



TO COUNCILLOR:

N Alam
L A Bentley
G A Boulter
F S Broadley (Vice-Chair)
M L Darr

J K Ford
D A Gamble
C S Gore
S Z Haq
G G Hunt

P Joshi
J Kaufman
K J Loydall
I K Ridley (Chair)

I summon you to attend the following meeting for the transaction of the business in the agenda below.

Meeting: Policy, Finance & Development Committee
Date & Time: Tuesday, 26 March 2024, 7.00 pm
Venue: Civic Suite 2, Brocks Hill Council Offices, Washbrook Lane, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5JJ
Contact: Democratic Services
t: (0116) 257 2775
e: democratic.services@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Yours faithfully

Council Offices
Oadby
18 March 2024

Anne E Court
Chief Executive



Meeting ID: 2605

ITEM NO.

AGENDA

PAGE NO'S

Meeting Live Broadcast | Information and Link

This meeting will be broadcast live.

Press & Public Access:

A direct link to the live broadcast of the meeting's proceedings on the Council's Civico platform is below.

<https://civico.net/oadby-wigston/18692-Policy-Finance-Development-Committee>

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence from Members to determine the quorum of the meeting in accordance with Rule 7 of Part 4 of the Constitution.



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Telephone: (0116) 288 8961 **Email:** customer.services@oadby-wigston.gov.uk



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OadbyWigstonBC



@Oadby_Wigston

2. Appointment of Substitutes

To appoint substitute Members in accordance with Rule 26 of Part 4 of the Constitution and the Substitution Procedure Rules.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that any declaration of interest should be made having regard to the Members' Code of Conduct. In particular, Members must make clear the nature of the interest and whether it is 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary'.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4 - 7

To read, confirm and approve the minutes of the previous meeting in accordance with Rule 19 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

5. Action List Arising from the Previous Meeting

There was no Action List arising from the previous meeting.

6. Petitions and Deputations

To receive any Petitions and, or, Deputations in accordance with Rule(s) 11 and 12 of Part 4 of the Constitution and the Petitions Procedure Rules respectively.

7. Collection and Write-Off of Miscellaneous Debtors (2023/24)

To Follow

Report of the Interim Finance Manager

8. Changes to the Council Tax Charges on Empty Property Policy (2024)

8 - 19

Report of the Revenue & Benefits Manager

9. Updated Discretionary Payments Policy (2024/25)

20 - 37

Report of the Revenue & Benefits Manager

10. New Local Plan Regulation 18B Consultation Draft (Preferred Options)

38 - 250

Report of the Principal Planning Policy Officer

11. Revised Local Development Scheme (Spring 2024)

251 - 267

Report of the Planning Policy & Monitoring Officer

12. Statement of Community Involvement (2024)

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Report of the Planning Policy & Monitoring Officer

13. Standards & Ethical Indicators (Q3 2023/24)

311 - 321

Report of the Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer

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Agenda Item 4

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
HELD AT CIVIC SUITE 2, BROCKS HILL COUNCIL OFFICES, WASHBROOK LANE, OADBY,
LEICESTER, LE2 5JJ ON TUESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT

I K Ridley Chair
F S Broadley Vice-Chair



Meeting ID: 2587

COUNCILLORS

N Alam
L A Bentley
G A Boulter
M L Darr
J K Ford
D A Gamble
C S Gore
S Z Haq
G G Hunt
P Joshi
J Kaufman
K J Loydall

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

S A E Ball Senior Finance Business Partner
B Bull Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer
A E Court Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service
D M Gill Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer
S Khan Interim Strategic Director
T Neal Strategic Director
A Thorpe Head of Built Environment
S Wheeliker Senior Democratic & Electoral Services Officer

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

44. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

None.

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C S Gore declared a pecuniary interest with regard to item 8 of the agenda, insofar as renting a plot in the Aylestone Lane allotments.

46. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

**Policy, Finance & Development
Committee**
Tuesday, 6 February 2024, 7.00 pm

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The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 5 December 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and approved.

47. ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

None.

48. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None.

49. BUDGET MONITORING (Q3 2023/24)

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 9 -39 of the agenda reports pack and pages 3 – 36 of the agenda update), which provided an update on the financial forecast position for the Council for the financial year 2023/24, at the end of Quarter 3.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded Councillor K J Loydall, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT

- i) The content of the report and appendices be noted; and**
- ii) The movement of the capital budget from the new Housing Initiative scheme to create the new Purchasing Existing Properties scheme be approved.**

An amendment was proposed by Councillor L A Bentley and seconded by Councillor S Z Haq that recommendation C would include the Chair of Service Delivery Committee.

IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT

- iii) The delegated authority for the purchase of a suitable dwelling to add to the HRA housing stock, subject to the inclusion of the Chair of Service Delivery Committee, be approved; and**
- iv) The reduction of the 2023/24 capital programme budgets by the forecast slippage amounts and the increase of the capital programme budgets for 2024/25 to reflect the slippage be approved.**

An amendment was proposed by Councillor C S Gore and seconded by Councillor N Alam that recommendation E read "Approve the creation of an NNDR Equalisation Reserve to hold income over budget created in one year so it can fund an NNDR deficit in a future year."

IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT

- v) The creation of an NNDR Equalisation Reserve to hold income over budget created in one year so it can fund an NNDR deficit in a future year be approved.**

50. DRAFT 2024/25 REVENUE BUDGETS, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND 2024/25 - 2028/29 CAPITAL PROGRAMMES

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 40 – 52 of the agenda reports pack and pages 37 – 126 of the agenda update), which gave an update on the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2024/25, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue budget for 2024/25, the Draft Capital Programmes and the MTFP 2024/25 to 2028/29.

It was moved by Councillor S Z Haq, subject to an amendment that the Health and Wellbeing budget be removed, and seconded by Councillor K J Loydall, and

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT

- i) The General Fund Revenue Budget for 2024/25 as set out in appendix 1, subject to any final adjustments as may be required prior to Full Council (such as NNDR1 final estimates and the Final Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25), based on no use of the general fund reserve and delivery of the Service Delivery Changes – Financial Sustainability Plan both approved at Full Council meeting on 12 December 2023, be recommended to Full Council.**

Votes For	10
Votes Against	4
Abstentions	0

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT

- ii) An increase in Council Tax by the maximum core referendum limit of 2.99% as announced in the Provisional Local Government Settlement, subject to any update announced in the Final Local Government Settlement be recommended to Full Council.**

Votes For	10
Votes Against	4
Abstentions	0

IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT

- iii) The HRA budget for 2024/25, as detailed in table 6, based on the rent increase of 7.7% for Housing rents, garages and service charges approved at the Full Council meeting on 12 December 2023, be recommended to Full Council for approval;**
- iv) The Scale of Fees and Charges as set out in appendix 4 be recommended to Full Council for approval;**
- v) The Capital Schemes for the General Fund and HRA, including an indicative ranking for potential future schemes to be added to the programmes as funding is secured, as detailed in table 9, be recommended to Full Council to note;**
- vi) The MTFP for 2024/25 to 2028/29 as set out in appendix 8 be recommended to Full Council to note; and**
- vii) The S151 Officer's statement on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves as set out in section 13 of the report be recommended to Full Council to note.**

51. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGIES AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS (2024/25)

**Policy, Finance & Development
Committee**
Tuesday, 6 February 2024, 7.00 pm

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The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 53 – 101 of the agenda reports pack), which asked it to approve the Treasury Management Policy and Strategies and Prudential Indicators (2024/25).

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor K J Loydall, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT

- i) The Capital Strategy 2024/25 including the Prudential Indicators (as set out in Appendix 1) be approved;**
- ii) The Treasury Management Policy, Treasury Strategy and Plan 2024/25 (as set out in Appendices 2 & 3) be approved;**
- iii) The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2024/25 (as set out in Appendix 4) be approved;**
- iv) The Investment Strategy 2024/25 (as set out in Appendix 5) be approved; and**
- v) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy (as set out in Appendix 6) be approved.**

52. RESIDENT FORUM FUNDING REQUESTS

The Committee gave consideration to the report (as set out at pages 102 – 104 of the agenda reports pack), which asked it to approve the release of funds to the relevant parties.

It was moved by Councillor L A Bentley, seconded by Councillor C S Gore, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT

- i) The content of the report be noted and the release of funds to the relevant parties be approved.**

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.20 pm

Agenda Item 8



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 26 March 2024	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Changes to the Council Tax Charges on Empty Property Policy (2024)**

Report Author(s): **Claire Werra (Revenues & Benefits Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is seek the Committee’s approval to update to the Council Tax Charges on Empty Property Policy to include Council Tax premiums for Second Homes.
Report Summary:	The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 proposes to allow Billing Authorities the power to charge a 100% Council Tax premium for empty and furnished properties, known as second homes.
Recommendation(s):	A. That the Committee approves the amendments to the Council Tax Charges on Empty Property Policy (as set out at Appendix 1); and B. That the Committee make a decision on the options as set out at paragraph 3.1 of this report.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2642 teresa.neal@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Trish Hatton (Head of Customer Services & Transformation) (0116) 257 2700 trish.hatton@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Claire Werra (Revenues & Benefits Manager) (0116) 257 2681 claire.werra@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	Our Communities (SO2) Our Economy (SO3)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Customer & Community Focused (V1) Proud of Everything We Do (V2) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out at paragraph 2.4 of this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	No corporate risk(s) identified.
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report.

Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council Tax Charges on Empty Property Policy 2. Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Excerpts)

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council Tax Charges on Empty Property Policy was approved by the Committee on 12 September 2023.
- 1.2 The Levelling up and Regeneration Act amends the definition of a dwelling being a "long-term empty dwelling" if for a continuous period of at least two years, to a continuous period of one year, from 1 April 2024. This change is now reflected in the Council Tax Charges on Empty Property Policy.
- 1.3 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 also includes a provision to charge a new Council Tax premium for furnished empty properties, known as Second Homes, at a rate of 100% from the day the property becomes unoccupied. See **Appendix 2**

2. Policy Details

- 2.1 The policy intention is to encourage owners of second homes to make their homes available for permanent occupations and therefore improve the supply of housing and for owners of second homes to make greater contribution to Council Tax receipts.
- 2.2 Second homes for Council Tax purposes include furnished rental properties and properties occupied by a person who has their sole or main residence elsewhere.
- 2.3 The intention to charge a premium on second homes would result in landlords paying more Council Tax during periods when properties are not let including potentially short periods between tenancies. The Council could specify a minimum period before the premium was to apply allowing landlords a reasonable length of time to manage the move between tenants.
- 2.4 We currently have 38 properties which are classed as second homes for Council Tax purposes. Based on this volume and the 24/25 Council Tax charges, applying the premium could generate an additional £72,140.51 in annual Council Tax revenue. The Council's portion of this would approximately be £8245.66 (based on retention of 11.43% of the overall income).

(Continued overleaf)

3. Matters For Consideration and Decision

- 3.1 The Council does not have to implement the second home premiums, but by not doing so, properties will remain unoccupied for longer as there is no incentive to re-occupy and the opportunity to maximise our Council Tax receipts is lost. If the Council does implement the second home premiums, the options available are:
 - 3.1.1 Apply the second home premium from the date the property becomes unoccupied, or
 - 3.1.2 Apply the second homes premium 12 months after the property becomes unoccupied to bring it in line with the long-term empty premium.
- 3.2 A determination to apply the charge must be made 12 months in advance of the financial year in which the charge is due to apply. The Council must therefore make a determination before 31 March 2024 if the intention is to apply the second home premium from 1 April 2025.
- 3.3 If approved, the second homes premium charge will be added as an Appendix to the Council Tax Charges on Empty Property Policy. See **Appendix 1**.

Council Tax Charges on Empty Properties (Empty Homes Premium) 2024

Document Version Information	
Policy Owner	Revenue and Benefits Manager
Committee	PFD Committee
Committee Approval Date	12.09.23
Last Review Date	19.01.24
Next Review Date	
Version	2.0

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 and associated regulations sets out the mechanism for levying council tax on domestic properties.
- 1.2 The regulations give councils some discretion in setting the level of council tax charged in respect of unoccupied properties.
- 1.3 The Rating (property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 allows councils to levy a higher amount of council tax for long-term empty dwellings that are unoccupied and unfurnished, known as empty property premium.
- 1.4 From 1st April 2024, The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, amends section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, by substituting the long-term empty period from '2 years' for '1 year'.

2.0 Purpose and principles of the policy

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the charges to be levied in respect of empty unoccupied and unfurnished properties in relation to the council's discretionary powers.
- 2.2 This policy also sets out the guidelines to be applied when deciding whether an exception to applying the empty property premium may be considered.

3.0 The Empty Property Premium

- 3.1 Where a property has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than one year, an additional premium is added to the council tax charge.
- 3.2 The amount of the premium is based on the normal council tax band of the property. The band itself is not affected by the empty property premium.

4 Purpose of the premium

- 4.1 Empty homes benefit from services such as police and fire services, street lighting and road maintenance. Before the premium is added, owners are given one year at the standard council tax charge to enable them sufficient time to sell or rent out their properties, or to complete any major renovations that might be required.
- 4.2 The empty property premium is intended as an incentive to owners to ensure properties are occupied as soon as possible and not left empty. Empty homes attract vandalism, squatting and anti-social behaviour within our community.

5 When might a premium be applied?

- 5.1 The additional premium applies to the property. A change of ownership or tenancy will not affect the amount of additional premium charged.
- 5.2 If a customer acquires an empty property which has already been empty for a year or more and they do not intend to occupy immediately, they will not be required to pay the additional premium for the first 6 months. After that period, the relevant premium will continue to be charged.
- 5.3 Liability for the premium depends on how long the property has been empty: a change in ownership does not 'reset the clock.' As soon as the customer moves into the property, the premium will cease to apply. Liability for a council tax premium will not appear on the normal legal searches that are conducted when purchasing a property.
- 5.4 If a customer buys, or inherits, a property and they have not been able to sell it within one year of it becoming empty, the premium will be applied.
- 5.5 An empty property premium is payable one year after a property becomes empty, not a year after another council tax exemption ends. For instance, if a customer has inherited a property from a relative who has died, they may have benefited from a Class F council tax exemption. But when that exemption no longer applied, an empty homes premium would become payable a year after the property originally became empty.
- 5.6 When a property is reoccupied, the premium is no longer payable. However, if the property becomes empty again before the 'reset period' (6 weeks) has elapsed, the premium will apply again immediately. If the property is reoccupied for longer than the reset period, a further year's period will have to elapse before a premium can be charged again.

6 When does a premium not apply?

- 6.1 An empty property premium cannot be charged if:
- The property that had attracted the premium is let out. The tenant will then become liable for council tax payments. The premium will cease to apply because the property is no longer empty.
 - The property is empty because the owner has to live in armed forces accommodation for job-related purposes.
 - The property is an annexe that is being used as part of the main property (annexes will often have a council tax band of their own).
- 6.2 The council will consider waiving the premium for customers who meet the qualifying criteria as specified in 6.3 of this policy.
- 6.3 The Council will treat all requests to waiver the premium on their individual merits and will consider granting full or partial exemptions from the empty property premium in the following circumstances:
- When the owner can clearly demonstrate continuous, ongoing, and realistic efforts to sell or let their property over the year since it became empty.
 - Where the owner is experiencing particular legal or technical issues which are preventing the sale or letting of the property.

- Where the new owner needs to conduct substantial repairs before they can move in, and the length of time taken to carry out the repairs is reasonable.
- Where the taxpayer has gone into care or hospital, is severely mentally impaired or has gone elsewhere to provide care.
- The taxpayer has died and probate has yet to be granted.

7 When does a premium end?

- 7.1 To end the additional empty property premium charge, the property must be back in use and the property must be furnished to a level which would mean the property was capable of occupation i.e. bed, sofa, table, chairs, wardrobe/chest of drawers etc.

8 The reset period.

- 8.1 When a property is reoccupied, the premium is no longer payable. However, if the property becomes empty again before the reset period (six-weeks) has elapsed, the premium will apply again immediately. If the property is reoccupied for longer than the reset period, a further year's period will have to elapse before a premium can be charged again.

9 The additional premium rates.

- 9.1 Additional premiums can be added to properties which have been unoccupied for more than 1, 5 or 10 years. As shown in the table below:

Empty period.	Additional Premium rate charged.	Maximum charge as a percentage of the standard bill.
1 – 5 years	100%	200%
5 – 10 years	200%	300%
+ 10 years	300%	400%

10.0 Hardship

- 10.1 Any person who believes they are suffering financial hardship due to exceptional circumstances may make a request for relief from the charges under section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act.

11.0 Appeals

- 11.1 Any person who disagrees with the amount of council tax they are liable to pay can appeal. To do this they must:
- Write to the council stating what the issue is.

The customer will be sent a response with the reasons for the decision made. If they remain dissatisfied or do not receive a response within 2 months, then can appeal to the Valuations Tribunal.

- Further details on how to appeal to the Valuations Tribunal can be found here [Council tax liability appeal - Valuation Tribunal Service](#) or by contacting the Valuations Tribunal Service directly on 0303 445 8100.

Appendix 1 – Second Home Premiums

From April 1st 2025, the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 introduces discretionary powers for local authorities to set a 100% empty homes premium to “substantially furnished” properties that have no permanent resident. This covers properties that are used as second homes by their owners. The liable person will therefore pay 200% Council Tax.

If a property is furnished but no one lives there, or the owner’s main home is elsewhere, then it is likely to qualify as a second home for Council Tax purposes and incur the additional 100% premium.

The minimum term before the second home premium will be applied is one year.

Appendix 2

Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023

Section – 80 - Dwellings occupied periodically: England

(1) The Local Government Finance Act 1992 is amended in accordance with [subsections \(2\) and \(3\)](#).

(2) After section 11B (higher amount for long-term empty dwellings: England) insert—

“11C Higher amount for dwellings occupied periodically: England

(1) For any financial year, a billing authority in England may by determination provide in relation to its area, or such part of its area as it may specify in the determination, that if on any day the conditions mentioned in [subsection \(2\)](#) are satisfied in respect of a dwelling—

(a) the discount under section 11(2)(a) does not apply, and

(b) the amount of council tax payable in respect of that dwelling and that day is increased by such percentage of not more than 100 as it may specify in the determination.

(2) The conditions are—

(a) there is no resident of the dwelling, and

(b) the dwelling is substantially furnished.

(3) A billing authority's first determination under this section must be made at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates.

(4) In exercising its functions under this section a billing authority must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

(5) Where a determination under this section has effect in relation to a class of dwellings—

(a) the billing authority may not make a determination under section 11A(3), (4) or (4A) in relation to that class, and

(b) any determination that has been made under section 11A(3), (4) or (4A) ceases to have effect in relation to that class.

(6) A billing authority may make a determination varying or revoking a determination under this section for a financial year, but only before the beginning of the year.

(7) Where a billing authority makes a determination under this section it must publish a notice of the determination in at least one newspaper circulating in the area.

(8) The notice must be published before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of the determination.

(9) The validity of the determination is not affected by a failure to comply with [subsection \(7\) or \(8\)](#).

11D Section 11C: regulations

(1) The Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe one or more classes of dwelling in relation to which a billing authority may not make a determination under [section 11C](#).

(2) A class of dwellings may be prescribed under [subsection \(1\)](#) by reference to such factors as the Secretary of State thinks fit and may, amongst other factors, be prescribed by reference to—

(a) the physical characteristics of, or other matters relating to, dwellings;

(b) the circumstances of, or other matters relating to, any person who is liable to the amount of council tax concerned.

(3) The Secretary of State may by regulations specify a different percentage limit for the limit which is for the time being specified in [section 11C\(1\)\(b\)](#).

(4) A statutory instrument containing regulations made under [subsection \(3\)](#) may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been approved by resolution of the House of Commons.”

(3) In consequence of the amendment made by subsection (2)—

(a) in section 11 (discounts), in subsection (2), after “11B” insert “, 11C”;

(b) in section 11A (discounts: special provision for England), in subsection (4C), at the end insert “and 11C(5)”;

(c) in section 13 (reduced amounts), in subsection (3), after “11B” insert “, 11C”;

(d) in section 66 (judicial review), in subsection (2)(b), after “11B” insert “, 11C”;

(e) in section 67 (functions to be discharged only by authority), in subsection (2)(a), after “11B” insert “, 11C”;

(f) in section 113 (orders and regulations), in subsection (3), after “under section” insert “11D(3),”;

(g) in Schedule 2 (administration), in paragraph 4(7), after “: England),” insert “11C(1)(b) (higher amount for dwellings occupied periodically: England),”.

(4) A determination for the purposes of section 11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as inserted by [subsection \(2\)](#) may not relate to a financial year beginning before 1 April 2024 (but this does not affect the requirement for the determination to be made at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates).

Agenda Item 9



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 26 March 2024	Matter for Decision
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Report Title: Updated Discretionary Payments Policy (2024/25)

Report Author(s): Claire Werra (Revenues & Benefits Manager)

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee's approval of the updated Discretionary Payments Policy (2024/25)
Report Summary:	Policies are more consistent and effective when they are reviewed regularly. The previous Discretionary Payments Policy required improvements to ensure it was relevant and clear for the residents of our Borough.
Recommendation(s):	A. That the content of the report be noted; and B. The Discretionary Payments Policy (2024/25) (as set out at Appendix 1) be approved).
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2642 teresa.neal@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Trish Hatton (Head of Customer Services & Transformation) (0116) 257 2700 trish.hatton@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Claire Werra (Revenues & Benefits Manager) (0116) 257 2681 claire.werra@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<p>Our Council (SO1)</p> <p>Our Communities (SO2)</p> <p>Our Economy (SO3)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision)</p> <p>Customer & Community Focused (V1)</p> <p>Proud of Everything We Do (V2)</p> <p>Resourceful & Resilient (V4)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Reputation Damage (CR4)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. Initial EA Screening (See Appendices)
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.

Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Updated Discretionary Payments Policy (2024/25) 2. Equalities Assessment (Initial Screening)

1. Background

- 1.1 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) were introduced in July 2001. The aim of these payments was to provide additional help to people who were already in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit that were in severe hardship.
- 1.2 The scheme is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Although the DWP has issued guidance for local authorities, the method of allocation adopted and the decision-making process lies with individual authorities.
- 1.3 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and introduced a new local provision to provide Local Council Tax Support. The discretionary payments for Council Tax are now funded locally and set by the Council each year.

2. Changes to the Policy

- 2.1 With Discretionary Housing Payment funding from the DWP reducing year upon year, there is greater need for the policy to be clearer and more robust, to ensure transparency for customers in our decision-making process.
- 2.2 The updated policy now clearly shows the Council's objectives for discretionary payments. Supporting our corporate visions and values.
- 2.3 The policy now shows the reduction in funding levels from the DWP for greater transparency.
- 2.4 The policy more clearly sets out the parameters for awarding discretionary payment and factors which will be considered by the awarding officer.
- 2.5 Backdating rules are now more clearly explained.
- 2.6 The role of our Financial Inclusion Officer is highlighted in our Policy to increase awareness of the support the Council provides.
- 2.7 The most significant change for customers is that they are now required to provide 2-months bank statements, by introducing this measure, customers will be able to demonstrate they are unable to meet their housing costs and Council Tax liability from their available income or that they have a shortfall in meeting these costs. This approach will allow us to provide targeted support to the most financially vulnerable customers who are experiencing severe financial hardship.

3. **Summary**

- 3.1 The recommendation is that Members approve the Policy included in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 The Policy will now be renewed on an annual basis to reflect the changing levels in DWP funding and any other relevant factors that arise.

Discretionary Housing Payments Policy

Document Version Information	
Policy Owner	Revenue and Benefits Manager
Committee	PFD
Committee Approval Date	
Last Review Date	01 April 2011
Next Review Date	01 April 2025
Version	2.0

Glossary

BO	Benefit Officer
CT	Council Tax
CTS	Council Tax Support
DFAR	Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001
DCTS	Discretionary Council Tax Support
DHP	Discretionary Housing Payments
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
FIO	Financial Inclusion Officer
HB	Housing Benefit
HOS	Head of Service
OWBC	Oadby & Wigston Borough Council
RBS	Revenues and Benefit Service
SBO	Senior Benefit Officer

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1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to specify how Oadby & Wigston Borough Council's Revenues and Benefits Service (RBS) will operate the discretionary payment scheme and indicate some of the factors that will be considered when deciding if an award can be made.
- 1.2. This policy contributes towards one of the council's strategic objectives 'Our Community' to provide good, affordable, efficient housing for everyone.
- 1.3. In making decisions on claims for discretionary payments, the RBS shall have regard to the relevant legislation and the additional guidance set out in this policy.

2.0 Legislation and Funding

- 2.1 DHP awards are made under the provisions set out in Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (DFAR). These regulations require local authorities to administer a DHP scheme and set out key qualifying criteria for making payments under the scheme.
- 2.2 In particular, the DFAR regulations give details of when payments cannot be made and explain the general qualifying criteria for Discretionary Payments (such as entitlement to Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support). The regulations also set financial limits for payments on councils and these are updated annually.
- 2.3 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provides an annual grant to each local authority to pay DHP. Any element of the grant not spent must be returned in full to the DWP. A local authority may spend more than its DWP grant up to an upper limit (2.5 times the DWP grant) but any amounts paid over the DWP grant fall upon the council's general fund to finance.
- 2.4 Payments of Discretionary Council Tax Support will be fully funded through the council's own finances.
- 2.5 Recent DHP government grant allocation for OWBC has been:
 - 2020/21 - £107,720
 - 2021/22 - £79,393
 - 2022/23 - £55,128
 - 2023/24 - £56,271

3.0 Policy Statement

- 3.1 This policy contributes towards one of the council's strategic objectives 'Our Community' to provide good, affordable, efficient housing for everyone.
- 3.2 To contribute towards this aim, OWBC will make discretionary payments wherever appropriate and will publicise the existence of these payments.
- 3.3 The council will do everything possible to make it easy for potential beneficiaries of discretionary payments to claim them. Claims will be considered carefully and fairly.

- 3.4 Benefit Officers will make decisions on DHP claims. Reasons for their decisions will be recorded and the claimant will be notified of these reasons in writing.
- 3.5 In making decisions on claims for DHPs, officers shall have regard to the relevant legislation, the principles of natural justice, equality of opportunities and the additional guidance set out in this policy.
- 3.6 The RBS will work actively with the local voluntary sector, social landlords and other interested parties in the borough to maximise entitlement to all available state benefits and this will be reflected in the administration of the discretionary payments scheme.

4.0 Scheme Objectives

- 4.1 All applications will be considered on their individual merit and will seek through the operation of this policy to:
 - Alleviate poverty
 - Encourage and sustain people in employment
 - Sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness
 - Safeguard tenants in their own homes
 - Help those who are trying to help themselves
 - Keep families together
 - Support the vulnerable or elderly in the local community
 - Help customers through personal and difficult events
 - Support young people in the transition to adult life, or
 - Promote good educational outcomes for children and young people.

5.0 What are discretionary payments?

- 5.1 Discretionary Council Tax Support (DCTS) provides financial assistance to customers who already receive Council Tax Support (CTS) and require further assistance to pay the shortfall between their weekly Council Tax liability and the amount of CTS they receive.
- 5.2 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) provide financial support towards housing costs and are paid to customers who need further financial assistance with housing costs and are in receipt of either:
 - Housing Benefit (HB) or
 - Universal Credit (UC) with housing costs towards rental liability
- 5.3 DHPs can cover shortfalls between housing support (HB or UC) and actual rentals costs. DHPs can also be used to cover rental deposits, rent in advance and costs associated with taking a new tenancy e.g. removal costs.
- 5.4 There are certain elements of a person's rent which the HB and UC regulations exclude, so they cannot be included as 'housing costs' for the purpose of DHP. These include:
 - Ineligible service charges.
 - Increases in rent due to outstanding rent arrears.

- Sanctions and reductions in benefits.
- Benefit suspensions.
- Shortfalls caused by HB and UC overpayment recovery.

6.0 Claiming Discretionary Payments

- 6.1 A claim for discretionary payments must be made on an approved form and received by OWBC at a designated office for the receipt of benefit claims. The claim must:
- Identify the claimant and the address that the claim relates to
 - Be properly completed
 - Contain sufficient reasonable information and supporting evidence to allow the council to make a DHP decision.
- 6.2 OWBC will accept an application for discretionary payments:
- Electronically via online form
 - By paper form upon request
 - By assisted completion by telephone or face to face via the Financial Inclusion Officer (FIO)
- 6.3 Where a claim does not comply with the above requirements the Benefit Officer (BO) will take reasonable steps to remedy the application. The BO may request any reasonable and relevant information or evidence in support of a claim.
- 6.4 In all cases, the customer will be required to provide two months up-to-date bank statements for all accounts held by them and their partner (if they have one). This includes bank, building society, Credit Union and Post Office accounts. No decision will be made without this information.
- 6.5 The BO will take into consideration the current rental market, size of suitable property and any other relevant costs when determining an application for Rent in Advance or Rent Deposit payments.
- 6.6 Retrospective payment for Rent Deposit or Rent in Advance will only be considered where there are extenuating circumstances, and an intention to claim DHP has been made to the council prior to paying the rent in advance or rent deposit to the landlord.
- 6.7 The customer will be asked to provide the information or evidence within one month. BOs will have discretion to extend the above time limit if appropriate in the interests of promoting the objectives of this policy.
- 6.8 If the customer does not provide the required information or evidence within the time limits outlined in 6.7, then the council will consider the DHP application taking into account any available evidence, including that held on the Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Support (CTS) records.

7.0 Period of award

- 7.1 The BO will decide the length of time for which payment will be awarded on the basis of the known facts and the evidence supplied. The start date of the award will usually be:

- The Monday after the council receives the claim, or
 - The date on which entitlement to HB/CTS/UC started, providing that the claim is made within one month of the council or DWP notifying the customer of the HB/CT/UCS decision, or such reasonable extension of time as officers may consider appropriate in the particular circumstances of the case, or
 - The Monday after a relevant change in circumstances giving rise to the need for the additional support.
- 7.2 A discretionary payment cannot be awarded for any period for which the customer has no entitlement to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support or Universal Credit under the HB/CTS/UC statutory scheme.
- 7.3 The minimum period for which a DHP may be awarded is one week, but in most cases DHPs will not be awarded for more than 26 weeks.
- 7.4 The BO may set a review date for an award in order to ascertain whether circumstances have changed. Furthermore, the customer will be under a duty to report all changes of their circumstances in writing to the council's designated office.
- 7.5 The BO will consider any reasonable request for backdating of a claim, but such backdating will be limited to the current financial year. Backdating decisions will be made based on the information and evidence supplied and the known facts.

8.0 Awarding a DHP

- 8.1 Decisions will be made in accordance with the principles of good decision making and decision makers will act fairly, reasonably and consistently. The level of award may cover all or part of the shortfall or assist with the cost of starting or retaining a tenancy.
- 8.2 In deciding whether to award a discretionary payment, the BO will take into account any of the following factors, which may be relevant:
- The current best practice guidance from the DWP and legislation
 - The amount of the shortfall between HB/CTS and the rental/council tax liability (net of any ineligible charges) and the reasons for that shortfall coming about
 - Any steps taken by the customer to reduce their rental or council tax liability
 - Any steps that could be reasonably taken by the customer to mitigate the need for DHP such as but not limited to moving home or applying for unclaimed benefits
 - The financial and medical or social needs and circumstances of the claimant, their partner and any other persons in the household
 - The income and expenditure of the claimant, their partner and any other persons in the household
 - Any savings or capital held by the claimant or family members
 - The level of overall debt of the claimant and family
 - Any exceptional circumstances of the claimant or family members
 - Any special reasons which make it necessary or particularly desirable for the claimant to occupy the dwelling in respect of which the liability arises
 - The likely consequences of rent or council tax arrears for the claimant or family members, especially if any of them are vulnerable by reason of age, sickness or disability
 - Action taken by the landlord (or OWBC) to recover arrears of rent or council tax

- The discriminatory impact of legislation (e.g. restrictions on the rent and applicable amount of younger single claimants)
- The remaining funding available within the scheme
- The possible impact on the council of not making an award, e.g. the pressure on priority homeless accommodation
- Any other special circumstances brought to the officer's attention.

- 8.3 The BO will recommend how much to award based on all the circumstances. This may be any amount within the limits prescribed by the DFAR.
- 8.4 An award does not guarantee that a further award will be made at a later date even if the claimant's circumstances have not changed. In all cases, where additional support is sought, a customer will be required to submit a full re-application on the approved form.
- 8.5 To ensure consistency, Benefits Officers will review the customer's income and expenditure by using the standard Financial Statement, which is in line with our internal and external partners, welfare and financial sectors. This standard Financial Statement tool allows us to provide a single set of information should the customer need to be referred for further support.
- 8.6 The Benefit Officer will consider if the amounts of expenditure are reasonable, taking into consideration the size and circumstances of the household. Further information may be requested for any expenditure that the Benefit service deemed unrealistic or non-essential.
- 8.7 The application will be processed, reviewing the level of shortfall between income and expenditure.
- 8.8 High levels of non-essential spending may be disregarded:
- Social and entertainment
 - Satellite and cable TV
 - Mobile phones
 - Alcohol and cigarettes
 - Private medical and dental healthcare
- 8.9 The council will also take account of unavoidable costs, such as fares to work or hospital.

9.0 Change of circumstances

- 9.1 RBS staff may revise, revoke, or suspend an award where the customer's circumstances have materially changed or where false, misleading or incomplete information has been supplied to the council. Such amendments will lead to the issue of a new decision notice with new appeal rights. However, a decision to suspend payments while further enquiries are undertaken by RBS does not carry a right of appeal.

10.0 Method of payment

- 10.1 As a general rule DHP and DCTS awards are paid together with HB or CTS.
- 10.2 The BO will decide on the most appropriate person to pay, the method, and timing of payments based upon the circumstances of each case. In most DHP cases, payment with HB will be the most

convenient payment method. In all DCTS cases, the award will be credited to the Council Tax (CT) account.

- 10.3 In the event that the award puts a customer's rent account or CT account in credit, the customer will have the option of applying for a refund or leaving the credit on the account against future liability.

11.0 Notification

- 11.1 Once a decision has been made, the BO will notify the customer of the outcome of their application within one working day or as soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter.
- 11.2 Where the DHP application is unsuccessful, the notification will state briefly the reasons for the decision and what the BO considered in making their decision.
- 11.3 Where the application is successful, the notification will advise:
- The weekly amount of DHP awarded
 - The period of the award
 - How, when, and to whom the DHP will be paid
 - The requirement to report any relevant change
- 11.4 All notifications will advise the customer of their rights to ask for a review (an appeal).

12.0 The right to seek a review.

- 12.1 Discretionary payments are not payments of HB or CTS and are therefore not subject to the statutory appeals mechanism. Accordingly, RBS will operate the following policy for dealing with disputes about:
- A refusal to award DHP/DCTS or
 - A decision to award a reduced amount of DHP/DCTS or
 - A decision not to award a backdate of DHP/DCTS or
 - A decision that there has been an overpayment of DHP/DCTS
- 12.2 A claimant or person acting on their behalf who disagrees with a DHP/DCTS decision may dispute the decision or request the full reasons for it.
- 12.3 A request for a review or for reasons shall be made in writing and must be delivered to the RBS by any method which is acceptable for a DHP/DCTS claim.
- 12.4 Any request for a review must be made within one month of the customer being notified of the decision.
- 12.5 Where appropriate, RBS staff will explain the decision to the customer by telephone, letter or e-mail and will seek to resolve the matter.
- 12.6 Where agreement cannot be reached, the Revenues and Benefits Manager (RBM) will consider the review.
- 12.7 Where the RBM decides not to revise the original decision, they will notify the appellant of the outcome of the review, setting out the reasons for confirming the original decision.

- 12.8 In exceptional circumstances the RBM may extend the time limit for an appeal. There is no right of appeal against a decision by the RBM not to extend the time limit for appealing.
- 12.9 Where a customer is not satisfied with the outcome of the review, they will only be able to challenge the decision via the Judicial Review Process or by complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

13.0 Additional support

- 13.1 Oadby & Wigston Borough Council is committed to help their residents reduce their indebtedness and maximise income. The Benefit Service can refer the customer to our Financial Inclusion Officer who can assist the customer to achieve financial independence.
- 13.2 The main purpose of the Financial Inclusion Officer is to support the claimant in maximising their income, debt/budgeting advice, and reviewing and supporting their housing application and Council Tax accounts. They will work with the customer to provide a one-stop service and will support the claimant by completing/supporting applications for further benefit/discount to minimise debt and increase income, refer to budgeting/debt advisory services, and work with the Housing and Council Tax team.

14.0 Overpayments

- 14.1 If a DHP has been overpaid, officers will consider whether it is appropriate to recover it in full, in part or not at all. As a general rule, overpayments caused by official error will not be recovered, unless the customer caused or contributed to the error or could have been reasonably aware that too much was being paid.
- 14.2 Overpaid DHPs will always be recoverable from the claimant, the payee or any party who has knowingly made false or misleading statements to the council. In most instances OWBC will issue a sundry debtor invoice to the party liable to repay the overpayment. Under no circumstances will overpaid DHP recovery be made from ongoing HB payments due to the claimant.

15 Fraud

- 15.1 If a customer falsely declares their circumstances, provide a false statement, or provide false evidence in support of their application, they may have committed an offence under the Fraud Act 2006. OWBC is committed to the fight against fraud in all its forms.

16 Publicity

- 16.1 OWBC will promote the availability of Discretionary Payments and will work with all interested parties including both voluntary and statutory organisations, to achieve this.
- 16.2 When undertaking benefit take-up work it will also promote this scheme.



EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

Name of Policy/Function:		This is new
		This is a change to an existing policy
		This is an existing policy, Function, not previously assessed
Discretionary Payments Policy	x	This is an existing policy/function for review

Date of screening	11/03/2024
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1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

Discretionary housing payments are intended to provide short term financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home.

Discretionary Council Tax Support Payments are intended to help people who are experiencing severe financial hardship who need extra help to pay the Council Tax

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council administers Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) on behalf of the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) The local authority receives an annual financial allocation from the DWP to provide this support. Although the DWP has issued guidance for local authorities, the method of allocation adopted and the decision-making process lies with individual authorities.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and introduced a new local provision to provide Local Council Tax Support. Discretionary Council Tax Support Payments are funded locally and set by the Council each year.

The purpose of the Discretionary Payment Policy is to specify how Oadby & Wigston Borough Council's Revenues and Benefits Service will operate the discretionary payment scheme and indicate some of the factors that will be considered when deciding if an award can be made.

2. Are there external considerations?

e.g. Legislation/government directive etc

Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (DFAR)

3. Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?

- **Customers** – Applying for discretionary payments
- **Benefits Staff** – Making decisions on and processing discretionary payment applications
- **Other Council Staff** – Sign posting and advising customers
- **Advice/Support Agencies** – Sign posting customers to the Council to make applications

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom?

The council want to achieve the outcomes listed below:

This policy contributes towards one of the council's strategic objectives 'Our Community' to provide good, affordable, efficient housing for everyone. All applications will be considered on their individual merit and will seek through the operation of this policy to:

- Alleviate poverty
- Encourage and sustain people in employment
- Sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness
- Safeguard tenants in their own homes
- Help those who are trying to help themselves
- Keep families together
- Support the vulnerable or elderly in the local community
- Help customers through personal and difficult events
- Support young people in the transition to adult life, or
- Promote good educational outcomes for children and young people.

