

**Statement from AB (Age Concern)
Received 3 May 2012**

Statement for the Inspector:

RE: Oadby and Wigston Area Action Plan

Introduction

I am writing this statement as a user of Age Concern Oadby and Wigston, based at Paddock Street, representing the views of many other users, who are very worried and concerned about this. I am also writing as a local resident.

Although we are interested in the general Area Action Plan, this statement will only reflect the important issues around the reduced parking in Paddock Street, as it is of paramount importance in relation to Age Concern. The statement will briefly discuss the role of Age Concern in relation to the area and where it fits into the decision criteria/ planning test, with the assistance of your guidance notes and report.

Role of Age Concern Oadby and Wigston, Paddock Street

Age Concern Centre provides a valuable service for older people living in Oadby and Wigston, enhancing their quality of life, both from its centre and outreach in the community.

At the centre:

Daily lunches and a coffee bar provide good food in a friendly environment, picking up more needy clients in its ambulances. Sometimes this is the only time clients go out of their homes. This service is also provided in Oadby two days a week.

On a more critical level, we operate a client based Senior Social Group, providing for clients with more physical and mental needs.

There are also varied services and activities including trips out.

Its outreach services provide Welfare and Benefits advice for older people living in the Borough.

Age Concern has its own charity shop.

Age Concern's funding comprises income from users and charity shop, grants, donations and fundraising.

The trustees, staff, volunteers, users and many other interested bodies work very hard to provide a sustainable income.

Opposition to the Area Action Plan

We do not consider the paddock Street developments to be justified as stated in your decision criteria i.e. planning tests.

These developments would reduce the income and usage of the centre and potentially cause the closure of Age Concern, which meets the needs of many elderly, disabled and immobile people living in Oadby and Wigston. We feel that this is counterproductive to the criteria of meeting needs. Oadby Age Concern Lunch club will also be affected, as it is funded by Wigston.

The following reasoning will back up the above statement:

It is crucial for elderly, disabled and immobile people to be able to park opposite the centre (i.e. paddock Street car park) when using the centre. Also a large number of volunteers who are needed for the continued running of the centre, use the car park.

Parking at Paddock Street car park also creates an awareness of Age concern, creating an interest and increased usage, plus purchases and donations to our charity shop.

Appendix C matter 2; discussed the plan taking on board Community Groups and Agencies.

Age Concern as you are probably aware is very supportive and encompassing of both Community Groups and Agencies.

All these factors will reduce numbers, reduce funding and create difficulties in continuing to provide our services.

The impact of this will be doing a disservice to a large percentage of your community who are either users or potential users of our services.

Recommendations

We strongly recommend that Paddock Street Car park remains as a car park with **NO** loss of parking places, and that the proposed developments in this car park are sited elsewhere.

Date 1/5/12

Signed -----

Angela Bishop