

## **Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Response to Oadby Town Centre Association Suggested changes**

**reword policy 17 as follows: replace 'district' with 'town';**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - The AAP reflects wording in Policy 2 of the Core Strategy and Oadby's current position in the retail hierarchy (see paragraph 2.21 of the AAP). However, the Council is clear in its objective to establish Oadby as a small town centre as mentioned during the debate.

**targets should reflect current and predicted economic situation – therefore aim at 80% of Core Strategy figures (800 sqm office floor space; 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace; 64 new residential units over the plan period)**

Council Response – For the avoidance of doubt the figures provided in the Core Strategy are gross. There is no evidence to support a blanket reduction of all figures set out in the Core Strategy. However, the Council has in some cases suggested reductions to reflect the economic climate where this is considered to be justified and evidenced. To some extent this meets the figures provided by OTCA as detailed below:

### *Offices*

As a result of the removal of block C4 this has been reduced from 2300 square metres to 800 square metres

### *Retail*

The total net gain in retail floorspace in Oadby is approximately 3100 square metres broken down as follows:

Net gain R1 – 1900 square metres

Net gain R3 – 820 square metres

Net gain R4 – 200 square metres

Net gain R5 - 170 square metres

### *Housing*

Paragraph 2.16-2.19 explains the differences between the Core Strategy and AAP figures. It is considered that a further reduction would compromise the ability of the AAP to meet the requirements of the Core Strategy because the Council would not be maximising opportunities to provide residential development in the town centre.

**there should be no parking figure, but a target of at least 90% of LCC maximum**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - The highway authority states maximum car parking standards for various land uses, however other factors need to be taken into account for public car parking provision (which provides for a wide range of uses) in a town centre location.

The considerations include:

- Linked trip purposes between town centre land uses;
- Good sustainable transport choice in the town centre;
- The provision of parking charges;

- Parking spaces locations to key town centre uses;
- Provision of other, public, private and on-street parking provision within the town

The study identifies requirement for car parking taking into account predicted trip estimates identified for peak times. Considering that not all current parking provision in the town centre is fully utilised, combined with a need to balance sustainable travel opportunities, the AAP is considered to have identified an appropriate level of parking provision for the town taking into account existing and proposed plan uses.

**replace reference to masterplan with ‘the Council will look favourably on planning applications proposing community use buildings in suitable locations within the town centre’.**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - The purpose of the Area Action Plan is to allocate land for specific uses. Therefore, the specific reference to a community use building in Policy 17 is appropriate and reflects the requirements of Core Strategy Policy 16. These policies do not preclude the development of other community use buildings in the town centre notwithstanding other Local Plan policies.

**amend policy 18 by (1) deleting reference to new residential development fronting Harborough Road; (2) change refurbished office block on South Street to residential**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - Paragraph 2.16-2.19 explains the differences between the Core Strategy and AAP figures. It is considered that a further reduction would compromise the ability of the AAP to meet the requirements of the Core Strategy because the Council would not be maximising opportunities to provide residential development in the town centre.

The suggestion that these housing targets could be met elsewhere is not considered easily achievable within the proposed town centre boundary. South Street would not be an appropriate setting for a development of this nature and it would have a significant impact upon parking supply which would compromise the ability to maintain the required level of public car parking.

Conversion of upper floors is positively supported by Policy 8, however there is no compelling evidence to include windfall sites within the AAP targets.

**increase target of car parking spaces from 150 to 200**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - In order to achieve this level of car parking it would not be possible to provide the proposed residential development and shared use public square.

The Council would suggest a change to policy 18 to reflect that the residential development will include 30 private car parking spaces and at least 160 public car parking spaces. The Council would also suggest a change to policy 19 to refer to the provision of 210 car parking spaces.

**include a commitment to improve junction of East Street and the A6.**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - The Council has considered issues such as this with the Highways Authority during the Masterplanning process and determined that proposals such as those suggested would not be appropriate. For example, the proposals put forward by OTCA would require all traffic entering the car park from the A6

to travel through the town centre via The Parade. However, in terms of preparing detailed plans for the proposed residential development some changes to the access arrangements may be possible.

With regard to servicing the Council's proposals maintain existing servicing arrangements which, due to the current layout on East Street only permit a south to north servicing arrangement.

**amend policy 19 by reducing target retail floorspace by 20% to 1,736 m<sup>2</sup>;**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - See above Council's response to reducing floorspace by 20%

**delete references to commercial and community use;**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - 800 square metres of office development at Baxters Place represents the only new office floorspace in the town centre and if this were removed the AAP would not be in conformity with the Core Strategy. In addition, it is important to create opportunities for employment in the town centre that meets the needs of modern occupiers, as evidenced by local employment studies and reflected by the NPPF.

The Council has sufficiently evidenced the need to include community use within Baxters Place in its Statements and through debate at the Hearing.

**change 200 parking spaces to maximum feasible number of spaces**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - The Council has a commitment to ensure that there is no loss of public car parking spaces in the town centre. The change suggested by OTCA would weaken the policy and potentially allow for the provision of less than 200 car parking spaces if it were evidenced that it were the maximum feasible number of spaces that could be included within the scheme.

**include a commitment to improve access/egress to car park by providing an entry/exit point in Chestnut Avenue.**

Council Response - The Council has maintained its position through the process of preparing the AAP not to acquire residential properties in order to achieve the Masterplan layouts and this would also have a significant effect upon financial viability.

The Council would suggest a change to provide a positive framework to deliver such development through the inclusion of the final paragraph of Policy 14 within Policy 19.

**In order to ensure the Plan is compliant with the Core Strategy, we submit that the Proposals Map be modified to reinstate the existing Local Plan Town Centre Boundary, and amend such relevant wording of the Plan as may be required to clearly define the core primary shopping areas as "Town Centre Development Areas".**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - See Issue 5.1 of Matter 5 in the Council's statement.

**We therefore propose that Policy 2 be amended to use the same 70% target for A1 use of primary frontages throughout the borough.**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - See Issue 5.2 of Matter 5 in the Council's statement.

**To become compliant, we propose Policy 8 should include a target of 40 non-family dwelling units and should require the Council to put forward positive proposals to help achieve this target.**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - See Issue 5.7 of Matter 5 in the Council's statement

**To encourage such change of use, upper-floor planning applications concerning two or fewer units converting to non-family dwellings within Oadby Town Centre Development Area should be exempt from parking restrictions and development levies.**

Council Response – No Change Suggested - It would not be appropriate to prescribe standards such as this in a policy, however, applications would be considered on a case by case basis and taking into account the Council's Guidelines for New Development SPD and Developer Contributions SPD. Additionally, such an exemption is unlikely to be appropriate should the Council progress with a CIL.

In April 2011 DCLG issued a consultation document in relation to increasing Permitted Development Rights for flats above shops from 1 unit.