5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

- Other Local Authorities Discretionary Payments policies have been researched
- The Revenues and Benefits Manager has spoken to peers at other Council about their policy and the approach they have taken
- The policy review has only resulted in minor changes that have been in response to customer feedback or to help make things like the eligibility and the decision making process clearer, therefore an external consultation has not been carried out

- The policy has however been shared with relevant staff within the Council for comment and feedback

6. Are there any concerns at this stage which indicate the possibility of Inequalities/negative impacts?

Consider and identify any evidence you have -equality data relating to usage and satisfaction levels, complaints, comments, research, outcomes of review, issues raised at previous consultations, known inequalities) If so please provide details.

No

7. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?

Positive – *It could benefit*

Negative – *It could disadvantage*

Neutral – *Neither positive nor negative impact or not sure.*

	Type of impact, reason & any evidence
Disability	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax
Age	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax
Gender Reassignment	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of

	renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax
Sex	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax
Sexual Orientation	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax
Religion/Belief	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive - The policy is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of people, including those with protected characteristics by providing additional financial support to households who face financial difficulty on meeting the cost of renting their home or to people who are experiencing severe financial hardship needing extra help to pay the Council Tax

8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?

e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes, homeless?

The policies are aimed specifically at addressing financial hardship for those households on low incomes. The policies will be used to enable households to achieve more sustainable financial situations without the need for additional financial support from the Council.

The number of applications and awards by this policies will be monitored by each equality group. This will help to provide an indication of the take up and awareness of the policies by each equality group.

9. Are there any human rights implications?

Yes/No (If yes, please explain)

No

10. Is there an opportunity to promote equality and/or good community relations?

Yes/No (If yes, how will this be done?)

No

11. If you have indicated a negative impact for any group is that impact legal?

i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation

N/A

12. Is any part of this policy/service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

No

13. Is a Part 2 full Equality Assessment required?

No

14. Date by which a Part 2 full Equality Assessment is to be completed with actions.

N/A

Please note that you should proceed to a Part 2, the full Equality Impact Assessment if you have identified actual, or the potential to cause, adverse impact or discrimination against different groups in the community.


We are satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out and a full equality assessment **is not required*** (please delete as appropriate).

Completed by:
(Claire Werra - Policy/Function/Report written)

Date **11/03/2024**

Countersigned by: *Trish Hatton*
(Trish Hatton - *Head of Service*)

Date: **11/03/2024**

Screened by:..... Mark Smith, Community Safety & Youth Officer
Date: **12/03/2024**

Please forward an electronic copy to our Equalities Lead mark.smith@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Equality Assessments shall be published on the Council website with the relevant and appropriate document upon which the equality assessment has been undertaken.

Agenda Item 10



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 26 March 2024	Matter for Decision
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Report Title: **New Local Plan Regulation 18B Consultation Draft (Preferred Options)**

Report Author(s): **Ed Morgan (Principal Planning Policy Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee’s approval to publicly consult on the emerging draft New Local Plan Preferred Options document for a 6-week period.
Report Summary:	<p>The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan. The time period of the new Plan period is 2020 to 2041. The Local Plan will contain planning policies that drive as well as shape sustainable development throughout the Plan period. The Plan will also protect and enhance the Borough’s historic heritage and green open spaces.</p> <p>In producing a Local Plan, the Council is required to undertake a number of formal public consultations at specific times and milestones (as set by national legislation and the Council’s Local Development Scheme). So far, for the new Local Plan, the Council has undertaken the first stage of public consultation under Regulation 18A - as termed by national legislation. This took place between Midday Friday, 25 September 2020 until Midday Friday, 20 November 2020 (Issues and Options).</p> <p>The Preferred Options document (see Appendix 1 to this Report) contains the Council’s preferred approaches to delivering sustainable development for the Plan period 2020 – 2041 and will be publicly consulted on for a 6-week period during April and May 2024.</p> <p>The proposed timetable for progressing the New Local Plan is set out in the Council’s latest Local Development Scheme. Once adopted, the New Local Plan will supersede the current Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan (adopted in 2019).</p>
Recommendation(s):	That Committee approves the emerging draft New Local Plan Preferred Options document for the purposes of public consultation commencing on Wednesday, 3 April 2024 for a 6-week period.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of Built Environment) (0116) 257 645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Jamie Carr (Planning Policy and Development Manager) (0116) 257 2652 jamie.carr@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Ed Morgan (Principal Planning Policy Officer) (0116) 257 2650 ed.morgan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>

Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Economy (SO3) Our Environment (SO4) Our Partners (SO5)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Political Dynamics (CR3) Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6) Economy / Regeneration (CR9)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. Initial EA Screening (See Appendices)
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None so far, however this report is seeking approval to consult with the public and other key stakeholders.
Background Papers:	Issues and Options (Regulation 18A) Statement of Consultation (March 2023)
Appendices:	1. Regulation 18B Preferred Options Consultation Draft 2. Equality Assessment Initial Screening

1. Information

- 1.1 The Council has already undertaken the first stage of public consultation for the new Local Plan (Issues and Options – Regulation 18A consultation). That document highlighted the Issues and Options for the Borough, and asked the public, businesses and other stakeholders to comment, as well as to add any more suggestions if they felt it necessary to do so.
- 1.2 The Issues and Options consultation and its outcomes has helped shape the production of the Preferred Options Local Plan document. The comments and the responses have been taken into account when producing the Preferred Options document for consultation. The comments received can be viewed in the Issues and Options Statement of Consultation ([link](#))

included in Background Paper 1 to this Report).

- 1.3 The Preferred Options document is in essence a draft new Local Plan that contains the vision, objectives and (in the main) preferred policies; that seek to fulfil the vision and the objectives over the Plan period up to 2041.
- 1.4 The key elements of the Preferred Options document were highlighted to Members at the most recent All Member Briefing that took place on the 13 February 2024. The briefing session also gave those Members in attendance the opportunity to speak with Officers about any questions or queries that they may have had in relation to the key elements of the Preferred Options document.

Structure

- 1.5 The structure of the document is set out as below:
 - 1. Introduction** - The document begins with an Introductory Chapter that sets out national planning policy, the Council's Corporate Priorities and sets out the strategic context of the Borough and the wider Leicester and Leicestershire region (for example the Strategic Growth Plan).
 - 2. Spatial Portrait** - The document contains a Spatial Portrait chapter that highlights the specific characteristics of the Borough, for example physical, social, environmental, historic and economic. This chapter also sets out the key challenges that the Borough will face now and in the future.
 - 3. Vision and Objectives** - The document then illustrates the vision and objectives that the Council wish to meet to ensure that sustainable development is delivered and the Borough is a safe and prosperous place to live.
 - 4. Policies** - Chapters 4 through to 11 contain all of the planning policies and the preferred approaches that the Council wishes to adopt to deliver the vision and objectives set out in the previous chapter. Chapter 4 sets out the Council's proposed Spatial Strategy that will provide a broad indication of the overall scale of development in the Borough, and the level of infrastructure needed to support it, whilst seeking a balance between protection of the Borough's environmental and historical assets, continuing socio-economic development, and improving the quality of life for all.
 - 5. Appendix 1** - The Regulation 18B Site Options are set out in Appendix 1 of the document. However, it should be noted that none of the sites submitted have yet been assessed for their appropriateness because the Council has not fully developed the suite of evidence that will underpin the New Local Plan and its growth areas. The full assessment will take place throughout 2024 prior to the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission public consultation.
- 1.6 A full version of the document that is to be publicly consulted on is contained within Appendix 1 to this Committee report.
- 1.7 To ensure that the New Local Plan fulfils certain required directives and legislation, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been prepared for this Preferred Options stage of the Plan. SA is a tool used at the plan-making stage to assess the likely effects of the plan when judged against reasonable alternatives. The Sustainability Appraisal will also be consulted on in public. Consultation will be for the same time period as the Plan; April to May 2024, for 6 weeks.
- 1.8 Although not necessarily required at this stage of the Plan, prior to the Local Plan Pre-Submission consultation stage, the Council will need to ensure that all of the approaches and policies set out within the Plan are appropriately evidenced. Evidence base production is ongoing.

2 Conclusion

- 2.1 It is important that the new Local Plan contains all of the appropriate and relevant elements that successfully deliver sustainable development that responds to local community need.
- 2.2 The approaches set out within the draft document are similar to those set out within the Council's existing Adopted Local Plan. They have been successful in shaping sustainable built development within the Borough since its adoption and it is felt that they will also be in the future, hence why they are to be carried forward in this emerging New Local Plan.
- 2.3 Subject to Committee approval, The Preferred Options document public consultation period will be commencing on Wednesday, 3 April 2024 for a 6-week period.
- 2.4 A further All-Member Briefing will be held following the Preferred Options consultation to inform the process of preparing the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission version of the emerging New Local Plan.

New Local Plan (2020 – 2041)

**Regulation 18B Preferred Options
Consultation Draft**

Spring 2024

Oadby & Wigston | Our borough -
the place to be

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Foreword

To be confirmed, subject to The Leader's confirmation.

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1. Introduction

Strategic Context

- 1.1.1 The Borough of Oadby and Wigston is a relatively small, compact and urbanised Borough that shares its boundaries with Leicester City, Blaby District and Harborough District. The entire urban area of the Borough sits within an area known as the wider Leicester Urban Area. The Leicester Urban Area is defined as the built up area that is centred on Leicester City. With the Borough area also being directly adjacent to the City of Leicester, the two share a strong spatial relationship, despite the differences in size and population.
- 1.1.2 The Borough is part of a collection of local planning authorities (LPA's) that make up Leicester and Leicestershire. The LPA's situated within Leicester and Leicestershire are, Leicester City Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Harborough District Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Blaby District Council, Melton Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and ourselves, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (all two-tier authorities). Leicester City Council is the only unitary authority situated within Leicester and Leicestershire area; with Leicestershire County Council taking control of the functions that the other two-tier Borough and District areas do not, for example highways and education.
- 1.1.3 The Leicester and Leicestershire area also comprises the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area and the Functional Economic Market Area (HMA). The Leicester and Leicestershire HMA authorities work together on a number of different strategies, partnerships, evidence base documents and processes and regularly meet under the Duty to Cooperate. Close joint working between the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA authorities ensures that there is a fully 'joined up' partnership approach to tackling strategic issues affecting each local authority as well as the wider HMA; for example transport and highway assessment evidence, housing and economic needs assessments, and strategic employment distribution.
- 1.1.4 The Leicester and Leicestershire HMA authorities, Leicestershire County Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) produced a (non-statutory) Strategic Growth Plan that continues to act as the strategic planning framework for the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA, up to the year 2050.
- 1.1.5 In addition to the wider HMA working mentioned above, the Council also works closely with both Leicester City Council and Harborough District Council due to the cross boundary green swathes of land that are defined and designated as Green Wedges. Green Wedges play a vital role strategically by providing 'green lungs' out from the City of Leicester into the open countryside of the surrounding District and Borough Council areas.

What is a Local Plan?

- 1.2.1 A Local Plan is one of, if not, the most important document that a local planning authority produces. It is the primary document that guides all forms of development within the local planning authority area.
- 1.2.2 Local Plans are aspirational, yet realistic documents that set out the vision and framework for future development within a local planning authority area, and address

needs and opportunities (for example) relating to housing, the economy, the environment, community facilities, local infrastructure, climate change and high quality design. The government also suggests that they are critical tools for guiding decisions about individual development proposals as they (combined with Neighbourhood Plans) are the starting point for considering whether applications for development are appropriate and sustainable and ultimately can be approved.

- 1.2.3 An adopted Local Plan is a statutory document that all Local Planning Authorities have a legal duty to prepare and to keep up to date. A Local Plan seeks to ensure local development is provided in accordance with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.2.4 If a local authority does not keep its Local Plan up to date, it is at risk of un-sustainable and un-planned development that its communities cannot have a say on. It is therefore, essential that local planning authorities ensure that its Local Plan is up to date, robust and has been produced with significant community involvement.

What is the purpose of the Regulation 18B Preferred Options consultation draft?

- 1.3.1 The Preferred Options Local Plan document builds on previous consultation exercises the Council has undertaken, including 'Call for Sites' and 'Issues and Options'. The Preferred Options Local Plan document has been developed through engagement with the public and key stakeholders such as infrastructure providers, Member's, residents groups, interest groups and the development industry. This has ensured the Preferred Options Local Plan document and the evidence underpinning it have been shaped by an understanding of the key local issues within the Borough area.
- 1.3.2 The Council has also taken into account significant changes in national planning policy, including the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and subjected all options and approaches to a Sustainability Appraisal. The Preferred Options Local Plan document is a further stage in the production process of the Council's new Local Plan and is another opportunity for residents, businesses and other interested parties to help plan the Borough's future.

Overview

- 1.4.1 The current Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan was adopted in April 2019 and sets out the Council's most up to date planning policy position for the period 2011 to 2031.
- 1.4.2 Although the current Local Plan is still considered to be up to date, and the Council has a healthy supply of development land, it takes a number of years to prepare and adopt a new Local Plan so the Council is taking the proactive approach in preparing a new one to ensure it remains up to date in future.
- 1.4.3 This is the second stage of public consultation on the preparation of the new Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan. The first stage was the Regulation 18A Issues and Options public consultation which the Council undertook between midday Friday, 3 September 2021 and midday Friday, 29 October 2021. Regulation 18A very much focused on identifying the key issues and challenges that may exist within the Borough area over the next Plan period, and sought to establish how the emerging New Local Plan will respond to these in the future.

- 1.4.4 Over the coming years, the Borough of Oadby and Wigston will need to undergo change and transformation. Not only does the Borough need to provide for its local community, but it also needs to allow for business growth, change and adaptation. In order to manage this change and transformation effectively, the Council must produce a new Local Plan that is aspirational, positive and deliverable. Once adopted, this emerging New Local Plan will establish the Borough's growth strategy for the period 2020 to 2041.
- 1.4.5 The new Local Plan will take account of Leicester City Council's declared unmet needs, specifically housing, unless evidence suggests that these levels of growth cannot be accommodated within the Borough area. The Plan period start date is consistent with those dates set out within the Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022).
- 1.4.6 The proportion of Leicester City's unmet housing need attributed to the Borough area, is 52 homes per year. When combining this apportionment with the Council's standard method housing need figure of 188 new homes per year, subject to evidence, the Council will make provision for 240 new homes per year or 5,040 new homes over the 21 year plan period. The apportionment of 52 homes per year from Leicester City's unmet need is evidenced up to the year 2036 (Leicester City's proposed Plan period), however the Council would not be planning proactively if the apportioned 52 homes per year was not taken into account for the period 2036-2041.
- 1.4.7 Therefore, in the absence of any declaration of unmet need in Leicester City beyond 2036 and based upon existing evidence, it is considered appropriate to take account of the apportioned figure of 52 homes per year for the entire Plan period (2020-2041).
- 1.4.8 Taking account of the Regulation 18B Site Options available to the Council, there is potential capacity for up to 6,000 new homes. However, it should be noted that none of the sites submitted have yet been fully assessed for their appropriateness and sustainability because the Council has not fully developed the suite of evidence that would underpin the new Local Plan and its growth areas, for example the South Leicestershire Transport Assessment or wider Strategic Transport Assessment.
- 1.4.9 Evidence bases such as these will highlight which growth areas will be the most appropriate and ultimately which of the sites submitted can potentially be allocated for development. The suite of evidence being produced will take into account the impacts of growth within the Borough area, but not in isolation. It also takes account of the potential growth occurring within neighbouring local authorities which will have cross boundary implications for the Borough area. Only when this suite of evidence base has been completed will the Council know the full extent of the impact of growth, and the infrastructure that is needed to fulfil such growth; and then the annual new home provision target. Any growth area will need to take account of all infrastructure requirements, including but not limited to, highways and public transport, GP Practices, Education, Biodiversity Net Gain, housing type, size and tenure, open spaces, community facilities and sports provision.

Regulation 18B Site Options

- 1.5.1 The Council has undertaken two 'Call for Sites' exercises that have helped to inform the Council's current position. These requests for land submissions formally took place from midday on Friday 25 September 2020 until midday on Friday 20 November 2020,

as well as alongside the Regulation 18A Public Consultation on the emerging new Local Plan Issues and Options Draft from midday Friday 3 September 2021 to midday Friday 29 October 2021.

- 1.5.2 These exercises were undertaken to understand what land interests there are in the Borough for potential housing, employment, retail or other development uses from 2031 onwards. The sites received from those two exercises are included within this consultation draft in 'Appendix 1 – Regulation 18B Site Options'. It will be from these site options that allocations will evolve in future iterations of the new Local Plan.

Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

- 1.6.1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA/SEA) is being undertaken as part of the Plan making process. The SA is an iterative document which appraises the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the Plan's proposals. It is used to inform the preparation of the Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Plan and development of the preferred strategy and policy direction following the issues and options consultation stage.
- 1.6.2 A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is also being undertaken as part of the Plan making process. The HRA is also an iterative document which assesses the potential impacts of the Plan's proposals on the conservation of European Designated sites.

What is the timetable for preparing the New Local Plan?

- 1.7.1 The Council's timetable for the New Local Plan's preparation is set out in its latest [Local Development Scheme](#). The timetable will be updated and published on the Council's website as Local Plan preparation is progressed to reflect the latest position.
- 1.7.2 The current timescales are also set out below:
- Call for Sites – Autumn 2020 and 2021
 - Regulation 18A Issues and Options – Autumn 2021
 - Regulation 18B Preferred Options – April to May 2024
 - Regulation 19/20 Pre-Submission – Spring 2025 (indicative)
 - Regulation 22 Submission to Secretary of State – Spring 2025 (indicative)
 - Regulation 24 Examination in Public – date to be determined
 - Main modifications, as recommended by the Independent Planning Inspector – date to be determined
 - Regulation 26 Adoption and publication – date to be determined

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- 1.8.1 The Local Plan must take into account the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) and [Planning Practice Guidance](#) (PPG).

The National Planning Policy Framework 'sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans can provide for sufficient housing and other development in a sustainable manner'. Further, 'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be

taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions’.

- 1.8.2 National Policy requires local plans to set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for: Housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development; Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal management, and the provision of materials and energy (including heat); Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 1.8.3 Government has made clear its intention to reform the planning system through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act which sets out parameters for the process and content of new-style local plans. To this end Government has set a deadline for local plans produced under the current system to be submitted for examination by June 2025. The Council will be submitting this new Local Plan under the current planning system.
- 1.8.4 Plans submitted after this deadline will need to follow the new system. Under the new system plans should take no more than 30 months to prepare from start to finish and Government intends to have in place regulations, policy and guidance by autumn 2024 to enable the preparation of the first new-style local plans to start.
- 1.8.5 To ensure a smooth transition to the new system, Government has sought views on options for a phased roll out. The Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan was adopted in 2019 so the Council are unlikely to be in an early phase. This means it could take several years to get a new plan in place under the new system (taking into account potential start dates for the new system and the 30-month timescale for plan preparation).
- 1.8.6 Therefore, this Preferred Options consultation draft has been prepared in the context of the current legislation, policy (including the NPPF published in December 2023) and guidance which provides the legal basis for plan making. In progressing the preparation of the Local Plan, the Council will ensure that any new national requirements are incorporated into the plan making process as appropriate. All of the proposed options and approaches in this document must therefore be accompanied by a clear caveat that they are proposed in the context of the current planning system.

Strategic Growth Plan: Leicester and Leicestershire 2050 Vision

- 1.9.1 The creation of sustainable and attractive places to live, work and relax is a shared endeavour by all partners in Leicester and Leicestershire. To achieve this key objective, the local authority partners have a history of working collaboratively to achieve the best outcomes for communities in delivering development and infrastructure, whilst also maintaining the distinctive identity and character of individual places in the City and across the County.
- 1.9.2 The Strategic Growth Plan, approved in 2018, was prepared by the ten partner organisations – the City Council, the County Council, the seven Boroughs and Districts, and the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership – to provide a plan which will shape the future of Leicester and Leicestershire in the period to the year

2050. It is a 'non-statutory' Plan, but it provides an agreed framework to use when preparing individual Local Plans and other strategies. The Strategic Growth Plan can be viewed at lstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk

- 1.9.3 Local Plans prepared by the City, District and Borough Councils are the statutory tool for delivering the Strategic Growth Plan's overarching vision, as well as providing the local steer for the delivery of infrastructure and reflecting local distinctiveness and circumstances. Local Plans may include policy provision to enable later phases of the Strategic Growth Plan beyond the plan period. As the Borough of Oadby and Wigston's Local Plan is updated and replaced, the relevant policies and proposals will reflect the Strategic Growth Plan together with the evidence base.
- 1.9.4 The Strategic Growth Plan recognises that significant new development cannot be accommodated within Leicester and Leicestershire without substantial investment in infrastructure and services.

It proposes:

- Focusing growth in areas close to existing employment clusters and opportunities and new infrastructure proposals;
 - Focusing growth in major strategic locations and reducing the amount that takes place in existing towns, villages and rural areas;
 - Five key growth areas (which are identified). Those relevant to the Borough of Oadby and Wigston are Leicester Our Central City and the A46 Priority Growth Corridor; and,
 - Delivery of the strategic growth areas will be as 21st century garden towns, villages and suburbs. New housing and employment will be planned together with new and improved roads, public transport, schools, health services, local shops and open space.
- 1.9.5 All Leicester and Leicestershire authorities continue to take a collaborative approach to the delivery of the Strategic Growth Plan's vision and objectives, incorporating cross-boundary growth and infrastructure matters, including through Statements of Common Ground and/or Memorandums of Understanding as appropriate.

The Borough of Oadby and Wigston Corporate Plan

- 1.10.1 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out the Vision, Objectives and Values for the Council, for the period 2019 to 2024.
- 1.10.2 The Corporate Plan, sets out three main Objectives for the Council. These are:

Corporate Objective One – '*Building, Protecting and Empowering communities – Be proud of your Borough as a place to live*'.

- 1.10.3 This objective seeks to ensure that the local communities have suitable housing and accommodation to meet their needs. It also seeks to build and protect local communities, by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as address any health inequalities that are apparent. Further, the objective seeks to empower local communities through positive engagement, and greater responsibility for where they live, work and play.

Corporate Objective Two – ‘Growing the Borough economically – Realise the aspirations of the Borough, benefiting those who live and work here’.

1.10.4 This objective sets the aim for the Borough – *‘to be the best it can be economically’*. The objective seeks to work with as many businesses as possible within the Borough to help them develop and grow. In addition, the objective seeks to attract new businesses and provide better employment opportunities for local communities. Further, the objective seeks the Council to be more commercial regarding income generation so that frontline services are protected.

Corporate Objective Three – ‘Providing excellent services – Delivering those services needed to the highest standard whilst providing value for money’.

1.10.5 This objective seeks to *‘put the customer first’* and provide services that are of the highest standards. In addition, the objective suggests that the Council will utilise smart technology to ensure that local communities have access to improved services that are safe, needed and effective.

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2. Spatial Portrait

Physical Characteristics

- 2.1.1 The Borough of Oadby and Wigston is a relatively compact highly urbanised Borough (approximately 2,400 hectares in size) that lies directly adjacent to and shares boundaries with the City of Leicester, Harborough District and Blaby District. The urban areas of the Borough share a strong spatial relationship with Leicester City despite the differences in size and population. The Borough plays an important role in providing residents of the City of Leicester with a link to the countryside due to its position, 'sandwiched' between the City and the countryside beyond.
- 2.1.2 For many years, the Borough has consisted of three main settlements (Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston). Oadby, a large village by the 1860s, established itself around agriculture. It expanded rapidly in the early 1900s as wealthy Leicester City business people built large family homes immediately to the east of the village. These houses remain as fine examples of the Arts and Crafts movement, although many are now in the ownership of the University of Leicester which established its Oadby Campus after the Second World War.
- 2.1.3 Wigston, originally two settlements, was amalgamated into Wigston Magna in 1529. The two settlements were linked by a series of 'Lanes' which remain today. The canal and railway brought further growth to what had been a predominantly agricultural community, resulting in further development to meet industrial and housing needs. This continued after the Second World War with numerous housing estates rapidly extending the size of the town.
- 2.1.4 South Wigston, a new town developed in the mid to late 1800s (by Orson Wright, the owner of large brickworks) followed the tradition of 'model' towns by Victorian philanthropists. Unlike other 'model' towns of the time, it was not just intended to house workers of the brickyard though. Other commercial premises, particularly associated with the clothing industry were established right from the start. The railway was fundamental to this development. The Victorian barracks, now used as the Territorial Army Headquarters, predated this growth. The current mature trees, open space, and road layout to the north of the barracks date from the 19th century Glen Parva Grange Estate. This history is still very much evident today.

Social Characteristics

The Community – population and demographics

- 2.2.1 Data from the 2021 Census¹ shows that the population of the Borough has increased by 2.7% from around 56,200 in 2011 to 57,700 in 2021. This is lower than the increase for the East Midlands which was 7.7% and England which was 6.6%. The Borough also has a relatively high usual resident population density which is 2,453 persons per square kilometre compared to other Leicestershire Districts and the County which has a population density figure of 342 usual residents per square kilometre. This demonstrates the more urban nature of the Borough compared to its more rural Leicestershire neighbouring authorities.

¹ Office for National Statistics: [First results from Census 2021 in England and Wales](#)

- 2.2.2 The Census 2021 data also shows that the Borough has a higher-than-average population percentage over the age of 75 years old at 10.8%. This is the highest of all the Leicester and Leicestershire local authority areas and is higher than the East Midlands average (8.9%) and the England average (8.5%).
- 2.2.3 The cultural composition of the Borough's population is rich in diversity. The Asian population represent 27.9% of the Borough's overall population, the Black population represent 2.2% of the population and the mixed/multiple ethnic groups represent 3.2%. The Asian population figure is approximately three and a half times higher than the East Midlands regional average figure of 8% (Census 2021).
- 2.2.4 The percentage of residents identified as being disabled and who reported that their ability to carry out day-to-day activities is 'limited a lot' in the Borough is 6.5%. The percentage who are disabled and who reported that their ability to carry out day-to-day activities is 'limited a little' is 10.1%. Overall, in 2021, 46.2% of residents described their health as "very good", increasing from 44.4% in 2011.

Housing and the economy

- 2.2.5 As mentioned above, the Borough area has three distinct settlement areas, Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. Each of the three settlement areas have very different perceived levels of affluence (in this instance represented by average house prices 2022) as well as levels of social deprivation (in this instance represented by Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD) ranking).
- 2.2.6 Land Registry (August 2023)² shows the average house price in the Borough is £271,782. At a settlement level, data shows that in Oadby, which is perceived as the most affluent area within the Borough, the median house price of a 3 bed semi-detached is £295,000. In Wigston, the median house price is £260,000 and in South Wigston is £250,000. Further to this, a 4-bed detached house found the median price to be £465,000 in Oadby, £350,000 in Wigston and £300,000 in South Wigston. The data clearly illustrates the land value disparities found within the Borough. Further, Oadby has pockets of land values in excess of £1 million.
- 2.2.7 The Borough is ranked 249th out of 317, (where 1 is the most deprived) by the Indices of Deprivation 2019³. The indices also measure deprivation for each Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) in England. On a settlement basis, South Wigston has the highest levels of social deprivation, Wigston has lower levels than South Wigston, and Oadby has the lowest. The Office for National Statistics data for income deprivation⁴ in the Borough highlights that in 2019, 8.6% of the population was income deprived. Of the 36 neighbourhoods assessed in the Borough, one was among the 20% most income deprived in England, this neighbourhood is located north of Blaby Road and south of the railway line in South Wigston. Six neighbourhoods were identified as being in the 20% least income deprived in England. These areas are located on the settlement edges of Wigston and Oadby as well as the border between Oadby and Stoneygate in Leicester city. Although the Borough is relatively small in size, this data illustrates the complexities that the Council needs to grapple with, and why a broad brush approach is not always appropriate.

² Land Registry: [House Price Index](#) (July 2022)

³ MHCLG: [English indices of deprivation](#) (2019)

⁴ Office for National Statistics: [Mapping income deprivation at a local authority level](#) (2019)

- 2.2.8 2021 Census data shows that the average household size within the Borough is 2.6 persons per household, which is similar to the 2011 Census average of 2.63. In general, the Oadby area has the highest average number of persons per household.
- 2.2.9 According to NOMIS⁵, a service provided by Office for National Statistics, the Borough has an unemployment percentage for the period July 2022 to June 2023 of 4.2%. This is an increase of 1.7% from the previous year. This compares to an East Midlands unemployment rate of 3.6 per cent and the national unemployment rate of 3.8 per cent. NOMIS (2022)⁶ data also shows that the wholesale, retail and garage repairs sector accounts for the largest number of people in employment in the Borough, at an estimated 3,500 people and 18.4% of total employment. This is above the East Midlands average (15.6%) and the Great Britain average (14%).
- 2.2.10 The second largest employer is the Health sector (15.8%), closely followed by the Manufacturing sector (11.8%) and Education sector (11.8%). The latter could be because of the Borough's close connection with the University of Leicester with student accommodation and ancillary facilities being located within Oadby alongside several primary, secondary, and further education institutions spread across the wider Borough.
- 2.2.11 In contrast, the lowest scoring sector is the Energy supply sector (0.1%), followed by the Water supply sector (0.2%). The Borough also has a relatively low workforce in the transport and storage industry at 3.2% compared to the East Midlands average of 6.7%. This difference is likely to be due to the locational nature of Leicestershire being in the golden triangle for storage and distribution and other Leicestershire District's having good road, rail, and air links in comparison to the Borough of Oadby and Wigston which does not benefit from decent road links to the national highway network.
- 2.2.12 The Borough has several identified employment areas. These are areas of land designated for uses defined as employment by the Use Classes Order. Some of the units on the identified employment areas lack the quality and flexibility required by modern industry. In addition, the environment, general layout, and accessibility for some is poor. Whilst there is relatively low turnover of businesses, there is a lack of interest in the units that do become available for new employment uses. This is largely due to the quality and large size of units and the identified employment areas having poor accessibility to the larger trunk roads such as the M1 and M69 compared to other nearby districts and boroughs. However, it is acknowledged that in recent years the Council has permitted the change of large single units within the identified employment areas to be replaced with/by groups/clusters of smaller single units that better reflect the market demand.
- 2.2.13 One of the major land users, employers, and catalysts in Oadby for inward investment, is the University of Leicester. The University has had a presence in the Borough for over 50 years and over this time has expanded its facilities which now provide student accommodation, conferencing, and sports facilities. The presence of the Campus contributes to the local economy by increasing the use of the facilities and services in

⁵ NOMIS: [Labour Market Profile for Oadby and Wigston Employment and Unemployment \(Jul 2022-Jun 2023\)](#)

⁶ NOMIS: [Labour Market Profile for Oadby and Wigston Employee Jobs by Industry \(2022\)](#)

Oadby district centre, and the sports facilities are used and enjoyed by local clubs and groups. The University has plans to continue improving and expanding its facilities in Oadby and replacing outdated accommodation.

- 2.2.14 Tourism in the Borough plays a small yet important role in the local economy in relation to the centres of Wigston, Oadby, South Wigston and the settlement of Kilby Bridge, as well as large areas of green space including Brocks Hill Country Park, Leicester Racecourse, and the Botanical Gardens in Oadby.

The Centres of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston

- 2.3.1 Wigston is the Borough's main town centre and contains the largest variety of shops, services, and facilities. The town is centred on the fully pedestrianised Bell Street, The Arcade and Leicester Road. Wigston is the only 'town' centre within the Borough and one of only a small number of town centres within the wider Leicester area. Wigston therefore fulfils an important town centre function for residents.
- 2.3.2 Oadby is a large district centre with a smaller, but nevertheless good range of shops, services and facilities which are mostly located along The Parade. Council owned public car parking is situated to the east and west of The Parade and is easily accessed from the north and south of the centre. Oadby is particularly influenced by the presence of three out of centre supermarkets situated along the A6.
- 2.3.3 South Wigston is a smaller sized district centre extending almost the entire length of Blaby Road. This results in a stretched linear centre. Many of the properties and retail units clearly date back to the origins of the settlement. Three large out of centre retail units are located opposite Blaby Road Park at the eastern end of Blaby Road. The North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College building, built in 2010, is also adjacent to the park.
- 2.3.4 Each of these centres are of equal importance to many local people. There is a tendency with the residents of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston, not to travel out of 'their' settlement to access other shops, services and facilities that are available within the Borough. This leads to each of the centres providing a similar range of opportunities, albeit at a different scale. This arrangement is a result of the way in which the three settlements have evolved and a perception that if needs are not met by the nearest centre, it is unlikely that the other centres in the Borough will meet the needs either. It is also a result of the limited public transport services that operate between the three centres, in comparison to the established links to the City of Leicester.
- 2.3.5 The centres, particularly Wigston, are not only influenced by their proximity to each other, but their proximity to Leicester City Centre and the Fosse Shopping Park in Blaby District and to a lesser extent Market Harborough centre. Both Leicester City and Fosse Park offer large amounts of retail and commercial floorspace and attract national retailers. Leicester City Centre offers a wide range of services and facilities. Nevertheless, the Borough's centres are valued by the Borough's residents. However, historically they have suffered from a lack of investment, particularly in relation to their quality of design and in terms of making the best use of sites within their spatial setting. Despite macroeconomic changes such as Covid and the cost-of-living crisis over the last few years, on average the town and district centres continue to operate relatively

well in relation to key performance indicators such as low vacancy rates and regular footfall patterns throughout the calendar year.

Transport

- 2.4.1 The Borough is crossed by three main transport routes that serve the City of Leicester and access to neighbouring authority areas, including: the A6, the A5199 and the B5366. The B582 serves as the only direct transport route linking the settlements of Oadby and Wigston and one of only two routes linking Wigston with South Wigston, the other being B5418. The A563 links the very northern parts of Wigston and Oadby settlements with Leicester City and provides a form of access to the M1 and M69 motorways. In general, the Borough's access to main arterial routes such as the M1, A14 and the A47 is poor. Due to this poor access to main arterial routes and the fact that the three routes into Leicester City from the south pass through the Borough, the Borough's roads suffer from significant congestion, particularly at peak times.
- 2.4.2 Significant congestion is apparent at many of the junctions within the Borough, as well as along its routes. At peak times, traffic flows along several of the main routes within the Borough are significantly hampered by congestion. The Borough Council works closely with neighbouring local authorities as well as the County Council (as the local highway authority) to ensure development, not only within the Borough, but outside of the Borough, is situated as to have the least impact on the existing highway network.
- 2.4.3 Public transport links within the Borough are also generally poor, with limited bus services operating between South Wigston, Oadby and Wigston, Parklands Leisure Centre, Brocks Hill Country Park and the Borough's town and district centres. The public transport links, however, into Leicester City from the town and district centres are relatively frequent.
- 2.4.4 The Borough has access to the Leicester to Birmingham railway line via South Wigston Railway Station. This mode of transport also provides a regular service to Leicester and onward to Nottingham and the north, as well as Nuneaton and Birmingham to the southwest. Passengers can also change at Leicester to access the Midland Mainline to London.

Environmental Characteristics (including heritage assets)

- 2.5.1 Attractive, safe, beautiful and accessible parks and green spaces contribute positively to social, economic, and environmental benefits and promote sustainable communities.
- 2.5.2 The Borough has relatively good access to the green open spaces and the open countryside via the Brocks Hill Country Park, the Green Wedge between Oadby and Wigston, the Green Wedge adjacent to the northeast of Oadby, the River Sence, the Grand Union Canal and various other parks and open spaces.
- 2.5.3 There are other areas which contribute to the Borough's Green and Blue Infrastructure, such as Fludes Lane Woodland, and Leicester Racecourse. Furthermore, the Limedelves and part of the Grand Union Canal between Kilby and Foxton is classified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, in part, a Regionally Important Geological Site, and a Local Wildlife Site. Although predominately urban, the Borough does have a good level of tree coverage along several of its streets / roads, for example Saffron Road in South Wigston. But due to the urban nature of much of the Borough, the level

of tree cover is patchy across the area. This Local Plan will seek to rectify this tree cover shortfall in certain areas.

- 2.5.4 There are four allotment sites across the Borough containing more than 300 plots of various sizes and these play an important role in contributing to the natural environment and in promoting healthy lifestyles.
- 2.5.5 In total, there are 10 Conservation Areas which are influential in maintaining the townscape and landscape of the Borough. Nine of these were designated by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and benefit from individual Conservation Area Appraisals and a Conservation Area Supplementary Planning Document. The other area, the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area was designated by Leicestershire County Council. Each of the Conservation Areas are extremely important and are designated due to their special architectural and / or historic interest. Each Conservation Area contributes to the Borough's varied and distinctive landscape character. It is imperative that these areas are conserved and enhanced for future populations to enjoy. In addition to the 10 Conservation Areas, there are currently 39 listings of Listed Buildings and Structures situated in the Borough.
- 2.5.6 There are several parks within the Borough that are home to equipped children's play and sports facilities, such as football and cricket pitches. The Borough also has a rich quality of green spaces, floral displays and horticulture. Together, these qualities have earned the East Midlands in Bloom 'Gold Award' for 13 consecutive years as at 2023, and the Borough has regularly been a finalist when representing the East Midlands in the Britain in Bloom awards where it achieved 'Silver Gilt' Award in 2023.
- 2.5.7 In addition to the above, there are areas of archaeological importance, as well as, non-designated heritage assets, for example locally listed buildings. Although not nationally designated, locally listed buildings are important to the local historic landscape and heritage of the Borough. The Borough Council recognises their importance locally and will seek to conserve and enhance these heritage assets. The Borough Council maintains a list of these buildings.

Kilby Bridge

- 2.6.1 The small settlement of Kilby Bridge is located approximately a 20-minute walk south from Wigston town centre and is part of the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area. The settlement is separated by the A5199, with built development either side. It is bounded to the north by the Leicester to London railway and to the south by the Grand Union Canal and River Sence (and the southern extent of the Borough boundary). Due to its proximity to both mentioned watercourses, parts of the settlement are liable to flooding.
- 2.6.2 The settlement consists of a small number of residential properties, small scale commercial and a public house. Kilby Bridge has rural surroundings and is an attractive and valuable asset. To the east of the settlement, is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, in part, a Regionally Important Geological Site, and a Local Wildlife Site.

3. Vision and Spatial Objectives

3.1.1 The Vision and Spatial Objectives form the very heart of the Local Plan and are built from the foundations laid out in the spatial portrait and take account of the Council's Corporate Priorities. The Vision provides an interpretation of how the Borough might look in 2041 given the influence of this Plan.

Vision

In 2041, the Borough of Oadby and Wigston will be a safe, clean and attractive place in which to live, work and visit. It will have a resilient and prosperous economy, secure environment, vibrant centres and healthy empowered communities. The Borough will be continuing to promote sustainable economic growth, as well as making the best use of its natural and heritage assets.

Growth will contribute to residents health, happiness and well-being in the Borough through the timely delivery of well-designed, beautiful and high-quality development that will meet their needs, whatever their income, stage of life and ability. High quality development will continue raising the level in terms of environmental standards, quality of life and local distinctiveness.

