

OADBY AND WIGSTON TOWN CENTRES AREA ACTION PLAN (AAP)

Examination of Oadby Town Centre Plan

Statement from Oadby Civic Society

Contents	Page number
Introduction	2
Car parking	2
Public Realms	3
Proposed Development North End East street car Park	3
Baxter Place	4
Appendix A Letter of 5th January 2008	5
Appendix B Letter of 7th December 2011	11

Oadby Town Centre Area Action Plan

Statement from Oadby Civic Society

Introduction

In submitting this Statement we request that the comments contained in our previous correspondence are taken into account. Previous letters are attached as Appendix A and B for convenience of reference. We have set out these comments in the context of whether the AAP is justified or effective.

This Statement collects the previous individual specific points made on the Plan into topics in a holistic manner as there is a great deal of interaction between the various points and our Statement attempts to focus these into a cohesive appraisal.

1) Car Parking

a) Numbers

It is important that existing numbers are at least maintained (there are times when the car parks are absolutely full and shoppers may be deterred from parking) but also extended to cater for the increased retail proposals. The numbers proposed in the plan are far from clear.

b) Access

It is essential that the vehicular and pedestrian access to the parking areas are convenient and attractive in order to encourage the public into the Town Centre.

c) Development of the proposed car parking provision will have a major financial implication which will have to be recouped through charges or by developers return on the retail units,

Taking these items into account we do not consider that the proposals for car parking are justified or effective.

We propose that the Brooksby/East Street car park be retained in its entirety and simply replanned to provide a more effective layout.

2) Public Realms

The proposed provision of Brooksby Square Public Realm outside the Methodist Church provides no gain and is of no merit. It provides no enhancement to the Town Centre as a whole and at the same time reduces car parking provision which is essential to the functioning of the Church. The development of this space would eliminate funds which would be more effectively used in the improvement of The Parade.

Therefore this proposed Public Realm is not justified and reduces the deliverability of The Parade improvements which are to be welcomed.

We propose that this Public Realm be omitted from the AAP and the area be retained as car parking.

3) Proposed development, North end of East Street Car Park

This proposed development reduces car parking provision for shoppers use and the residential element does not provide any “policing” gain to the Centre, particularly if the Public Realm is omitted. The masking of the car park is contrary to the need for good access to same as referred to in 1b. above.

Any need to meet residential quotas would be better provided in The Parade itself or in conjunction with the proposed new retail development on South Street which would have no affect on car parking.

To close off this end of the car park to public view would have a detrimental affect on the street scene relative to the Methodist Church.

Therefore this proposal is not justified or effective.

We propose that this end of the car park be left open to view and landscaped.

4) Baxter Place

While additional retail spaces are acceptable, the viability of the proposal would depend on the provision of high quality and attractive connections to The Parade. This appears to be compromised by the need of dual use to enable servicing to the majority of the units.

The imposition of a two storey car park is unacceptable because of its impact on the existing housing and the vehicle approach which is convoluted and contrary to the principle of having easy access for vehicles and pedestrian traffic as referred to in 1b. above. There are also major financial implications which we have referred to in 1c. above.

The provision of a Community Use Space in this position is unacceptable because of poor access, potential nuisance to the existing housing and potential conflict with the usage of the car parking needed for the proposed increased retail space. Community Use Space should be in a location where dedicated car parking can be provided, thus not taking away car parking for shoppers.

Therefore the plan as proposed is not effective or deliverable.

We proposed that, as suggested, with the Brooksby/East Street car parking retained in total, the two storey car park be omitted together with the Community Use Space in this location.

Tony Parr MA; Dip Arch; RIBA
Peter Bliss ARIBA
On behalf of Oadby Civic society

3rd May 2012

