

Development Description

- 7.6. The potential new community building located on the Harborough Road frontage will provide a high-profile civic identity for Oadby, both for local people and visitors. The proposed building could incorporate a number of community facilities including a multi-purpose hall and meeting rooms, thereby extending the use of the site outside core hours. These extended uses are also important factors in contributing to the overall vitality of a new public square immediately to the south of the community building. The square forms a setting to the existing church and is complemented by a place of worship structure on the south side. This, together with new retail frontages on one side of South Street, will provide an active connection to The Parade and assist in extending pedestrian circuits. The remaining southern area of the East Street site is given over to a refurbished and reconfigured surface car park and servicing area including improvements to the appearance of the rear of existing premises.



Active and attractive public space

Impact Assessment

- 7.7. Changes associated with development of East Street Car Park will also have a series of associated impacts:

7.8. **Economic**

- Image/ external perception: Improvements in the external perception of Oadby, in particular from the A6. Associated branding opportunities
- Market attractiveness: Improved and enlarged circuits adding to footfall and general usage
- Economic performance of the local area: Greater vitality and variety of uses contributing to the overall performance of the town centre

7.9. **Environmental**

- Heritage value: Improvements to the built form of the town centre making it a more attractive place to visit
- Townscape: Concealment of negative service elevations and new positive frontages
- Movement and connections: Integration of existing places with new routes

7.10. **Social**

- Sense of identity and place: Improvements in local internal perceptions and creation of place
- Social inclusion/equity: Promotion of social inclusion through new community facilities integrated within town centre development
- Community safety/crime reduction: Reduction of areas without natural surveillance and activity thereby contributing to an associated reduction in anti-social behaviour and crime

Property Commentary

- 7.11. This project provides retail, leisure and community space as well as a place of worship. The south of the site would be used to provide car parking as well as maintaining its servicing role.
- 7.12. Also proposed is a new community building which could also incorporate an alternative location for the new library subject to discussions with the County Council. There is also acknowledged demand for at least one place of worship.

Transport Commentary

- 7.13. The car park is currently of poor quality with differing traffic calming features, different colour spaces for different lengths of stay which cause confusion to visitors, many reserved spaces in amongst normal spaces; and a convoluted internal road layout.
- 7.14. In order to address these matters the new car park layout will also need to accommodate the following:
- separate reserved spaces from regular spaces;
 - change the existing colour coding system to a more conventional long stay and short stay system;
 - provide a direct and safe pedestrian route for vehicles towards The Parade;
 - implement consistent traffic calming features.

Sandhurst Street, The Precinct and Chestnut Avenue

- 7.15. Sandhurst Street, The Precinct and Chestnut Avenue collectively form a group of sites with the potential to create a new focal point in heart of Oadby town centre.
- 7.16. Development of these sites will achieve the following primary design objectives:
- Creation of a new public square as a focal point at the confluence of a series of existing streets
 - Associated enhanced public realm to The Parade, Sandhurst Street and Chestnut Avenue
 - A variety of new retail footprints that define a series of enhanced circuits extending pedestrian activity
 - Opportunities for new residential accommodation overlooking the new public square
 - Creation of a new setting for The Old Library public house as a quality building that should be celebrated within the town centre

Development Description

- 7.17. New single storey (double height) retail units provide a link between Sandhurst Street and the new public square via a new pedestrian street. The street will incorporate high-quality public realm and is seen as a means to increase variety and exploration of the town centre. Chestnut Avenue and The Parade are upgraded with new 'full stop' buildings, including residential accommodation above The Parade. All new buildings will follow the existing topography thereby creating further three-dimensional interest and opportunities for framed views and incidental space. Car parking in this area will be achieved in the form of deck parking above the new retail units.



New retail development and attractive town square

Impact Assessment

7.18. Changes associated with development of Sandhurst Street, The Parade and Chestnut Avenue will also have a series of associated impacts:

7.19. **Economic**

- Improvements in occupational rent and capital value: As a result of the uplift associated with the development of The Parade
- Image / external perception: Improvements in the external perception of Oadby, in particular in relation to the main high street
- Associated branding opportunities: In relation to the change in retail and town centre living emphasis
- Market attractiveness: Improved and enlarged circuits adding to footfall and general usage
- Economic performance of the local area: Greater vitality and variety of uses contributing to the overall performance of the town centre

7.20. **Environmental**

- Heritage value: Improvements to the built form of the town centre making it a more attractive place to visit
- Townscape: More efficient, intensive use of Sandhurst Street car park creating a greater sense of place
- Movement and connections: Circular routes and public realm changes reducing vehicular flows and increasing pedestrian dominance

7.21. **Social**

- Sense of identity and place: Improvements in local internal perceptions and creation of place
- Social interaction/participation: Improved opportunity for social interaction through the creation of new public spaces
- Community safety/crime reduction: Greater legibility of spaces leading to improved occupation of spaces and consequent reduction in crime levels and the fear of crime

Property Commentary

7.22. The development of additional retail space on Sandhurst Street and The Precinct (and possible remodeled space on Chestnut Avenue) will deliver four key benefits:

- It reinforces the retail offer at the end of The Parade that contains a greater number of independent shops
- Combined, it provides a defined centre for Oadby and a focus for pedestrian flows. The retail is focused around a series of new public spaces that could also serve as an open event space as well as a new public space at the convergence of the three

main areas of development

- Provides opportunity for new development that can deliver modern retail floorplates at street level
- Significant car parking is provided roughly equivalent to the spaces that will be lost. Local business highlighted the retention and improvement of parking facilities as a priority

Transport Commentary

- 7.23. The development proposes a more open, town square area in front of the precinct which would take the form of a raised table incorporating the highway itself, therefore adding to the feel of a large open town square and creating a gateway into the main shopping area from the south and west. The area in front of the precinct would be attractively paved along with the raised table, but in differing colours to clearly delineate between carriageway and pavement. This theme would be continued along The Parade as part of the traffic management scheme and public realm works.