The Borough will deliver sustainable housing and employment growth by making local services and destinations more spatially linked by walking and cycling and through the promotion of sustainable transport solutions. In turn, this will enable thriving local economies by supporting sustainable business growth, investment and attracting new businesses. Entrepreneurship and equality will be encouraged through enabling better education, skills and employment opportunities for all.

The Borough will progress towards net zero and be resilient to climate change through adaptation and mitigation measures whilst reducing its carbon footprint through energy efficiency measures and nature-based solutions.

Residents in the Borough will have the opportunity to enjoy peaceful, harmonious, high quality and healthy active lifestyles in communities that are in keeping with the character and local distinctiveness of the area and offer a range of; high quality new homes which meet local needs; job opportunities; high quality sporting facilities and other important services and facilities. The Borough and its assets will be accessible to all through sustainable modes of transport.

Residents will be able to enjoy a strong network of multi-functional green and blue infrastructure including parks, waterways and the open countryside which provide health and environmental benefits for all. The Borough's historic and natural environment will be conserved and enhanced, with a focus on improving biodiversity and increasing natural capital.

The Spatial Objectives

3.2.1 To ensure that the Vision and strategy is effectively delivered, this Local Plan sets out fifteen Spatial Objectives. The Spatial Objectives focus on the key issues and challenges that need to be addressed to fulfil the Vision. The objectives consist of a 'headline' and detail as to why each objective is a key issue locally.

Vibrant town centres

Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres

Masterplans and associated documentation, alongside land allocations will deliver regeneration, investment, and growth in the centres of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston. The centres will be a focus of growth due to their sustainable locations at the heart of their communities. They will be the key locations for retail shops and cafes, leisure activities, office-based employment, and some residential development. New development will respect the unique character of each centre and ensure the provision of public space that residents and visitors can enjoy.

Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre

Reinforce Wigston's role as the Borough's main town and one of only a small number of town centres in the wider Leicester area. There will be public realm improvements across the town centre to a consistent high standard and pedestrian and cycle-friendly connections will be maximised to make a 'walkable Wigston'. The regeneration of the town centre will make Wigston a more attractive investment destination for national and regional retailers as well as supporting the smaller independent local retailers and businesses that provide a diverse and unique mix of retail outlets.

Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre

Reinforce the role that Oadby's centre plays within the Borough. Continue to encourage the mix of retailers that accommodate the main shopping streets, as well as the supplementary uses such as cafes, bars, and restaurants. As well as the encouragement of local residents, a concerted effort will be made to encourage the use of the centre by the thousands of students that reside under a mile away in the University of Leicester's Manor Road student campus.

Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre

Continue to promote regeneration opportunities within the district centre that build upon the significant investments made to Blaby Road Park, and the South Leicestershire College campus. Reinforce the distinct local heritage associated with Orson Wright and its model town origins.

A prosperous economy

Spatial Objective 5: Improved employment opportunities

Areas identified within the Borough for industrial, storage and distribution employment will be managed appropriately and protected from uncomplimentary or detrimental changes of use. Office based and retail-based employment will be focused in the most sustainable locations. This approach will help to maintain the Borough's relatively low rates of unemployment by offering a variety of employment opportunities across the Borough that have good transport connections. Land will be allocated for appropriate employment uses that meet the Borough's required need, as well as offering opportunities for businesses to establish and grow. A mix of type and size of employment uses will be encouraged within each location identified, to achieve a better balance between the location of jobs and housing, which reduces the need to travel.

Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links

The use and development of sustainable transport, including travel planning, working from home, cycling and walking will be actively encouraged as well as an improvement to residents and employees' access to fast, frequent, and affordable public transport. The east / west public transport links between the settlements of Oadby and Wigston and Wigston and South Wigston will be improved. In addition, the reliable public transport links between each of the Borough's main centres and Leicester City will be maintained and enhanced where possible to do so. Whilst encouraging the reduction of private car use, the highway network within the Borough will be improved to ensure as reliable and free flowing movement of vehicular traffic as possible.

Healthy empowered communities

Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas

Make the most efficient use of the Borough's limited land and plan for suitable and well-located housing and employment which meets identified needs. Allocation growth areas will have appropriate access to and will not have significant detrimental impacts on the current highway network. Development will be located to reinforce Wigston's main town centre role as well as realising Oadby centre's role within the Borough. These growth areas will contribute towards meeting the Borough's identified Objectively Assessed Needs.

Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market

A mix of housing opportunities will be provided to positively meet the housing needs of the entire local community across their lifetime. A mix of type, tenure and affordability will be provided to ensure that all residents of the Borough have access to appropriate homes. The primary focus for new homes will be the three main centres, the rest of the urban area, as well as allocated growth areas. Support will be given to proposals or schemes that realise these primary focus locations and the needs of the local community.

Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles

A wide range and mix of high quality cultural, educational and health facilities will be provided in the most appropriate and sustainable locations. Walking, wheeling and cycling will be supported throughout the Borough and improved access to these travel methods will be required in large scale development schemes. The existing provision of publicly accessible open spaces and leisure and recreation facilities within the Borough will be conserved and enhanced. The Council will adopt a 'no net loss' strategy towards open spaces within the Borough.

Climate resilient, safe, clean, and attractive

Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change

To mitigate and adapt to climate change and support the Borough to transition to net zero carbon by 2050. This will be achieved by promoting a sustainable pattern of development, limiting carbon emissions, ensuring well designed developments incorporating low carbon technologies, renewable energy, and energy efficiency measures, and being resilient to the current and future climate threats.

Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design

All new development within the Borough, whether it is new build or conversion, will be required to illustrate the highest standards of design and construction. Design will also be a key component in ensuring that streets are safe from crime and anti-social behaviour and promote social inclusion and community cohesion. All development will be required to respect local history, character, and vernacular, whilst incorporating measures to conserve energy, minimise flood risk, achieve sustainable energy generation, encourage active travel, and minimise waste.

Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure

All development should be respectful to the natural environment and landscape (including Local Green Spaces, ancient woodland, and veteran trees), as well as conserving and enhancing the Borough's biodiversity. Both green and blue assets will be protected, managed, and enhanced. Due to the predominately urban nature of the Borough, enhancement of the landscape and biodiversity will consist of, for example the planting of trees, and the creation of ponds and other natural habitats to improve species resilience to climate change and provide nature-based solutions. Provision of a network of multi-functional green spaces which secures a net gain in biodiversity and contributes to the Nature Recovery Network will be sought.

Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

To encourage the enhancement and conservation of; historically significant buildings and heritage assets and their settings; archaeological sites; conservation areas; parks and other cultural assets; there will be opportunities for people to access and understand our local heritage. To conserve and enhance the Borough's heritage, respecting historic buildings and their settings, links, and views.

Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside

Promote the positive management of the Green Wedges so that their cumulative impact help to support healthy lifestyles in terms of limiting the effects of pollution on health, providing recreational opportunities, enhancing the natural environment, and guiding development form. Encourage small scale development in the countryside that provides for the rural economy. Through Bio-diversity Net gain, increase and improve the network of habitats for wildlife, and access for local people to the natural environment and key Green Infrastructure assets, achieving a healthy balance between the recreational and biodiversity roles of the green wedges and countryside.

Spatial Objective 15: Kilby Bridge regeneration

The settlement of Kilby Bridge, would benefit from small scale development, consisting of residential, commercial, open space and tourism. Any development would need to conserve and enhance the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area which forms an important linear asset for nature conservation, recreation, as well as a valued heritage asset.

4. Spatial Strategy

Policy 1: Spatial Strategy for Development within the Borough (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 4.1.1 The Spatial Strategy for the Borough will seek to address all of the core aspects of sustainable development within the Borough area and any cross boundary implications with the wider Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area.
- 4.1.2 The Spatial Strategy will provide a broad indication of the overall scale of development in the Borough, and the level of infrastructure needed to support it, whilst seeking a balance between protection of the Borough's environmental and historical assets, continuing socio-economic development, and improving the quality of life for all.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 5: Improved employment opportunities
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside
- Spatial Objective 15: Kilby Bridge regeneration

Supporting Text

- 4.2.1 No supporting text needed as the below wording is a policy direction / approach and not policy wording.

Policy Direction

For the avoidance of doubt, the below is not Policy wording, it is setting out a proposed Policy approach.

Spatial Strategy for Development within the Borough (Strategic)

Sustainable development is often defined as development that meets the needs of the present, whilst not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development at its core is an approach to development that looks to balance

different, and often competing needs, for example, those associated to the environment, society and the economy.

The pursuit of sustainable development involves a plethora of differing aspects, including (but not limited to):

- seeking positive improvement in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment
- improving people's quality of life and health and wellbeing
- easy access to local jobs
- easy access to a wide range of new high quality homes
- easy access to key facilities and services
- high quality design and materials
- easy access to sustainable transport options
- easy access to leisure opportunities and quality open spaces
- achieving net gains for biodiversity and the natural environment
- minimising the impacts to climate change.

The Spatial Strategy for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston will seek to address all of the core aspects of sustainable development and will be derived from the Vision and Spatial Objectives of the new Local Plan, and the Council's corporate priorities highlighted in the Corporate Plan. It also takes account of the cross boundary implications relating to the wider Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area.

The Spatial Strategy will provide a broad indication of the overall scale of development in the Borough, and the level of infrastructure needed to support it. The role of the strategy is to achieve an appropriate balance between protection of the Borough's environmental and historical assets, continuing socio-economic development, and improving the quality of life for all; ensuring that necessary change and development is sustainable in the interests of future generations. Policies in the new Local Plan will seek to deliver the spatial strategy (thus the Vision and Objectives) and provide the context for the delivery of sustainable communities.

The Strategy will deliver the regeneration of the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and their connected communities and will achieve the strategic objective of concentrating new sustainable development within the built up urban areas, and only utilising greenfield sites where absolutely necessary. This sequential and balanced approach will ensure that the Council is fulfilling the policy approaches set out within the NPPF where it requires local planning authorities to plan proactively and make the best and most efficient use of brownfield land. It also ensures that the Council will provide a range of development sites, rather than putting 'all of its eggs in one basket'.

The Plan period for the new Local Plan will run from 2020 for a twenty one year period up to the year 2041. The new Local Plan will take account of Leicester City's declared unmet needs, specifically housing, unless evidence suggests that these levels of growth cannot be accommodated within the Borough area. The Plan period start date is consistent with those dates set out within the Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022).

New Homes

As set out within the Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022), the proportion of Leicester

City's unmet housing need attributed to the Borough area, is 52 homes per year. When combining this apportionment with the Council's standard method housing need figure of 188 new homes per year, subject to evidence, the Council will make provision for 240 new homes per year or 5,040 new homes over the 21 year plan period. The apportionment of 52 homes per year from Leicester City's unmet need is evidenced up to the year 2036 (Leicester City's proposed Plan period), however the Council would not be planning proactively if the apportioned 52 homes per year was not taken into account for the period 2036-2041.

Therefore, in the absence of any declaration of unmet need in Leicester City beyond 2036 and based upon existing evidence, it is considered appropriate to take account of the apportioned figure of 52 homes per year for the entire Plan period (2020-2041).

It is not prudent for the Council to accommodate all new housing development within the Borough's urban areas; neither would this be the best approach to meeting housing needs across the Borough as a whole.

With the Borough being highly constrained from an infrastructure and land availability point of view, the locations for growth within the settlement centres and wider urban area is limited in terms of the growth that can be accommodated, therefore it is inevitable that greenfield areas of growth will be needed to meet the assessed needs of the Borough. There are only a few areas for possible greenfield growth. In general terms, the potential areas of growth are limited to the south and east of the settlement of Wigston, the south and west of the settlement of Oadby and the east of the settlement of Oadby. Further details in relation to the potential development sites that have been put forward to the Council can be found within the Appendix 1 - Regulation 18B Site Options.

Taking account of the Regulation 18B Site Options available to the Council, on the face of it, there is potential capacity for approximately 5,600 new homes. However, it should be noted that none of the sites submitted have yet been assessed for their appropriateness. Also the Council has not fully developed the suite of evidence that would underpin the new Local Plan and its growth areas, for example the South Leicestershire Transport Assessment or wider Strategic Transport Assessment.

Evidence bases such as these will highlight to the Council, which growth areas will be the most appropriate and ultimately which of the sites submitted can potentially be allocated for development. The suite of evidence being produced will take into account the impacts of growth within the Borough area, but not in isolation. It also takes account of the potential growth occurring within neighbouring local authorities which will have cross boundary implications for the Borough area. Only when this suite of evidence base has been completed will the Council know the full extent of the impact of growth, and the infrastructure that is needed to fulfil such growth; and then the annual new home provision target. Any growth area will need to take account of all infrastructure requirements, including but not limited to, highways and public transport, GP Practices, Education, Biodiversity Net Gain, housing type, size and tenure, open spaces, community facilities and sports.

New Jobs

The Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022) sets out that the Leicester and Leicestershire housing market area authorities agree the appropriate way to calculate employment need is using the jointly prepared Housing and Economic Needs Assessment 2022 (HENA) unless an up-to-date local assessment has been undertaken. Based on the HENA and local assessments of employment land need, the Borough of Oadby and Wigston has a total

employment need of 4.1 hectares, this is split into 1.0 hectare B1 use and 3.1 hectares B2/B8 (small) use.

The HENA also identifies an unmet employment land need arising from Leicester of 23 hectares, however the HENA Distribution Paper (2022) concludes that Charnwood Borough Council is best able to suitably meet this unmet need in full. This reflects the existing over-supply of employment land compared to Charnwood Borough's own needs; combined with the availability of employment sites and land which is close to the city and can contribute to delivering employment land which can service the needs of Leicester-based companies.

The Council currently has over 5 hectares of land identified for employment use within the Borough, with outline planning permission. This land is located to the south of the Wigston Direction for Growth area. In addition, the Council is seeking to continue the current employment land allocations at Oadby Sewage Works in Oadby (2.67 hectares) and Magna Road in South Wigston (0.55 hectares). In doing so, the Council is seeking to provide employment land opportunities well in excess (8.22 hectares) of the identified need (4.1 hectares). Identifying employment land areas in excess of the need figure, allows for an element of 'churn' within the market, and also choice within the market.

In addition to new employment opportunities, the Council will continually seek opportunities to achieve the regeneration of the Identified Employment Areas in the Borough. The main focus will be on ensuring land and opportunities are available for the full range of employment needs, from smaller employment uses and those looking to expand, to larger more national business that are settled but want to evolve. The Identified Employment Areas within the Borough will, in the main, be safeguarded for employment uses, however the Council is fully aware that market needs and wants fluctuate regularly, therefore some flexibility will be afforded to these identified areas. The Council does not want these areas to stagnate, they need to grow and evolve with the ever changing markets and consumer demands.

Sustainability Appraisal

A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is an important tool used in plan making. The SA highlights the environmental, social, and economic effects/impacts of different options and is carried out throughout the plan making process. An SA has been undertaken for this stage (Preferred Options) of Local Plan production and has been published alongside it. The SA not only tests the potential policies and their approaches but also will be key in the future stages of Local Plan production, in particular, land allocations.

Policy 2: Regeneration Schemes and Large Scale Change (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 4.3.1 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development. Larger scale development brings with it the opportunity to enhance not only the development site itself but the wider context that the development sits in. To ensure the opportunity for sustainable development is maximised the Council will require a masterplan (or equivalent) to be produced so the Council can be satisfied that all relevant aspects of sustainable development are addressed by the development.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby town centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre

Supporting Text

- 4.4.1 The Council will always seek to ensure that each and every development occurring within the Borough area contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and place making. Creating a sense of place is vital in ensuring that development fits well within the landscape that it is proposed but is also vital to local communities and the way they carry out their everyday way of life.
- 4.4.2 Place making means creating real ‘places’ and focuses on transforming public spaces and environments to strengthen the connections between people and places. Place making is very much a process centred on people and their needs, wants, aspirations, desires, and visions. It is about creating environments in which communities want to live, work and explore.
- 4.4.3 To ensure that larger scale development proposals are transparent and contribute towards the delivery of sustainable development and create a real sense of ‘place’, the Council will require the production of masterplans, development briefs or other appropriate strategies, that set out how the proposal seeks to deliver the three overarching NPPF objectives, as well as how the proposal intends to create real and unique ‘places’ and not just generic new developments.
- 4.4.4 The Council will work with its partners, including (but not limited to), local universities, colleges, schools and academies and Leicestershire County Council, to encourage the use of local workforce in large scale change and larger scale development proposals.
- 4.4.5 Proposals for new regeneration schemes and initiatives that lead to large scale change will be consulted upon in accordance with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement and the requirements set out in the appropriate Town and Country Planning Regulations. The Council will seek to consult with key stakeholders and ensure that representatives of the wider local community are involved throughout any

planning and implementation process, relating to large scale change.

Policy Text

Policy 2: Regeneration and Large Scale Change (Strategic)

When large scale change of either 100 homes or more, 1,500 squares metres of floorspace or more, or of 5 hectares or more is proposed, the Council will require, at least, the production of a masterplan, development brief, design code and phasing plan. In conjunction with Leicestershire County Council Highways Department, the applicant will also be required to produce an appropriate transport assessment.

Submitted documentation must:

- Identify the land area of the new development or redevelopment and set out the uses proposed, and how they interact with one another;
- Illustrate how the proposal is helping to combat climate change, through adaptation, renewable energy production and mitigation;
- Be shaped by active design and travel, as well as sustainable transport modes, achieving healthy communities;
- Prioritise street based growth of existing adjacent places rather than 'tagged' on separate development areas;
- Include on-site measures for the integration of biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements within development, demonstrating how BNG measures will contribute towards objectives within Local Nature Recovery Strategies;
- Conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings;
- Conserve and enhance Green Infrastructure assets and Local Green Spaces;
- Establish a spatial and sustainable pattern of growth;
- Identify constraints to development and illustrate how these will be overcome;
- Identify impacts on infrastructure and illustrate how these will be overcome;
- Identify all sensitive features and measures for protection;
- Illustrate all relevant access, transport and potential traffic issues, as well as mitigation measures;
- Take account of local landscape and / or townscape character in the design of the scheme;
- Set out the necessary infrastructure needed to bring the site forward;
- Take into account all other relevant policies within this Local Plan.

Where large scale change is proposed, the earliest liaison between the applicant, the Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council Highways Department and Education Department (and Leicester City Council where relevant) is essential.

Creating a Skilled Workforce

Larger scale development proposals that relate directly to the development of or use of local skills, and training opportunities, particularly for young people and residents who are unemployed will be supported by the Council.

Policy 3: Infrastructure and Developer Contributions (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

4.5.1 The Policy seeks to ensure that specific planning issues arising from a development scheme that cannot be mitigated through planning conditions are addressed through developer contributions.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 5: Improved employment opportunities
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside
- Spatial Objective 15: Kilby Bridge regeneration

Supporting Text

4.6.1 Developer contributions (sometimes also referred to as planning obligations) are used to address specific planning issues arising from a development scheme that cannot be mitigated through planning conditions. Developer contributions are set out in legal agreements under the provisions of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). They may be agreed between the Council, the County Council, landowners and developers, or, they may also be unilaterally proposed by a landowner and agreed by the Council.

4.6.2 Depending upon the size, type and density of new development, very often, it can put pressure on existing local infrastructure because of the inevitable change that can occur, for example population increase, which in turn creates additional demand on services and facilities. Therefore, development proposals will need to identify what impact they will have upon the surrounding area and where necessary, the funding towards or provision of the necessary infrastructure to mitigate that impact. This will need to be agreed to ensure the delivery of sustainable growth now and in the future.

4.6.3 In addition to affordable housing and transport infrastructure, there will be substantial requirements for other forms of infrastructure such as new schools, health facilities, open space and community buildings, as well as other types of infrastructure associated with 'utilities' such as power, water and telecommunications. Some schools and health facilities in the Borough are operating close to, or above, their optimum

capacity. Further growth in areas with capacity constraints has the potential for adverse impacts on new and existing communities and therefore the impact of new growth must be mitigated accordingly.

4.6.4 Examples of infrastructure items, services or facilities that may be delivered to mitigate the impact of new development could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- affordable or specialist housing needs;
- open space and play facilities;
- sporting, recreation and leisure facilities;
- local education provision;
- allotment provision;
- highways and public transport improvements / provision;
- healthcare provision and social services;
- utility services;
- telecommunications, particularly superfast broadband;
- local waste management and recycling;
- environmental works, including protection and enhancement of local biodiversity, the cultural and historic environment and other local green spaces, tree planting and green infrastructure enhancement projects;
- new provision of and/or improvements to community buildings;
- public art or public realm (including street lighting) enhancements in key locations;
- cemetery provision;
- crime prevention and community safety initiatives;
- water and drainage facilities; and,
- flood protection schemes.

4.6.5 The Council will develop an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) that will contain a 'live' infrastructure project list. The document will seek to identify all local and strategic infrastructure deemed necessary to support sustainable delivery of growth in the Borough over the plan period to 2041. Joint working with neighbouring local authorities and other key agencies such as utility companies or service delivery partners will be a key element to identify and to successfully deliver necessary infrastructure.

4.6.6 All developer contributions to be sought by the Council will be carefully assessed and monitored to ensure that they meet the statutory Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation tests included within the National Planning Policy Framework, as well as guidance set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance. Any contributions sought by the Council will also be aligned with guidance set out in the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (latest edition).

Viability

4.6.7 National guidance is clear that the viability considerations of the policy requirements for all contributions, including affordable housing and open space, sport and recreation facilities, should be considered as a whole with other policy requirements, such as all infrastructure contributions.

4.6.8 This means that it is important to get the right balance between meeting infrastructure needs whilst ensuring that the Borough continues to be an attractive and viable place to build and invest.

- 4.6.9 To help inform this balance, an assessment of the Whole Plan Viability will be undertaken alongside the delivery of this emerging Local Plan which takes into account costs of building new homes and costs associated with policies in this plan against the sales values of homes in the Borough.
- 4.6.10 The Whole Plan Viability Assessment will be a key piece of evidence which will ultimately determine what levels of key infrastructure can be sought across the Borough, whilst ensuring that the new developments coming forward will remain viable. This evidence will be informed by and aligned to key emerging evidence and guidance, including, the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document and the Whole Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Exceptional Circumstances

- 4.6.11 The Council recognises that in some exceptionally specific cases, delivery of Policy requirements as set out in this Plan could have implications, for development feasibility and viability.
- 4.6.12 Therefore, whilst it is important to manage and steer the infrastructure delivery, design requirements and any other policy variations that influence the overall viability of a scheme, this should not solely be a formulaic exercise.
- 4.6.13 Through an open dialogue with applicants, as part of the planning process, the Council will work collaboratively with the development industry throughout the course of this Plan-period.
- 4.6.14 The only exception to a Policy requirement will be where it can be robustly demonstrated by the applicant to the Council that meeting the Policy required standards would lead to significant viability and / or feasibility issues, and that the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.
- 4.6.15 Should an applicant consider that the level of contributions and / or Policy requirements would render their proposed scheme financially unviable, sufficient information must be provided based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach) to enable the viability of the scheme to be comprehensively assessed. The assessment must be provided to the Council with the submission of the relevant planning application. If material changes to the scheme are made after the submission of the viability appraisal, a revised developer-funded version of the appraisal should be submitted, together with an explanation of the changes to the proposal.
- 4.6.16 If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 4.6.17 The Council has assessed the option of developing a Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule. The assessment deemed that negotiating planning obligations through the Section 106 process remains be the most appropriate and viable method for the Council. The Council will continue to assess the viability of adopting a Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule and will update the Developer

Contributions Supplementary Planning Document accordingly, should circumstances change.

Cross Boundary Contributions

4.6.18 Due to the location of the Borough, directly adjacent to the local authority areas of Leicester City, Harborough District and Blaby District, development that occurs within the Borough could have impacts on the infrastructure in these other local authority areas. The same can be said for development that occurs within any of those aforementioned local authorities which could also have an impact on infrastructure within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston.

4.6.19 As an example, the two main arterial highway routes (the A6 and A5199) that link Harborough District to Leicester City from the south, run continuously through the Borough, therefore any development that increases traffic volumes on these two routes could have a detrimental impact upon the capacity of the road infrastructure within the Borough.

4.6.20 Through collaborative working, including liaison with Leicestershire County Council, any development that has an impact upon infrastructure within the Borough will be required to contribute towards the provision of and / or financial contribution towards necessary mitigation measures to accommodate that additional demand.

Policy Text

Policy 3: Infrastructure and Developer Contributions (Strategic)

Developer contributions secured from new development will be used by the Council to deliver the infrastructure required to facilitate sustainable growth. This will include measures to mitigate the impacts of development and to meet the costs of providing required on and off-site infrastructure, as identified in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and other measures to make new growth acceptable in planning terms.

All infrastructure delivered will be to meet a demonstrated shortfall in capacity to mitigate the impact of new developments.

All secured developer contributions will deliver new and / or improved facilities that will relate well to public transport services, walking and cycling (including wheeling) routes, and, should be easily accessible to all sectors of the community.

When appropriate, proposals which utilise opportunities for the multi-use and co-location of infrastructure facilities with other services and facilities, and thus provide convenient and co-ordinated infrastructure hubs for the community, will be particularly supported.

All contributions sought through Section 106 agreements will be in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations and will therefore be:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

For all new development proposals, it will be necessary to establish both the individual and cumulative impact that they may have upon the surrounding infrastructure network within the Borough and within the local authority areas adjoining the Borough. The Council will give consideration to the cumulative impact of a proposal, particularly if a proposed new development is likely to come forward in staged phases or if it is within the site boundary or immediately adjacent to another new or recent development proposal.

Developments occurring within the Borough (or within neighbouring local authorities) which have cross boundary impacts will be taken into account when developer contributions are being negotiated and agreed.

Consideration must be given to the likely timing of infrastructure provision. As such, development may need to be phased. Conditions or a planning obligation may be used to secure this phasing arrangement.

Proportionate monitoring fees will be required from the applicant to cover all costs incurred by the Council over the lifetime of all relevant obligations, for example, for the monitoring of Biodiversity Net Gain on-site or off-site over the 30-year lifetime of those obligations.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

5. Combating Climate Change

Policy 4: Sustainable Development (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 5.1.1 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 5: Improved employment opportunities
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside
- Spatial Objective 15: Kilby Bridge regeneration

Supporting Text

- 5.2.1 Within the NPPF, the government has clearly stated that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is the golden thread running through the planning system, both when plan making and decision taking. The government also states that the planning system should be genuinely plan led and should empower the local people to shape their surroundings.

- 5.2.2 Pursuing sustainable development in the Borough involves seeking positive improvement in the quality of the built, natural, and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):

- creating sustainable communities;
- addressing climate change;
- creating healthy, safe, and cohesive communities and reducing inequalities;
- prioritising active travel and effective public transport;
- making it easier for jobs to be created in the Borough's main centres;
- meeting the Borough's identified development need;
- widening the choice of high-quality homes;
- replacing poor design with high quality design;

- improving the conditions in which people live, work and travel;
- improving access to leisure opportunities; and
- Protecting and enhancing green infrastructure, biodiversity and geodiversity, particularly protected habitats and species and providing a biodiversity net gain.

5.2.3 In order for the government to realise its commitment of becoming a net zero emitter, carbon emissions must be minimised. In order to do this, each local community needs to help.

5.2.4 The Local Plan has a critical part to play in helping the government to meet its targets in lowering greenhouse gas emissions and in providing sustainable development at a local level. Therefore, the Council has ensured that one of the golden threads running through the entire Local Plan is to achieve sustainable development and combat climate change.

Policy Text

Policy 4: Sustainable Development (Strategic)

All development proposals in the Borough must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development including mitigating and adapting to climate change.

The Council will be positive when determining development proposals that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies set out in this Plan. The Council will ensure that development proposals improve the social, economic, and environmental conditions in the Borough; meeting the challenges of climate change and protecting and enhancing the Borough's ecosystems.

For development to be deemed 'sustainable' within the context of this Plan, it must contribute towards delivering the Spatial Strategy, the Council's Vision, and Objectives, and must be in conformity with the local planning policies contained within this Plan. Development that conflicts with policies of the Plan will be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Should there ever be a time when the Plan is deemed absent or silent or out of date, the Council will not look upon development proposals positively, where the proposal is deemed unsustainable, and / or the adverse impacts associated with the proposal significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies set out within the National Planning Policy Framework, when taken as a whole.

Policy 5: Climate Change (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 5.3.1 Provide an overarching approach for the Council to ensure that the impacts of climate change are fully considered at an early stage of any planning proposal to ensure that development and associated infrastructure is future proofed and resilient in contributing towards slowing negative climate change.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure

Supporting Text

- 5.4.1 Climate change is one of the most important and defining issues of our time. Global temperatures are warming as a result of continually increasing greenhouse gas emissions, largely compounded by exponential economic and population growth across the globe. There is mounting evidence demonstrating its seriousness and its potential impacts upon all aspects of life at a global, national and local level. Unless greenhouse gas emissions are vastly reduced, temperatures could continue to rise globally.
- 5.4.2 The impacts of climate change on the built and natural environment have been increasing in frequency and intensity year on year. Globally, nationally and locally, we have seen higher temperatures especially during the summer months, increased rainfall and flooding during the winter months, and, an increase in extreme and unpredictable weather events driven mainly by increases in mean temperature rises across the globe.
- 5.4.3 Some people and places will be more exposed than others to the direct impacts of climate change. Within these places, some people may be more vulnerable to the impacts as a result of their socio-economic status. This inequality is referred to as 'climate justice'. To help address this, the Local Plan will ensure that diversity and equality is at the heart of planning for climate change and that climate change adaptation and mitigation policies do not disadvantage different sectors of the local community.

International / National Response

- 5.4.4 Climate change can be a natural process where temperature, rainfall, wind and other elements vary over decades or more. In millions of years, our world has been warmer and colder than it is now. But today we are experiencing unprecedented rapid warming from human activities, primarily due to burning fossil fuels that generate greenhouse gas emissions.
- A reduction in greenhouse gases will be achieved through a range of measures classed as either 'adaptation' or 'mitigation'.

- 5.4.5 'Adaptation' is when adjustments are made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.
- 5.4.6 'Mitigation' is an action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions. As well as taking actions to reduce emissions, it will also be important to maximise natural processes that can take carbon out of the atmosphere and lock it into features such as peat bogs and trees, known as 'carbon sequestration'.
- 5.4.7 On a national level, the UK has committed to becoming net carbon zero by 2050. The NPPF makes it clear that mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy is a core planning environmental objective.

Response at the Local Level

- 5.4.8 Leicestershire County Council's Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan (2023-2027) sets out the net zero 'roadmap' to inform the future development of coordinated climate action by all residents, businesses, public authorities and other stakeholders across Leicestershire. The Net Zero Strategy sets out the approach to delivering the council's ambitions to work with others to achieve net zero carbon emissions in Leicestershire by 2045 or before.
- 5.4.9 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is currently preparing its Climate Change Strategy and the Council is committed to playing its part in tackling climate change. Key areas for climate change action that the Council is committed to, will include:
- Buildings and energy – support energy efficiency; low carbon heat and renewable energy production; and help create a climate resilient built environment;
 - Transport – encourage and support sustainable transport options;
 - Resources and Waste – support action to move towards a more circular economy by using our resources better, recycling and reducing waste;
 - Local Economy – working with businesses and partners to collectively reduce environmental impact;
 - Communities – facilitate residents and communities to take local action to tackle climate change; and,
 - Nature and Land Use – help protect and enhance natural landscapes and wildlife to support biodiversity, carbon storage and climate resilience.

Role of the Local Plan

- 5.4.10 The planning system is one of many tools that can be used to help minimise vulnerability to all sectors of the community and provide resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- 5.4.11 The way in which new and existing developments in the Borough are shaped can make a significant contribution to adapting and mitigating the impacts of climate change through carbon reduction ('decarbonisation') and sustainable design & construction.

5.4.12 Green infrastructure, including trees, woodland and hedgerows will have a major role to play in this, helping to mitigate the impacts of high temperatures, reduce flood risk, and maintain / restore biodiversity.

5.4.13 This is a Strategic Policy providing an overarching approach for the Borough Council to ensure that the impacts of climate change are fully considered at an early stage of any planning proposal to ensure that development and associated infrastructure is future proofed and resilient.

Policy Text

Policy 5: Climate Change (Strategic)

A comprehensive and integrated approach to addressing climate change will be taken by the Council, consisting of the following elements:

Carbon Reduction

- Development proposals are expected to reduce the amount of energy used in construction and operation of buildings and improve energy efficiency, including retrofitting existing properties, to contribute to achieving net carbon zero.
- The Council will support and promote the creation of low carbon heating / cooling networks and the delivery of renewable energy schemes.
- Development must prioritise active travel such as walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport to reduce reliance on the private car and facilitate car free lifestyles.
- Development must follow the waste hierarchy to minimise, reuse, and recycle waste during the construction phase and to encourage greater levels of recycling over the lifetime of the development.
- Development must seek to create buildings and land that produce sustainable energy and allow for the integration of modern methods of powering vehicles.

Maximising carbon sequestration

- Development must incorporate green infrastructure such as street trees and other vegetation into the public realm to; support rainwater management through sustainable drainage systems; reduce exposure to air pollution; moderate surface and air temperature; and, increase biodiversity.
- Development must achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity commensurate with the scale of the development, including a positive contribution to the habitat network through habitat protection, creation and enhancement.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

- Development must maintain (or increase where necessary) the current level of tree canopy cover across the Borough and seek opportunities to increase appropriate species of woodland cover.
- Development must be designed to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change and reduce vulnerability, particularly in terms of overheating, flood risk and water supply.
- Development must ensure that buildings and infrastructure are designed to adapt to a changing climate, making efficient use of water, reducing impacts from

natural hazards like flooding and heatwaves, while mitigating against and avoiding contributing to the urban heat island effect. This should include maximising opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation.

- Development must seek to provide adaptation and mitigation measures which improve the resilience of communities, reduce inequality and bring a range of social benefits.
- Development must not compromise land that is required to deliver towards a nature recovery network.

This Policy should be read and applied in conjunction with other relevant policies set out within this Plan.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

Policy 6: Flood Risk and Sustainable Water Management (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

5.5.1 Development should be directed towards the areas of lowest flood risk first. Where this is not possible, within the site the most vulnerable development should be located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location. All sources of flood risk should be considered.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure

Supporting Text

5.6.1 Flooding occurs from a range of sources and as a result of climate change flood events are likely to become more frequent and more severe impacting local communities and the environment. It is therefore important that development is safe and resilient and does not increase flooding elsewhere. Development can present opportunities to reduce flood risk through natural flood management techniques and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which also have the potential to provide a range of multifunctional benefits.

5.6.2 In line with national planning policy, development should be directed towards the areas of lowest flood risk first. Where this is not possible, within the site the most vulnerable development should be located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location. All sources of flood risk should be considered.

5.6.3 The exception test may have to be applied in relation to development proposals. The need for the exception test will depend on the potential vulnerability of the site and of the development proposed, in line with the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification set out in national planning guidance.

5.6.4 The proactive management of flood risk is one of the most important ways of managing the potential impacts of climate change that would have an effect of the Borough's water environment. Examples of these likely recurring events may include:

- Increased flood risk due to wetter winters and more frequent destructive storms;
- Strain on water availability due to drier, longer summers; and
- Expectation that rain storms will be heavier and more prolonged. Where heavy rain cannot be absorbed fast enough by land this leads to localised flooding and potential flash floods.

5.6.5 The Council has commissioned consultants to prepare its Level 1 and 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (expected 2024) and this is being prepared in liaison with

statutory consultees including the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority, as well as in accordance with the requirements of the National Policy.

- 5.6.6 The aim of the emerging Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is to provide sufficient information for the application of the Sequential Test and to identify whether application of the Exception Test is likely to be necessary. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment involves a broad scale assessment of areas at risk of flooding within the Borough, be it fluvial or other forms of flooding and includes advice on sustainable drainage techniques and other flood risk solutions. The Study also predicts likely increased flooding risk in the Borough due to relevant factors, including climate change.
- 5.6.7 Within the Borough there are two main occurrences of Flood Zone 2 and 3; one along the River Sence corridor (which is a tributary of the River Soar), adjacent to the Grand Union Canal to the south of the Borough; and, one along the Wash Brook corridor which flows west to east between north Wigston and Oadby.
- 5.6.8 Blue and Green Infrastructure (BGI) and Natural Flood Management (NFM) can capture flood flows and provide additional flood storage, which is a form of climate change adaptation. New wetland habitat also provides additional biodiversity benefits. These measures would be especially valuable upstream of communities at flood risk such as the community along the Wash Brook and the community at Wigston Harcourt.
- 5.6.9 The only main river in the Borough recognised by the Environment Agency is the River Sence in the south of the Borough. However, there is also recognised flood risk from the Wash Brook ordinary watercourse and the Evington Brook main river to the North (outside of the Borough's boundary). There is a 'Community at Risk of flooding' on the Wash Brook and also a 'Community at Risk of flooding' at Wigston Harcourt, from an ordinary watercourse and which is a tributary of the River Sence.
- 5.6.10 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will help to inform the spatial development strategy for the Borough and is the basis upon which the Sequential and Exception Tests will be applied.
- 5.6.11 Flood Risk Assessments should follow the approach recommended by the NPPF (and associated guidance), as well as guidance provided by the Environment Agency and Leicestershire County Council in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority. This includes:
- Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment: Checklist (NPPF PPG, Defra)
 - Standing Advice on Flood Risk (Environment Agency)
 - Flood Risk Assessment for Planning Applications (Environment Agency)
 - Current Industry Best Practice for SuDS (The SuDS Manual CIRIA C753)
 - Leicestershire County Council LLFA Policy for the Management of Surface Water
 - (Emerging) Borough of Oadby and Wigston Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)
- 5.6.12 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will also offer guidance on how to manage any floodplains in the Borough.

Water Management

- 5.6.13 Water is a vital resource we cannot live without - it supplies us with water for drinking, industry, farming and recreation, and is essential for ecosystems to flourish, as well as human health and economic growth. However, water pollution and drought threatens this. As such, it is important we maintain and improve the quality and quantity of fresh and marine waters to ensure the needs of society, the economy and the environment can be maintained.
- 5.6.14 The Water Environment Regulations 2017 apply to surface waters and groundwater (water below the surface of the ground). These regulations set out requirements to prevent the deterioration of aquatic ecosystems; protect, enhance and restore water bodies to 'good' status; and achieve compliance with standards and objectives for protected areas.
- 5.6.15 The NPPF supports the delivery of sustainable development and the Humber River Basin Management Plan promotes the use of the tighter Water Efficiency Target within Building Regulations.
- 5.6.16 Through the Building Regulations all developments (currently) are required to achieve a mandatory standard of 125 litres of water per person per day. The optional technical standards for housing allows local authorities to apply a more stringent standard of 110 litres per person per day where there is a clear local need. The majority of the Severn Trent Water area is now classified as an 'area of serious water stress'⁷ and therefore, all new developments in the Borough are required to implement water efficient technology and fittings which have energy efficiency benefits.

