

# **Matter 7 – Town Centre Growth and Retail Provision**

**March 2018**

**Local Plan Examination Matter Statement**



*Oadby and Wigston  
Borough Council*

Issue 1 – whether the Local Plan will address the retail needs of the area.

**Q1. Will Policy 22 be effective in meeting the convenience and comparison retail floorspace needs of the area over the plan period?**

Council response;

1. Yes. The Council considers that Policy 22 Delivering Retail will be effective in meeting the convenience and comparison retail floorspace needs of each of the town, district and local centres.
2. The wording of Policy 22 states that up to 2031 the overall quantitative capacity for additional convenience and comparison retail floorspace within the Borough is 2,974 square metres. Comprising, 1,169 square metres in Wigston town centre, 1,351 square metres in Oadby district centre, 373 square metres in South Wigston district centre and 81 square metres in the Borough's local centres.
3. Submission Local Plan Policy 2 Spatial Strategy for Development within the Borough, allocates land within each of the town, district and local centres, to meet the additional capacity requirements in full; as set out in Policy 22.
4. The Council's Retail Capacity Study 2016 (LP8/05), on which Policy 22 is based, states at paragraph 5.6 that *'the PPG suggests town centre strategies should plan for a 3-5 year period, but longer term plan period should be considered. Projections up to 2026 are realistic and are based on up to date forecasts, which take into account the effects of the most recent recession. The long term floorspace projections (up to 2031 and beyond) should be treated with caution and should only be used as a broad guide, particularly when translated into the development plan allocations or when used to guide development decisions. Long term forecasts may be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.'*
5. Up to 2026, the tables set out in the supporting text to Policy 22 illustrate that the overall quantitative capacity for additional convenience and comparison retail floorspace within the Boroughs town and district centres is 1,151 square metres. Comprising, 194 square metres (1,559 – 1,365) in Wigston town centre, 750 square metres in Oadby district centre and 207 square metres in South Wigston district centre.

6. In addition, as paragraph 4.2.25 of the Submission Local Plan suggests, *'to ensure that the development approach within the Borough's main centres is flexible, this Plan contains policies relating to overall levels of growth within the Borough's centres as well as generic development management policies (illustrated within Chapters 8 and 9). The existing masterplans relevant to the centres of Wigston and Oadby demonstrate that the objectives and levels of growth can be delivered. Upon adoption of this Plan, the Town Centre Area Action Plan will be superseded as a policy document and will become guidance. The document will be titled the 'Area Action Plan Guidance' document. This document will be reviewed and updated post adoption of this Plan when necessary.'*

7. In addition to the above, the Council would propose the following wording amendment to the final sentence of Policy 22:

*'Proposals for retail development within the town **and district** centres would need...'*

458 words not including title.

**Q2. Policy 24 requires an impact assessment to be submitted in certain scenarios. However, is it clear to a decision maker what the impact assessment must demonstrate to find an application for a proposal outside of a defined centre, not otherwise in accordance with the plan, acceptable? Is policy 24 effective?**

Council response;

8. Policy 24 sets out the Council's locally specified impact thresholds for the town centre of Wigston and the district centres of Oadby and South Wigston.

9. With the National Planning Policy Framework, specifically at paragraph 26, setting out the local impact threshold and what is required from an assessment, the Council did not consider it necessary to repeat national planning policy. However, to ensure the policies effectiveness the Council would propose the following wording change to the policy.

*'Applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of a defined centre, which is not in accordance with this Plan, will require an impact assessment if the development is over the following floorspace thresholds:*

- *Wigston Town Centre – 1,500 ~~sqm~~ **square metre** gross floorspace*
- *Oadby District Centre – 1,500 ~~sqm~~ **square metre** gross floorspace*
- *South Wigston District Centre – 500 ~~sqm~~ **square metre** gross floorspace*

**'The impact assessment should assess at least the elements set out at paragraph 26 of the National Planning Policy Framework'.**

161 words not including title.