



# Oadby & Wigston

## Town Centres Area Action Plan

# Situation Update Matter One Issue 1.3





## **Brief explanation of the reasons for selecting the alternatives which are being supported in the AAP**

### **1 Process of Selecting the Alternatives**

- 1.1** The process of considering and selecting the alternatives that have subsequently been incorporated into the submitted Town Centres Area Action Plan has been integral to the masterplanning process.
- 1.2** The Issues and Options public consultation was undertaken in June 2007. This was informed by an 'Options Workshop' held in May 2007 attended by approximately 50 stakeholders who were invited to identify positive and negative attributes, opportunities, priorities and the potential future role of the towns. The Issues and Options report set out a number of alternative site based interventions (set within character areas) and non physical supporting projects of varying degrees of intervention (Low/Medium/High) and invited comments on these as well as a number of alternative potential development sites (14 in Wigston and 12 in Oadby). Comments were also invited on the various alternatives of amending the town centre boundaries.
- 1.3** Further details and explanation of this can be found in the Issues and Options reports, in particular pages 6-9 and figures 3.1 and the tables following pages 11.
- 1.4** For each of the various levels of intervention a Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken of each alternative potential development site against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives.
- 1.5** In preparing the Preferred Options report a number of different levels of intervention were considered for each of the potential development sites. These were tested against the design objectives and a number of economic, environmental and social criteria and were also taken into account through Sustainability Appraisal (section 6 of the Preferred Options Sustainability Report).
- 1.6** Planning policy issues were also taken into account, for example, the relationship between the option of contraction of the town centre boundaries and the selection of the potential development sites that would form the key focus of the Area Action Plan.
- 1.7** The result of this process was the Preferred Options masterplans that were incorporated into the Preferred Options report. A detailed Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken of the proposals for each of the character areas, the planning policy issues and the key potential development sites. This is summarised in table 8.5 of the Preferred Options Sustainability Report and where necessary, mitigation measures are listed in Section 8.4. Section 5 of the Preferred Options report details some of the options that were not progressed and the reasons why.



- 1.8** In November 2008 an Addendum was published to the Preferred Options masterplans/report. This introduced some alternative proposals based on the responses to the Preferred Options public consultation and the publication of a Retail Study that the Council had commissioned. A Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken of the effects upon the Sustainability Appraisal objectives of introducing the alternatives set out in the Addendum report and further public consultation was undertaken.
- 1.9** In September 2010 the Council's Core Strategy was Adopted and in August 2011 the Town Centres Area Action Plan Delivery Strategy was published. This required the consideration of further alternative proposals to ensure that the Area Action Plan was in conformity with the Inspector's amendments to the policies in the Core Strategy and to ensure that the policies in the Area Action Plan were deliverable given that confidence in the economic climate was considered to remain weak for a significantly longer period of time than had been envisaged in 2007 and 2008.
- 1.10** Taking into account these issues the Masterplans were finalised and the policies prepared and incorporated into the Town Centres Area Action Plan. A full Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken of this process and the outcomes included in a final Sustainability Report.

## **2 Key Reasons for selecting the Alternatives**

### **2.1 Wigston – Burgess Junction**

- Site Located within the Town Centre Boundary.
- Consideration was given to the extent of the site – the final option maximises the opportunities whilst retaining and minimising impact upon the neighbouring residential properties and also respects better surrounding land ownership thereby assisting in delivery.
- Opportunity to upgrade the public realm, particularly the part of the site which acts as a 'gateway' to the town centre.
- Opportunity to extend 'The Lanes' with a link from Leicester Road to Frederick Street thus creating a high quality circular route for shoppers to encourage footfall around the whole town.
- Largest opportunity to provide a mixed retail and office scheme; improving the office market in Wigston, thus attracting inward investment and long term job creation, and; improving retail service provision in the town and the opportunity for retail growth in the only town centre located within the southern part of the Leicester Principal Urban Area.
- Opportunity to provide a multi storey car park, consolidating car parking provision in the town thus reducing the amount of congestion in the town caused by drivers travelling to and between car parks.



## 2.2 Wigston – Chapel Mill

- Site Located within the Town Centre Boundary.
- Provides an opportunity to provide a much needed town square in Wigston in a location that is closely linked to the Library and the Church and which will form part of a high quality circular route for shoppers around the town on the newly aligned/extended 'Lane' through the town. This would also achieve a number of social benefits (eg community cohesion and awareness of training and involvement opportunities).
- Opportunity to provide retail space between the town square and Bell Street that would allow for expansion of Sainsbury's supermarket
- Opportunity to make the town more accessible through non car modes through the provision of a public transport facility on Bull Head Street to encourage and facilitate east-west bus movements and a direct bus service linking the planned Direction for Growth to Leicester city centre via Wigston town centre.
- A one way west-east through road linking Frederick Street to Bull Head Street initially proposed with the aim of reducing congestion in the town has not been pursued due to concerns that it would compromise the town square environment.

## 2.3 Wigston – Long Lanes

- New residential development will meet the housing requirements of the Core Strategy, including requirements related to affordable housing, meeting the housing needs of the community and providing an appropriate range and mix of housing in the Borough as a whole as well as reducing the need to develop in the countryside.
- Opportunity to increase the number of people living in the town centre and therefore surveillance and activity, particularly during the evenings.
- Opportunity to provide residential development through a combination of new build and conversion of existing buildings.
- Opportunity to link the site to the rest of the town through the realignment and extension of the 'Lane'.
- Although main parking provision will be relocated to the north of the town, some public car parking provision will remain alongside appropriate parking provision for the residential development.

## 2.4 Oadby – Brooksby Square

- New residential development will meet the housing requirements of the Core Strategy, including requirements related to affordable housing, meeting the housing needs of the community and providing an appropriate range and mix of housing in the Borough as a whole as well as reducing the need to develop in the countryside.
- Opportunity to increase the number of people living in the town centre and therefore surveillance and activity, particularly during the evenings.



- Opportunity to provide a much needed town square in Oadby in a location that is closely linked to the Church and which would be framed by a number of leisure retail uses. This will provide a focus for community events and also serve to achieve a number of social benefits, such as community cohesion. It will also allow events that will encourage inward investment, with the knock on effect of creating more jobs.
- The various alternatives relating to balancing the benefits of a public square and public car parking in this part of Oadby has resulted in a masterplan that shows the provision of a shared use public square that would provide public car parking spaces when the public square was not in use for activities.
- Opportunity to retain public car parking and to achieve enhancements to the layout and public realm associated with the car park. The option of providing a decked public car park was removed when deliverability testing suggest that this would not be viable currently or over the period of the Area Action Plan.
- Opportunity to maximise this prominent location on Harborough Road, better announcing the town to passers-by.

## **2.5 Oadby – Baxters Place**

- Opportunity to provide additional retail provision, that would provide a mix of retails space for both national multiples and in particular smaller, independent retailers in order to retain the currently very successful mix in the town, centred around an attractive public realm.
- Ability to retain public car parking provision provided as two decks, sunk to the level of half a deck to avoid unacceptable impact on neighbouring residential properties.
- Opportunity to retain the provision of a community use on the site which could include a place of worship in line with the relevant policy in the Core Strategy. This would create opportunities for social interaction.

**Oadby and Wigston Borough Council**

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