Sustainable Drainage and Surface Water

- 5.6.17 Traditional drainage is designed to move surface water run-off as rapidly as possible to a discharge point; either a watercourse or soak away. This approach has a number of harmful effects because run-off from impermeable surfaces can increase the risk of flooding downstream, as well as causing sudden rises in water levels and flow rates in watercourses. In addition, by diverting rainfall to piped systems, water does not soak into the ground, depleting ground water and reducing flows in watercourses in dry weather.
- 5.6.18 Surface water run-off can contain contaminants such as oil, organic matter and toxic metals. Although often at low levels, cumulatively they can result in poor water quality in rivers and groundwater, affecting biodiversity, amenity value and potential water abstraction. After heavy rain, the initial run-off is often highly polluting.
- 5.6.19 The theory that sits behind Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is that they seek to replicate the natural movement of water from a development by reducing flood risk, improving water quality and often create desirable features that can make towns and cities more attractive places to live in by enhancing the quality of life. In addition, the European Water Framework Directive requires careful management of water resources through sustainable protection of water quality. Development proposals that are likely

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-stressed-areas-2021-classification> - Water stressed areas – 2021 classification

to impact surface or groundwater should consider the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. SuDS offer an interesting and cost effective solution in delivering the Directive's requirements.

5.6.20 Recent revisions to planning policy and the National Planning Policy Framework recognise the role that well-designed SuDS have in managing surface water.

5.6.21 As well as the provision of SuDS, the creation of new habitats, the planting of appropriate trees, and the creation of new woodland will be sought as they can also help reduce the danger of both fluvial and surface water flooding.

Policy Text

Policy 6: Flood Risk and Sustainable Water Management (Strategic)

Flood Risk

The Council will work with relevant bodies to ensure that flood risk in the Borough is managed and reduced. Development will be directed away from areas of highest risk of flooding from any source and opportunities will be taken to reduce flooding, through sustainable drainage systems and natural flood management to deliver multi-functional benefits for people and wildlife.

All new development proposals in the Borough must take into account the potential impact of climate change on water resources, water quality and on the level of flood risk posed, as detailed in the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), and, via the most relevant and up to date sources or Legislation for flood risk and / or water management. Development in areas that would be at risk from flooding must be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that:

- Appropriate land at lower risk is not available (and this has been evidenced through the application of the National Planning Policy Framework Sequential Test, and if necessary, the Exception Test);
- There are national policies or other material considerations permitting development of that nature on land with a high risk of flooding;
- There are exceptional reasons for development to take place in that location; and,
- The localised and cumulative risk of flooding can be fully mitigated through careful design and engineering methods including (but not limited to) natural flood risk or other on-site flood management infrastructure.

A detailed site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required for all development proposals greater than 1 hectare in size situated within a Flood Zone 1 and all development proposals regardless of size situated in Flood Zone 2 or 3, or in an area within Flood Zone 1 which has critical drainage problems.

The Flood Risk Assessment should be proportionate to the degree of flood risk and appropriate to the scale, nature and location of development. The assessment must identify the necessary mitigation and adaptation measures which must:

- Aim to avoid or reduce the risk of flooding and harm from it by ensuring the sequential approach has been undertaken and the development is safe for the lifetime of the development and will not increase flood risk to others;
- Include suitable habitat creation and not cause detriment to existing habitats and species;
- Demonstrate how such measures form an intrinsic part of the overall development;
- Proactively manage surface water run-off through the use of sustainable drainage techniques and positive land management, including the use of permeable surfacing and natural flood risk management infrastructure.

Development of previously developed sites must be accompanied by a desktop study to identify any potential site contamination. If there is potential for contamination to be present on site, further more detailed investigation will be required to ensure that contaminants are not mobilised through development and enter groundwater supplies or watercourses.

In order to allow access for the maintenance of watercourses, development proposals that include or abut a watercourse should ensure no building, structure or immovable landscaping feature is included that will impede access within an 8m buffer zone of a watercourse.

Planning Conditions may be included where relevant to ensure this access is maintained in perpetuity and may seek to ensure responsibility for maintenance of the watercourse is clearly identified and included in maintenance arrangements for future occupants.

Water Efficiency

The Severn Trent Water area is now classified as an 'area of serious water stress' and therefore, all development proposals must be able to robustly demonstrate that:

- they are water efficient by incorporating innovative water efficiency and water re-use measures, demonstrating that the estimated consumption of wholesome water per dwelling is calculated in accordance with the methodology in the water efficiency calculator and should not exceed 110 litres per day per person (or any update to this) as described by Building Regulations;
- water is readily available to support the proposed scale of growth;
- clear management arrangements and funding for ongoing maintenance of water availability and quality over the lifetime of the development is known. Planning conditions or obligations will be used to secure these arrangements;
- that adequate mains foul water treatment and disposal is already in existence or can be provided in time to serve the new development. Non-mains foul sewage disposal solutions will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the local planning authority and / or statutory bodies.

Water Management

All development proposals comprising of new buildings:

- with outside hard surfacing, must ensure such surfacing is permeable (unless there are technical and unavoidable reasons for not doing so in certain areas) thereby reducing energy demand on the water recycling network;
- should consider the potential to incorporate a green roof and/or walls;
- should consider the use of grey water recycling;

- which is residential and which includes a garden area, must include a rain harvesting water butt(s) of minimum 100l capacity; and
- must seek to reuse and recycle rainwater via harvesting measures that have been incorporated wherever possible in order to reduce demand on mains water supply as part of an integrated approach to water management agreed by the local planning authority.

Sustainable Drainage and Surface Water

The Council will require all major development proposals, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, to incorporate appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems in accordance with the latest National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and in agreement with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Leicestershire. Development proposals that are likely to impact on surface or ground water should consider the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

All schemes must be informed by specific catchment and ground characteristics, and they will be required to establish the wider ranging issues relating to long-term management, adoption and maintenance of SuDS.

Where development is proposed in areas known to be susceptible to surface water flooding issues, appropriate management and mitigation schemes will be required. Development should protect and enhance groundwater, surface water features and control aquatic pollution. Development must not have an unacceptable impact on the quality and potential yield of local water resources, the water environment, and, the local ecology.

Applicants will be encouraged to submit proposals that incorporate solutions to reduce the risk of flooding and propose sustainable water management from the outset via discussions with the Local Planning Authority and / or all relevant bodies via Pre-Application and Full Application dialogue.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

Policy 7: Preventing Pollution (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

5.7.1 Seeking to reduce and actively monitor pollution stemming from new development.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change

Supporting Text

5.8.1 The planning system plays a vital role in making sure all new development takes into account pollution levels and ways to minimise these. Pollution can come from many sources, including light, noise, air, odour and vibrations, all of which can have a damaging effect on the local environment, amenities and health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

5.8.2 All development will be assessed on the level of pollution it would generate and the impact it would have on the surrounding area including the natural and historic environment. The Council will expect the development to mitigate any negative effects caused and also take into account any controls and mitigation measures that could reasonably be imposed by condition e.g. hours of operation.

5.8.3 Adverse effects must be carefully considered by the applicant of any planning proposal as such impacts can be the basis for the refusal of an application if not adequately addressed.

5.8.4 Applicants are encouraged to have pre-application discussions with the Council to be advised on the specific requirements. Applicants are also encouraged to submit appropriate assessments setting out potential pollution and there impacts. Assessments should:

- identify the potential pollution,
- identify the sensitive receptor(s) which may be affected by the proposed development, including residents, businesses, land users and sensitive environmental assets,
- consider the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or approved development, and
- demonstrate the measures which would be implemented to ensure adverse impacts would be avoided at source, or where this is not possible, outline the proposed management and mitigation measures to reduce effects to an acceptable level; and identify the significance of any residual effects.

Policy Text

Policy 7: Preventing Pollution (Non-Strategic)

The potential impacts of exposure to pollutants must be considered in locating development, during construction and in use.

Development should be designed and located to ensure that established noise and other nuisance generating uses remain viable and can continue or grow without unreasonable restrictions being placed on them.

Development proposals that have not clearly demonstrated how noise and other nuisances will be mitigated and managed should not be permitted.

Planning permission will not be granted where the development and uses would cause unacceptable risk to public health or safety, the environment, general amenity or existing uses due to the potential of vibration, odour, light pollution, pollution of surface / ground water sources or land pollution and to occupiers of surrounding land uses or the historic and natural environment, unless the need for development is considered to demonstrably outweigh the effects caused and the development includes mitigation measures to minimise the adverse impacts.

Developments sensitive to pollutants will be permitted where the occupants and environment would not experience adverse impact, or the impact can be overcome by mitigation measures.

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Policy 8: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 5.9.1 Seeking to reduce the detrimental impact that development has on climate change through producing renewable and low carbon energy on-site rather than fully relying on existing energy providers.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design

Supporting Text

- 5.10.1 The NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance requires planning policies to maximise and promote renewable and low carbon energy generation. It also suggests that there should be radical reductions in carbon emissions through development. This policy builds on the other measures proposed throughout the Plan and aims to reduce demand for energy through the on-site generation of renewable and low carbon energy.
- 5.10.2 Increasing the amount of energy generated from renewable and low carbon technologies will only help to ensure that the Borough area has access to a secure energy supply, reduces its greenhouse gas emissions to slow down negative climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. This Plan has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.
- 5.10.3 To reduce carbon emissions, all development should incorporate renewable and low carbon energy production equipment into its building fabric. Such energy generation could take the form of (but is not limited to) photovoltaic energy, solar-powered, wind generated energy, air / ground source heat pumps and geo-thermal water heating.
- 5.10.4 Higher density and mixed use developments can provide ideal conditions for successful, viable and efficient applications of decentralised energy technologies, as a way of ensuring clean, affordable, secure energy into the future.

Policy Text

Policy 8: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (Non-Strategic)

All new homes and new commercial buildings must incorporate renewable and low carbon energy production equipment into its building fabric to meet at least 10% of the predicted total annual energy requirements (of non-renewable and low carbon energy use) of the building and its occupants. Proposals that do not meet this requirement will be refused, unless the applicant submits to the Council robust justification as to why it is not appropriate or viable to meet the requirement.

The development of renewable, low carbon, or decentralised energy schemes or community based projects will be supported in principle where proposals:

- are located appropriately and do not have an unacceptable impact on surrounding uses or the environment, landscape character or visual appearance of the area; and
- mitigate any potential noise, odour, traffic or other impacts of the development so as not to cause an unacceptable impact on the environment or local amenity.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

6. Housing

Policy 9: Affordable Housing (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

6.1.1 The Policy will ensure that the appropriate levels of affordable homes are provided within the Borough, to not only address any affordable housing need, but also provide a balanced housing market.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design

Supporting Text

6.2.1 The Borough of Oadby and Wigston is a relatively unique local authority area compared to other local authority areas within the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area. There are three distinct settlement areas all of which have very different socio-economic profiles as well as land values. In general, Oadby has the highest land values of the three settlements, with Wigston having the second highest and South Wigston the lowest.

6.2.2 Evidence for the need for affordable housing is set out in the latest Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) that has been undertaken for the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area the Borough. The Council has also identified delivery of affordable housing as one of its priorities because it recognises the important role it plays in providing homes for all within the community.

6.2.3 Further work is ongoing in terms of the minimum targets for affordable homes to be sought in the plan period up to 2041. In addition further work is underway on development viability and this will inform the final draft affordable housing policy in the next version of the draft plan. The policy at this stage therefore sets out the broad principles for the preferred approach to securing affordable homes in the Borough.

6.2.4 The Council will commission an Affordable Housing Viability Assessment that will seek to provide the Council with evidence relating to an appropriate affordable housing threshold by which to require affordable housing provision on a development site and an appropriate percentage of affordable housing provision should a development proposal meet the prescribed threshold.

Policy Text

Policy 9: Affordable Housing (Strategic)

The Council requires the provision of affordable homes on all major developments, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation. The provision of affordable housing must be provided in conformity with Table 1. The expectation is that all affordable will be provided on-site.

Table 1. Minimum percentage of affordable homes to be provided per settlement

Settlement	Minimum percentage of affordable homes to be provided
Oadby	30% (to be confirmed)
Wigston (including Kilby Bridge)	20% (to be confirmed)
South Wigston	10% (to be confirmed)

A cumulative approach to affordable housing on a development site will apply regardless of the number of different associated planning applications.

There is no maximum number of affordable homes that can be provided on a site. The major development threshold does not restrict proposals providing affordable homes on sites of fewer than 10 homes or less than 0.5 hectares in size.

The provision of affordable homes is a priority for the Council and therefore, should a site be proposed for more than the minimum percentages illustrated in Table 1, the Council may take a flexible approach to other developer contributions through negotiation with the applicant.

The type, tenure and mix of affordable homes to be provided will be negotiated at the time of the proposal being determined by the Council. All proposals should respond to the most up-to-date assessment of local housing need.

In line with Government guidance, at least 10 percent of the total number of homes to be provided must be available for affordable home ownership, and at least 25 percent of all affordable homes on qualifying sites will be sought as First Homes.

Proposals for residential development that meet the major development threshold but do not provide any affordable housing will be refused unless an appropriate off-site contribution is provided in lieu of the required number. The off-site contribution will be negotiated at the time of the proposal being determined by the Council.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

Policy 10: Housing Density (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

6.3.1 Land is a scarce and finite resource, ensuring that development occurs at an appropriate density for its surroundings should ensure that land is not 'wasted'. An independent analysis may be needed to show that in order to achieve other policy priorities (flooding, historic environment) there is a need to reduce density on a particular site.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 11: High Quality and sustainable design

Supporting Text

- 6.4.1 The Borough of Oadby and Wigston is a small, compact, urban authority area that is directly adjacent to and shares a boundary with Leicester City. The Borough has a finite supply of land on which development can be situated, therefore making the most efficient use of this land is paramount.
- 6.4.2 To ensure the development of new homes is concentrated within the most appropriate and sustainable locations, the Council is seeking a higher density within the town centre of Wigston and the district centres of Oadby and South Wigston. Seeking higher densities within built up centre locations will concentrate residential development close to essential services and jobs and will reduce the need to travel by motor vehicle.
- 6.4.3 Concentrating housing within the more urbanised areas of the Borough will positively affect the local economy as there will be more people closely located to existing retail, service and leisure facilities. The Council is aware that a higher figure would not be appropriate throughout the entire Borough area, therefore, is reducing the density figure on a 'sliding' scale outside of the main centre boundaries. This is to allow for flexibility relating to location, as well as responding to the distinct character areas of the Borough.
- 6.4.4 Each site has its own particular characteristics, and the Council will consider whether the proposal is of an appropriate density against the criteria set out in the High Quality Design policy of this Plan and using The National Design Guide to incorporate good design principles. The National Design Guide states that *'the appropriate density will result from the context, accessibility, the proposed building types, form and character of the development'*.
- 6.4.5 The Council is committed to achieving the Local Plan Vision where *'growth will contribute to people's health, happiness, and well-being in the Borough through the timely delivery of well-designed, efficient and high-quality development that will meet their needs, whatever their income, stage of life and ability'* and good design is key to attaining this part of the vision.

Policy Text

Policy 10: Housing Density (Strategic)

The Council is committed to delivering new homes in an effective and efficient manner. The Council is also committed to locating residents close to much needed services and facilities as well as adopting good design principles and enabling healthy communities.

In seeking to achieve higher densities developers must have regard to creating high quality environments and beautiful places. A balance should be struck which allows for the development needed, while ensuring that design and quality of development maximises opportunities for people to be active – which includes creation of high-quality, safe spaces for people to engage in formal and informal recreation, active travel, play, social engagement.

To ensure that the Borough provides the required number of homes for its communities, the Council will adopt the following density targets on all new development sites that involve the provision of new homes.

- At least 50 homes per hectare on average at proposed development sites that have a gross site size of 0.3 hectares and larger and are located within the town centre boundary of Wigston or the district centre boundaries of Oadby and South Wigston.
- At least 40 homes per hectare on average at proposed development sites that have a gross site size of 0.3 hectares and larger and are located outside of the town centre boundary of Wigston or district centre boundaries of Oadby and South Wigston.

Where a development is otherwise acceptable but an independent viability appraisal and / or an independent character and design appraisal demonstrates that the required density cannot be achieved, the Council will work with the applicant to ascertain whether there are alternative approaches. If the Council requires its own independent viability assessments to verify outcomes of the applicants assessment, it will be at the applicants cost.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

Policy 11: Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 6.5.1 Seeks to ensure an overarching approach to providing appropriate accommodations needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople that reflects a local need across the Plan period.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside

Supporting Text

- 6.6.1 Meeting the identified housing needs of all sections of our community, including Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is a key objective of this Plan. This is because it is important to provide for the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the wider context of meeting identified local housing needs.
- 6.6.2 The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for Travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of settled communities.
- 6.6.3 There are distinct differences in the culture and way of life of Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople. For this reason, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, updated December 2023) provides two separate definitions:
- Gypsies and Travellers: *'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.'*
 - Travelling Showpeople: *'Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above'.*
- 6.6.4 A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is being prepared in partnership with a cluster of other local authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire to better understand the latest accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople within those Leicester and Leicestershire local authorities

involved. It is however expected that the Borough of Oadby and Wigston will continue to have a zero need for both permanent sites and transit pitches.

- 6.6.5 This approach will ensure that the Council meets the requirements of the Housing Act (1985), the Housing and Planning Act (2016), the NPPF (2023) and Planning Policy Guidance (2014) as amended by Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) (which included a change to the definition of Travellers for planning purposes).
- 6.6.6 The main objective of the GTAA is to provide the Council with robust, defensible and up-to-date evidence in relation to the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople during the period up to 2041.
- 6.6.7 This criteria-based Policy for the provision of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople should be used to guide the allocation of sites to meet identified needs where they are identified. The Policy seeks to ensure that sites are accommodated in sustainable locations with access to a range of essential services, such as education, healthcare, welfare, shops, water and sewerage facilities, where possible.

Policy Text

Policy 11: Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (Strategic)

The Council will identify sufficient land to accommodate Gypsy and Traveller needs should evidence suggest a need to do so. Should a need be identified that requires the identification of land for Gypsy and Travellers the following criteria will apply:

- a) Sites must be accessible, by a range of transport modes, to essential local services and facilities, including shops, schools and GP surgeries.
- b) Sites must not be isolated, and preferably be located within or adjacent to main urban areas.
- c) Sites must have formal safe access to the highway network, and must have sufficient parking provision on site.
- d) Sites must be (or have the opportunity to be) served by adequate water and sewerage services / facilities.
- e) Sites must not be located within Flood Zones 2 or 3.
- f) Sites must not be situated on contaminated land or within areas with poor ambient air quality.
- g) Sites must be incorporated and integrated into the surrounding area through high quality design.
- h) Sites will not have an unacceptable impact on adjoining / neighbouring properties and / or land uses.
- i) Sites will not have adverse impacts on environmentally sensitive areas, areas of historic or heritage interest, or areas of landscape character importance.

Any proposal for Gypsy and Travellers site provision must also conform to current national policy and guidance.

Policy 12: Housing Choices (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

6.7.1 The policy seeks to ensure that the Council provides a balanced, high quality and fit for purpose housing market that is available to all and delivers a wide choice of different types of new homes that meet the local communities needs.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

Supporting Text

Housing Choices

6.8.1 The NPPF suggests that local planning authorities should deliver a wide choice of high quality homes; they should widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. The Council also wants to provide the most appropriate housing solutions for all of its existing population, as well as those future populations aspiring to live within the Borough. 'Housing for Older and Disabled People' (2019) supplements the national policy position, recognising the growing need to plan for specific groups requirements as part of new development.

Local Context

6.8.2 The Council is committed to ensuring new development in the Borough will provide an appropriate mix of housing size, types, tenure and range of accommodation choices that are flexible enough to adapt to the local needs of the community. This will include the delivery of specialist accommodation and Lifetime homes, as well as to cater for 'whole life communities' as part of new developments up to 2041 and beyond.

6.8.3 All new developments will contain an appropriate housing mix having regard to the nature of the development site, character of the surrounding area, the most up to date evidence of need, as well as the existing housing mix of the immediate area. This means that all new residential development in the Borough should maintain, provide and contribute to a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities.

6.8.4 This will ensure that new development provide a greater mix of accommodation choices for all, including accessible, inclusive homes accommodating the needs of a wide range of households, such as young professionals, families, older people and individuals with disabilities.

6.8.5 The Council is committed to providing new homes that are 'fit for purpose' and promote healthy living conditions, and are appropriate for modern living and requirements. The

Council will require all new homes, regardless of type or tenure, to be of a size that allows sufficient space for all of its proposed inhabitants to live comfortably and sustainably.

- 6.8.6 New housing developments should not only be 'fit for purpose' for its inhabitants, but they should also be located in sustainable locations, close by to key services and facilities and should protect and exploit opportunities for sustainable transport use. As well as being situated within sustainable locations, any residential proposals (including change of use, subdivision or new build) will need to reflect the character of the local area.
- 6.8.7 Shared accommodation options, including well designed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), play an increasingly vital role in providing housing choices for people on lower incomes, those on benefit payments and young professionals. They are often the only choice of housing for people who would otherwise be homeless.
- 6.8.8 Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding (SBCH) is a part of the Government's strategy to improve and diversify housing provision and offer people a different option to get on the property ladder. The Council will continue to maintain a Register of individuals and associations of individuals who have expressed an interest in self and custom build homes.
- 6.8.9 The Council will use the most up to date available National and Local housing evidence base to inform this Plan and subsequent discussions with the development industry as new development proposals emerge throughout this Plan-period.

Requirements of Specific Groups

- 6.8.10 People aged 65 and over currently represent 21.3 per cent (Census 2021) of the local population across the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. This is higher than both the East Midlands 19.5 per cent and national average of 18.4 per cent. This proportion is expected to grow significantly at the local level, with population projections suggesting that people aged 65 and over will increase by 3,380 people, which represents a significant growth of 27.5 per cent in that age group. This represents by far the largest population age group increase within the Borough where by 2041, over 65s will represent 26 per cent of the whole Borough population. With 88.6 per cent of those aged 65 and over in the Borough owning their home, it is important that the Council delivers the right diversity of new homes in the right places.
- 6.8.11 Linked particularly to a growing older population, the number of people with health problems and/or disabilities is also projected to increase significantly. The number of wheelchair users in the Borough is projected to increase by 27.6 per cent between 2020 and 2041 and over the same period, the number of people experiencing mobility problems will rise by 38.3 per cent and Dementia cases will also significantly increase, by 46.8 per cent in the same period.
- 6.8.12 Evidence therefore suggests that there are expected to be significantly greater housing pressures for older people with specific requirements over the Plan period.
- 6.8.13 Many older people decide to and continue to live in mainstream housing, and it is therefore important that housing is designed so it can be adapted to a household's changing needs and enable people to remain independently living at home for longer.

- 6.8.14 In a September 2020 Government consultation, 'Raising accessibility standards for new homes: A consultation paper', proposals were set out to increase the required access standards for all housing through building regulations. This consultation set out a range of options for how standards can be improved and, in response to the consultation in July 2022, the Government confirmed its intention to make M4(2) standards mandatory for all housing through Building Regulations.
- 6.8.15 Therefore, available national and local evidence suggests that it would be sensible to design housing so that it can be adapted to households changing needs and therefore recommends there is sufficient justification to require that all new build dwellings should be delivered to Part M4(2) 'Accessible and Adaptable' Standards (or equivalent replacement standards). The requirement for all new build dwellings to be designed to achieve M4(2) will also ensure they can be easily adapted to meet the needs of a household including wheelchair users.
- 6.8.16 Given the ageing population and higher levels of disability and health problems amongst older people there is likely to be an increased requirement for a wide spectrum of specialist housing options moving forward. There may be a range of factors which may influence such developments, including, issues related to loneliness, health, ability to maintain existing homes and/or care and support needs. Options include sheltered and extra care housing (classed as C3 dwellings), and residential care homes and nursing homes (care bed spaces classed as C2 provision). In all instances, proposals will generally be supported where they are seeking to meet an identified demand and when proposals are located in the most appropriate available locations.
- 6.8.17 Sheltered and extra care housing are alternatives to care/nursing home bed spaces and can help to reduce costs associated with care by supporting people to remain as independent for as long as possible. These can also support not only older people but also those with a lifelong disability. In addition, they can be integrated well into local communities and also as part of larger developments.
- 6.8.18 The Council is working towards improving inclusion and quality of life for people with Dementia. The Council therefore encourages the design of new homes to have regard to the guidance contained within the 'RTPI: Dementia and Town Planning' (September 2020).

Internal and External Space Standards

- 6.8.19 The Council recognises the importance of homes being of high quality and decent in relation to space standards. All new homes should provide spaces that are of a decent standard for its residents. Spaces and layout within new homes have a significant impact on housing quality in general, and residents life quality.
- 6.8.20 According to The Health Foundation, housing conditions can influence residents physical and mental health and general wellbeing. In particular, it suggests that children living in crowded homes are more likely be stressed, anxious and depressed, have poorer physical health, and attain less well at school.
- 6.8.21 The role of homes and buildings in levelling up health and wellbeing research briefing note, suggests that in terms of mental health impacts, living in non-decent, cold or overcrowded housing and in unaffordable housing has been associated with increased stress and a reduction in a sense of empowerment and control over one's life and with

depression and anxiety. It goes on to state that children living in overcrowded homes have a greater risk of behavioural problems than those in uncrowded homes.

6.8.22 The Government through its permitted development rights legislation states that in relation to new homes provided through the permitted development route, all new homes provided through permitted development rights must comply with the nationally described space standards. The Council considers that this national stance is extremely positive and influential, and therefore is to further this requirement to all new homes provided within the Borough.

6.8.23 The Council will require that, as a minimum, all new development should be built in accordance with these nationally described standards. These standards will apply to all open market dwellings and affordable housing, including those created through subdivision and conversion.

6.8.24 It is important that occupiers of all new homes have access to suitable private, or at least, semi-private outdoor space. For houses, this can most usually be provided in the form of a private enclosed garden. In the case of flats, accommodation for families should usually be provided on the ground floor so that access to a garden can be provided. For other flats, balconies may take the place of a garden but easily accessible communal areas will often be required.

6.8.25 The amount of outdoor amenity space must be appropriate to the size of the home(s) being proposed and designed to allow effective and practical use of, and level access to, the space by all residents.

Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding (SBCH)

6.8.26 Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding (SBCH) is another route to helping people to achieve home ownership. There are subtle differences between the two forms of development, with custom build being where a person commissions a specialist developer to help to deliver their own home or where they can make choices about the design, layout or style of the home; whilst self-build is where a person is more directly involved in actually organising and constructing their home.

6.8.27 The legal definition of self-build and custom housebuilding in the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) is outlined below: *'self-build and custom housebuilding means the building or completion by— (a) individuals, (b) associations of individuals, or (c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals'*.

6.8.28 There are a number of mechanisms for delivering custom and self-build homes, including:

- people finding their own plot and building their own home;
- developers providing serviced plots for people to design and have their own home built to a design specified by themselves;
- sites being specifically acquired, marketed and delivered by a builder or developer as custom build where the builder will construct the custom homes for an individual, allowing them to make choices about the finer details but not to the overall design.

6.8.29 Where opportunities arise, the Council will support proposals for high-quality Self Build and Custom Housebuilding (SBCH) projects that are sensitive to the characteristics of the local area. On sites where more than one self or custom build dwelling is proposed, a Design Framework will be required as part of the planning application to help coordinate the finer details of the proposed development and to ensure it will be in accordance with the suite of policies set out in this Plan.

Retention of Existing Homes

6.8.30 Given the limited amount of remaining suitable land available for new residential development in the Borough, it is vitally important to retain existing housing, especially accommodation such as bungalows or those meeting specialist needs to combat the Borough's aging population and the level of projected need. There is also an ongoing need to ensure that the range of dwelling types, tenures and sizes continue to meet the identified housing need, facilitate housing choice and achieve mixed and balanced communities.

6.8.31 It is recognised that the loss of existing homes may be justified in some cases, for example, where this is the only way to raise the standard of poor quality accommodation such as where a loss is necessary to meet the required minimum space or access standards. All exceptions will need to be clearly justified and accompanied by suitable supporting information as part of proposal submitted to the Council.

6.8.32 The Council hopes that this Policy-approach will help to ensure that measures aimed at delivering additional residential accommodation, including through renovation and repair, are not undermined through losses to the existing net housing stock. Bringing empty properties back into residential use will also be encouraged as this helps to meet local housing demand and also improves the appearance of the area.

Policy Text

Policy 12: Housing Choices (Non-Strategic)

Housing Choices

The Council expects all applications for new residential development to contribute towards delivering a mix of dwelling types, tenures and sizes that meet the identified needs (and / or demand) of the communities within the Borough.

All new residential development proposals must demonstrate how they contribute to achieving the identified needs as set out in this Plan and in accordance with the most up-to-date evidence of housing needs and demands, to help determine the most appropriate housing mix based upon the character and location of the individual site.

Housing Mix

For all major residential developments, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, the mix of dwelling sizes, as per the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2022) (illustrated below in table 2), will be the starting point for discussions, unless there is any other up to date evidence.

Table 2. Housing mix for affordable housing and market housing

	1-Bedroom	2-Bedrooms	3-Bedrooms	4+-Bedrooms
Market Housing	5%	35%	45%	15%
Affordable Housing	15%	45%	30%	10%

The Council will support the development of bungalows, ground floor accommodation, specialist care accommodation, elderly care accommodation and retirement accommodation that meets an identified need and is proposed in appropriate sustainable locations. Other forms of accommodation meeting identified types, tenures and sizes needed, for example, student halls of residence or individual live/work units that provide workspaces that are designed to be functionally separate from the dwelling(s) but enabling a more sustainable way to live and work, will also be supported in appropriate locations.

Requirements of Specific Groups

All new residential developments will provide flexible, vibrant, socially inclusive and adaptable accommodation choices to help meet the diverse needs of the existing and future community, as well as to be able to respond to the changing needs of occupants over time.

The Council will expect all new build homes to comply with Part M Building Regulations Standard M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings (or equivalent replacement standards).

The Council will also expect all major residential development proposals to deliver 10 per cent of market homes and 20 per cent of affordable homes to comply with Part M Building Regulations Standard M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair User Dwellings (or equivalent replacement standards).

Internal and External Space Standards

New dwellings across all tenures will be expected to meet as a minimum, the Government's Nationally Described Space Standards (or any subsequent Government update) for internal floor areas and storage space. These standards will apply to all open market dwellings and affordable housing, including those created through subdivision and conversion.

New residential dwellings will be expected to have direct access to an area of private and / or communal amenity space. The form of amenity space will be dependent on the form of housing and could be provided as a private garden, roof garden, communal garden, courtyard balcony for accommodation above ground floor level, or ground-level patio with defensible space from public access.

The amount of outdoor amenity space must be appropriate to the size of the home(s) being proposed and designed to allow effective and practical use of and level access to the space by all residents.

Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding (SBCH)

The Council will support the provision of Self Build and Custom Housebuilding (SBCH) serviced plots on all sites, provided that proposals are of high-quality design and satisfy all

other relevant policies within this Plan. In line with national legislation, the Council will continue to keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who wish to acquire serviced plots of land to bring forward Self Build and Custom Build housing projects.

On sites where more than one self or custom build dwelling is proposed, a Design Framework should be submitted as part of the planning application to help coordinate the development.

Retention of Existing Homes

The Council will seek to resist any net loss of existing residential accommodation (Use Class C3). Any development proposals that result in the loss of residential accommodation will be resisted unless any of the following exceptions apply:

- it can be demonstrated that the accommodation cannot be renovated to achieve satisfactory housing standards;
- the proposal would result in a net gain in units of affordable housing;
- the loss would enable residential units to be enlarged to at least meet residential space standards;
- the proposed change of use will provide a local community service / facility that meets an identified need in the Borough;
- it can be demonstrated that a proposed change of use is the only practicable way of preserving the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building or other building of heritage significance; or
- applications for the conversion of flats or Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) back to family sized homes will be considered on their merits taking account of other considerations including, for example, amenity considerations and evidence regarding the need for family homes.

When considering proposals for the conversion of dwellings into smaller units of self-contained accommodation, the proposal must provide a high standard of accommodation that complies with internal space standards and requirements for private outdoor space. In addition, the Council will consider the impact upon the mix of dwellings locally and the impact on the local character and amenity spaces of adjoining properties in the area in which they are located. Applications for the change of use to Use Class C4, a mixed Use Class C3/C4 or to a Sui Generis HMO use should also demonstrate that the communal living space(s), cooking area(s) and bathroom facilities provided are appropriate in size to cater for the proposed maximum number of occupants.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

Policy 13: Urban Infill Development (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 6.9.1 Seeks to guide appropriate infill development on previously developed land to ensure effective use of land that respects the surrounding local area.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

Supporting Text

- 6.10.1 The NPPF sets out the importance of making effective use of previously developed land in urban areas, as promoting under-utilised land and buildings can help meet local development needs while also remediating the environment on derelict and degraded sites.
- 6.10.2 Previously developed land is defined within the NPPF. The definition excludes residential garden land or other open amenity space around buildings. The majority of previously developed land within the Borough is situated within the built-up urban areas. It is this land that can be subject to urban infill development proposals. Urban infill development is therefore classed as development occurring on sites located in defined urban areas of the Borough, usually situated between existing buildings.
- 6.10.3 With the Borough being relatively compact and urban in nature, appropriate infill development has consistently come forward year on year and it makes a valuable contribution towards the Council's provision of new homes and other uses.
- 6.10.4 Through local planning policy, the Council will manage inappropriate infill development that has a detrimental impact on the locale in which it is proposed. The Council will also manage tandem development or development that seeks to split existing residential plots appropriately.
- 6.10.5 The Council recognises the changes in demand on land and the opportunities previously developed land brings to the local area with the many functions it can perform. In principle, the Council will encourage proposals seeking appropriate infill development that meets a local need, aligns with growth and infrastructure, ensures safe and healthy living conditions, are suitably situated and are of sustainable design and construction, provided they do not undermine the NPPF by compromising key economic sectors, go against the safeguarding and improvement of land, or the health of defined Centres. All development proposals would also need to conform to all other relevant policies within this Plan.
- 6.10.6 The Council's Landscape Character Assessment sets out guidance for each of the Urban Character Areas of the Borough and should be taken into account in any

development proposals.

Policy Text

Policy 13: Urban Infill Development (Strategic)

Within the urban areas of the Borough, proposals for infill development on previously developed land that meet an identified need, are of high quality design, improve the character of the locale, do not have any adverse impact on / or loss of amenity to adjacent properties or nearby properties, do not have negative impacts on heritage assets, and do not cause unacceptable noise and or other disturbance, will in principle be supported.

The Council will therefore take a positive approach to applications on previously developed land of appropriate densities that enhance the local area through carefully designed buildings that are in keeping with the overall street scene.

Any proposal for development on residential garden land or any other open amenity space around buildings, particularly tandem development, will not be permitted unless it conforms to the guidance set out within the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, as well as all other policies of this Plan.

Proposals that split existing residential plots and propose development on the garden land of and / or open amenity space of existing plots will not be granted planning permission unless the proposal sits comfortably in, is consistent with, is in character with, and respects or enhances the direct existing street scene in which it is situated.

The Council will not accept development proposals that 'over develop' a site from its original intended or existing use unless the benefits of doing so significantly outweigh the detrimental impacts.

Development proposals would also need to illustrate high quality design and use of materials that are consistent with the character of the area and the existing properties in the direct area.

7. Commercial Development

Policy 14: Management of New and Existing Identified Employment Areas (IEA) (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 7.1.1 Providing employment opportunities within the Borough offers the chance to both reduce out-commuting thus contributing to sustainable development and provide young people/the unemployed entry to the labour market. The pressure for residential development can often squeeze out lower value land uses so it is important to protect employment land.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 5: Improved employment opportunities
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas

Supporting Text

- 7.2.1 This emerging Local Plan is being prepared at a time where there has and continues to be a great deal of uncertainty and change to the national and global economy brought on in the wake of the Covid 19 pandemic, the UK departing the European Union, and, in light of the ongoing challenges surrounding a cost of living crisis and environmental uncertainty.
- 7.2.2 Within the Borough area, the Council ensures that sufficient land is available for a number of different uses, including, housing, retail, leisure and employment. To ensure that the Borough area has sufficient land supply of B2, B8 and E(g) (employment) Use Classes, the Council allocates specific areas, or clusters, known as 'Identified Employment Areas'; which are mapped on the Council's Adopted Policies Map. The Borough currently has 8 Identified Employment Areas and these areas have been appropriately managed to ensure that they remain in predominantly B2, B8 and E(g) employment use. In addition to these areas, just over 8 hectares of additional land was allocated in the current Local Plan (planning up to 2031). Currently the Council has granted planning permission for some 5 of the 8 hectares.
- 7.2.3 In recent years, the Borough has not seen significant demand for large scale or strategic employment growth. The main types of employment change has been associated with smaller scale changes of use application, extensions to existing employment use properties, as well as 'churn' proposals involving demolition and rebuilding of redundant properties or properties that are near 'end of life'.
- 7.2.4 The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Employment Needs Assessment (HENA) was published in 2022 and sets out that the local employment need for each of the local authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire from 2021 to 2041. The HENA has identified that the Borough has a total need of just 4.3 hectares of employment land, equating to 1.3 hectares of Offices (including Research and Development) as well as 3.1 hectares of Industrial and Distribution.

- 7.2.5 Given the lack of market interest in the 8+ hectares allocated in the current Local Plan to 2031 and the reduced projected need of 4.3 hectares up to 2041, the Council's strategy for the emerging Plan period will be to retain and roll forward the current Local Plan employment allocations. Therefore, no further land will be allocated for employment development as the existing sites are in the most appropriate locations to meet the Borough's local need.
- 7.2.6 The provision of the above exceeds the need / requirements illustrated within the HENA and allows capacity for 'churn' within the Borough's existing employment sites.
- 7.2.7 In recognition of the need to move away from 'protection' and towards proactive 'management' of the Borough's identified employment areas, the Council has decided to remove the 'Core', 'Base' and 'Release' identified employment area land categories in this emerging Local Plan Policy approach. The Council recognises its crucial role in stimulating investment by positively managing growth and investment in the Borough's employment areas in this new Plan-period.
- 7.2.8 By embracing the current challenges and by applying greater flexibility to the mix of uses and employment opportunities that can be brought forward on the Identified Employment Areas, it is hoped that the new Policy approach will enable:
- Vibrancy and variation to the existing identified employment sites and premises;
 - Greater flexibility and interest for key growth sectors to maximise their potential;
 - New inward investment and expansion opportunities;
 - A buoyant and attractive mix of opportunities for small to medium sized businesses, start-ups and micro-businesses; and,
 - The Borough of Oadby and Wigston to become known locally as the 'place to be', providing an entrepreneurial culture and a inspiring business hub for all.
- 7.2.9 The local economy must continue to be resilient and this Plan seeks to deliver sustainable future growth by guiding development through the creation of effective policies that are consistent with the wider National and International context. To achieve this, this Policy approach seeks to deliver certainty, yet flexibility, for the longer-term investment into the Borough's local economy.

Policy Text

Policy 14: Management of New and Existing Identified Employment Areas (IEA) (Strategic)

Existing and new Identified Employment Areas (IEA) will continue to be managed and enhanced appropriately, recognising their importance in the local economy.

