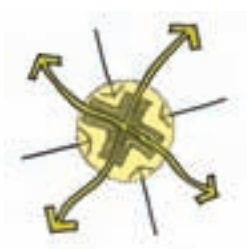




Positioning local centres away from main routes deprives them of life and passing trade



The answer is to create pedestrian and public transport-orientated centres at key focal points



Public transport orientated development ensures that a mixed use community has a railway station or bus stop within walking distance at its heart

3.2.5 CENTRES

Focus centres on public transport nodes

Highest concentrations of activity (particularly the retail core) emerge naturally along principal routes or points of convergence - along high streets, at crossroads and so on. These centres vary in size depending on location, the nature of the street network, overall densities and size of catchment.

Mixed-use centres are best located at crossroads and along main movement routes, within walking distance of homes. This strengthens their identity, provides passing trade and enables bus stops and/or railway stations to be fully integrated. For small sites, bear in mind how the site is connected to existing local centres.

Inject housing into the mix

Centres that have been a victim of postwar zoning demonstrate how vitality and viability are lost where housing is not part of the mix. Injecting housing into the mix wherever possible enables activity to be stretched beyond daytime office and shopping hours.

The ability to introduce non-residential uses into housing areas varies tremendously between the centre and edge of a settlement. To create a strong community focus, a shop, bus stop and primary school will usually be considered a bare minimum. In large housing schemes that cannot be expected to attract many non-residential uses, consider the 'centre' as the core residential area within which the local shops, commercial use and amenities will sit.

Emphasise the civic

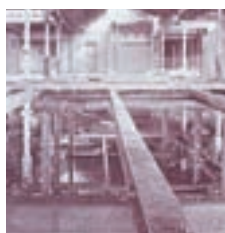
Public services and amenities support residents and workers, and provide focal elements of an urban structure that help to encourage a strong sense of community and identity. Nurseries, libraries, community centres, police and fire stations and government offices are best placed at central points in highly visible locations. Public squares can be used to emphasise their civic status.



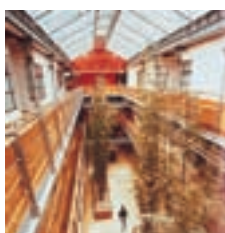
A variety of active uses line the ground floor



A footbridge links to the adjacent multi-storey car park



The existing superstructure has been retained



An atrium brings light to the interior

Urban Splash

Smithfield Buildings, Manchester: *Mixing it up*

Location	Tib Street in the Northern Quarter of the City Centre
Designer	Stephenson Bell Architects
Developer	Urban Splash (Developments) Ltd
Local Authority	Manchester City Council
Floor Area	13,424 m ² former department store
Project	The creation of 81 loft apartments, 21 ground floor shops and a basement gym
Details	Until its decline in the 1950s, Smithfield Buildings housed one of the city's most famous department stores - Affleck and Brown, the "Harrods of the North". Throughout the 1980s the building stood empty, but was located within an area targeted for regeneration by the City Council. With design ingenuity and flair it has now been redeveloped into award-winning, highly desirable, loft apartments with shops, cafes and a nightclub below. In design terms this has been achieved by retaining the atrium to provide daylight into the centre of the block, and skirting this with internal access galleries. The dramatic loft layouts harness to great effect the potential for new forms of urban living.
Contact	Urban Splash. Tel: 0161 237 9499