



Oadby & Wigston

Town Centres Area Action Plan

Situation Update Matter Four Issue 4.2





The Plans for Oadby town centre, including justification of the proposed schemes, how, where and when they would be implemented, and public and private sector resource implications. Would proposals for and to the north of Brooksby Square, and for Baxters Place, distract from the core of Oadby, which several representors considered to be The Parade?

1 Brooksby Square

Justification

- 1.1 Core Strategy Policy 1 requires a target of approximately 80 dwellings to be provided in Oadby town centre. This reflects the spatial strategy for development in Oadby and Wigston that is to deliver the regeneration of town centres and their associated communities and to focus new development within the Leicester Principal Urban Area.
- 1.2 Currently there are very few opportunities to live in the town centre. Providing new residential development will activate the town throughout the day and into the evening and contribute towards the objectives for Oadby town centre to establish a distinct and sustainable role for the town.
- 1.3 Oadby lacks an area of high quality outdoors public space where events and activities can be held and this was identified as an issue from the early stages of preparing the Area Action Plan. Furthermore, the various public consultations clearly identified a need to provide opportunities to improve community cohesion in the town and one of the key ways in which the Area Action Plan can respond to this is to allow space for this to take place.
- 1.4 The Brooksby Square policy therefore includes proposals to establish a public square to respond to this need. The intent was that it would be the focus for community events being located adjacent to the existing Methodist Church and framed by some new retail and leisure uses (eg restaurants; cafes etc) and a new building housing a community use. Several changes have taken place to the proposal for the public square in response to comments raised during subsequent public consultations, including removing the community use (to Baxters Place) and the suggestion to introduce a shared use public square to also include public car parking.
- 1.5 The existing East Street car park is of very poor quality in terms of its public realm, orientation of car parking spaces, servicing and how vehicles can move through the car park. Paragraph 5.65 and 5.66 of the Area Action Plan identify an opportunity to improve this as part of the redevelopment of the Brooksby Square site.



Implementation and Resources

- 1.6** Matters of how, where and when the Brooksby Square scheme will be implemented and relating to necessary resources are dealt with in the Oadby Town Centre Masterplan Delivery Strategy, in particular section 3 (Document Library reference: H6a).

2 Baxters Place

Justification

- 2.1** Core Strategy Policy 2 requires the provision of approximately 5,000 square metres (gross) of retail floorspace to be provided in Oadby town centre. This contributes to a total of 20,000 square metres (gross) of retail floorspace to be provided in the Borough as a whole up to 2026, split between the three centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. This is in line with the Retail Capacity Study that was prepared to evidence the preparation of the Core Strategy. All figures include both comparison and convenience floorspace.
- 2.2** The Baxters Place policy allows for the largest amount of new retail floorspace in Oadby (1,900 square metres). This would provide additional opportunities for small independent retailers and the occasional anchor store, but would not look to interfere with the current mix that exists in the town, for example, on The Parade. In addition, this policy allows for the establishment of a circular route for shoppers to follow when moving around the town which currently does not exist in Oadby. Allied to this would be a high quality of public realm with a central plaza linking all elements of Baxters Place; The Parade; and, the decked car park. It would also allow servicing access to Baxters Place and the rear of units on The Parade.
- 2.3** Core Strategy Policy 2 requires the provision of 1,000 square metres (gross) of commercial floorspace of which the Baxters Place policy allows for the provision of 800 square metres at upper floor levels. The purpose of this commercial floorspace is to strengthen and facilitate the expansion of the office market in Oadby. This amount contributes to a total of 5,800 square metres (gross) of commercial floorspace to be provided in the centres of Oadby and Wigston up to 2026. This is in line with the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study that was prepared to evidence the preparation of the Core Strategy.
- 2.4** The community use allows for the provision of a place of worship in Oadby. A need for a place of worship was identified in the Faith Community Profile and Places of Worship Needs Assessment which was prepared to evidence the preparation of the Core Strategy, specifically Core Strategy Policy 16. Given that the Oadby and Wigston Muslim Association now own the building located adjacent to Sandhurst Street car park (formally Oadby Library) the community use could replace that building as set out in paragraph 5.69 of the Area Action Plan.



- 2.5** The decked car park is required to allow space to enable the level of development described above on the land that currently includes Sandhurst Street car park. It will ensure that there is sufficient car parking capacity to ensure that there will be no loss to the current amount of public car parking spaces in Oadby.

Implementation and Resources

- 2.6** Matters of how, where and when the Baxters Place scheme will be implemented and relating to necessary resources are dealt with in the Oadby Town Centre Masterplan Delivery Strategy, in particular section 3 (Document Library reference: H6a).

3 The Core of Oadby

- 3.1** One key issue that was identified in the early stages of preparing the Area Action Plan is that Oadby does not have a defined 'core' that local people can associate with. Whilst some might identify with The Parade as the core, in actual fact The Parade runs almost the entire length of the town centre. Whilst it can clearly be identified as the main shopping street it is too spread out to provide a core.
- 3.2** Others might identify the junction of The Parade and Chestnut Avenue as the core, given that this is where two roads merge in the centre of town and where pavements widen, for example in from of The Precinct and adjacent to the bank.
- 3.3** It is not the intent of any of the policies in the Area Action Plan to change the way The Parade or the junction of The Parade and Chestnut Avenue operate in the context of Oadby as a whole. In fact, there are specific policies dealing with The Parade (policy 20) and The Precinct (policy 21) and these areas remain very much a firm focus of Oadby Town Centre.
- 3.4** The purpose of the Brooksby Square and Baxters Place proposals is to provide opportunities to introduce new and additional uses into the town and to provide more space, in particular associated with the public realm, which currently is lacking throughout the whole town. These proposals also aim to encourage circular routes to assist pedestrians when moving around the town.

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