Taking account of guidance set out in the Council's Employment Sites Supplementary Planning Document, Identified Employment Areas will primarily support proposals for B2, B8 and E(g) Use Classes (i.e. offices, research and development, or other industrial processes).

Where planning permission is required, proposals that will result in the loss of business uses under B2, B8 or E(g) Use Classes will be acceptable where the proposed use:

- a) will not adversely impact the role of the Identified Employment Area or introduce conflict with other existing or proposed uses; and,

- b) will not significantly reduce the overall supply and quality of employment land and premises within the locality; and,
- c) will deliver economic regeneration benefits to the site and / or area or there will be a significant community benefit which significantly outweighs the impact; and,
- d) will have adequate parking provision on-site and will not unacceptably impact upon the local and/or strategic highway network; and
- e) is no longer suitable or reasonably capable of being redeveloped for employment purposes. This should be demonstrated by providing evidence from a registered commercial agent that the unit is unfit for purpose and that there is no interest from the market.

Proposals for the loss of business uses under B2, B8 or E(g) Use Classes where the proposed use will not generate new employment opportunities will be considered on their merits against bullets a-e above and in relation to the anticipated impacts of the loss of employment use on the community it serves. The suitability of the site for the proposed use will also be considered in accordance with other policies in this plan.

Where permission is required, development of new or changes of use to existing premises under E Use Classes beyond E(g) will only be deemed acceptable where the sequential test against the network and hierarchy of town, district and local centres is passed or where the proposed use can be shown to be clearly ancillary to existing or proposed uses on the site.

Please note: In the event that the Use Classes Order changes during the life of this Plan, then the closest new Use Classes to those previously categorised as B2, B8, E(g) and E Use Classes as a whole will apply for the purpose of applying the above policy, provided such new Use Classes are reasonably similar to the ones being replaced. Should no similar replacement new Use Classes arise, then the description of B2, B8 and E Use Classes as at the date of the adoption of this plan will apply for the purpose of applying this policy, and appropriate conditions or similar mechanisms will be used to enforce such provisions.

Policy 15: Retail and Related Policies (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 7.3.1 Seeks to ensure that main town centre and other appropriate uses are located within the defined centres within the Borough.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 5: Improved employment opportunities
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

Supporting Text

- 7.4.1 Enabling our town, district and local centres to be places that people want to live in, work in and visit is more than just the collection of uses within them. It's about creating places that encourage investors to invest and that people want to spend time in.
- 7.4.2 National Policy suggests that local planning authorities should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a proactive and positive approach to their growth, management and adaption. Further, the Town Centres Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) suggests that local planning authorities should plan to support town centres in generating local employment, promoting beneficial competition within and between town centres, and creating attractive, diverse places where people want to live, visit and work.
- 7.4.3 In terms of retail provision within the Borough, a '*town and district centre first*' approach will continue to be applied. Proposals for main town centre uses will be prioritised within the town or district centres, however, it is recognised that some flexibility will be allowed for edge of centre locations if the main centres cannot accommodate the retail provision proposed.
- 7.4.4 This Policy therefore provides a spatial expression for the policies contained elsewhere in this Plan and forms part of the overall approach to development within the Borough's town centres. It has a key role in supporting the delivery of those wider corporate and partner aspirations by seeking to manage and steer change, where possible, to the most suitable locations.
- 7.4.5 The central aim of the planning system is to promote sustainable development. Town centres are key to promoting sustainable development as they are locations that are

accessible by a range of methods (not just the car) and offer a wide range of facilities and services. In line with the advice set out in the NPPF, the Council has set out a hierarchy and a sequential approach to the location of town centre uses.

- 7.4.6 Development outside of town centres could potentially have an adverse impact on the town centres themselves, but through setting a threshold for schemes of a certain size within a given distance of a centre that could have an impact on the centre allows the Council to assess the level of harm of the scheme on the town centre and make an informed decision accordingly. The NPPF encourages Council's to set a threshold and the emerging evidence has informed us on the appropriate thresholds as included. The Policy also responds to policy in the NPPF which encourages local authorities to define boundaries for their town centres and for the primary shopping areas within those centres.
- 7.4.7 The role of town centres has had to change in response to both the growth of internet-based shopping and the Covid-19 pandemic. The Policy therefore takes a flexible approach to encourage a wide diversity of uses to locate within established town centres to increase dwell time in the centres hopefully resulting in increased expenditure in the centres. The Policy also recognises the need to protect amenity levels that could be harmed by an over proliferation of certain uses.
- 7.4.8 In a similar vein and in order to maintain interest, diversity and attractiveness within our centres, the Council will seek to prevent too many non-main town centre uses co-locating.
- 7.4.9 Centres can help boost their appeal to people by having attractive shopfronts. The Policy tries to assist applicants in providing these. Similarly, the design of security shutters can have an impact on the 'feel' of a centre and the Policy tries to balance security with attractiveness.

Policy Text

Policy 15: Retail and Related Policies (Non-Strategic)

Supporting Main Town Centre Uses

A) Delivering Retail

Retail development will be supported in the defined policy areas of the town centre and district centres, as well as the Borough's local centres.

The defined centres of the Borough should be the focus for new additional retail floorspace, maintaining the Borough's current hierarchy and market share between centres.

Retail development must be of a scale appropriate to the needs of the local area served by these centres. Development will be subject to local planning, traffic and environmental considerations and proposals seeking high levels of retail provision would need to demonstrate that there would not be a significant adverse impact on the centre in which the proposal is situated.

In determining proposals for new retail development, the Council will apply the sequential and impact test as specified in the latest National Planning Policy Framework and National

Planning Practice Guidance. It will be essential that any new development does not have an adverse effect on existing centres within the Borough. New development must be integrated within existing infrastructure.

Proposals for retail development within the town and district centres would need to follow the principles as set out within this Policy and all relevant Policies set out in this Plan.

B) Retail Hierarchy

Town, district and local centres will be supported to be distinctive and inclusive places at the heart of their communities. Priority will be given to concentrating main town centre uses within the centres in the following hierarchy:

1. **Town Centre** – Wigston;
2. **District Centres** – Oadby and South Wigston;
3. **Local Centres** – Brabazon Road, Oadby; Glen Road/Highcroft Avenue, Oadby; Old Oadby, London Road, Oadby; Rosemead Drive, Oadby; Severn Road, Oadby; Gloucester Crescent, South Wigston; Kelmars Avenue, Wigston; Leicester Road, Wigston; Little Hill, Wigston; and, Queens Drive, Wigston.

C) Sequential Approach

New development should be consistent with the role of the centre in the hierarchy. The preferred location for main town centre uses is within the boundaries of these centres in accordance with the hierarchy. Edge of centre locations adjoin these boundaries. Edge-of-centre and out-of-centre sites should be accessible to all and well connected to the town and district centres. For instance, by being closely linked to a defined centre in terms of proximity, continuity of function and ease of access by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

Where a proposal fails to satisfy the ‘town and district centre first’ approach and / or the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on the centre, it will not be permitted.

D) Impact Thresholds

An impact assessment will be necessary to accompany proposals for main town centre uses (including those relating to mezzanine floorspace and the variation of restrictive conditions) which are not located within a defined centre where:

- the proposal provides a gross floorspace in excess of 500 sq.m gross; or
- the proposal is located within 800 metres of a town or district centre and is in excess of 300 sq.m gross; or
- the proposal is located within 800 metres of a local centre and is in excess of 200 sq.m gross.

The full scope and nature of an impact assessment will be determined at the time the proposal is submitted to the Council. Proposals that would have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the centres will not be permitted.

E) Boundaries

The defined centre boundaries and the primary shopping areas for Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston are shown on the Adopted Policies Map.

Within any defined primary shopping area no more than 3 consecutive non E class use units will be permitted.

F) Development within the centre boundary but beyond the primary shopping area

Within the centre boundaries but beyond the primary shopping area, proposals for uses currently in Use Classes F1 and F2 (as at December 2023) and C3 will be supported in principle.

G) Night-Time Economy and Dwell Time (Cafes, Restaurants, Bars etc.)

Proposals that impact the Borough's night time economy should be located within defined centres and will be discouraged outside these locations. Proposals within defined centres will be permitted subject to:

- an assessment of its impact on the vitality and viability of the frontage or block of units of which it forms part of is submitted to the Council. Any proposal that is likely to damage the primary function of a block or frontage will not be permitted.
- the cumulative effect/impact of any proposal will be taken into account. Where a number of night-time uses occur that are already causing nuisance in terms of unacceptable traffic generation and deterioration in the amenity of the area, planning permission will not be permitted if the proposal will increase the nuisance.
- In all cases, proposals will be considered subject to compatibility with other Plan policies.
- In some cases there may be circumstances where any adverse impacts or effects of a proposal could be reduced by the introduction of conditions specific to that permission. Where this is not possible, permission will not be granted.

H) Upper Floors

When planning permission is required for bringing vacant/underused space above units back into use, the Council will support proposals that contribute towards the vitality and viability of the centre, subject to compatibility with other Plan policies.

I) Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles

When planning permission is sought for vehicle ranks and waiting offices, the Council will support proposals that do not have a significant impact on any premises within the vicinity of the site, subject to compatibility with other Plan policies.

J) Shopfronts and Shutters

Proposals for new frontages or alterations to existing frontages will be supported provided the proposal:

- is of a high quality design and is sympathetic in scale, proportion and appearance to the building of which it forms part, and to the character of the surrounding street scene;
- enhances, or at least protects, traditional or original frontage or features that are of architectural or historic interest, particularly if the building is listed or within a conservation area;
- is designed to allow equal access for all users.

Where a proposal includes the provision of external security shutters, permission will only be granted where:

- it is demonstrated that there is a persistent problem of crime or vandalism affecting the property which cannot be satisfactorily and reasonably addressed by an alternative measure; and
- the property is not a listed building or situated in a conservation area; and
- the security shutter is transparent or heavily perforated to an extent that the area behind is highly visible; and
- the shutter is in keeping with the character and appearance of the building and its surroundings.

K) Tourism

Proposals for development within a defined centre or on other appropriate sites which would contribute towards the Borough's role as a tourist destination will be supported subject to compatibility with other Plan Policies.

Policy 16: Hot Food Takeaways (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

7.5.1 Seeks to minimise any over concentration of hot food takeaways and manage their cumulative effect on the surrounding economy and environment.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre

Supporting Text

7.6.1 Hot food takeaways can contribute to both daytime and evening economies of town, district and local centres. However, they can also generate a range of detrimental impacts including anti-social behaviour, litter, highway safety concerns and impacts on upper floor uses in their vicinity. This Policy seeks to minimise such impacts, whilst acknowledging the contribution that hot food takeaways can make, particularly those that offer a variety of meal solutions, including healthier food options.

7.6.2 For the purposes of this Policy, 'hot food takeaways' refer specifically to those that fall under Use Class Sui Generis as defined within the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order. Applications for uses such as hot food takeaway establishments with closed and inactive street frontages will need to be carefully considered, taking into account the role each unit plays in that centre or location.

7.6.3 The Council is aware that all three of the main town and district centres in the Borough currently (as of Summer 2023) have an above national average proportion of units in takeaway use. However, in Wigston town centre and Oadby district centre, the over-provision is relatively modest with reference to the comparison to national average figures. In South Wigston district centre, the proliferation of takeaway uses is more significant and as a result, there are stretches where such uses dominate. The potentially negative impacts of takeaways are also potentially exacerbated in South Wigston as its vacancy rate is higher than that evident at the two other principal centres. This means there is greater potential for a large number of units to be 'shuttered' and not in active use throughout much of the working day.

7.6.4 Therefore, consideration must be given to any potential positive or negative cumulative impact of such proposed uses; whether such proposed uses will add to the vitality and viability of the centre; and, take into account what impact such use may have upon surrounding residential amenity.

7.6.5 Where appropriate, advice and evidence will be sought from relevant key partners including other Council Departments, Public Health and the Police.

7.6.6 All proposals will be expected to include details of extraction, including its design, because in many cases, external extraction such as vents and chimneys can have significant detrimental impacts on the overall design, as well as the local character.

Design, including extraction, will be considered as part of the planning application itself and not be a requirement of a planning condition(s).

Policy Text

Policy 16: Hot Food Takeaways (Non-Strategic)

To avoid the potential significant adverse impact of hot food takeaways, all such proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Any proposal for a hot food takeaway, particularly a change of use from an existing E(a) use, will be assessed for its impact on the vitality and viability of the frontage or block of units of which it forms part of. Any proposal which is likely to damage the primary retail, leisure and other commercial service businesses within Use Class E function of a block or frontage will not be permitted.
- Any proposal for a hot food takeaway likely to cause issues in terms of unacceptable traffic generation and deterioration in the amenity of the area, will not be permitted.
- Where hot food takeaways are already present within the vicinity, the cumulative impact of any proposal will be taken into account. Where a number of takeaways occur that are already causing problems in terms of unacceptable traffic generation and deterioration in the amenity of the area, planning permission will not be permitted if the proposal will increase the nuisance.
- In all cases, account will be taken of the impacts of the proposal on local residents and upon the amenity of the area, with particular regard to the proposed opening hours, the impact of noise, health and wellbeing, disturbance, design (including ventilation), smell and litter, traffic generation, parking problems and highway safety.

When considering all relevant proposals, regard will be had as to whether a proposal would result in an over concentration of uses such as hot food takeaways with closed and inactive street frontages. The Council will consider the role of the centre or location within which the proposal is located and other matters such as the numbers of existing similar uses and proposed hours of use within the frontage and any existing or potential issues that may occur.

Permission will not be granted where harm to the vitality and viability of the centre, or the amenity of local residents and businesses, cannot be adequately mitigated.

In some cases there may be circumstances where any adverse impacts of a proposal could be reduced by the introduction of planning conditions specific to that permission. Where this is not possible, permission will not be granted.

Any proposal for a hot food takeaway will be subject to other relevant local planning policies within this Plan.

8. Transport and Community Infrastructure

Policy 17: Sustainable Transport and Initiatives (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 8.1.1 Encouraging modal shift to walking, wheeling and cycling is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing vehicular emissions.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change

Supporting Text

- 8.2.1 Active travel refers to modes of travel that involve a level of physical activity. The term is often used interchangeably with walking and cycling, but active travel may also include trips made by wheelchair, mobility scooters, adapted cycles, e-cycles, scooters, as well as cycle sharing schemes. Active travel is a key component of sustainable transport planning, as it has a number of benefits for individuals, communities, and the environment.
- 8.2.2 Encouraging modal shift to walking, wheeling and cycling is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing vehicular emissions. Active travel should be an important consideration in all planning decisions. When planning new developments, it is important to make sure that there are safe and convenient routes for people to walk, cycle, and wheel. This can be done by providing dedicated infrastructure for active travel, such as footpaths, cycle lanes, and shared spaces. It is also important to make sure that the built environment is designed to encourage active travel, such as by creating compact, walkable communities.
- 8.2.3 Proposals for new development that would have transport implications should be accompanied by a Travel Plan. A development must be considered cumulatively with other developments, in so far as whether it is likely to have a severe impact on the local community or road network. In consultation with the local Highway Authority, the scale, location and nature of development will be considered in determining how the transport impacts of development should be assessed.
- 8.2.4 The Council will work together with the County Council as the local highway authority, Highways England, public transport operators, developers and other relevant bodies to ensure that key highways and junctions have sufficient capacity to manage the growth planned in the Borough and connect effectively with neighbouring areas.

Policy Text

Policy 17: Sustainable Transport and Initiatives (Strategic)

In order to manage the anticipated growth in demand for travel, development proposals which promote an improved and integrated transport network, with a re-balancing in favour of non-car modes as a means of access to jobs, homes, services and facilities, will be encouraged and supported.

The Council will promote and support development that prioritises active travel by walking, cycling, wheeling, Non-Motorised User routes and public transport, and reduces the proportion of journeys made by car.

The Council will achieve a rebalancing of transport in favour of sustainable modes by:

- ensuring that new development is located in sustainable locations with good access to schools, shops, jobs and other key services by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport in order to reduce the need to travel by car;
- ensuring that the design and layout of new development prioritises the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport over ease of access by the motorist;
- ensuring that new development minimises the need to travel and, where appropriate, incorporates measures to mitigate for any transport impacts which may arise from that development;
- requiring new development to provide for an appropriate level of cycle parking, car parking and electric vehicle space allocations that takes into consideration the impact of development upon on-street parking, residential amenity, highway safety and has regard to Leicestershire County Council standards / guidance;
- using developer contributions as necessary to fund off-site works where new or improved infrastructure is required to address the impacts of development proposals;
- requiring development which generates a significant demand for travel, and/or is likely to have other transport implications to; be supported by a Transport Assessment / Transport Statement and sustainable Travel Plan (in line with Leicestershire County Council guidance and the NPPF); contribute to improved sustainable transport infrastructure, including the provision of safe and reliable sustainable transport modes; and, provide facilities and measures to support sustainable travel modes.

The Potential Transport Route will be safeguarded by this Plan unless the positive community impacts of developing the route for alternative uses demonstrably outweighs the benefits of retaining the route for sustainable transport uses. The route will be identified on the Council's Adopted Policies Map.

Policy 18: Active Design and Travel (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

8.3.1 Seeks to create safer roads and walking routes, as well as improving the Borough's public transport system. Also is seeking to embed active design principles into new development.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure

Supporting Text

8.4.1 The modest distances and topography of Oadby and Wigston, being the smallest local authority by area outside the M25, gives a good opportunity to explore a more connected place to live through strategic planning.

8.4.2 Plans and evidence accompanying applications will demonstrate how the ability to travel by foot or cycle will be actively encouraged by the delivery of well designed, safe and convenient access for all both into/out of and through the development. Priority should be given to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, people with impaired mobility and users of public transport by providing a network of high quality pedestrian and cycle routes and green corridors, linking to existing routes and public rights of way where opportunities exist, that give easy access and permeability to adjacent areas.

8.4.3 A key principle is to make healthy behaviours the easier option. Promoting high levels of regular exercise through active travel by making the public realm and pedestrian and cycle routes safer and more attractive.

8.4.4 Healthy Place Making shifts the dial to help communities better understand the impact of the built and natural environment on our wellbeing, and explore opportunities to make our places healthier.

Policy Text

Policy 18: Active Design and Travel (Strategic)

The Council will work with Leicestershire County Council and other relevant agencies to encourage and support measures that promote improved accessibility, create safer roads, reduce the environmental impact of traffic movements, enhance the pedestrian environment, or facilitate highway improvements.

In particular, the Council will:

- support the expansion and improvement of public transport services;
- encourage improvements to existing rail services, new or enhanced connections or interchanges between bus and rail services, and improvements to the quality and quantity of cycle parking at railway stations;
- support the development of a network of high quality walking and cycling routes throughout the borough, including those identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (or its successor);
- ensure the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code;
- be expected to enable and contribute towards improvements and delivery of local and strategic active travel routes and links as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan; and
- ensure provision of secure cycle parking and active travel in line with the latest guidance.

Developments must embed active design and sustainability principles in local area design. They will be purpose-developed for the communities they serve where the spaces, places and amenities facilitate healthy lifestyle and active travel choices. Depending on the nature of a development proposal and its location, developer contributions may be required to mitigate the impact of the scheme.

Policy 19: Improving Health and Wellbeing (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

8.5.1 There are multiple factors that contribute to health and well-being, although not the sole determinant in health, the planning system has a role to play in promoting health and well-being. The policy sets out a range of health-related issues that new development needs to address, or show why it cannot be addressed in this particular case, which can contribute to better health.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside

Supporting Text

- 8.6.1 National government requires local planning authorities to ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision taking. Public health organisations, health service organisations, commissioners and providers, and local communities are expected to work effectively with local planning authorities to promote healthy communities and support appropriate health infrastructure.
- 8.6.2 The Council and its partners will achieve this by creating and safeguarding opportunities for healthy, fulfilling, and active lifestyles to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of residents across age groups by creating healthy neighbourhoods and communities that tackle the causes of ill health, inequity, and inequality.
- 8.6.3 The Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment was adopted in 2023. It is an ambitious plan for stakeholders to deliver together, working in partnership to identify how individuals, communities and organisations can improve health and wellbeing in Leicestershire. It identifies strategic priorities through a life-course approach, focusing on the best start in life, staying healthy, safe, and well, living being supported well, and dying well.
- 8.6.4 One of the Council's strategic objectives is to support any activities or actions that enhance the health and well-being of the Borough. The Council's Health and Wellbeing Board aims to bring key decision makers together from a range of local health providers to review local health data, share information on service provision and lobby for change. The Council will seek to ensure that all of its residents are happy and live long and healthy lives, with less inequality.
- 8.6.5 To address these priorities and issues, it is essential that community needs are supported through appropriate physical and social infrastructure, and by other facilities and key services which contribute to improving physical and mental health and wellbeing, and the overall quality of life experienced by residents in the Borough.

- 8.6.6 By having a positive approach to local health and wellbeing, the Council will seek to create and support vibrant, sustainable, and healthy communities by promoting and facilitating healthy living and lifestyle choices as well as creating an environment that offers plentiful opportunities for improving health and wellbeing.
- 8.6.7 To ensure that all new development contributes towards providing an array of opportunities for healthy living and wellbeing of the Borough's residents, all proposals should, through design and provision, encourage walking and cycling, as well as encourage the use of other sustainable modes of transport.
- 8.6.8 This would respond to the challenges around climate change and impacts of poor air quality by reducing car use and improving the health of residents through increasing activity levels. Where there is potential to do so, development should contribute towards, for example, the provision of and / or the refurbishment of footpaths, cycle ways, canal towpaths, outdoor adult gyms, outdoor sports provision, children's play equipment and recreational open spaces.
- 8.6.9 The impacts of proposed development on health should be assessed and considered by the applicant at the earliest stage of the design process, to avoid negative health impacts and ensure positive health outcomes for the community. This includes developers consulting with health care commissioners at an early stage to identify the need for new or enhanced health care infrastructure and Public Health colleagues regarding local need and inequality.
- 8.6.10 The locally-developed Healthy Place Making⁸ platform by LRS Active Together has been developed to provide a resource for planners, developers and other interested parties to find information on how to create healthier places, along with the opportunity to create bespoke project boards to help influence place making. This is a useful tool which can be used to assist in the development of places that consider health and wellbeing at the forefront of design and function.

Policy Text

Policy 19: Improving Health and Wellbeing (Strategic)

Development that maintains and improves the health and wellbeing of our residents by encouraging healthy lives and creating healthy communities that tackle the cause of ill health, inequity and inequality across the life course will be supported in principle. Proposals should:

- a) Ensure homes are of high quality, efficient, warm, dry, safe, adaptable for lifetime use and allow people to live healthy lives within them;
- b) Be designed, in partnership, to build safe, resilient and inclusive communities with health considerations across the lifespan of the development embedded within its design;
- c) Enable residents to remain in their homes for longer and across their life-course, ensuring vulnerable residents can experience independent lives and flourish in neighbourhoods with access to local community facilities and activities;
- d) Deliver a safe walking and cycling network to increase access to active travel, considering active design within developments connected with the wider local community, services, and employment opportunities;

⁸ <https://www.healthyclacemaking.co.uk/> Healthy Place Making Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

- e) Extend opportunities to maintain and improve health and wellbeing through increasing access to, protecting and improving green and blue infrastructure that encourage greater participation in physical activities and increases opportunities for social interaction in the community;
- f) Maintain or improve access to key services such as healthcare (clinical and community based), education, voluntary organisations, community and recreational facilities and wider support services for all age groups;
- g) Reduce health inequality within the community by improving the economic wellbeing, physical and mental health of all our communities; and
- h) Consider increasing access to healthy food options and restricting access to unhealthy food, embedding factors to improve air quality, improve access to and use of green spaces, create healthy streets and low traffic neighbourhoods linked to active travel.

Proposals for major development, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, or development located in an identified area of concern in the Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2023), or other development likely to have a potentially significant health impact in relation to either its use and/or location, will be required to submit a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) screening statement.

The level of information required should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed. The statement will measure the potential impact and demands of the development proposal upon the existing services and facilities and should demonstrate how the conclusions of the HIA screening statement have been considered in the design of the scheme.

The Borough Council will require the HIA screening statement to be prepared in accordance with the advice and best practice for such assessments as published by the Department for Health and other agencies. For developments where the initial screening assessment indicates more significant health impacts, a more comprehensive, in-depth Health Impact Assessment will be required.

Where significant impacts are identified, planning permission will only be granted where measures to mitigate the impact are provided, either onsite and / or offsite using planning obligations.

Policy 20: Car Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

8.7.1 Seeks to ensure that the appropriate levels, design and specifications of car parking is provided in all new development. Also seeks to have a positive influence on combating climate change with the introduction of electric vehicle charging.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 10: Climate change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design

Supporting Text

8.8.1 The Leicestershire County Council Highway Design Guide sets out a variety of design guidance relating to travel including car parking standards to promote sustainable communities.

8.8.2 The NPPF states that local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in defined centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure, including appropriate provision for motorcycles and bicycles. Guidance also suggests that appropriate parking charges should be set within town centres.

8.8.3 The Council recognises the transition to new, sustainable modes of transport and the subsequent demands on car parking both now and in the future with further behavioural change. The provision of car parking in the Borough needs to account for the transition to ultra-low and zero emission vehicles and ensure new associated technologies are future-proofed and adaptable.

8.8.4 The NPPF recommends that in setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the accessibility of the development;
- the type, mix and use of development;
- the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
- local car ownership levels; and
- the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

8.8.5 The availability of car parking in key areas and centres has a major influence on the choice of means of transport.

8.8.6 For all car parking development and development including car parking, (in addition to requirements of high quality design and security and appropriate proportions of disabled and motorcycle parking spaces), electric charging points should be introduced for an agreed number of spaces to encourage electrical vehicle use. In line with the NPPF, the Council will seek that developers provide charging points in accordance with Building Regulations at the earliest stages of development proposals, as the

construction of integrating them is cheaper and less disruptive than retrofitting at a later date.

- 8.8.7 All new car parks should include secure motorcycle and bicycle parking provision close to their main entrances.
- 8.8.8 The quality of car parking is imperative to the success of the Borough's centres. Car parking should therefore be provided in safe locations with convenient access and serve multiple needs, such as car sharing, Electric Vehicle charging points and encourage the use of sustainable transport patterns. New car parks or changes to existing car parks must be delivered in accordance with adopted standard sets out by the Leicestershire Highway Design Guide and proportionate to the demands of the Borough.
- 8.8.9 It is important to maintain the right balance between providing sufficient parking spaces, Electric Vehicle charging points and encouraging access by alternative modes of transport to the private car, especially considering the town and district centre locations and the relative ease of access to a choice of travel mode and ranges of facilities and services within walking distance.
- 8.8.10 All proposals will be expected to be supported by evidence that justifies the associated parking provision accordingly.
- 8.8.11 New car parks and associated infrastructure will also be expected to be supported by a management and security regime to a standard which is acceptable to the Borough Council and the Local Highway Authority with evidence either at application stage or required through a condition(s).

Policy Text

Policy 20: Car Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging (Non-Strategic)

All new development must ensure there is suitable provision of car parking spaces and Electric Vehicle charging facilities.

Car parking provision and associated facilities in all new developments must accord with the standards set out in the Leicestershire Highway Design Guide (or equivalent) and the latest edition of The Building Regulations.

The parking standards must be seen as a minimum for developers and any variation from these standards must be supported by robust evidence in the form of a robust transport statement. Where there is a robustly evidenced need to do so, flexibility could be factored into the standards in relation to the specific local circumstances.

The incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), permeable surfacing materials and means of protecting water quality, and negating surface water run-off in drainage schemes associated to car parking will be required.

All new residential and non-residential development must demonstrate that it has addressed suitable access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure for on-plot private and communal parking spaces and anticipated on street parking.

For major developments, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, this includes appropriate on-site provision consistent with building regulations and other national standards. The location, siting and design of EV charging points and associated infrastructure must facilitate user access, maintenance and future EV or mobility technology retrofit. This will protect the amenity of nearby occupiers and highway safety.

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Policy 21: Community Facilities and Indoor Sports Facilities (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

8.9.1 Much needed facilities are an integral to communities and are a key component of achieving sustainable and inclusive development. This policy seeks to manage the loss, refurbishment, replacement and establishment of new community facilities in the Borough.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 15: Kilby Bridge regeneration

Supporting Text

8.10.1 Community facilities (sometimes referred to as Community assets) are defined as buildings or spaces where community led activities for community benefit are the primary use and the facility is managed, occupied or used primarily by the voluntary and community sector.

8.10.2 Community facilities can include purpose-built structures such as community halls and village halls, places of worship, health centres, schools and cultural facilities such as museums, libraries, theatres, and post offices. Indoor sports facilities are those that provide specific spaces for indoor sport and / or leisure activities to be carried out, such as swimming, badminton, keep fit and other organised fitness classes. The definition does not include development needed to facilitate and support outdoor sporting activities, for example changing facilities and clubhouses.

8.10.3 Some community buildings provide only one type of activity while others provide as diverse a range as possible in response to the needs of the communities they serve. They are a key part of sustainable communities and can contribute positively towards community health, recreation and wellbeing.

8.10.4 The Council continually monitors and assesses the local community's needs to ensure that provision of community facilities within the Borough is appropriate.

8.10.5 In recent years the Borough has seen significant investment within its community facilities and indoor sports facilities, both from the private sector as well as the Council itself, for example the new combined health centre in Wigston, the new swimming pool at Parklands in Oadby and the new pavilion at Horsewell Lane Park. Through working closely and collaboratively with key stakeholders, it is anticipated that such

investments are likely to continue into the future.

8.10.6 Proactive working with key stakeholders is crucial to enable positive outcomes. The Council has developed strong collaborative partnerships with service providers such as Leicestershire Public Health, as well as the Integrated Care Board, Leicestershire Police and local community organisations.

8.10.7 Town centre masterplans, development briefs and Supplementary Planning Documents have previously and will continue to seek to meet any identified needs for community facilities within the Borough. Any developer contributions will be sought in accordance with the Borough Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (latest edition).

Retention, Enhancement and New Community Facilities

8.10.8 The loss of community facilities can have a substantial impact on people's quality of life, wellbeing and overall viability of the local area. The Council will expect new development to at least retain, and where possible, improve existing local community facilities. It is important that these are integrated into the design of new development from the outset. If development proposals are likely to have an impact, whether positively or negatively on an existing community facility, it is imperative that the proposer of development has early engagement with the Council.

8.10.9 For existing community facilities, the Council will work with partners to secure future improvements and will protect them against redevelopment for alternative uses (should evidence suggest that there is a need to do so), particularly housing and commercial development.

8.10.10 The NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should:

- Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- Ensure that established community facilities are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and be retained for the benefit of the community.

Assets of Community Value

8.10.11 Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011(Act) allows local people and groups to put forward to local authorities, what is known as an '*asset of community value*'; through the Community Right to Bid procedure. The Act requires local authorities to maintain a list of '*community assets*' that have been put forward by qualifying groups or bodies and agreed for designation by the local authorities themselves.

8.10.12 Further information regarding assets of community value can be found on the Council's website. It is important to note that should a building be designated as an asset of community value, it does not preclude future development; however it does give the local community and / or local community group better opportunities of securing an assets future use for the community.

Indoor Sports Facilities

8.10.13 The Borough has a good range of existing high quality indoor sport and leisure facilities; however, some existing facilities are now ageing, or require longer term replacement and refurbishment.

8.10.14 The Council will seek the provision of new and / or upgraded facilities where there is an evidenced need to do so.

8.10.15 In addition, the Council will:

- retain existing levels of community accessible sports halls and fitness provision in the Borough
- retain existing levels of swimming pool provision in the Borough
- encourage investment in ageing facilities which need to be replaced or refurbished
- support opportunities for participation to be provided in a wider range of places and spaces particularly at a local level.

8.10.16 To support the above objectives, the Council will seek contributions from new developments towards new or enhanced provision either on site or off site, having regard to viability and evidenced need. The Council will calculate the contributions required from new developments using the Developer Contributions SPD. Where a proven need exists, the Council will encourage pooled contributions to facilitate provision.

8.10.17 In assessing whether new provision is required, consideration will be given to the quantity, quality and accessibility of existing provision in the local area.

Policy Text

Policy 21: Community Facilities and Indoor Sports Facilities (Non-Strategic)

The Council will work with key partners including developers to secure and maintain a range of new community facilities, including indoor sports and leisure facilities. All development proposals should recognise that community facilities such as, but not limited to, community halls and pavilions, libraries, public houses, places of worship, indoor sports facilities and registered asset of community value, or any other valued community facilities recognised locally as an integral component in achieving and maintaining sustainable, well integrated and inclusive development.

Existing Facilities

Proposals for the redevelopment or expansion of an existing facility to enhance, extend or diversify the level of service provided will generally be supported. In most instances, the loss of an existing facility will not be supported.

The loss, via redevelopment, of an existing community facility and / or indoor sports facility to provide an alternative land use which is not that of a community facility and / or indoor sports facility will only be permitted if it is demonstrated that:

- The facility is no longer fit for purpose and / or that the site is not viable to be redeveloped for a new facility; or
- The service provided by the facility is met by alternative provision that exists at another location in the Borough or within reasonable proximity to the Borough (what is deemed as reasonable proximity will depend on the nature of the facility and its associated catchment area); or
- The proposal includes the provision of a new facility of similar nature and of a similar or greater size in a suitable on or offsite location.

New and enhanced facilities

Where new or extensions to existing community facilities and / or indoor sports facilities are deemed necessary as part of a wider development proposal (such as a residential development scheme which generates demand for additional facilities), on-site provision and / or off-site contributions towards new or enhanced facilities to meet any needs arising from that development will be sought.

Proposals for the development of new or extensions of existing facilities will be supported where:

- They are accessible to all of the surrounding community by prioritising access by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport;
- they are designed so that they are adaptable and can be easily altered to respond to future demands if necessary;
- residential amenity can be protected from any detrimental impact in terms of noise, traffic and hours of use;
- they encourage co-location of community and indoor sports uses;
- they provide sufficient car parking to meet the needs of the development; and,
- the external appearance of the building can provide a sense of place and can positively reflect the character and appearance of its surroundings.

Opportunities to incorporate facilities within or adjacent to a development site should be sought in the first instance. Off-site provision may be acceptable as an alternative if:

- There is insufficient space available onsite / adjacent to the site; or
- Incorporation of the facility onsite / adjacent would not be financially viable; or
- It would be more appropriate to contribute (in whole or part) to the establishment or expansion of a facility elsewhere in order to meet wider demand or combine facilities.

Facilities required as part of wider development proposals should also:

- Be implemented, as appropriate, at an early stage of the phasing of development;
- Have a robust business plan, specification and governance arrangements in place, prepared by the applicant, including any funding arrangement, to ensure the facility is financially sustainable in the longer term.

Generally, town centre, district centres and local centres will be the most appropriate locations for community facilities, or, in suitably accessible locations as part of major new sites coming forward in the Borough. In general, indoor sporting facilities should be located within or directly

adjacent to existing indoor sporting facilities.

The Council will support the provision of new facilities that are designed to respond to changing participation trends and opportunities. Where provision of new facilities are located within school and college sites, public access to these facilities will be sought and secured through community use agreements.

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Policy 22: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreational Facilities (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

8.11.1 Outlines the protection of existing open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities and sets forth the expectation of new facilities to be accessible and of high quality.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside
- Spatial Objective 15: Kilby Bridge regeneration

Supporting Text

8.12.1 The NPPF sets out that '*planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which...enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities...access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling*'.

8.12.2 Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for recreation and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of the Borough's communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.

8.12.3 Open space, outdoor sports and recreation underpin everyone's quality of life, with well designed and implemented planning policy being fundamental in delivering the broader Government objectives of supporting urban regeneration and rural renewal; promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion; health and wellbeing; and, promoting more sustainable local communities.

8.12.4 Open spaces in towns and urban areas are essential in improving public health, well-being and quality of life. Attractive, safe and accessible parks and green spaces contribute positively to social, economic and environmental benefits and promote more healthy communities.

8.12.5 Over the years, locally based open space, outdoor sports and recreational requirements / standards have been developed by the Council and have been very successful in maintaining (and increasing) the provision of open space within the Borough. With this success it is considered that it would not be appropriate to deviate from having locally derived requirements/standards.

8.12.6 The requirement/standards and provision of Outdoor Sport Space will be set out in the Council's most up-to-date Playing Pitch Strategy, with all other typology

requirements/standards and provision set out within the Council's latest assessment of open space and recreation facilities. An assessment of open space and recreation facilities is also currently being produced by the Council and will inform the new Local Plan preparation.

8.12.7 When finalised, this Policy will be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, outdoor sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The information gained from the assessments will be used to determine what open space, outdoor sports and recreational provision is needed within the Borough.

8.12.8 The current typologies being assessed are:

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural greenspaces
- Amenity greenspace
- Provision for children and young people
- Allotments
- Cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds
- Outdoor Sports

8.12.9 All open spaces, outdoor sports facilities and recreation facilities are relevant to this policy.

Policy Text

Policy 22: Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreational Facilities (Non-Strategic)

The Council will protect all open spaces, outdoor sports facilities and recreation facilities from development where;

- there is a need and / or demand to retain them; or,
- they contribute towards the Green and Blue Infrastructure network in the Borough; or,
- the equivalent cannot be provided elsewhere.

All major development, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, must contribute either physically or financially to the provision of or improvement of open space, outdoor sports facilities and recreation facilities in the Borough.

The quantity requirements set out in the Council's most up-to-date assessment of open space and recreation facilities study, the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy and the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document will be used in relation to the provision of and improvement of open space, outdoor sport facilities and recreation facilities within the Borough, to satisfy need and allow every current and future resident access to adequate, high quality, accessible open space, outdoor sports facilities and recreational facilities.

All provision of open space, outdoor sport facilities and recreational facilities must:

- be located close to their intended population catchment areas; and,

- be accessible by a choice of sustainable transport modes, rather than the private car; and,
- be of an appropriate scale and design; and,
- seek positive impacts to landscape form.

Existing open space, outdoor sports facilities or recreational facilities, including school playing fields, must not be developed or lost unless:

- an up-to-date assessment has been undertaken which robustly demonstrates that the open space, outdoor sports facilities or recreational facilities are surplus to requirements; or,
- the resulting loss of open space, outdoor sports facilities or recreational facilities is to be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable nearby location; or,
- the development is for alternative outdoor sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

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9. Design and The Built Environment

Policy 23: Public Realm (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

- 9.1.1 Ensure all public realm development is provided to the highest standard with attractive design and innovation integrated within schemes.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design

Supporting Text

- 9.2.1 Public realm is the public spaces between buildings and structures that are of the built and/or natural environment, that are open and freely accessed by the public. Public realm also provides the context and setting for existing and new development. It includes hard and soft surfacing materials, street furniture (including lighting, benches, litter bins), traffic and pedestrian signage, way finding and control, trees, and landscaping. For a full definition of public realm see the Borough Council's Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document.
- 9.2.2 Although it is acknowledged that many public realm schemes require the use of street furniture, barriers and signage, the Council does not support schemes that create unnecessary street clutter. The use of signage and barriers will only be supported where they are incorporated innovatively into the design of a scheme or they are evidenced to be necessary.
- 9.2.3 Any public realm scheme must ensure that it is designed and developed to the highest standards. All schemes must improve the attractiveness of the streets and places and make the areas more desirable places to visit, to shop, work and live. Development that seeks to provide flexible outdoor events spaces will be encouraged where relevant to do so.
- 9.2.4 The use of high quality materials presents an attractive and welcoming environment, and they also ensure longevity against deterioration. Public realm development presents an opportunity to replace existing impermeable hard standing and surfaces with permeable materials and to incorporate Sustainable Drainage systems (SuDs). A high quality sustainable drainage scheme must be integrated into the development design from the outset and can provide multiple benefits, such as; creating an attractive environment; providing habitat and wildlife; being part of the green infrastructure network; and managing surface water run-off. Drainage features such as permeable surfaces, swales, filter strips, rainwater gardens and soakaways are

encouraged.

