

Transport Framework

5.38. This section of the report sets out the overarching transport framework for the future of the town. Again, these preferred options have been informed by research and consultation as set out previously. They are designed to fit in and help to achieve development proposals.

Overall Strategy

- 5.39. Key to the transport strategy (see figure 5.2) for the town is the management of traffic to reduce the overall amount of through traffic along The Parade. This will assist in the creation of the positive pedestrian environment that will allow the development and improvement of the retail and leisure role of the town.
- 5.40. In terms of public transport, the frequency of bus services is generally good with exception of the link to Wigston. Provision of consistent, high quality bus stops is essential.
- 5.41. The current parking provision in Oadby operates at a fairly high capacity throughout the average day, and the strategy ensures that full account is taken of parking requirements.
- 5.42. Pedestrian and cycle routes within Oadby also need to be improved. Provision of a local network would encourage travel by sustainable modes, and indeed this is one of the fundamental aspects of the AAP. Pedestrian linkages to The Parade from Sandhurst Street and the East Street/ Brooksby Drive car park are particularly poor and in need of improvement.



Figure 5.2 Transport Strategy (NTS)

Vehicular Movement

- 5.43. The A6 is a key route in the East Midlands, linking Leicester to Market Harborough while the B582 is a well-used local distributor route running east to west and providing linkage to Wigston. Accordingly, the town suffers from severance caused by the A6 and dominance of vehicular traffic over pedestrians on The Parade.
- 5.44. Severance can be addressed by providing a signing strategy and creation of strong gateways off the A6 and from the B582. This would assist to indicate the close proximity of the town centre. The geometry of the existing junctions along the A6 (The Parade, East Street and Sandhurst Street) could be amended to open up the town centre, providing strong visual links with the A6 and allowing land to be set aside for gateway features and buildings. An indicative layout is shown in figure 5.2 although the precise design of this would have to be the subject of further analysis.

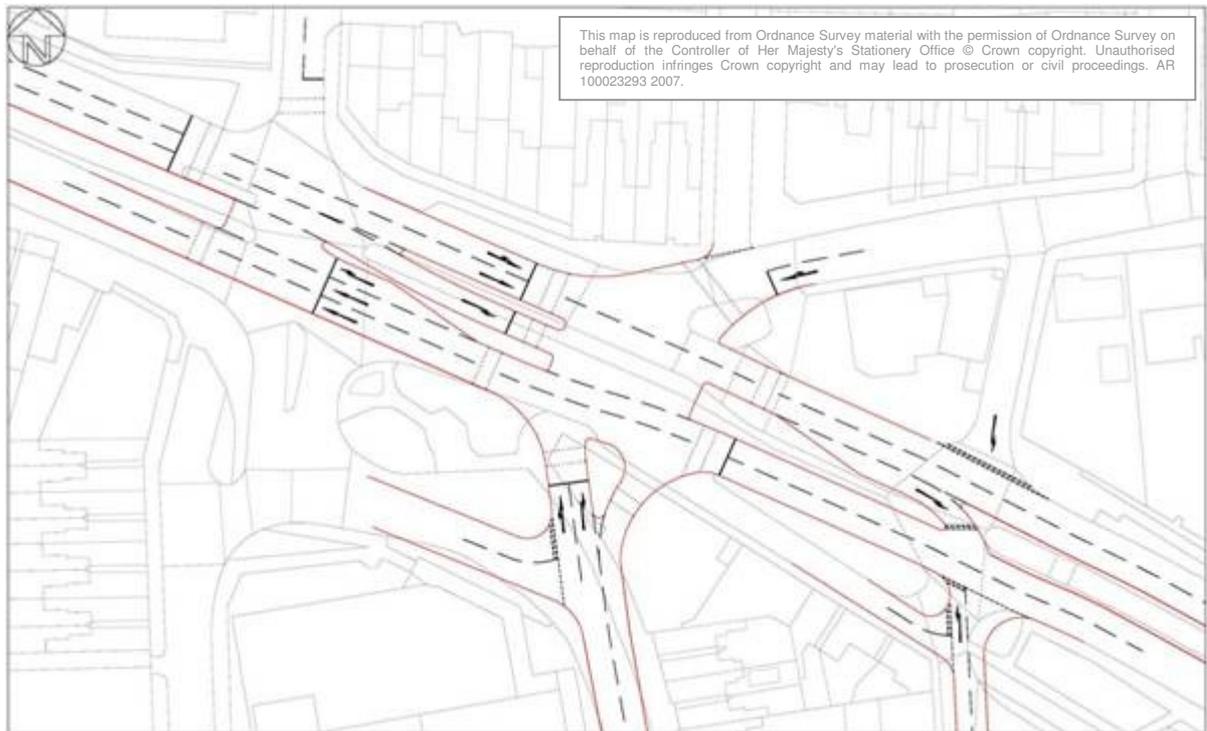


Figure 5.3 Indicative The Parade / A6 Junction design (NTS)

Signage and Gateways

- 5.45. A signage strategy is recommended in the town centre and should include pedestrian and cycle signage as well as vehicular. The car park signage should direct visitors to an appropriate car park via the most suitable route, avoiding The Parade where possible. The pedestrian and cycle signage should indicate the most appropriate routes for these users and identify local networks and facilities. Links to adjoining residential neighbourhoods are particularly important.

