Lion Centre which includes the Morrison supermarket (12 Units) and along Liverpool Road North. The Central Square Shopping Centre comprises two terraces of retail units that face onto Westway. This area incorporates four separate car parks, three at the rear of the shopping centre and one in front of the main shopping terrace. The Red Lion Centre provides a further terrace of small retail units which connects to the Morrisons store. A pedestrianised walkway links the Morrisons store to Westway.

The freehold for The Central Square Shopping Centre was acquired in July 2015 by Evolve Estates for £11.85 million. Proposals put forward by the previous owners of the shopping centre for its refurbishment as well as the redevelopment of part of the shopping centre gained approval in February 2011. It is thought that the majority of the physical regeneration works previously approved have not been carried out, although the car parking has been extended at the rear of the shopping centre.

The Local Plan Publication Draft (January 2015)¹ identifies an extended district centre boundary compared to that set out in the adopted Unitary Development plan which includes additional commercial premises north of Westway on the eastern side of Liverpool Road North.

Diversity of Uses

Table 1: Units in Maghull District Centre at 22nd July 2015

| | Number of Units | | | Floorspace Figures | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | No. | Maghull | UK | Sq.m | Maghull | UK |
| Convenience | 7 | 7.7% | 8.5% | 2,574 | 19.1% | 15.1% |
| Comparison | 22 | 24.7% | 32.5% | 3,725 | 27.7% | 36.1% |
| Retail Service | 18 | 20.2% | 14.2% | 2,093 | 15.6% | 7.4% |
| Leisure Service | 14 | 15.7% | 22.5% | 1,991 | 14.8% | 23.3% |
| Financial and Business Service | 19 | 21.3% | 10.8% | 1,922 | 14.3% | 8.2% |
| Vacant | 9 | 10.1% | 11.3% | 1,145 | 8.5% | 9.2% |
| Total | 91 | 100.0% | 100.0% | 13,450 | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Table 2: District Centre Facilities

| National Operators | Total |
|--|-------|
| Key Anchor Store: Morrisons | 17 |
| Other National Retailers: Pound Bakery, O2, B&M Bargains, Bon Marche, Boots Pharmacy, Card Factory, Superdrug, Hallmark, Home Bargains, Hays Travel, Thomas Cook, TSB, RBS, Halifax, HSBC, Nat West | |
| Community Facilities | |
| Maghull Health Centre, Maghull Police Station | 2 |

Source: WYG site visit based on town centre boundary, (Local Plan Publication Draft January 2015)¹, UK average from the Experian Goad Category Report (June 2015)

¹ No material changes of relevance have been made to the Local Plan between the Publication Draft (January 2015) document and the Local Plan Submission (July 2015) document.

The key anchor store in Maghull is the Morrison supermarket (1,905 sq.m gross), which benefits from its own customer car park. Since WYG's last health check of the centre in August 2011 there has been a net loss of four convenience retailers. Despite this, the extent of convenience floorspace within the district centre remains above the national average, with the Morrisons supermarket complemented by a number of independent convenience retailers located within the Central Square Shopping Centre.

With respect to comparison outlets the centre has a lower representation than the national average, this being 24.7% compared to 32.5% nationally, reflective of the centre's role within the shopping hierarchy. The centre is very well represented in terms of retail and financial and business services, with both the number of outlets and extent of floorspace occupied by these business categories being above the national average. The centre includes a number of national retail banks including RBS, Halifax, HSBC and Nat West which provide important financial services. Other main town centre uses within the district centre boundary include the Maghull Health Centre, the Maghull Police Station and office accommodation.

Vacancies:

Vacancies within the centre represent 10.1% of units, slightly below the national average of 11.3% of units. In addition, the former Maghull Library building on Liverpool Road North is a prominent vacant unit, with the plot identified as for sale. A new library is now accommodated at the Meadows on Hall Lane, 0.5km to the south of the district centre. The former Stafford Moreton Youth Centre building on the neighbouring plot is also no longer in use. For consistency with previous health check surveys these two vacant buildings are not incorporated into the data provided in Table 1 as their previous use was not for commercial purposes. However, together these two neighbouring plots occupy a sizable area of presently underused land which is well connected to the primary activity of the district centre. The largest vacant unit within the centre is the former Red Lion Garage on Liverpool Road North at the northern extremity of the district centre.