- 9.2.5 All public realm schemes will need to prioritise pedestrians over other modes, and must be designed to ensure the minimum amount of street clutter such as road signs and bollards. Manual for Streets II (or up-to-date equivalent) offers further guidance in this regard and should be considered when designing proposals.
- 9.2.6 The design of public realm in gateway locations will be of particular importance and should 'announce' the area / space to people entering or passing. Development at gateway locations will also improve the visibility and attractiveness of the Borough. Attractive gateway design can be achieved through a number of ways, including the use of high quality and different materials.
- 9.2.7 Whilst development proposals should be comprehensive and include proposals for surrounding public realm improvements, the Borough Council will use developer contributions to ensure appropriate levels of contribution for wider public realm improvements within the Borough.
- 9.2.8 Any developer contributions sought will be in accordance with the Borough Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.

Policy Text

Policy 23: Public Realm (Strategic)

All proposals for new development must incorporate high quality public realm on-site and / or contribute towards public realm improvements off-site, physically or by way of monetary developer contribution.

All proposals that propose new public realm or impact upon the existing public realm must ensure that the pedestrian is prioritised over other modes of transport and that materials and design are of the highest standards and quality.

All public realm redevelopment or improvements must follow the principles and guidance set out in the Council's Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document, and must contribute towards reducing carbon emissions and therefore impact on climate change.

Development impacting public realm, whether new or existing, will not be permitted, unless it is of the highest quality in terms of design, innovation, material use and implementation.

The Borough Council will use developer contributions as necessary to ensure appropriate contributions to wider public realm improvements, both within the Borough's main centres and outside of the centres.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

DRAFT

Policy 24: High Quality Design and High Quality Materials (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

9.3.1 The policy seeks to ensure that high quality design, and the use of high quality materials is used in all new development within the Borough. Also that new development creates attractive, buildings and spaces that are sustainable, well connected, and are in character within the locale they are set.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

Supporting Text

9.4.1 High quality design, and the use of high quality materials is paramount to ensuring that new development creates attractive, buildings and spaces that are sustainable, well connected, and are in character within the locale they are set. It is imperative that new development provides buildings and spaces that people enjoy now and in the future.

What this Policy seeks to achieve

9.4.2 National Policy and Guidance seeks to secure high quality design and makes it clear that poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for enhancing the character and quality of an area and the way it functions should be refused.

9.4.3 This policy is seeking to promote healthy communities and sustainable travel measures, and create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Design in planning is about making places welcoming, easy and efficient for people to use in terms of functionality, durability, and accessibility. High quality and inclusive design should reflect local character and distinctiveness and be the basis for shaping balanced, safe, healthy and integrated communities. It is important to recognise that design is not just about the visual and functional aspects of a development but also its influence on social and environmental wellbeing.

9.4.4 The construction of buildings and spaces and the sustainability and efficiency of buildings and surrounding amenity are nationally regulated through Building Regulations. The Building Regulations are a set of national standards on key aspects of construction, including the reduction in carbon emissions and the efficient use of

water. Any development proposal should deliver the highest possible quality of design and use of materials.

- 9.4.5 The design principles set out in this policy should be used to help structure discussions between the Council and the development proposer.
- 9.4.6 For non-residential buildings, the BREEAM standard was created as a cost-effective means of bringing sustainable value to development. Evidence demonstrates that sustainable developments, like those delivered through BREEAM, offer value in many ways, including: reduced operational costs. The Council would encourage the use of the BREEAM standard in all new non-residential development.
- 9.4.7 Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place. It puts; land, water, drainage, energy, community, economic, infrastructure and other such resources to the best possible use – over the long, as well as the short term.
- 9.4.8 Any development proposal should seek to ensure that there is a significant positive effect on the community in which it is situated. Any negative affect should be effectively mitigated; consideration should be given to the following aspects:
- local character (including landscape setting);
 - safe, connected and efficient streets;
 - a strong network of green spaces (including parks) and public places;
 - crime prevention;
 - high quality architecture;
 - access, inclusion and health;
 - efficient use of natural resources;
 - cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods;
 - air quality and air quality management;
 - sustainable construction; and,
 - climate change.
- 9.4.9 The Council will also actively encourage applicant / developers to take account of the standards, principles and the ten characteristics of well-designed places set out in the National Design Guide, National Model Design Code, and, the Council's High Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document. As a minimum, a Design and Access Statement will be required to accompany any development proposal or application.
- 9.4.10 Major development, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, including large-scale refurbishments, will require preparation of a masterplan, development brief and / or design code where deemed appropriate by the Council.
- 9.4.11 The National Design Guide sets out the characteristics of well-designed places under ten themes and these will form the foundation of this Borough's future approach to achieving high quality design and materials outcomes moving forward:
- Context: enhances the surroundings
 - Identity: attractive and distinctive
 - Built Form: a coherent pattern of development
 - Movement: accessible and easy to move around

- Nature: enhanced and optimised
- Public spaces: safe, social and inclusive
- Uses: mixed and integrated
- Homes and Buildings: functional, healthy and sustainable
- Resources: efficient and resilient
- Lifespan: made to last

9.4.12 The Council will also have regard to a range of other best practice documents, standards and principles, such as (but not limited to):

- Secured By Design Guidance (Various);
- Buildings for Life 12 (Design Council CBE, 2015);
- Building for a Healthy Life (Homes England, 2020)
- Lifetime Homes Standard (2010)
- Future Homes Standard (TBC)
- Building with Nature Standards (latest version)
- Active Design Checklist (Sport England/Public Health England, Oct 2015);
- Dementia and Town Planning (RTPI, September 2020);
- Healthy Place Making Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland
- Leicestershire Highways Design Guide (latest version)
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (DCLG, 2015)

9.4.13 Development should be designed to be adaptable and flexible and reduce the effects of climate change, throughout the proposed lifetime of the development, and not just in the short term. The use of sustainable building materials and the re-use of materials in all developments will be sought, as will the use of recycled aggregates in the construction of buildings and spaces. Development proposals should also seek to use design to create layouts and orientation that minimise energy consumption.

9.4.14 When new development connects to and makes use of existing routes, it should not be restricted to highways and pavements, it will include other routes, such as canal towpaths and other public rights of way. As well as connections, all development should provide the appropriate level of parking, including that for cycling and motor vehicles (including electric vehicle charging) where relevant.

9.4.15 Development should have regards to and enhance local character and history by ensuring that it responds to its landscape setting and history of the area, topography and wider context, within which it is located, as well as the local streetscape and local building materials.

9.4.16 All development proposals should also have regard to the design principles and guidance set out within all relevant Policies set out in this Plan.

Policy Text

Policy 24: High Quality Design and High Quality Materials (Non-Strategic)

The Council will require the highest standards of inclusive design and use of the highest quality materials for all new development, including major refurbishment. All development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings, must deliver sustainable

development of the highest quality that contributes positively to local character, landscape and townscape, and supports diversity, equality and access for all. Proposals considered to be of poor design and / or materials will be refused.

High quality and beautiful design must be at the centre of every development proposal and this will be required to be demonstrated through evidence supporting planning applications to a degree proportionate to the proposal.

All new development proposals must incorporate the ten characteristics of well-designed places, as set out in the National Design Guide as the starting point and throughout Pre-Application and Full Application discussions.

All development proposals will be assessed against, and must meet the following relevant criteria:

1. Context: enhances the surroundings

- Be based on a sound understanding of the local and wider context, integrating into the surroundings and responding to local landscape character, history, culture and heritage;
- Relate well to the site and existing local characteristics, including the retention of existing natural and historic features wherever possible and including appropriate landscape and boundary treatments to ensure that the development can be satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding area;
- Protect any important local views into, out of or through the site;
- Embrace and create beautiful places through preservation and enhancement of the natural landform, geography and topography, seeking opportunity to deliver green and blue linkages to interconnect existing and new communities;

2. Identity: attractive, beautiful and distinctive

- Contribute positively to the sense of place, reflecting and enhancing (not just repeating) existing valued character and distinctiveness;
- Reflect and improve on the original architectural style of the local surroundings, or embrace opportunities for innovative design and new technologies which sympathetically complement or contrast with the local architectural style;
- Use appropriate, high quality materials (both externally and internally) which reinforce or enhance local valued character and distinctiveness;
- Create well considered buildings, streets and places, using height, scale, massing and relationships between buildings and the surrounding landscape features, setting and backdrop;
- Integrate green infrastructure and public spaces that separate the carriageway and the pavement, to create safe and attractive routes with age-friendly street furniture, planting to stimulate all of the senses, and buildings or structures that consider layout and grain of the new community to create a memorable sense of place;
- Not result in the visual or physical coalescence with any neighbouring building, or settlement, nor result in ribbon development;

3. Built Form: a coherent pattern of development

- Make effective and efficient use of land that contributes to the achievement of compact, walkable and wheelable neighbourhoods;
- Be appropriate for its context and its future use in terms of its building type, street layout, development block type and size, siting, height, scale, massing, form, rhythm, plot widths, gaps between buildings, and the plot to site size ratio of developed to undeveloped space both within a plot and within a wider scheme;
- Achieve a density not only appropriate for its context but also taking into account its accessibility to enable people to move around an area and reach places and facilities, including older and disabled people, those with young children, as well as those walking and wheeling from local facilities whilst carrying luggage and shopping;
- Have a layout and form that delivers efficient and adaptable homes in accordance with all other relevant Policy and Guidance;
- Have a street layout that allows for the effective and efficient collection of refuse and recycling.

4. Movement: accessible and easy to move around

- Form part of a well-designed and connected travel network with consideration for all modes of transport offering genuine choices for non-car travel and prioritising active travel and where relevant demonstrate this through evidence clearly showing connectivity for all modes and a hierarchy of routes;
- Maximise pedestrian and cycle permeability and avoid barriers to movement through careful consideration of street layouts and access routes both within the site and in the wider context contributing to the delivery of walkable, wheelable and cyclable neighbourhoods;
- Ensure areas are accessible, well-lit, safe and legible for all; creating open routes that utilise low-level planting schemes and barriers that enable natural surveillance and avoid enclosed and frightening routes;
- Deliver well-considered and usable parking and access solutions and layouts, including suitable electric vehicle charging points, with appropriate landscaping provided in accordance with the parking standards set out in the Leicestershire Highways Design Guide (latest edition);
- Enable suitable access solutions for servicing and utilities;

5. Nature: enhanced and optimised

- Incorporate and retain as far as possible existing natural features including hedgerows, trees, and waterbodies particularly where these features offer a valuable habitat to support biodiversity, as well as contribute to landscape character and amenity, aligned with relevant Policies and Guidance;
- Incorporate appropriate landscape and boundary treatments to ensure that the development can be satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding area, maximising opportunities to deliver diverse ecosystems and biodiverse habitats, strengthening wildlife corridors and green infrastructure networks, and helping to achieve wider goals for biodiversity net gain, climate change mitigation and adaptation and water management;
- Integrate a network of multifunctional green and blue space capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits, as well as to deliver features that are designed to reduce flood risk, which are built to receive surface water run-off, such as constructed wetlands, permeable surfaces, retention ponds, green roofs and swales;

6. Public Spaces: safe, social and inclusive

- Ensure public spaces are accessible to all, are safe and secure, and, will be easy to maintain with clear definition of public and private spaces in locations that are easy to access, with activities for all to enjoy, such as play, food production, recreation and sport, so as to encourage physical activity and promote health, well-being and social inclusion;
- Form part of a hierarchy of spaces where relevant to offer a range of spaces available for the community and to support a variety of activities and encourage communities to come together;
- Be carefully planned and integrated into the wider community to ensure public spaces feel safe and benefit from natural surveillance, being flanked by active uses and by promoting activity within the space;
- Maximise opportunities for delivering additional trees (specifically lining streets) and biodiversity gains through the creation of new habitats and the strengthening or extending wildlife corridors and the green infrastructure network in accordance with relevant Policies and Guidance;

7. Uses: mixed and integrated

- Create or contribute to a variety of complementary uses that meet the needs of the community;
- Be compatible with neighbouring land uses and not result in likely conflict with existing uses unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that both the ongoing use of the neighbouring site will not be compromised, and that the amenity of occupiers of the new development will be satisfactory with the ongoing normal use of the neighbouring site;
- Not result in adverse noise, vibration or other disturbance, taking into account surrounding uses nor result in adverse impacts upon air quality from odour, fumes, smoke, dust and other sources;
- Integrate communities through delivering well-designed places with a variety of home types and tenure-neutral solutions where there is no segregation or difference in quality between tenures by siting, accessibility, environmental conditions, external facade or materials;
- Recognise and provide homes that deliver solutions for an increasingly aging population by designing age-friendly developments that seek to meet the needs of older people through building homes that are accessible and adaptable, including retirement villages, care homes, extra-care housing, sheltered housing, independent living and age-restricted general market housing;

8. Homes and Buildings: Functional, healthy and sustainable

- Provide homes with high quality external and internal environments with adequate space for users and good access to private, shared or public spaces;
- Be adaptable and resilient to climate change;
- Be capable of adapting to changing needs of future occupants and be cost effective to run;
- Not result in harm to people's amenity either within the proposed development or neighbouring it through overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light or increase in artificial light or glare;
- Provide adequate storage, waste storage, servicing and utilities for the use proposed, both internally and externally;

- Conveniently positioned and sensitively integrated safe cycle storage solutions in public spaces and buildings;

9. Resources: efficient and resilient

- Minimise the need for resources both in construction and operation of buildings and spaces being easily adaptable to avoid unnecessary waste;
- Use high quality materials which are not only suitable for the context but that are durable and resilient to impacts of climate change;
- Build fit for purpose and adaptable places that will remain resilient and able to embrace technological evolution through responding to evolving Policy and Guidance seeking to minimise environmental impact;

10. Lifespan: made to last

- Use high quality materials which are durable and ensure buildings and spaces are adaptive;
- Create attractive public spaces for the present and future generations through integrating well-designed places that are robust, durable and easy to look after, with maintenance responsibilities that are clearly defined for all parts of a development; and,
- Encourage the creation of a sense of ownership for users and the wider community with a clear strategy for ongoing management and stewardship.

A new High Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document will be adopted alongside this Plan to add local context and guidance for all stakeholders.

All proposals for new development will be expected to demonstrate how they have conformed to the Council's criteria for achieving high quality design and high quality materials.

Compliance with the above criteria will need to be expressed through submission of a Design and Access Statement.

Ensuring Approved Plans are Delivered

To ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, where appropriate, the Council will resist subsequent planning applications that would impact negatively on the design and quality of the originally considered and approved scheme.

Policy 25: Landscape and Character (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

9.10.1 The policy seeks to ensure that all new development conserves and enhances the distinctive landscapes in the Borough. All new development needs to reflect the prevailing quality, character and features such as settlement patterns, important views, open spaces and significant natural habitats.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside
- Spatial Objective 15: Kilby Bridge regeneration

Supporting Text

9.10.2 It is important to recognise and to protect the Borough's most distinctive and attractive landscapes. The Borough contains ten Conservation Areas, as well as a number of nationally and locally listed buildings and important urban and rural character areas.

9.10.3 The Council's Conservation Area Appraisals and Landscape Character Assessment will be used to ensure that development proposals are sympathetic to townscape and landscape character, and contribute towards the regeneration, restoration, maintenance and conservation of the areas affected.

9.10.4 These documents, along with any other relevant Management Plans, Development Briefs and Supplementary Planning Documents support the Council in preserving and enhancing all areas with distinctive landscape character in the Borough.

9.10.5 Development proposals should always be supported by evidence setting out how any impacts of the proposed development will be managed and mitigated.

9.10.6 The Borough's Landscape Character Assessment identifies that the Borough is made up of a series of urban and rural character areas. Each area is significant for its own unique blend of character and the Council will seek to ensure that wherever possible, development proposals retain and / or enhance the surrounding quality. For example, Oadby Arboretum Urban Landscape Character Area is locally significant and valued due to its distinctive character of having large plot sizes and attractive, leafy, suburbs.

Policy Text

Policy 25: Landscape and Character (Non-Strategic)

All development proposals within the Borough will be determined against the need to conserve and enhance the distinctive landscapes in the Borough. The Council will ensure that all development proposals reflect the prevailing quality, character and features such as settlement patterns, important views, open spaces and significant natural habitats.

Development will only be permitted where it is in keeping with the area in which it is situated or has a positive contribution towards and / or enhances local distinctiveness. Development proposals that are contrary to the policy guidance as set out within the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, the Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document and / or the Conservation Area Appraisals will not be approved unless the development provides a positive contribution towards the area in which it is situated, either through beautiful and high quality design and architecture or significant public benefit.

Development proposals that have an adverse impact on local character, nationally designated areas or features of landscape and cultural significance will not be permitted.

DRAFT

Policy 26: Culture and Historic Environment Assets (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

9.11.1 Historic and cultural assets are finite resources that should be at least protected if not enhanced. The policy needs to ensure that new development contributes to people's appreciation of the cultural and historic environment by preventing its loss or damage or by ensuring new development showcases the asset.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

Supporting Text

9.11.2 The NPPF states that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

9.11.3 Significance is defined as an asset's heritage interest, whether archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic, and may be derived from both the asset and its setting. All heritage assets, whether designated or not, are material considerations in the planning process.

9.11.4 For designated heritage assets and other archaeological assets of national importance, great weight should be given to their conservation - the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

9.11.5 For non-designated heritage assets (and archaeological assets that are not of national importance) a balanced judgement is required that has regard to the scale of the harm/loss posed by the development and the significance of the heritage asset.

9.11.6 Combined with the NPPF, the Council will take all relevant guidance and legislation into account when considering applications that might impact on heritage assets. Historic England also publishes an extensive range of expert information and guidance on topics from 'Conservation Principles' to 'Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings'.

9.11.7 The Council will have regard to Historic England's publications and will expect developers to make good use of the information and guidance as appropriate.

9.11.8 It is also important that existing listed buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas are not allowed to deteriorate; the Council can request improvements to be made to remedy sub-optimal conditions (for example, to repair render and renew external paintwork), and use a variety of methods to enforce positive change if such a request is not complied with.

9.11.9 In addition to views to and from designated heritage assets, important views that contribute to the setting of heritage assets include landscape and townscape

relationships. Where views are demonstrably important to the setting, development proposals should respect and protect what makes the view special. Evidence on Landscape and Environmental Information will be relevant to this analysis.

9.11.10 Much of the evidence base for the historic environment, which is used to inform and appraise development proposals, is held by the County Council. Existing evidence can also be used to predict whether currently unidentified archaeological heritage assets might be discovered in the future. Leicestershire County Council, who are responsible for archaeology, provide guidance on when a Historic Environment Record search is considered appropriate.

9.11.12 The Borough Council will work closely with the County Council to promote understanding of the archaeological environment, ensure appropriate investigation, and require measures to mitigate the potentially damaging effects of development.

Policy Text

Policy 26: Culture and Historic Environment Assets (Non-Strategic)

The Borough's unique cultural identity, as well as its significant heritage and historic character will be enhanced through the identification and protection of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

The Council will:

- Identify, conserve and enhance local heritage assets;
- Take a proactive approach to the protection, promotion and interpretation of archaeological remains;
- Support the conservation and appreciation of key characteristics of the wider townscape and landscape; and,
- Take a positive strategy towards assets that are considered at risk.

The Borough's heritage assets include (but is not limited to):

- Conservation Areas;
- Nationally and locally listed buildings and significant monuments;
- Non-designated heritage assets;
- The character of the historic cores in the Borough;
- Landscape features, including ancient woodlands and veteran trees;
- Field patterns;
- Watercourses;
- Drainage ditches and hedgerows of visual, historic or nature conservation value;
- Archaeological sites and remains; and,
- Historic parks and gardens.

All development proposals must safeguard, conserve or enhance both designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, as well as the character and setting of areas of acknowledged significance.

Where development is likely to have a significant adverse impact on designated heritage assets and their settings and / or non-designated heritage assets and their settings, and / or

other historic / heritage character areas and cannot be avoided or they cannot be preserved in situ, the development will not be permitted, unless there are substantial public benefits, which outweigh that harm or loss.

DRAFT

Policy 27: Development in Conservation Areas (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

9.12.1 Development needs to contribute to the setting of the conservation area it is located within to ensure the features that led to its designation as a conservation area are protected.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

Supporting Text

9.12.2 Conservation Areas are defined as areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Relevant legislation can be found in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It is this Act that affords Conservation Areas statutory protection.

9.12.3 Conservation Areas exist to assist the conservation and enhancement of areas of particular architectural or historic interest. Legislation requires that special attention is paid to this objective in exercising planning control and, therefore, the Borough Council has prepared Conservation Area Appraisals and management plans for all of its designated Conservation Areas. The character of Conservation Areas is often the product of various elements such as the mixture and style of buildings, the extent and form of open spaces and other natural elements such as trees and hedges.

9.12.4 The demolition of buildings within Conservation Areas can have damaging impacts, by removing structures that contribute to their special character or by leaving unsightly gaps in the built-up area. Hence, as with listed buildings, it is appropriate to employ a presumption in favour of retention.

9.12.5 Where a building, structure, or space makes little or no contribution to the street scene within a Conservation Area and adversely affects the setting of the Conservation Area, demolition or redevelopment may be considered appropriate where detailed plans for the site's regeneration are able to demonstrate that the proposed scheme will conserve, protect and enhance the character of the area.

9.12.6 The ten designated Conservation Areas in the Borough are listed below and are shown on the Council's Adopted Policies Map:

- All Saints Conservation Area, Wigston
- London Road and Saint Peters Church Conservation Area, Oadby
- Midland Cottages Conservation Area, South Wigston
- North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Conservation Area, Oadby
- Oadby Court Conservation Area, Oadby
- Oadby Hill Top and Meadowcourt Conservation Area, Oadby
- South Wigston Conservation Area, South Wigston

- Spa Lane Conservation Area, Wigston
- The Lanes Conservation Area, Wigston
- The Grand Union Canal Conservation Area

9.12.7 The Council's Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document contains further information in relation to the Borough's nine Conservation Areas. In addition to this, the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area which runs along the route of the Canal from east to west in the south of the Borough. This Conservation Area is County Council designated, therefore any development proposals affecting the area would need to take account of the relevant policies and guidance that the County Council produce.

Policy Text

Policy 27: Development in Conservation Areas (Non-Strategic)

The Council will permit development proposals or change within designated Conservation Areas provided that it at least conserves and preserves, if not enhances both the special built and natural character and prevailing appearance and quality of the area.

Proposed development or change will be supported where:

- Development or change will not prejudice the special features of the Conservation Area, including historic settlement patterns, relationships between buildings, the arrangement of open areas and their enclosure, or significant natural or heritage features;
- The detailed design of proposed buildings, including height, density, mass, layout, proportions, or materials at least respects, if not enhances the special character of an area;
- Development or change will not prejudice the setting and surroundings of a Conservation Area or spoil the inward or outward views; and,
- Development or change will not prejudice the local distinctiveness, appearance, verdancy or the ambience of the Conservation Area.

In order to determine the impact of proposed development or change within Conservation Areas, the Council will require the submission of full detailed plans and will not grant outline planning permission, unless the outline submission contains robust supporting information by which the full impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area can be established.

On all major development proposals or large scale change, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, within Conservation Areas, detailed design codes and design statements must be submitted, in accordance with the respective Conservation Area Appraisals, to fully demonstrate the impacts that the proposed scheme will have.

Demolition in a Conservation Area

Within Conservation Areas, permission for development involving any form of demolition will not be granted unless it can be robustly demonstrated that:

- The structure to be demolished makes no material contribution to the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area; and,

- The structure to be demolished is wholly beyond repair or incapable of beneficial use; and,
- The removal of the structure and its subsequent replacement would lead to the enhancement of the Conservation Area.

DRAFT

Policy 28: Sustainable Design and Construction (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

9.13.1 Seeks to maximise the sustainability of buildings, whilst reducing the waste that buildings produce, both during construction and through on-going use.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design

Supporting Text

9.14.1 Sustainable design and construction will demonstrate how the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation have been embedded within the development proposal. This includes identifying and pursuing opportunities to minimise whole life cycle carbon emissions.

9.14.2 Developments will make use of sustainable resources and reduce their impact upon climate change by meeting high standards of sustainable construction and design including via layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping.

9.14.3 Development will be designed, constructed, and maintained to minimise operational energy use and carbon emissions, while also preventing overheating. Energy use will be demonstrated through passive measures including building form, orientation and fabric, energy efficiency using mechanical and electrical systems and maximising renewable energy.

9.14.4 Retrofitting of existing homes and buildings will prioritise measures to reduce energy consumption followed by maximising renewable energy in accordance with the energy hierarchy, in a manner consistent with their heritage context.

9.14.5 Development often results in the production of a significant quantity of waste during demolition, construction and for the duration of its use. Developers should reduce the construction waste arising from new development and re-use and recycle as much material as possible, following the waste hierarchy.

Policy Text

Policy 28: Sustainable Design and Construction (Non-Strategic)

Development will where possible exceed and as a minimum achieve national climate change standards relating to energy use in place at the time of the proposed development. This includes Building Regulations, the Future Homes and Buildings Standard. Local projects and initiatives which contribute to net zero aspirations and targets will be supported subject to the other policies of this Local Plan.

Development must demonstrate how carbon emissions have been addressed and minimised including through materials sourcing, development design and layout, the energy hierarchy, water cycle and waste management solutions (during and post-construction).

Development will make appropriate provision for waste collection and recycling and encouraging the use of locally sourced, reclaimed, recycled or low environmental impact products in design and construction and provide facilities for effective waste management in the operation of development.

Development must minimise or re-use waste generated during the construction phase. This should be done by using materials and construction techniques that generate the least waste and minimise emissions. Waste should be treated as a resource to be re-used, recycled or recovered, and should only be disposed of when all other options have been exhausted.

On-site management of waste will be preferred, unless the activities would result in unacceptable harm through impacts on the environment, transport or on neighbouring uses, or that management elsewhere would have wider sustainability benefits.

Commercial

Major non-domestic development proposals must meet the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) very good standard for new construction projects, using the most up-to-date new construction version of BREEAM, where technically and financially feasible. Where assessment methods are changed or superseded, the appropriate replacement standards will be used.

Exceptional Circumstances

The Council will only consider any variation to the requirements set out in this Policy in exceptional circumstances, and in such cases, it must be robustly demonstrated to the Council by the applicant that this would be unviable based on a PPG-compliant developer funded viability assessment agreed with the Council (through an open book approach).

If a variation to any Policy requirement is to be agreed, the Council must be satisfied that the alternative proposal will still achieve a satisfactory outcome for all.

If the Council requires the procurement of an independent review by a viability expert to scrutinise any submitted viability evidence, the applicant will be required to pay for this assessment and for any other associated costs that arise.

Policy 29: Phone Masts (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

9.15.1 There needs to be an appropriate balance struck between recognising that modern society functions with wireless technology which requires infrastructure to function and ensuring the environment does not become cluttered with masts.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

Supporting Text

9.16.1 The Council is supportive of modern telecommunications systems and the vital part that they play in everyday life and that they can bring significant economic and social benefits. But it is essential that the infrastructure required to support these systems is delivered sensitively, keeping the impact on the environment and local character to a minimum.

9.16.2 Communication technology is ever growing and evolving and consequently there is an increasing demand from operators for the provision of telecommunications infrastructure such as satellite dishes, radio antennae, masts, switching and base stations. The need for these forms of infrastructure must be balanced against the potential adverse effects it may have on the quality of the environment of the Borough, whether it be residential suburbs, open spaces or in sensitive areas such as conservation areas.

Policy Text

Policy 29: Phone Masts (Non-Strategic)

The Council will grant planning permission for masts and other telecommunication apparatus development that is designed sensitively so as to minimize the visual impact and use is made of existing or new screening, such as trees, fences or buildings, and that it has been robustly demonstrated that:

- It is not possible to share existing facilities;
- It is not possible to use existing buildings or structures;
- It is not possible to locate the required infrastructure in a less sensitive or obtrusive location.

Applicants will also need to submit i) evidence that the proposal is the least environmentally harmful option; ii) a statement that self-certifies that the cumulative exposure will not exceed the guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

10. Natural Environment

Policy 30: Green and Blue Infrastructure (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

10.1.1 Seeks to maintain, preserve and enhance the green and blue infrastructure assets of the Borough area as well as the Borough's green infrastructure network. Also seeks to maintain and enhance public access and appropriate use of such areas / spaces.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside

Supporting Text

10.2.1 Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) can be defined as a strategically planned and delivered network of multi-functional, green and blue (water) spaces and other natural features, and the connections between them, in both urban and rural areas, which is capable of delivering a range of environmental, economic, health and quality of life benefits for local communities.

10.2.2 The green infrastructure network may comprise of spaces in public or private ownership, with or without public access.

10.2.3 The Council's aim is to preserve and enhance the existing network of assets, as well as create new areas and spaces that will further contribute towards the overall network of GBI throughout the Borough and beyond.

10.2.4 GBI is fundamental in achieving successful place-making through the range of multi-faceted benefits that well-designed and integrated green infrastructure can bring to an area. In the Borough the GBI network will be planned, designed, and managed to:

- promote healthier living and supporting people's physical and mental health and social wellbeing;
- reduce health inequalities and meet the needs of families and an ageing population;
- lessen the impacts of climate change and store carbon through improving air and water quality;
- reduce and manage flood risk and drought through managing water run-off and providing sustainable urban drainage solutions;
- encourage active and more sustainable travel options through walking, cycling, and other recreational and sensory experiences;
- provide continued, new, and enhanced links to the countryside; and
- protect and enhance existing biodiversity, creating new areas for biodiversity and biodiversity net gain, and reversing the fragmentation of habitats by restoring the

connectivity between them and improving ecological resilience.

- 10.2.5 Throughout the Borough there is a network of existing areas of strategic GBI falling into various categories which are important to the character of both the urban and rural areas; and provide valuable spaces for formal and informal recreational activities in our communities.
- 10.2.6 These strategic areas include the countryside around the urban areas, the green wedges, river corridors (and their riparian habitats), canals (and their riparian habitats) and railway lines.
- 10.2.7 Current provision of more local GBI within the Borough includes (but not limited to) formal and informal open spaces, local green spaces, cemeteries, sports fields, golf courses, Leicester Racecourse, local wildlife sites, local nature reserves, country parks, veteran trees, woodland and spinneys, important hedgerows, ponds, rivers, canals, streams and watercourses, ditches, sustainable urban drainage systems and allotment sites.
- 10.2.8 The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) highlights that *'the provision of more and better-quality green infrastructure, including urban trees, will make towns and cities attractive places to live and work, and bring about key long-term improvements in people's health'*.
- 10.2.9 The Green Infrastructure Framework (GIF), launched by Natural England in January 2023 will help to target the creation and/or improvement of GBI across the Borough, as well as throughout England. The Natural England Framework complements Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Nature Recovery Strategies which both form part of the Environment Act (2021).
- 10.2.10 Green infrastructure principles should be considered and incorporated into a scheme from the earliest stages of the design process, at every scale (from a single building to a new settlement), and be capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, health and quality of life benefits for local communities. Developers should appraise the site context for green infrastructure functions and take opportunities to achieve multi-functionality by bringing green infrastructure functions together.
- 10.2.11 Building with Nature Standards Framework or Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework provides a useful guide for considering green infrastructure.
- 10.2.12 GBI has a vital role in promoting healthy and safe communities that can improve the wellbeing of a neighbourhood with opportunities for recreation, exercise, social interaction, experiencing and caring for nature, community food-growing and gardening, all of which can bring mental and physical health benefits. GBI can help to reduce health inequalities in areas of socio-economic deprivation and meet the needs of families and an ageing population.
- 10.2.13 The Policy makes clear the Borough Council's commitment for strengthening both local and strategic GBI across the Borough for the benefit of both the natural environment and the health and wellbeing of the community. New GBI provision will add to the integrity of the wider network of the Borough and those of neighbouring authorities.

Policy Text

Policy 30: Green and Blue Infrastructure (Strategic)

The Council will protect, from inappropriate development, and enhance all existing and new green and blue infrastructure in recognition of their multi-functional role in strengthening the local and strategic networks throughout the Borough.

Proposals that cause loss of or harm to any part of the green and blue infrastructure network will not be supported unless the need for and benefits of the development demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts. Where adverse impacts on green and blue infrastructure are unavoidable, development will only be supported if suitable mitigation measures for the network are provided.

New development must protect, conserve, enhance and deliver green and blue infrastructure across the Borough, incorporating on-site environmental net-gain based upon up-to-date evidence and information about how to maximise multi-functional benefits of ecologically rich public and private spaces.

All development proposals should ensure that existing and new green and blue infrastructure is considered and integrated into the scheme design from the outset. Where new green and blue infrastructure is proposed, the design and layout should take opportunities to:

- incorporate a range of types and sizes of green and blue spaces, green routes and environmental features that are appropriate to the development and the wider green and blue infrastructure network to maximise the delivery of multi-functionality;
- deliver biodiversity net gain and support ecosystem services;
- respond to landscape/townscape and historic character;
- link fragmented parts of the existing network;
- support climate change adaptation and resilience including through use of appropriate habitats and species;
- incorporate functional green space, such as SuDS and flood storage areas;
- create green and blue spaces and planting within development to provide shade, cooling and wind interception and an insulation role in winter; and,
- encourage healthy and active lifestyles through connectivity between green infrastructure assets, including public rights of way, bridleways, cycleways and waterways, and take opportunities to improve and expand such features.

Major developments, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, should demonstrate how they are meeting the requirements of this Policy in their submitted Sustainability Statements, Health Impact Assessments, and, will also be encouraged to achieve the Building with Nature Standards Full Award.

Arrangements and funding for the management and maintenance of green and blue infrastructure over the long term should be identified and implemented. Where appropriate, the Council will seek to secure this via planning obligations, in accordance with the Council's latest Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.

Policy 31: Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

10.3.1 Seeks to protect all important biodiversity and geodiversity in the Borough area, but also seek net gains where possible and appropriate to do so.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside

Supporting Text

10.4.1 The policy aims to prevent harm to protected habitats and species, and sites of geological importance, from direct impacts such as land take, and from indirect impacts such as recreational impacts, changes to a watercourse or air pollution and the potential combination of such impacts.

10.4.2 National planning policy sets out the need for planning applications to apply the avoid, mitigate, compensate conservation hierarchy, as well as requiring local plans to distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national, and locally designated sites and the protection afforded to them.

Designated sites

10.4.3 The Borough has a number of nationally and locally designated sites including Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and other valuable wildlife sites. These areas are invaluable to the Borough and will be protected from development. Any development proposals that have a negative impact on important areas or result in significant habitat loss within the Borough will not be supported.

10.4.4 If a development proposal has a less significant impact that can be mitigated through appropriate mitigation measures, for example habitat re-creation, the proposal may be supported, but only after discussions between the applicant, the Council, the County Council, the Woodland Trust, the Environment Agency, and Natural England.

10.4.5 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), Candidate Local Wildlife Sites (cLWS) and Potential Local Wildlife Sites (pLWS) are non-statutory designated sites that occur within the Borough which have been designated due to the significance of the species and habitats present.

Non-designated sites and habitats

10.4.6 Much of the biodiversity in the Borough exists on undesignated sites or non-priority habitats. However, the biodiversity value of these sites is still high and they need protecting from inappropriate development. Development proposals on such sites will

be appropriately considered and decisions will be commensurate with their relative ecological status.

10.4.7 A number of legally protected species and their habitats occur throughout the Borough. Where there is a reasonable likelihood that protected species, or the habitats upon which they depend, may be affected by a development proposal, survey information must be submitted that shows the presence (or otherwise) and extent of the species or habitat that may be impacted. In all cases, any negative impacts to protected and priority habitats and species should be avoided.

10.4.8 All proposals for new development will need to comply with the recommendations as set out in the Council's Extended Phase One Habitat Survey, as well as the relevant national policies and those set out in this Plan. Policy guidance set out within the Landscape Character Assessment will also need to be taken account of within any development proposal, as there will be important landscape features noted within the document that will need conserving and enhancing.

Policy Text

Policy 31: Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity (Strategic)

All development proposals must ensure the protection, conservation, and enhancement of biodiversity valued features and habitats including water quality, ponds, wetland, species-rich grassland, hedgerows, trees and woodland.

Mitigation Hierarchy

If harm cannot be avoided (e.g. by locating development on an alternative site with less harmful impacts or through innovative design), then such harm must be mitigated on-site. Where it cannot be mitigated on-site, then as a last resort such harm must be compensated for. Where it cannot be compensated for, planning permission will not be granted.

Internationally and Nationally designated sites

Development likely to have an adverse impact on an internationally designated site will be subject to assessment under Habitats Regulations and will not be permitted unless adverse effects can be fully avoided, mitigated and /or compensated.

Development likely to have an adverse impact on a nationally designated site will only be permitted where it can be robustly demonstrated that the on-site benefits clearly outweigh the negative impacts on the site. In such cases, the Mitigation Hierarchy will apply.

Irreplaceable habitats

Development that results in the loss or deterioration of an irreplaceable habitat (such as ancient woodland, ancient or veteran trees, and ancient hedgerows) will only be permitted for wholly exceptional reasons where:

- a) The need and benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss; and,
- b) It has been robustly demonstrated that the irreplaceable habitat cannot be retained within the proposed scheme; and

- c) Appropriate compensation measures are provided on site (off site where this is proven not feasible). The scale and quality of the compensation measures required will be commensurate to the loss or deterioration of the irreplaceable habitat, including long term management and maintenance.

Local sites and Species and Habitats of Principal Importance

New development that has an adverse impact on Local Nature Reserves or Local Sites (including sites that meet the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland criteria for designation as a Local Wildlife Site), will not be permitted unless the harm can be mitigated by appropriate measures. In such cases, the Mitigation Hierarchy will apply.

New development which harms, directly or indirectly, species which are legally protected, or species and habitats that have been identified as Species or Habitats of Principal Importance in England (also known as Section 41 or 'Priority' species and habitats) will not be permitted unless the harm can be avoided or mitigated by appropriate measures. In such cases, the Mitigation Hierarchy will apply.

Calculate biodiversity value using the biodiversity metric

In accordance with the latest National Guidance, all new developments must provide a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity. The net gain must be:

- Measurable;
- accessible by the public;
- on site in the first instance, or through biodiversity off setting if necessary;
- demonstrated via a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan using the most up to date biodiversity accounting metric developed by DEFRA and provide details of the long-term maintenance and management of the net gain.