- 5.46. The existing junction with the A6 should be used for vehicles arriving from the north as it should reduce traffic on The Parade and allow a traffic management scheme to be implemented to create a better pedestrian environment. Public realm improvements would be included as part of the traffic management scheme, these could include:
- a pedestrian build-out opposite South Street
 - paved parking lay-bys
 - a raised flat-top table at the junction of The Parade/Chestnut Avenue would assist in reducing the perceived high vehicle speeds and also create a virtual town square area
- 5.47. A junction improvement scheme would be beneficial at the mini-roundabout of Wigston Road/Leicester Road.
- 5.48. The existing geometry of the A6/The Parade/Sandhurst Street junction shields the shopping area from direct view as detailed above. Realignment of this junction would open up the town centre, providing strong visual links with the A6 and allow space for a distinct gateway feature.
- 5.49. The gateway of Chestnut Avenue/The Parade will be enhanced as part of the public realm improvements along The Parade. The proposed raised flat-top table at this junction would indicate vehicles are entering the town centre as well as creating a virtual town square area.
- 5.50. The gateway of Wigston Road/Leicester Road mini roundabout would benefit from a junction improvement scheme. This could incorporate a flat-top raised table to give visitors a sense of arrival to Oadby town centre.

Parking Strategy

- 5.51. The car parks in Oadby are low quality with poor pedestrian links to the shops, and the variety of coloured parking spaces is confusing for visitors. A strategy is required to upgrade the car parks to a consistent high quality with a more conventional short-stay and long-stay arrangement. It is important that there is no overall loss of car parking spaces in the town.
- 5.52. Furthermore, on-street restrictions need to be consistent throughout the town, which will help to achieve more certainty by drivers and reduce street clutter with reduced numbers of signs.
- 5.53. The northern section of The Parade suffers from illegal parking, especially in the evening. Consideration should be given to changing the restrictions to 'no parking at any time'. The very close proximity of the East Street/Brooksby Drive car park reduces the need for any on-street parking bays on The Parade except for the disabled and loading. Additional on-street disabled parking bays should be provided.

- 5.54. Consideration needs to be given to a residential parking permit scheme in the surrounding neighbourhoods that would increase residential amenity on the area, but may also add pressure on the town centre parking facilities. Again more detailed analysis would better inform this position.

Public Transport

- 5.55. Existing bus stop facilities in Oadby are inconsistent and often do not provide seating or adequate shelter. The introduction of consistent, high quality bus stops and facilities are required.

Pedestrians and Cyclists

- 5.56. The pedestrian environment along The Parade needs enhancement. Currently pedestrians cross The Parade along its entire length, ignoring the crossing points provided. The traffic management scheme along The Parade should give more priority to pedestrians over vehicles. Pedestrian build-outs could be provided and new paving continued across the carriageway would give the 'sense' of a pedestrianised area.
- 5.57. The proposed car park signage strategy stops vehicles using South Street for access to the East Street/Brooksby Road car park. This allows the potential for a pedestrian only link to be created along South Street, providing a strong visual link to The Parade from the car park and a safe route for pedestrians.
- 5.58. Oadby has a compact town centre and could be more accessible to sustainable modes of travel. Improvement of the existing pedestrian routes, with creation of new pedestrian circuits are required, along with the provision of new cycle facilities. There are limited pedestrian circuits in the town centre and pedestrian linkages to car parking areas are often via narrow, unattractive alleyways. A future circuit could be provided from the proposed new gateway at the A6 along The Parade and Chestnut Avenue up to the Sandhurst Street development. Pedestrian linkages to The Parade from Sandhurst Street and Brooksby Drive car park need to be improved. Cycle facilities in Oadby are well used yet minimal. Creation of a cycle network and increased number of stands should encourage more cyclists into the town centre.

Servicing

- 5.59. Town centres must be able to remain competitive, and their ability adequately to service their offers is of critical importance, since it affects the use that each unit can be put to. It is therefore considered vital that improvement measures within Oadby be designed whilst considering adequate servicing with good management of service routes, times and access.