Harborough Road Gateway and The Parade

- 7.24. The existing entrance to The Parade from Harborough Road presents a confused and uninviting gateway to the town centre.
- 7.25. Development of this site will achieve the following primary design objectives:
- Opportunity to define the entrance to the heart of the town
 - New built form to mask the poor buildings at the end of The Parade
 - Reconfiguration of existing pavement areas to create a series of seating and spill out areas from adjacent shops
 - Raised tables and other traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speeds on The Parade
 - Additional on-street car parking bays integrated into the overall public realm design

Development Description

- 7.26. Commercial office and retail buildings form the gateway marker on the Harborough Road Island in this proposal. This is combined with a high level of public realm intervention along the length of The Parade including new gateway signage, furniture and lighting upgrades. This option incorporates high quality materials in pavement areas and highways in order to distinguish this important public activity space from surrounding streets.



High quality public realm shared space and active cafe frontages

Impact Assessment

7.27. Changes associated with development of Harborough Road Gateway and The Parade will also have a series of associated impacts:

7.28. **Economic**

- Image/ external perception: Improvements in the external perception of Oadby, in particular from the A6. Associated branding opportunities
- Market attractiveness: Greater patronage from passing trade as a result of the improved gateway
- Economic performance of the local area: Greater vitality and variety of uses contributing to the overall performance of the town centre

7.29. **Environmental**

- Heritage value: Improvements to the built form of the town centre making it a more attractive place to visit
- Townscape: More attractive kerbsides throughout The Parade with related opportunity to create and manage outside space
- Movement and connections: Increased pedestrian activity and interaction animating the space

7.30. **Social**

- Sense of identity and place: Improvements in local internal perceptions and creation of place
- Social interaction/participation: Improved opportunity for social interaction through the creation of new public spaces
- Community safety/crime reduction: Reduction of areas without natural surveillance and activity thereby contributing to an associated reduction in anti-social behavior and crime
- Health: An environment that encourages walking and browsing with associated small changes in health patterns

Transport Commentary

- 7.31. The Parade is the heart of Oadby with many businesses and busy shops, hence it is the centre of pedestrian activity. The proposed traffic management scheme will give pedestrians priority over vehicles in association with public realm enhancements. The traffic management scheme seeks to create a better environment for pedestrians and encourage linkage between the two rows of shops. To achieve this, the carriageway could be narrowed and footways widened. Attractive paving for footways could be used and continued across the carriageway but in a differing colour, therefore giving the 'sense' of a pedestrian area whilst differentiating footway from the carriageway.
- 7.32. This project will include the A6/The Parade junction re-alignment. Straightening The Parade's approach to the A6 will open up the town centre, providing strong visual links with the A6 and allowing land to be set aside for a gateway feature. This will sit alongside a traffic management strategy that will aim to re-direct traffic away from The Parade other than for access purposes. This will allow The Parade to become less trafficked and more pedestrian friendly, thereby supporting the overall strategic objectives for Oadby.

Non-Physical Projects

Town Centre Management

- 7.33. The Issues and Options report identified a range of measures that would fall under the remit of town centre management. A key town centre management intervention would be the appointment of a town centre manager (who could also cover Wigston and South Wigston). The town centre manager would be able to take a lead in the achievement of many non-physical projects. This could include newsletters and local press articles, as well as working with other organisations to market the town, organise events and achieve funding etc. This may include development a Business Improvement District scheme, townscape heritage initiatives or other relevant grant regimes as appropriate. Making better use of existing community facilities for example Church Halls etc (where appropriate) to help host events could also fall under the remit of the town centre manager.

Town Centre Design Guidance

- 7.34. This would involve taking the guidance that will be set out in the AAP to a further level, but taking a more comprehensive approach than simply on a case by case, ad-hoc, basis. The development of a town centre design guide would therefore be beneficial and could also incorporate specific themes such as shops fronts. Consultation, involvement and local ownership would be key to its success. It could also link to funding opportunities.

Access and Circulation

- 7.35. The development of a strategy for pedestrian routes linked to signage and junction design would support many of the physical projects as set out above. A comprehensive strategy would be required to ensure that works in the different areas of town whilst at the same time representing a common theme so as to link the town together.

Young People Initiatives

- 7.36. Many interventions under this umbrella could be delivered by the town centre manager, such as crime reduction and anti-graffiti initiatives. The options stage introduced the possibility of a new youth centre and this is proposed through the positive planning framework for the delivery of community facilities, which would be multi-functional.