Major developments, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to:

- a) restore and enhance existing features on site;
- b) create additional habitats and ecological networks; and
- c) link existing habitats to create links between ecological networks and where possible, with adjoining features.

Biodiversity net gain is not applied to irreplaceable habitats and should be additional to any habitat creation required to mitigate or compensate for impacts. Net Gain can be delivered where there are no losses through development.

Planning conditions or obligations

Where appropriate, the Council will use planning conditions or obligations to provide appropriate enhancement and site management measures, and where impacts are unavoidable, mitigation or compensatory measures. Proportionate monitoring fees will be required from the applicant to cover all costs incurred by the Council over the lifetime of all relevant obligations, for example, for the monitoring of schemes on-site or off-site over the 30-year lifetime of those obligations.

Policy 32: Local Green Space (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

10.5.1 Ensure the protection of Local Green Space designation and outlines the approach to proposals for new designations of Local Green Space.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage

Supporting Text

10.6.1 The NPPF introduced the Local Green Space (LGS) designation. The LGS designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green open areas of particular importance to local communities.

10.6.2 The NPPF suggests that local communities should be given the opportunity to identify green areas of particular importance to them through local and neighbourhood plans. It also suggests that the designation would have a high degree of protection from new development due to its local importance. Importantly, national planning policy makes it clear that this designation should be consistent with wider planning policy for the area and should complement investment in the provision of new homes, employment opportunities and other essential services.

10.6.3 The NPPF specifies that LGS designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. Further, the designation should only be used in the following circumstances:

- Where the green space area is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

10.6.4 Whilst the NPPF establishes the concept of LGS designation and provides some guiding principles, it leaves it to local authorities, in partnership with local communities to determine which areas are designated as Local Green Space. The Council will ensure that its approach is consistent with NPPF policy and guidance relating to Green Belt, when considering planning applications in or adjoining LGS.

10.6.5 All areas designated as Local Green Space will be identified on the Adopted Policies Map.

10.6.6 Alongside this Preferred Options Local Plan consultation, the Council is also asking local communities to submit sites that they consider meet the Local Green Space

criteria and hence should be designated in the new Local Plan.

Policy Text

Policy 32: Local Green Space (Non-Strategic)

In areas designated as Local Green Space, new development that would cause harm to the local significance of the Local Green Space will not be permitted except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless it can be demonstrated that the harm to the local significance of the Local Green Space is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Proposals put forward to the Council for Local Green Space designation will be assessed against the criteria set out within National planning policy.

DRAFT

Policy 33: Green Wedges (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

10.7.1 Ensure the protection of areas of open land to provide a 'Green Lung' for the Borough and influence development while maintaining appropriate distance between settlements within the Borough boundary and outside within surrounding administrative boundaries.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside

Supporting Text

10.8.1 The purpose of the Green Wedges situated within the Borough is to protect important areas of open land which influence development form and have a positive effect on people's health and wellbeing. The Green Wedge policy seeks to retain and where possible enhance important areas of open land that meet the criteria, as set out within the relative policy.

10.8.2 There are currently two Green Wedges situated within the Borough, both of which cross administrative boundaries into neighbouring Local Authority areas.

10.8.3 The Oadby and Wigston Green Wedge spans the administrative boundary with Leicester City to the north west. The green wedge in its entirety is a large expanse of land, with the Borough's designation being circa 168 hectares in size and separating the urban settlement areas of Oadby and Wigston entirely. The green wedge runs north west to south east from Leicester City out towards the open countryside to the south of Oadby and east of Wigston. As well as farm land and open countryside the green wedge comprises of many appropriate leisure activity uses including outdoor sports grounds and outdoor training facilities, a horse racing course, a golf course and a country park.

10.8.4 The Oadby, Thurnby and Stoughton Green Wedge is situated to the north east of Oadby and crosses administrative boundaries with Leicester City and Harborough District. The overall area of the green wedge is substantial. The Borough's designation makes up approximately 93 hectares of the total designation size. The area of green wedge that lies within the Borough runs from a north west to south easterly direction and begins at the Borough boundary close to the B582 Gartree Road and extends out towards the countryside to the north of Manor High School in Oadby. Land uses currently situated within the Borough's green wedge area include outdoor sports pitches and open fields.

10.8.5 With the Borough being relatively compact and urban in nature, Green Wedges are extremely important; they play major roles in shaping the character of the environment and help stimulate leisure and tourism whilst improving residents and visitors quality of life and health and wellbeing.

10.8.6 As well as guiding development form and effecting residents positively, Green Wedges are key green areas within the Borough's Green Infrastructure network and support the

Borough's biodiversity. The Green Wedges within the Borough act as important strategic green infrastructure corridors linking green areas within the urban area to the countryside as well as other key strategic green infrastructure corridors such as the Grand Union Canal and railway corridors.

10.8.7 Any development proposed that impacts the Green Wedges within the Borough will also need to ensure that it conforms to the policy recommendations as set out in the Council's latest Landscape Character Assessment. All development needs to respect the character of its surroundings and should be sympathetic to the local landscape.

10.8.8 For the purposes of this Plan the Council may need to release areas of green wedge to provide land for future development. To ensure that the most appropriate areas are released, the Council will undertake a Green Wedge Review, that assesses both of the Borough's green wedges in their entirety. The Green Wedge Review will be published by the Council to inform the future Pre-submission new Local Plan.

Policy Text

Policy 33: Green Wedges (Non-Strategic)

Green Wedges are valuable areas of green land within the Borough and the Council will retain these areas as open and undeveloped.

The objectives of all Green Wedge areas situated within the Borough are to:

- Prevent the merging of settlements or urban areas;
- Guide development form;
- Provide a 'green lung' between the urban area and the countryside; and
- Act as an open and undeveloped recreational resource.

Due to the open and undeveloped nature of the Green Wedges, the Council will allow uses that are consistent with the following:

- Agriculture, horticulture and allotments and associated development necessary to facilitate and support these uses;
- Outdoor leisure, outdoor recreation and outdoor sports and associated development necessary to facilitate and support these uses, as long as the use does not negatively impact the undeveloped character;
- Forestry and bodies of water and associated development necessary to facilitate and support these uses;
- Footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways; and,
- Burial grounds and associated development necessary to facilitate and support these uses.

The Council will support proposals that retain and enhance public access into the Borough's Green Wedges, as well as proposals that retain and enhance the role that the Green Wedges play in the Borough's Green Infrastructure Network and its biodiversity.

Road proposals or dedicated public transport routes proposed to be situated within a Green Wedge that are evidenced as being a necessity will only be acceptable where it has been proven that there are no alternative routes outside of the Green Wedge.

Any proposal that has an adverse impact on the Green Wedge will only be permitted where there is a robust and justified need which outweighs these impacts and where a Landscape Character Assessment has been undertaken to ensure that all detrimental impacts that a development may cause have been addressed and can be mitigated.

DRAFT

Policy 34: Countryside (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

10.9.1 It is important that the countryside is protected for its own sake as well as recognising the multiple contributions it can make to society, mitigating flooding, providing food, combatting climate change, proving sport and recreation opportunities. Policy needs to protect the countryside.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside

Supporting Text

10.10.1 It is paramount that the Countryside areas within the Borough are protected and enhanced. Due to the urban nature of Borough, the Countryside areas play a key role in everyday life as well as health and wellbeing. Valued and beautiful landscapes need to be protected from inappropriate development, and the role they play in the biodiversity and green infrastructure networks needs to be enhanced.

10.10.2 This policy provides protection against inappropriate development in the countryside. New development in the countryside will only be permitted where a justifiable need can be demonstrated consistent with the principles set out in the NPPF.

10.10.3 Where development does take place in the countryside, it must be sympathetically designed and located so as to provide as little disturbance as possible to the open nature of the countryside and to protect the various Green Infrastructure asset that it supports. The Council will promote high quality management methods that protect the openness, beauty and intrinsic character of the Countryside, as well as important hedgerows and trees.

10.10.4 Although the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is predominantly urban, land to the south and east within the local authority boundary plays an important role in providing the residents of the Borough access to open countryside. The majority of the Borough's population live within the built up areas within the settlement of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston.

10.10.5 The rural landscape plays a major role in shaping the character of our environment, both through stimulating leisure and tourism and supporting the overall 'quality of life'. The Oadby and Wigston Landscape Character Assessment identifies a number of landscape character areas across the Borough and it is important that both the quality and distinctive characteristics of these areas are conserved and enhanced when new development occurs.

Policy Text

Policy 34: Countryside (Non-Strategic)

Land within the Borough area designated as Countryside is defined on the Local Plan Adopted

Policies Map.

The openness, beauty and intrinsic character of the Countryside will be recognised and protected from development. The Council will promote high quality management methods that protect the openness, beauty and intrinsic character of the Countryside, as well as important hedgerows and trees.

Any development in the countryside should not result in a level of activity that has an adverse impact on the character or biodiversity of the area, unless it is required to ensure the high quality management and protection of the Countryside.

Improvements to green infrastructure, including (but not restricted to) enhanced pedestrian, cycle, equestrian access, and better access for those with mobility difficulties will be supported.

DRAFT

Policy 35: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

10.11.1 Promoting trees, woodland and hedgerows provides society with multiple benefits and policy will need to take the opportunity to protect what exists and improve provision to help adapt to and mitigate climate change, provide for biodiversity.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure

Supporting Text

10.12.1 Canopy coverage primarily provided by trees and woodlands, as well as hedgerows can have a multitude of substantial benefits upon both the local and the wider environment. The benefits of all things green are endless, but in this context can include examples such as enabling the modification of microclimates; absorption of atmospheric pollutants; contribute towards flood mitigation; and provide habitats for biodiversity.

10.12.2 In addition, the retention and planting of trees, woodlands and hedgerows provide an increase in quality of life for all living creatures, as well as enhancing the natural beauty in the locale.

10.12.3 The NPPF states that *'trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined. that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible'*.

10.12.4 The Tree Equity Score, launched in Winter 2023, shows that the Borough of Oadby and Wigston has an average canopy coverage of 14.8%, ranging from 7% in parts of South Wigston to 33% in parts of Oadby. The Borough's average canopy cover is therefore lower than The Environmental Targets (Woodland and Trees Outside Woodland) (England) Regulations 2023 target of reaching 16.5% canopy cover by 2050.

10.12.5 The Council recognises the importance of retaining urban trees, woodland and hedgerows. This policy contributes towards the wider context of nature recovery through the delivery of pockets of green infrastructure and seeks to address significant disparities in the current distribution of canopy cover across LSOAs.

10.12.6 In instances where a site is located in two or more LSOAs, the average canopy coverage for the entire site will be calculated.

Policy Text

Policy 35: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows (Non-Strategic)

To be in line with The Environmental Targets (Woodland and Trees Outside Woodland) (England) Regulations 2023, the Council requires that all new developments within the Borough area there should be no net loss of trees or hedgerows. Any trees or hedgerows removed should, where practical and appropriate, be replaced on a greater than 1:1 basis to retain and enhance levels of canopy coverage and contribute to on-site biodiversity net gain.

Where this is demonstrated to not be possible, an off-site contribution will be sought by the Council.

All major developments, as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, in Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) with a canopy coverage score of under 16.5% will be required to provide a minimum on-site canopy coverage of at least 16.5%. The canopy coverage score is to be identified using the latest publicly available data from the Tree Equity Score UK adopted in Winter 2023, or its most relevant successor adopted by the Council.

Additional tree planting is encouraged to improve the quality of the local environment and increase appropriate species canopy coverage. All tree stock enhancements should be UK sourced and grown species.

Policy 36: Soils and Agricultural Land (Non-Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

10.13.1 Seeks to minimise the impact that development has on soils and agricultural land.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside

Supporting Text

10.14.2 It is important to conserve and enhance soil quality within the Borough area, including peat reserves which are important stores of carbon.

10.14.3 It is important that development proposals consider the type and quality of the existing soils and be designed in a way that incorporates measures to mitigate negative impacts from the development where appropriate, particularly to the highest quality soils. This could include tailoring construction processes to avoid loss, erosion, compacting soils with heavy machinery, as well as minimising risks from release of contaminants through the construction stages.

10.14.4 Development must make careful choices about the design of the site and its landscaping, such as by locating development away from the highest quality soils where relevant; ensuring beneficial soil reuse and sustainable soil management; as well as minimising artificial surface cover that would lock away the soils (in combination with high-quality green and blue infrastructure).

10.14.5 Government advises that the best and most versatile agricultural land should be protected from development where possible. According to DEFRA the Borough area is predominately urban soil grade with the rest being Grade 3 except for the river valleys which are Grade 4 agricultural land. In this case the advice to protect the better quality grade 1 and 2 land does not currently apply.

10.14.6 When considering development proposals, the Council will consider the risk of pollution arising from contamination and the impact on human health, property and the wider environment.

10.14.7 Contamination is not, however, restricted to previously developed land but it can also occur on greenfield sites and it can arise from natural sources as well as from human activities.

10.14.8 Developers are expected to proactively monitor impacts and emissions to enable issues to be addressed swiftly. Close liaison with communities and relevant agencies can support this approach, enabling feedback and dialogue on the need for and effectiveness of any mitigation measures.

Policy Text

Policy 36: Soils and Agricultural Land (Non-Strategic)

All proposals must demonstrate how the impact of development on soils has been mitigated and opportunities for conserving and enhancing the capacity/quality of soil maximised. This includes how impacts on soils during the construction process has been minimised through avoiding: soil loss, compaction, pollution and reduction in the quality of soil.

Developers must undertake a preliminary risk assessment to identify any contamination on site. Where sites are known to be contaminated, or where contamination is subsequently discovered, any development proposals on the land will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the contamination can be mitigated.

Major developments as defined within the latest National Planning Policy Framework, and or relevant national legislation, on undeveloped land upon, or within 200m of, known peat reserves must submit an assessment, informed by borehole sampling, to determine any potential impacts on peat reserves.

Development on potentially contaminated land must ensure necessary remediation works are undertaken to ensure there is no pollution risk to controlled waters or human health.

For proposals on, or near to, land that is contaminated or has a history of potential contamination, permission will be granted if the council can be satisfied that:

- There will be no threat to the health or safety of future users or occupiers of the site or neighbouring land, and
- There will be no adverse impact on the quality of local groundwater or surface water.

11. Monitoring and Implementation

Policy 37: Monitoring and Implementation (Strategic)

What this Policy needs to do

11.1.1 The policy needs to allow the council to respond to changes that occur after the plan is adopted so it remains relevant.

Relevant Spatial Objectives

- Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of town and district centres
- Spatial Objective 2: Wigston town centre
- Spatial Objective 3: Oadby district centre
- Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston centre
- Spatial Objective 5: Improved employment opportunities
- Spatial Objective 6: Accessible transport links
- Spatial Objective 7: Growth of the urban areas
- Spatial Objective 8: A balanced housing market
- Spatial Objective 9: Healthy lifestyles
- Spatial Objective 10: Climate Change
- Spatial Objective 11: High quality and sustainable design
- Spatial Objective 12: Conserving and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Spatial Objective 13: Enhancing local heritage
- Spatial Objective 14: Green Wedges and the Countryside
- Spatial Objective 15: Kilby Bridge regeneration

Supporting Text

11.2.1 The purpose of this Chapter is to identify the key indicators that will be used to monitor the delivery of the Local Plan and its Objectives, through measuring the performance of the related key policies.

11.2.2 The key indicators identified will be monitored by the Council on, at least, an annual basis through the production of the various monitoring documents, including the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Monitoring the performance of policies within the Local Plan is critical, due to the planning and building profession being fluid and ever changing. Policies need to be appropriate and relevant in order to deliver the objectives of the Local Plan. Each of the Objectives and their relevant policies and targets will be set out in the Monitoring Framework.

11.2.3 It must be noted that although monitoring will be undertaken on at least an annual basis, not all indicators are annually set targets. However, regular monitoring will give a clear picture of one off events or ongoing problems / issues.

11.2.4 If monitoring indicates that further action is needed in order to accomplish an Objective, the policies contained within this Plan will be assessed and updated where necessary.

11.2.5 The Council is aware that although this Plan covers the period up to 2041, there may be instances when a partial or full review of the Plan may be required. The Local Plan will be reviewed in line with the relevant guidance and legislation that applies at the time.

Policy Text

Policy 37: Monitoring and Implementation (Strategic)

The Council will monitor progress towards the achievement of indicators and targets set out within the Monitoring Framework of this Plan. The Authority Monitoring Report will be produced on at least an annual basis and will be used to establish whether the implementation of the Plan, either in part or as a whole, is being effectively actioned.

Where there is evidence to suggest that policy specific targets listed in the Monitoring Framework have not been met, contingency measures and actions listed in the Monitoring Framework will apply.

Contingency measures may include one or more of the following:

- seeking to accelerate delivery on other permitted or allocated sites
- seeking alternative sources of funding if a lack of infrastructure is delaying development or causing significant problems as a result of new development
- identifying alternative deliverable sites that are in general accordance with the Spatial Strategy of the Plan, and
- undertaking a full or partial review of the Local Plan, if investigation indicates that its strategy, either in whole or in part, is no longer appropriate.

In addition, in conformity with the NPPF, the Council will review whether the Plan needs updating at least once every five years. The review will be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of the plan and will take into account changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy.

Appendix 1 – Regulation 18B Site Options

Background

- 12.1.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council has undertaken two formal Call for Sites Public Consultations to inform this Appendix, but also has the Call for Sites Submission Form readily available on its website 24/7, 365 days a year.
- 12.1.2 The two formal Consultations took place from Midday Friday, 25 September 2020 until Midday Friday, 20 November 2020, as well as alongside the Regulation 18A Public Consultation on the emerging new Local Plan Issues and Options Draft from midday Friday, 3 September 2021 and midday Friday, 29 October 2021.
- 12.1.3 Due to the unique nature of the Borough of Oadby and Wigston, the Council invited the submission of any land parcels (no minimum site size threshold) from all interested parties, including local residents; businesses; landowners; developers; and, agents, to identify potential sites for consideration for development which could comprise part of the Borough's housing and economic development land supply, post 2031.
- 12.1.4 This document presents a Location Plan, photograph(s), and, a summary of key information for each of the 32 Site Options received by the Council as of Spring 2024. More detailed Site Summaries (as received) can be found on the Council's Call for Sites webpage, here.
- 12.1.5 The contents of this document is based upon that submitted to the Council via the Call for Sites Submission Forms received, or, as per the information the Council holds for the current land allocations that are being carried forward for consideration from the currently adopted Local Plan (2019) because they have yet to be permitted and / or built out.
- 12.1.6 As this emerging New Local Plan continues to progress, the Council will evaluate the evidence and seek further relevant information to help determine whether the carried forward sites should remain allocated in the New Local Plan, or, if it is unlikely that they will be brought forward during the new Plan-period, it will be decided if these sites should in fact be de-allocated.
- 12.1.7 The proportion of Leicester City's unmet housing need attributed to the Borough area is 52 homes per year. When combining this apportionment with the Council's standard method housing need figure of 188 new homes per year, subject to evidence, the Council will make provision for 240 new homes per year, or, 5,040 new homes over the 21 year plan period from 2020 to 2041.
- 12.1.8 The apportionment of 52 homes per year from Leicester City's unmet need is evidenced up to the year 2036 (Leicester City's proposed Plan period). However, the Council would not be planning proactively if the apportioned 52 homes per year was not taken into account for the period 2036-2041.
- 12.1.9 Therefore, in the absence of any declaration of unmet need in Leicester City beyond 2036 and based upon existing evidence, it is considered appropriate to take account of the apportioned figure of 52 homes per year for the entire Plan period (2020-2041).

12.1.10 Taking account of the Regulation 18B Site Options set out in this document and therefore currently available for consideration by the Council, on the face of it, there is potential capacity for approximately 5,600 new homes (as submitted).

12.1.11 However, it should be noted that none of the sites submitted have yet been assessed for their appropriateness because the Council has not fully developed the suite of evidence that would underpin the New Local Plan and its growth areas. For example, evidence relating to the South Leicestershire Transport Assessment or wider Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Assessment is not yet finalised.

Therefore, it is important to note the following:

- The sites have been recorded and mapped as submitted by each relevant Landowner, Agent, or Organisation.
- No assessment of the appropriateness of any of the sites has taken place to date, except for those sites where no further assessment will occur.
- This document does not assess the extent as to whether a site is deemed appropriate or not.
- No conclusions regarding a Sites developability or deliverability should be drawn at this stage.

Next Steps

12.2.1 Sites that are ultimately proposed for allocation to accommodate new development in the emerging New Local Plan will be subject to independent scrutiny by a Planning Inspector once the emerging New Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State to be Examined in 2025.

Table 1: Submission Sites in Oadby

Initial Site Ref.	Site Name	Nearest Settlement	Area (Ha)	Ward(s)	Developer / Agent	Proposed Use
OAD/001	Land at Stoughton Grange Farm	Oadby	3.63*	Oadby Grange	Stantec	Leisure and Recreation
OAD/002	Land South of Gartree Road	Oadby	22.8	Oadby Uplands	Stantec	Residential: approximately 467 dwellings.
OAD/003	Land to the West, South and East of Spire Leicester Hospital, Gartree Road	Oadby	6.07*	Oadby Grange	Stantec	Mixed Use: Residential, Health, Education. Approximately 65 – 90 dwellings and approximately 3,500 sqm of non-residential floorspace.
OAD/004	Land North of Manor Road	Oadby	0.6*	Oadby Grange	Marble Property Services Ltd	Residential: 4 – 8 dwellings
OAD/005	Land North of Palmerston Way	Oadby	3.1*	Oadby St. Peters	Landmark Planning Ltd	An institutional or similar style use, yet to be determined.
OAD/006	Land at Oadby Grange	Oadby	22.9*	Oadby Woodlands Oadby Uplands	Pegasus Group	Residential and Country Park: approximately 300 – 330 dwellings.
OAD/007	Land South of Sutton Close	Oadby	Circa 9.0*	Oadby Brocks Hill	DLP Planning Ltd	Residential: approximately 50 – 170 dwellings.
OAD/008	Half of Glen Gorse Golf Course	Oadby	12.69	Oadby Brocks Hill	Marble Property Services Ltd	Residential: approximately 224 – 336 dwellings.
OAD/009	Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Primary Masterplan)	Oadby	33.65*	Oadby Uplands	Stantec	Residential (approximately 600 dwellings) and approximately 0.4 hectares of Commercial or Community uses.
OAD/010	Land South of Gartree Road and	Oadby	33.65	Oadby Uplands	Stantec	Residential (approximately 380 dwellings), and approximately

Initial Site Ref.	Site Name	Nearest Settlement	Area (Ha)	Ward(s)	Developer / Agent	Proposed Use
	East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Variant Option 1)					0.4 hectares of Commercial or Community uses, plus a Cemetery.
OAD/011	Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Variant Option 2)	Oadby	33.65	Oadby Uplands	Stantec	Residential (approximately 500 dwellings), and approximately 0.4 hectares of Commercial or Community uses, plus a Cemetery.
OAD/012	Land at East Street Car Park, Oadby (Brooksby Square)	Oadby	Circa 1.0*	Oadby St. Peter's	OWBC	Mixed Use: 38 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
OAD/013	Land at Sandhurst Street Car Park, Oadby (Baxter's Place)	Oadby	Circa 1.0*	Oadby St. Peter's	OWBC	Mixed Use: 38 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
OAD/014	Sewage Works Employment Extension Oadby	Oadby	2.67	Oadby St. Peter's	Severn Trent Water	Employment Land - B2, B8 use and / or E(g) uses
OAD/015	Land South of Gartree Road and North of the A6, Oadby	Oadby	60.0*	Oadby Woodlands Ward	Urban and Civic	Residential (up to 1,000 dwellings in Oadby element). This site forms part of wider site that falls in neighbouring Authority area).

Table 2: Submission Sites in Wigston and Kilby Bridge

Initial Site Ref.	Site Name	Nearest Settlement	Area (Ha)	Ward(s)	Developer / Agent	Proposed Use
WIG/001	Land West of Welford Road	Wigston	3.25*	Wigston All Saints	Andrew Granger & Co	Residential: approximately 60 – 75 dwellings.
WIG/002	Wigston Meadows Phase 3	Wigston	Circa 26.0*	Wigston Meadowcourt	David Wilson Homes East Midlands	Residential: at least 400 dwellings.
WIG/003	Land North of Denbydale	Wigston	2.33	Wigston Meadowcourt	Jelson Limited	Residential: approximately 50 – 60 dwellings.
WIG/004	Land North of Newton Lane	Wigston	40.64	Wigston Meadowcourt	Jelson Limited	Residential: approximately 1,000 – 1,300 dwellings.
WIG/005	Highfield Farm	Wigston	21.08	Wigston Meadowcourt	Marble Property Services Ltd	Leisure: approximately 6,000 sqm
WIG/006	Land off Denbydale and Rosedale Road	Wigston	8.29	Wigston Meadowcourt	Jelson Limited	Residential and Agricultural: approximately 150 – 155 dwellings.
WIG/007	Land at Seven Oaks Farm, Newton Lane	Wigston	29.0	Wigston Meadowcourt	Westernrange Limited	Residential: approximately 610 – 810 dwellings.
WIG/008	Land at Newton Lane	Wigston	69.0*	Wigston Meadowcourt	Westernrange Limited and Jelson Limited	Residential: approximately 1,400 – 1,700 dwellings, a Local Centre and a new 1 FE Primary School.
WIG/009	Land West of Welford Road	Kilby Bridge	3.59*	Wigston All Saints	Mr Lee Hadfield (Private Landowner)	Residential: approximately 78 – 103 dwellings.
WIG/010	Land North of Glen Gorse Golf Course	Wigston	12.8*	Wigston Meadowcourt	Mather Jamie	Residential: approximately 280 – 370 dwellings.
WIG/011	Land Adjacent to Newton Lane	Wigston	7.87*	Wigston Meadowcourt	Mr David Coverdale	Residential or Residential Institution: approximately 350 – 395 dwellings.

Initial Site Ref.	Site Name	Nearest Settlement	Area (Ha)	Ward(s)	Developer / Agent	Proposed Use
					(Private Landowner)	
WIG/012	Land north of centre (primarily focused on Junction Road car park) adjacent to Wakes Road / Junction Road, Wigston (Burgess Junction)	Wigston	Circa 1.0*	Wigston St. Wolstan's	OWBC	Mixed Use: 43 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
WIG/013	Frederick Street towards the north of Bell Street, Wigston (Chapel Mill)	Wigston	Circa 1.0*	Wigston St. Wolstan's	OWBC	Mixed Use: 43 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
WIG/014	Land towards the south of the centre (primarily focussed on Paddock Street car park) between Bell Street and Paddock Street, Wigston (Long Lanes)	Wigston	Circa 1.0*	Wigston All Saints	OWBC	Mixed Use: 43 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces

Table 3: Submission Sites in South Wigston

Initial Site Ref.	Site Name	Nearest Settlement	Area (Ha)	Ward(s)	Developer / Agent	Proposed Use
SWIG/001	Magna Road Employment Extension South Wigston	South Wigston	0.55	South Wigston	OWBC	Employment Land - B2, B8 use and / or E(g) uses

Table 4: Submission Sites in Oadby and Wigston (Cross-Settlement)

Initial Site Ref.	Site Name	Nearest Settlement	Area (Ha)	Ward(s)	Developer / Agent	Proposed Use
O&W/001	Glen Gorse Golf Course	Oadby Wigston	45.27	Oadby Brocks Hill Wigston Meadowcourt	Marble Property Services Ltd	Residential: approximately 630 – 1,080 dwellings.
O&W/002	Glen Gorse Golf Course and Highfield Farm	Oadby Wigston	66.49*	Oadby Brocks Hill Wigston Meadowcourt	Marble Property Services Ltd	Residential and Leisure: approximately 630 – 1,080 dwellings and 6,000 sqm of non-residential floorspace.

In total, the Council is considering 32 site submissions covering circa 336.17 hectares of land⁹.

Based purely on the figures submitted by landowners and / or site promoters, it is suggested that these sites would have capacity to accommodate approximately 4,422 to 5,622 dwellings.

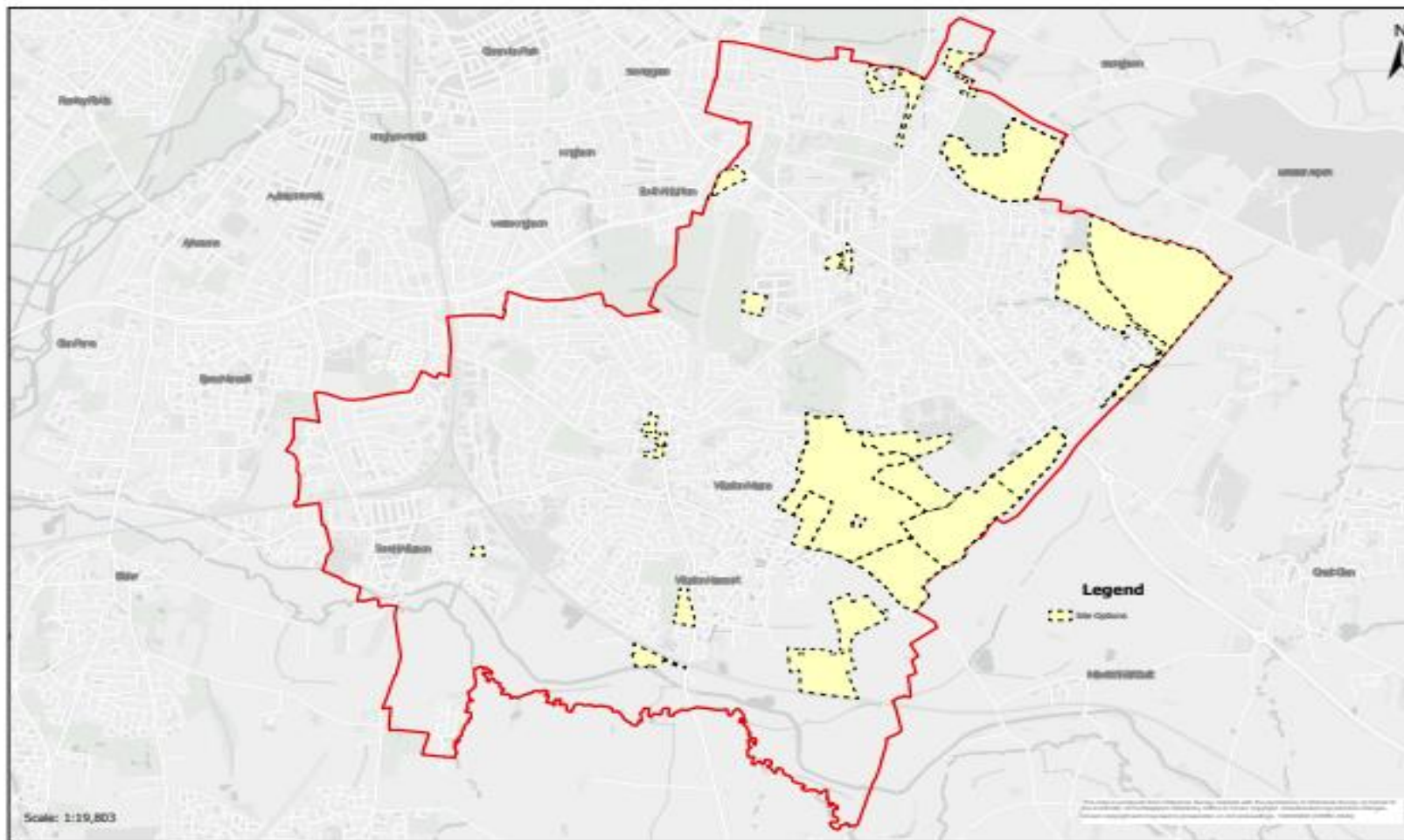
With regards to non-residential options, 9,500 sqm of non-residential floorspace (listed as Health, Education or Leisure floorspace in the submissions) has been proposed, as well as land for employment, retail, commercial, community, institutional or cemetery uses.

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⁹ Please note: This figure does not take account of all 32 individual submissions because in some instances, some parcels of land have been submitted more than once as part of wider sites, and therefore, only the whole site area, including all parcels, have been included in this calculation (using an asterisk* in Tables 1 - 4).

All Regulation 18B Site Options Received (Spring 2024)

Local Plan Regulation 18B Site Options



OAD/001, Land at Stoughton Grange Farm, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/001
Site name:	Land at Stoughton Grange Farm, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Grange
Site area:	3.63 ha
Easting / Northing:	462935 / 302148
Brownfield/greenfield:	Brownfield and Greenfield
Proposed use:	Leisure and Recreation
Location description:	The Site forms part of the Stoughton Grange Farm Park complex and surrounding land. The Site is located off Gartree Road, in the north-east of the Borough.
Asset description:	The Site is host to a number of former agricultural buildings, which are now redundant, and areas of hard standing.
Adjacent use:	Open grassland and woodland surround it, insofar as they lie within the Borough Council's administrative area. The wider land holding includes the woodland, open grassland and water body associated with the former Stoughton Grange Hall (in Harborough District). There are three Grade II listed buildings and one locally listed building within 150m of the Site.

Site Photographs and Map

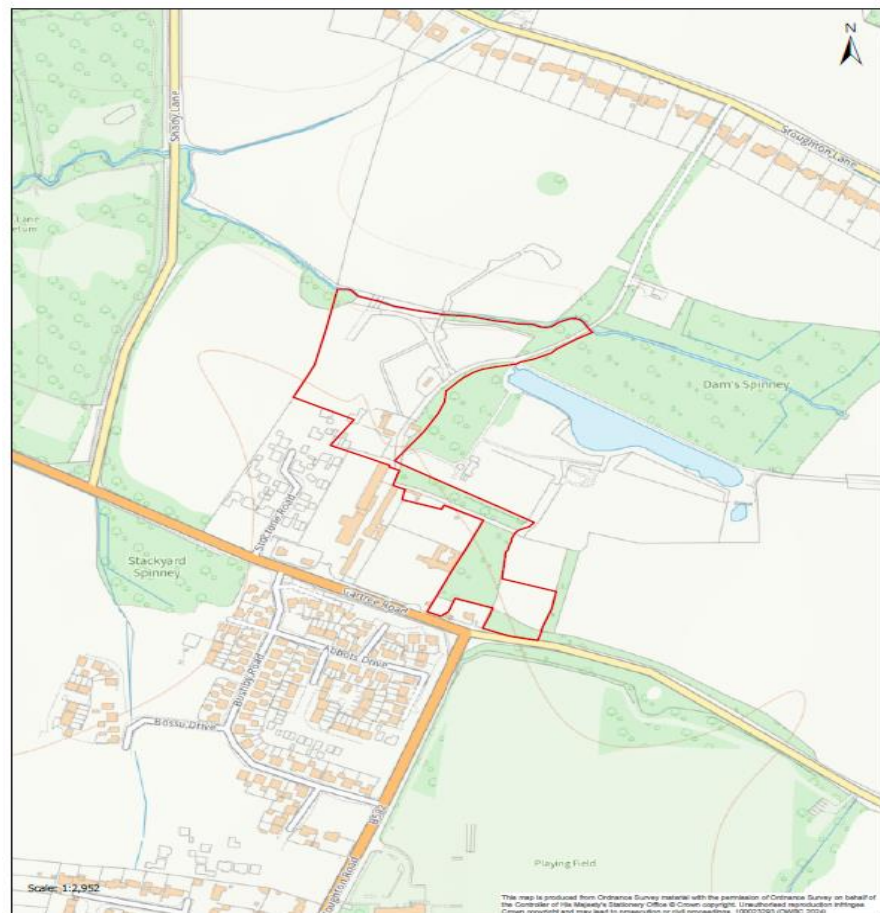
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_001 - Land at Stoughton Grange Farm



OAD/002, Land South of Gartree Road, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/002
Site name:	Land South of Gartree Road, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Uplands
Site area:	22.8 ha
Easting / Northing:	463536 / 301540
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 467 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site is located in the north-east of the Borough, east of Stoughton Road, south of Gartree Road, Oadby. The Site is adjacent to the Stoughton Road Playing Fields belonging to the University of Leicester.
Asset description:	The Site comprises two distinct greenfield land parcels, defined by strong hedgerow boundaries separated by a watercourse and sporadic trees. There are public rights of way, one running north to south through the Site, as well as one running along the southern boundary of the Site, east to west.
Adjacent use:	There are also a number of trees located to the north-west of the Site adjacent with the boundary with the aforementioned playing fields and along the southern boundary of the Site, adjacent to the rear gardens of the residential properties on Copse Close. Arable fields are located to the north and east, and residential properties are to the south.

Site Photographs and Map

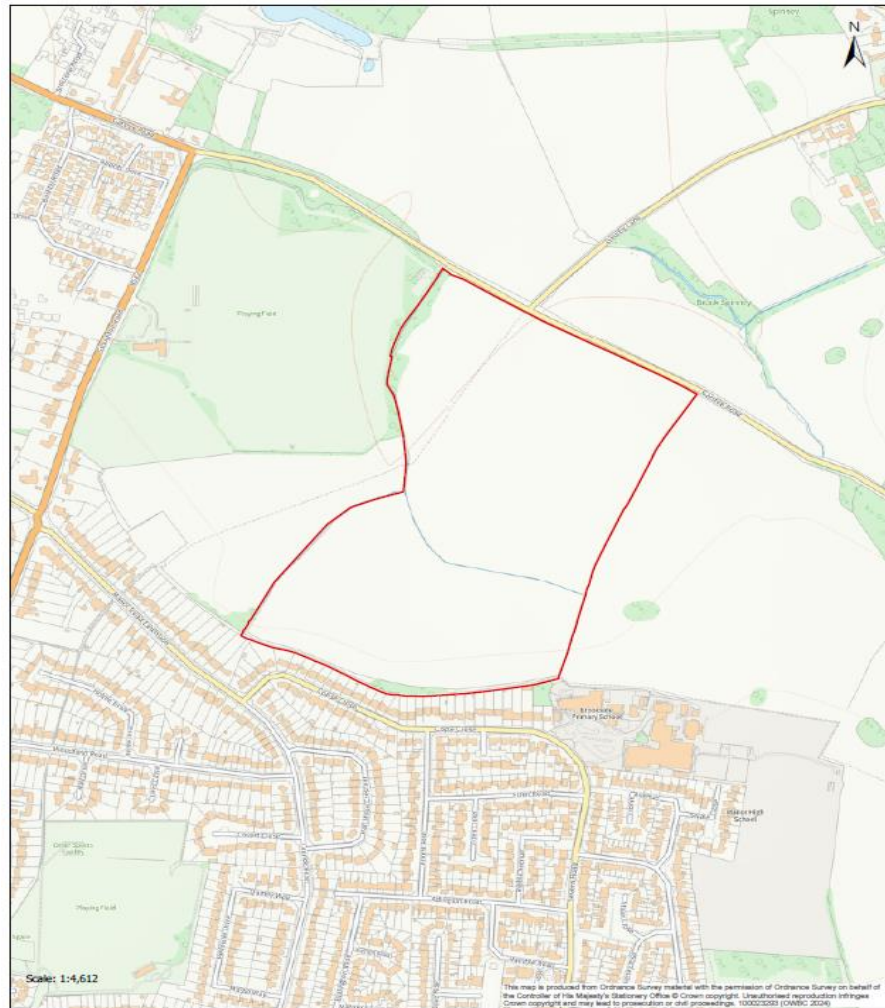
Site photographs:



Aerial view from the south looking northwards.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_002 - Land South of Gartree Road



OAD/003, Land to the West, South and East of Spire Leicester Hospital, Gartree Road, Oadby

Proposed Site Option Summary

Site reference:	OAD/003
Site name:	Land to the West, South and East of Spire Leicester Hospital, Gartree Road, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Grange
Site area:	6.07 ha (suggested only circa 4.0 hectare available for development)
Easting / Northing:	462409 / 302106
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Mixed Use: Residential, Health, Education. Approximately 65 – 90 dwellings and approximately 3,500 sqm of non-residential floorspace.
Location description:	The Site effectively wraps around the Spire Leicester Hospital site, south of Gartree Road in the north of Oadby. A Public Right of Way runs through the Site leading to Gartree Road.
Asset description:	The Site comprises two distinct land parcels, the first and largest, to the west is irregular in shape and wraps around the Spire Leicester Hospital. It provides a frontage to Gartree Road, to the west of the hospital access. A number of trees and hedgerows line the periphery of this parcel of land. The second parcel, to the east, is broadly triangular in shape and again has a frontage to Gartree Road to the north. Stackyard Spinney is partially located in and adjacent to the site, in the north-eastern corner.
Adjacent use:	The Site is bounded by residential properties to the west and south, which front Gartree Road, The Broadway and The Fairway. Stackyard Spinney is partially located in and adjacent to the Site, in the north-eastern corner. Shady Lane Arboretum (in Leicester City) is to the north, as is the Spire Leicester Hospital. The eastern boundary is immediately adjacent to recently allocated Stoughton Grange Direction for Growth area.