The Central Square Shopping Centre and car parking.



Shopping terrace, north side of Westway.



Pedestrian walkway alongside the Red Lion Centre.

**Accessibility:**

The centre is located on the eastern side of the Borough, just over 3km away from both Junction 1 of the M58 to the east and access to the M57 to the south. The car parks at the Central Square Shopping Centre have been extended in recent years in order to ease congestion and capacity issues, including the formation of a permit holder's only area. The Central Square Shopping Centre car parks which together provide approximately 220 parking spaces are advertised as being free for up to 30 minutes, with one hour costing £0.50 and two hours costing £1.00. The Morrisons car park (approximately 130 spaces) provides free parking for up to two hours for customers of the store.

Pedestrian movement is supported adjacent to the Primary Retail Frontage by pedestrianised areas at both the Central Square Shopping Centre and the Red Lion Centre. The southern half of the centre is disconnected from the main activity found along Westway with the accessibility of the shops and services at the southern end of Liverpool Road North are compromised as a result.

Bus stops are conveniently positioned for shoppers at locations on both Westway and Liverpool Road North. Services are available to many of the surrounding communities as well as key destinations such as Southport and Liverpool. Accessibility to train services is a weakness of the centre, with the closest station being Maghull Railway Station which is approximately a 20 minute walk away from the centre's shopping frontage on Westway.

Environmental Quality:

The focus of the district centre's shopping activity is located at the Centre Square Shopping Centre. This facility conveniently provides a concentration of shop units, which generally are relatively small in size. Although a refurbishment of the centre was formally proposed through a planning application in February 2011, works to upgrade the shopping units have not been carried out. The external appearance of the retail units and flats above are now showing signs of deterioration and the shopping centre as a whole would benefit from investment to modernise the facilities.

There are relatively few seating opportunities for shoppers across the centre, as well as a limited extent of open public space to be enjoyed. It is considered that the pavements and areas of public realm adjacent to the Primary Retail Frontage would also benefit from improvement. These environmental limitations do not help to encourage shoppers to prolong their visits.

The car parks at the Central Square Shopping Centre were found to be poorly maintained. All of the pay and display machines were found to be out-of-order at the time of WYG's visit to the centre. The surfacing and markings within the car parks were also found to be in need of maintenance.

The concentration of activity around the Red Lion Centre and the Central Square Shopping Centre helps to engender good perceptions of safety for users in these key areas. CCTV monitors the shopping area of the Central Square Shopping Centre with coverage along Westway. Perceptions of safety are weakest at the car parks to the rear of the shopping centre which are not evidently overlooked, are largely enclosed and have limited street lighting.

**Pedestrian Flows:**

WYG observed the centre to be a relatively popular destination, with healthy levels of pedestrian activity focused around the Morrisons store and the Central Square Shopping Centre. The second terrace of units at the Square Shopping centre to the eastern side of the centre were observed to attract significantly less activity than the main concentration of units which surround the main car park. Similarly, footfall was found to be limited along Liverpool Road North and at the southern end of the centre, where a higher proportion of service uses are located.

Commercial Rents:

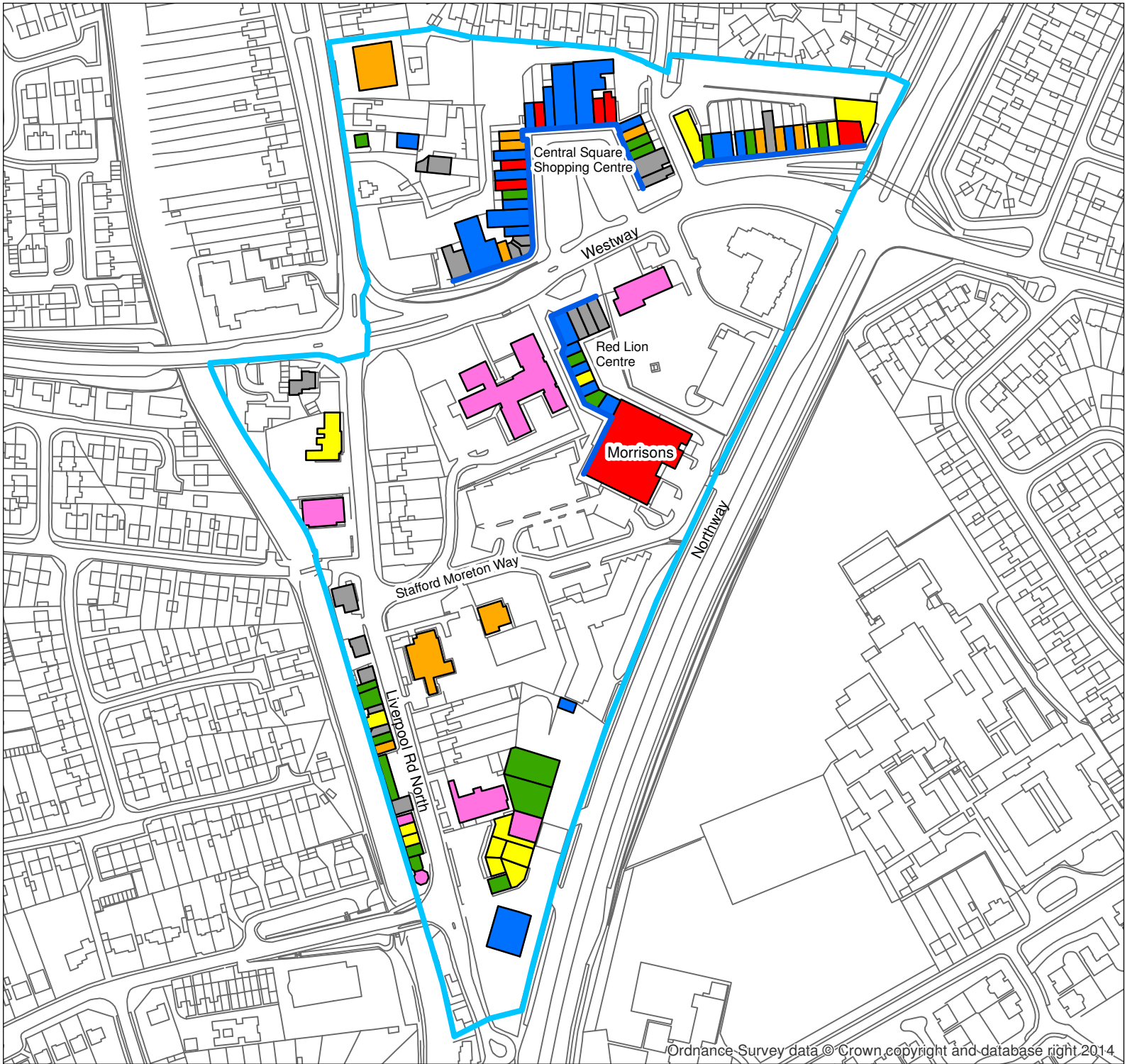
The purchase of the freehold of the Central Square Shopping Centre in July 2015 by Evolve Estates Limited for £11.85 million achieved a yield value of 8.25%. This shows a significant increase in yield values at the shopping centre since 2006 when Maghull Developments Limited acquired the freehold for £21.25 million at an initial yield of 5.0%.² The increase in yield values indicates a weakening of the shopping centre's market performance over this time.

Summary:

The centre is considered to remain a popular destination which plays an important role in meeting the convenience shopping and day-to-day service needs of the local resident population, alongside providing a limited comparison shopping offer. The environmental quality of the main shopping area around the Central Square Shopping Centre is showing signs of deterioration and would benefit from modernisation. Car parking management and maintenance is an evident issue at the Central Square Shopping Centre.

The vacant buildings within the centre, and their associated plots, provide opportunities to attract investment into the centre. Specifically, the vacant library building, former Stafford Moreton Youth Centre and the former Red Lion Garage sites are each individually relatively well connected to the key shopping areas at the Central Square Shopping Centre and the Red Lion Centre.

² Source: EGi Shopping Centre Report, 2015



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Client: Sefton Council
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Maghull District Centre

Diversity of Uses Plan

Key

- Primary Retail Frontage (Local Plan Publication Draft 2015)
- District Centre Boundary (Local Plan Publication Draft 2015)
- Convenience
- Financial & Business Service
- Comparison
- Leisure Service
- Retail Service
- Other Main Town Centre Use
- Vacant



Scale 1:3,000 @ A4

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