Site Photographs and Map

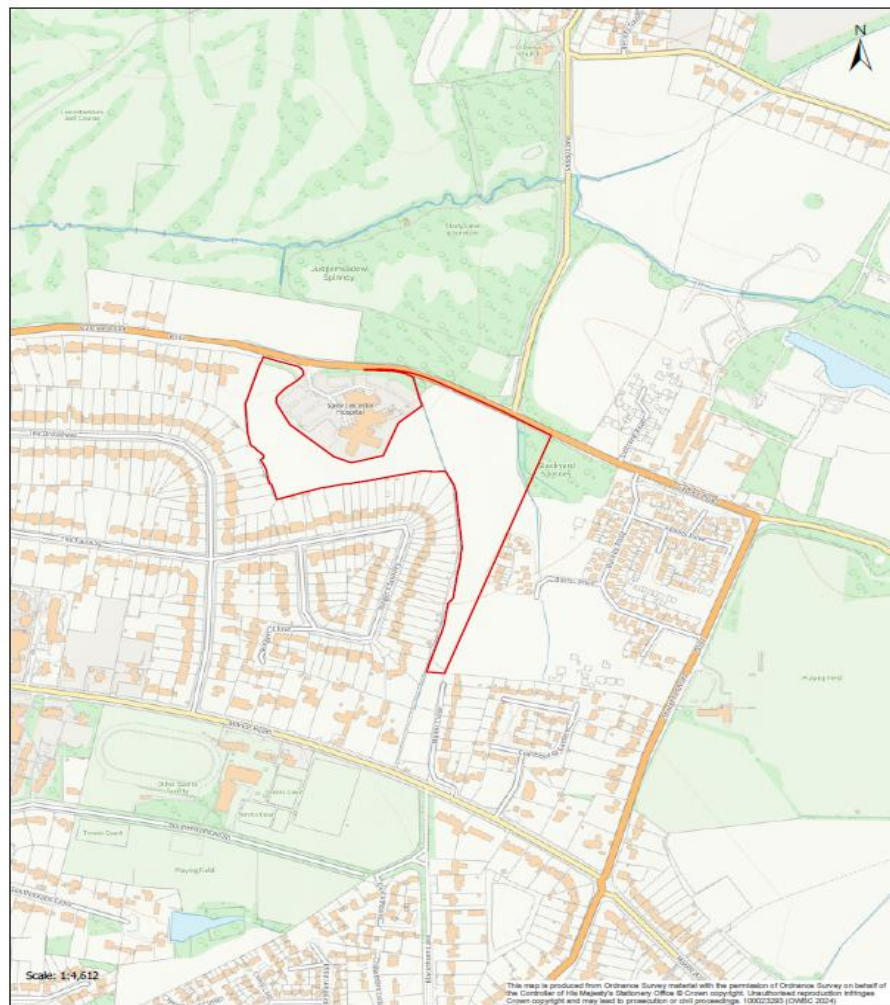
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards illustrating the proximity of this Site to the recently allocated development.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_003 - Land to the West, South and East of Spire



OAD/004, Land North of Manor Road, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/004
Site name:	Land North of Manor Road, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Grange
Site area:	0.6 ha
Easting / Northing:	462582 / 301662
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: 4 – 8 dwellings
Location description:	The Site extends northwards from Manor Road and is adjacent to Manor Close, Oadby.
Asset description:	The Site is entirely greenfield and undeveloped and is currently used as a Horses Paddock.
Adjacent use:	Residential to the west and east, grassland to the north (forming part of Site Option OAD/003), and University of Leicester's sports fields to the south, beyond Manor Road. The western boundary is flanked by a Public Right of Way, which extends further north, leading to Gartree Road.

Site Photographs and Map

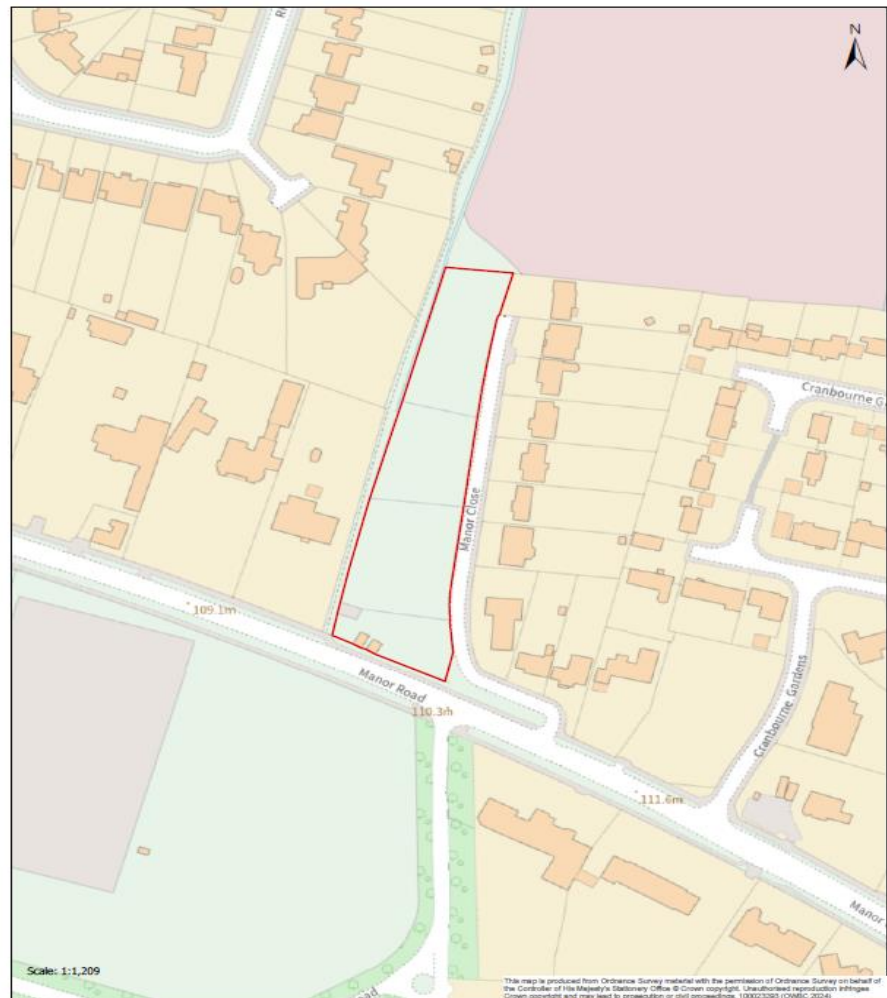
Site photographs:



View from Manor Road looking northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_004 - Land North of Manor Road



OAD/005, Land North of Palmerston Way, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/005
Site name:	Land North of Palmerston Way, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby St. Peters
Site area:	3.1 ha
Easting / Northing:	461332 / 301308
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	An institutional or similar style use, yet to be determined.
Location description:	The Site is located to the north of Palmerston Way (A563) and to the south-west of Leicester Road (A6), on the western fringe of Oadby, immediately adjacent to the Borough's administrative boundary with Leicester City.
Asset description:	The Site comprises of open grassland, semi-mature woodland and is bounded by hedgerows and small trees.
Adjacent use:	The surrounding road network are dominant features to the north, east and south, but beyond that, the site is surrounded by residential to the west and north, the University of Leicester's Botanical Gardens to the north-east, and Leicester Racecourse to the south.

Site Photographs and Map

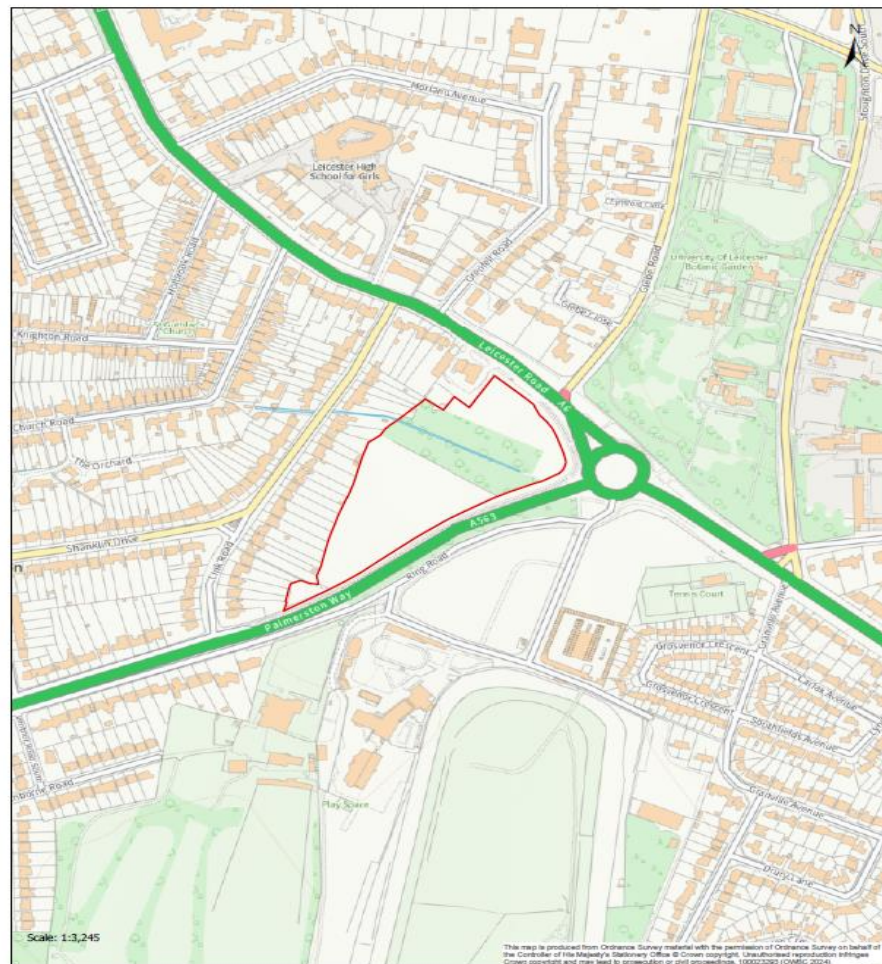
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_005 - Land North of Palmerston Way, Oadby



OAD/006, Land at Oadby Grange, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/006
Site name:	Land at Oadby Grange, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Woodlands Ward
Site area:	22.9 ha
Easting / Northing:	463918 / 300359
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential and Country Park: approximately 300 – 330 dwellings.
Location description:	Land at Oadby Grange, off Florence Wragg Way / Bluebell Close, immediately adjacent to the eastern-edge of Oadby.
Asset description:	To the south of the site is a large drainage basin constructed as part of the recent residential development on adjoining land. The site is located on the eastern edge of Oadby and is predominantly greenfield in nature. Bounded by mature woodland, as well as surrounding the drainage basin in the south.
Adjacent use:	Residential to the west and south, arable fields to the east, and school playing fields to the north.

Site Photographs and Map

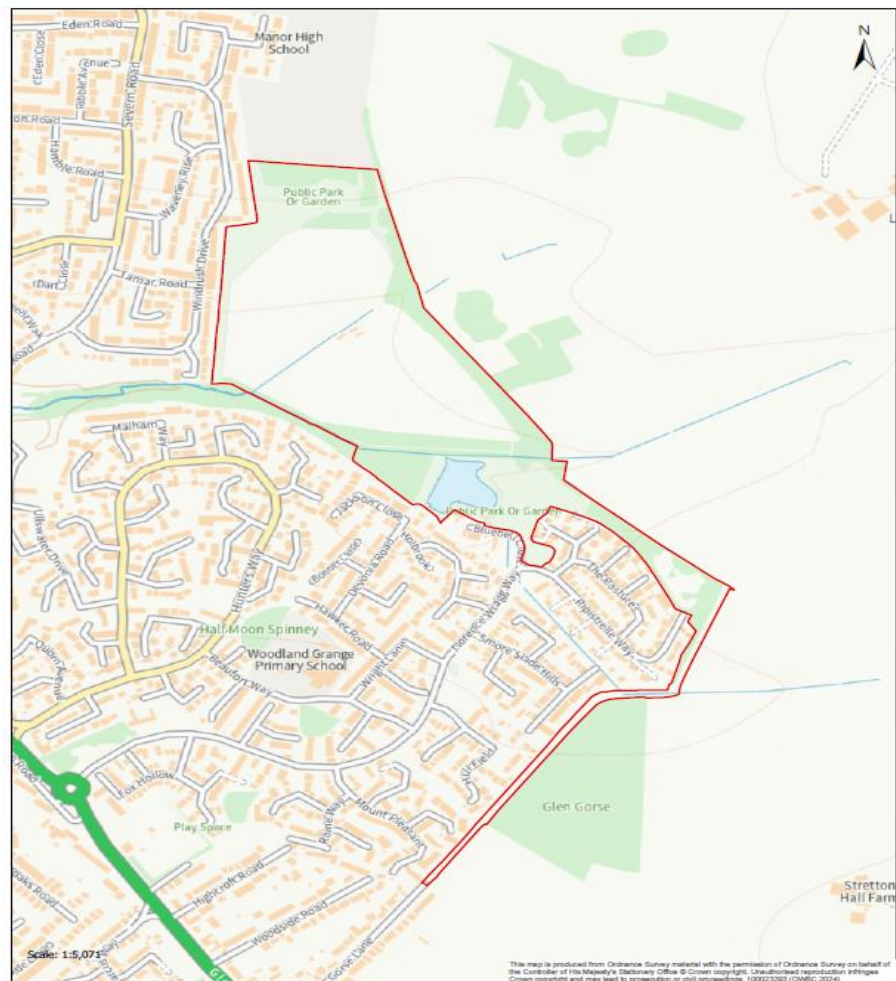
Site photographs:



Aerial view northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_006 - Land at Oadby Grange



OAD/007, Land South of Sutton Close, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/007
Site name:	Land South of Sutton Close, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Brocks Hill Ward
Site area:	9 ha
Easting / Northing:	462563 / 299089
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 50 – 170 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site is located to the south of Sutton Close and Tilton Drive, as well as Brocks Hill Primary School, Gartree High School and Beauchamp College. Oadby.
Asset description:	The Site currently used for the production of crops, predominantly bound by hedgerows and sporadic trees throughout, except adjacent to the rear gardens off Sutton Close and Tilton Drive. A watercourse runs along the southernmost boundary of the site.
Adjacent use:	The Site is bound on its northern border partially by existing residential properties and the adjacent Schools; Brocks Hill Primary School, Gartree High School and Beauchamp College. The site area narrows toward the east and at its easternmost point it shares a boundary with the Coombe Park Recreational Ground, located to the southeast. To the south and west are agricultural fields.

Site Photographs and Map

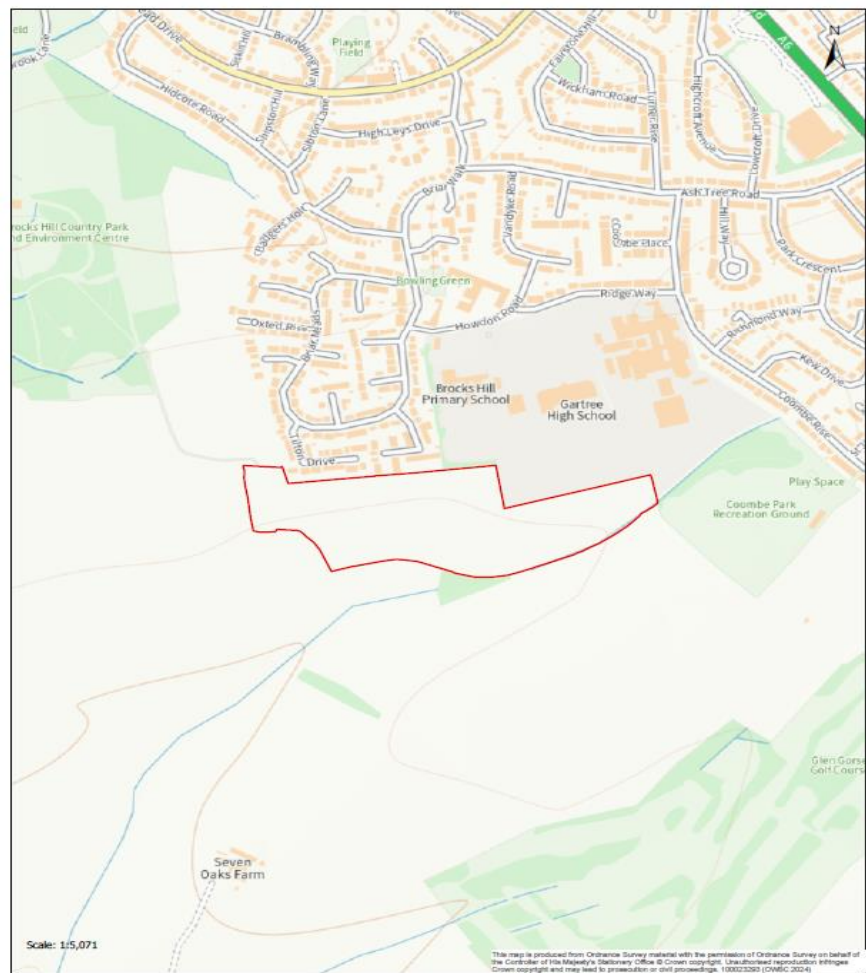
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards towards homes on Sutton Close, Oadby.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_007 - Land South of Sutton Close



OAD/008, Half of Glen Gorse Golf Course, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/008
Site name:	Half of Glen Gorse Golf Course, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Brocks Hill Ward
Site area:	12.69 ha
Easting / Northing:	463686 / 299099
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 224 – 336 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 12.69 hectares and forms part of the Glen Gorse Golf Course in Oadby. The Site is located off the A6, Glen Road, in the south-east of the Borough.
Asset description:	This Site consists of approximately half of the existing Glen Gorse Golf Course, incorporating the existing Club House and car park adjacent to the A6, Glen Road. The current use of the Site is considered to be Leisure-based.
Adjacent use:	Residential development to the north and east, agricultural and leisure uses to west and south. There are a few Public Rights of Way and watercourses running through and adjacent to the site. The site has direct access onto the A6, Glen Road.

Site Photographs and Map

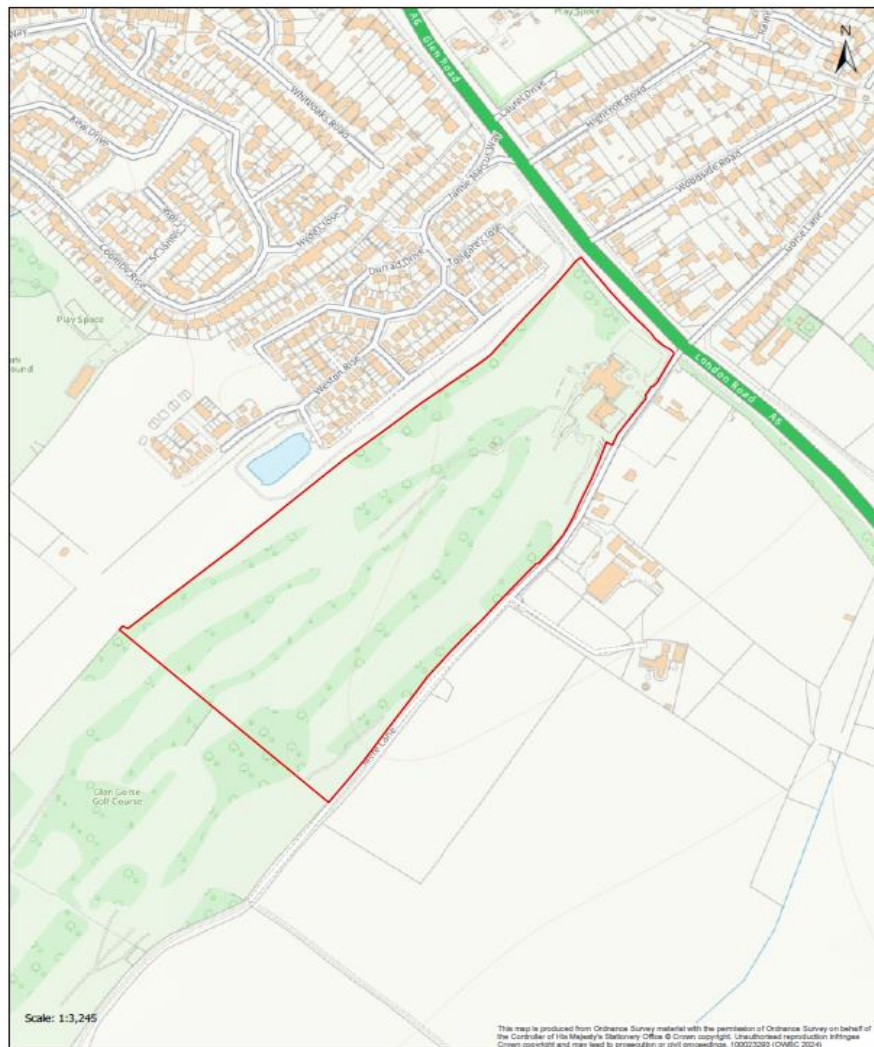
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards over Glen Gorse Golf Course, Oadby.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_008 - Half of Glen Gorse Golf Course



OAD/009, Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Primary Masterplan)**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/009
Site name:	Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Primary Masterplan)
Ward:	Oadby Uplands Ward and Oadby Grange Ward
Site area:	33.65 ha
Easting / Northing:	463536 / 301540
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential (approximately 600 dwellings) and approximately 0.4 hectares of Commercial or Community uses.
Location description:	The Site is located in the north-east of the Borough, east of Stoughton Road, south of Gartree Road, Oadby. The Site includes the southernmost parcel of land owned by the University of Leicester which is currently home to a football pitch, open grassland and a semi-mature woodland. The Site wraps around the remainder of the Stoughton Road Playing Fields belonging to the University of Leicester.
Asset description:	The Site comprises four distinct greenfield land parcels, defined by strong hedgerow boundaries separated by a watercourse and sporadic trees. There are public rights of way, one running north to south through the Site, as well as one running along the southern boundary of the Site, east to west. The Site benefits from direct access from Gartree road to the north and Stoughton Road to the west.
Adjacent use:	The Site has residential homes to the south and west, with the rear gardens of the residential properties on Copse Close and Manor Road Extension immediately adjacent to the southern boundary. Arable fields are located to the north and east, and schools to the south-east.

Site Photographs and Map

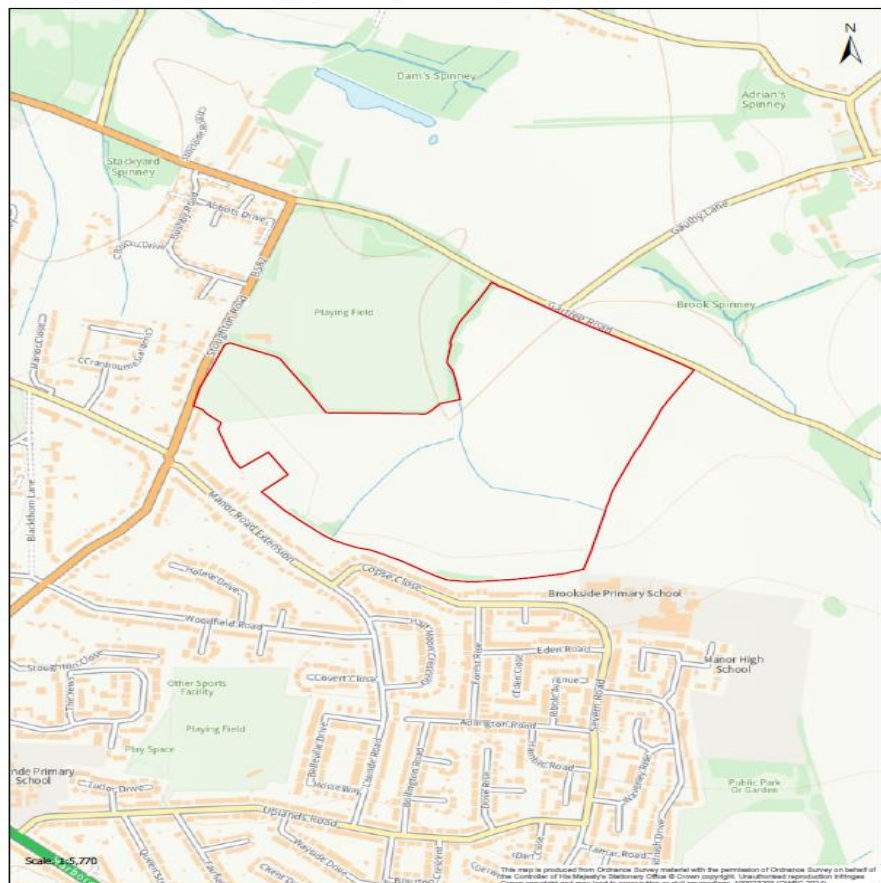
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_009 - Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Primary Masterplan)



OAD/010, Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Variant Option 1)**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/010
Site name:	Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Variant Option 1)
Ward:	Oadby Uplands Ward and Oadby Grange Ward
Site area:	33.65 ha
Easting / Northing:	463536 / 301540
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential (approximately 380 dwellings), and approximately 0.4 hectares of Commercial or Community uses, plus a Cemetery.
Location description:	The Site is located in the north-east of the Borough, east of Stoughton Road, south of Gartree Road, Oadby. The Site includes the southernmost parcel of land owned by the University of Leicester which is currently home to a football pitch, open grassland and a semi-mature woodland. The Site wraps around the remainder of the Stoughton Road Playing Fields belonging to the University of Leicester.
Asset description:	The Site comprises four distinct greenfield land parcels, defined by strong hedgerow boundaries separated by a watercourse and sporadic trees. There are public rights of way, one running north to south through the Site, as well as one running along the southern boundary of the Site, east to west. The Site benefits from direct access from Gartree road to the north and Stoughton Road to the west.
Adjacent use:	The Site has residential homes to the south and west, with the rear gardens of the residential properties on Copse Close and Manor Road Extension immediately adjacent to the southern boundary. Arable fields are located to the north and east, and schools to the south-east.

Site Photographs and Map

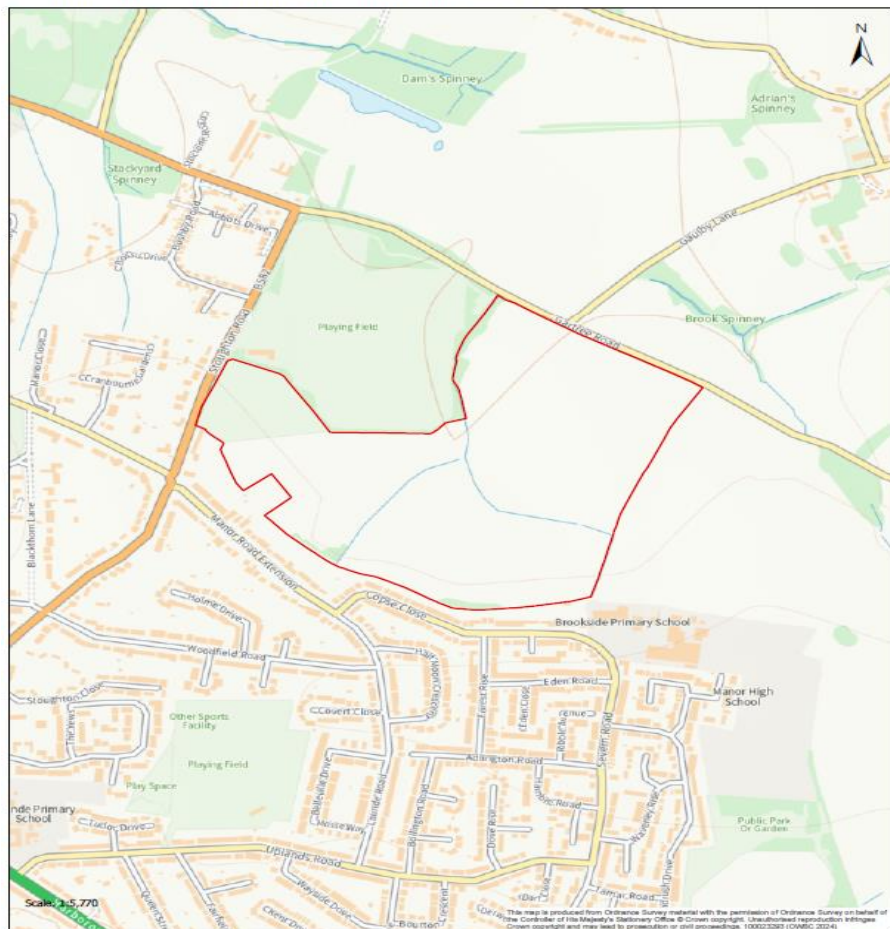
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_010 - Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Variant Option 1)



OAD/011, Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Variant Option 2)**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/011
Site name:	Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Variant Option 2)
Ward:	Oadby Uplands Ward and Oadby Grange Ward
Site area:	33.65 ha
Easting / Northing:	463536 / 301540
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential (approximately 500 dwellings), and approximately 0.4 hectares of Commercial or Community uses, plus a Cemetery.
Location description:	The Site is located in the north-east of the Borough, east of Stoughton Road, south of Gartree Road, Oadby. The Site includes the southernmost parcel of land owned by the University of Leicester which is currently home to a football pitch, open grassland and a semi-mature woodland. The Site wraps around the remainder of the Stoughton Road Playing Fields belonging to the University of Leicester.
Asset description:	The Site comprises four distinct greenfield land parcels, defined by strong hedgerow boundaries separated by a watercourse and sporadic trees. There are public rights of way, one running north to south through the Site, as well as one running along the southern boundary of the Site, east to west. The Site benefits from direct access from Gartree road to the north and Stoughton Road to the west.
Adjacent use:	The Site has residential homes to the south and west, with the rear gardens of the residential properties on Copse Close and Manor Road Extension immediately adjacent to the southern boundary. Arable fields are located to the north and east, and schools to the south-east.

Site Photographs and Map

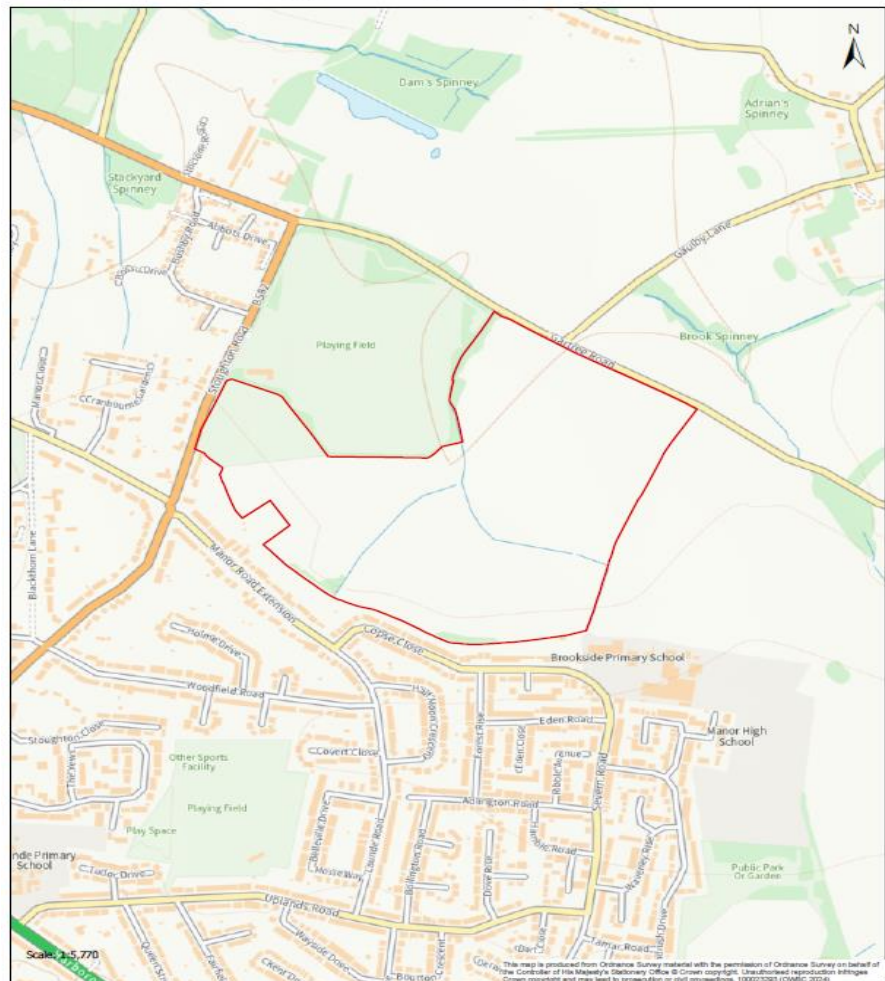
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_011 - Land South of Gartree Road and East of Stoughton Road, Oadby (Variant Option 2)



OAD/012, Land at East Street Car Park, Oadby (Brooksby Square)**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/012
Site name:	Land at East Street Car Park, Oadby (Brooksby Square)
Ward:	Oadby St Peter's Ward
Site area:	Circa 1.0 ha
Easting / Northing:	462206 / 300671
Brownfield/greenfield:	Brownfield
Proposed use:	Mixed Use: 38 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 1.0 hectare and forms the entirety of East Street Car Park and surrounding land. The Site is located off The Parade to the west and south, as well as Brooksby Drive, East Street and the A6, Harborough Road. The Site is located in the heart of Oadby.
Asset description:	The Site is predominantly car parking, as well as commercial units with a host of other uses above these shops, including residential. Much of the car park is owned and run by the Borough Council.
Adjacent use:	The site is urban in nature and therefore surrounded by a range of uses including retail, commercial and residential. Trinity Methodist Church is immediately adjacent to the site, to the north-east.

Site Photographs and Map

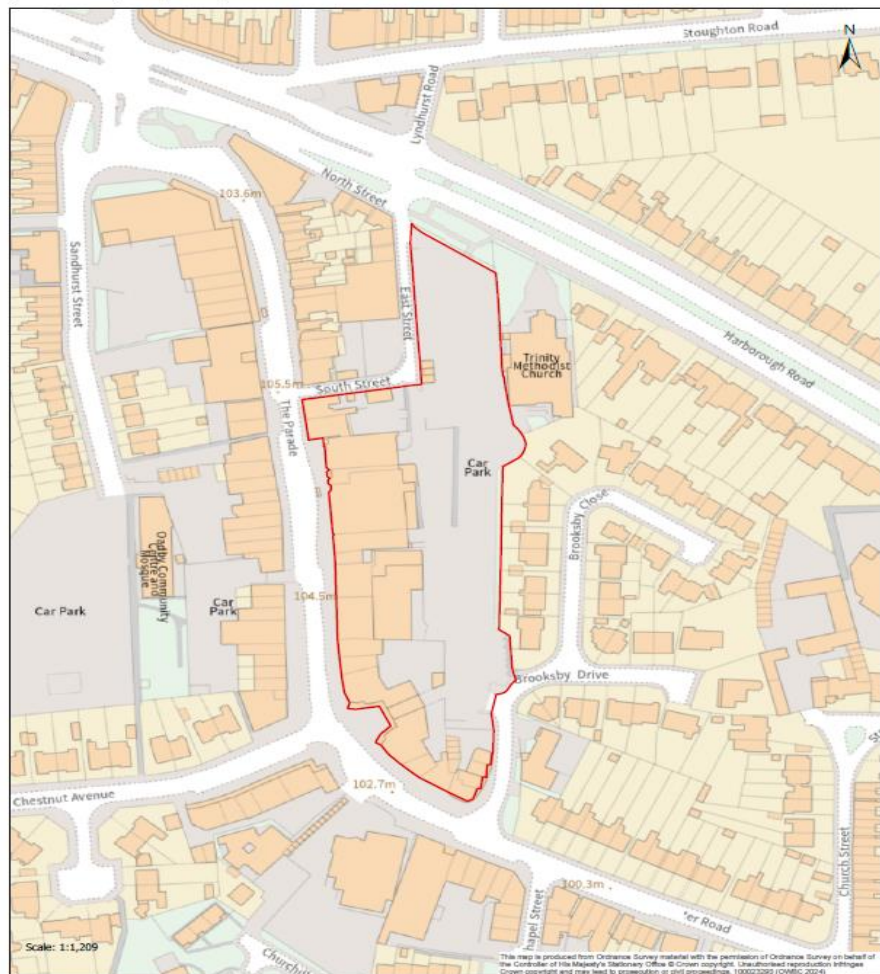
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_012 - Land at East Street Car Park, Oadby (Brooksbury Square)



OAD/013, Land at Sandhurst Street Car Park, Oadby (Baxter's Place)**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/013
Site name:	Land at Sandhurst Street Car Park, Oadby (Baxter's Place)
Ward:	Oadby St Peter's Ward
Site area:	Circa 1.0 ha
Easting / Northing:	462061 / 300577
Brownfield/greenfield:	Brownfield
Proposed use:	Mixed Use: 38 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 1.0 hectare and forms the entirety of Sandhurst Street Car Park and surrounding land. The Site is located off Sandhurst Street, to the east of The Parade and to the north of Chestnut Avenue. The Site is located in the heart of Oadby.
Asset description:	The Site is predominantly car parking, as well as commercial units with a host of other uses above these shops, including residential. Oadby Central Mosque is centrally located in the former Library building. The car park is owned and run by the Borough Council.
Adjacent use:	The site is urban in nature and therefore surrounded by a range of uses including retail, community, commercial and residential.

Site Photographs and Map

Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards through the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_013 - Land at Sandhurst Street Car Park, Oadby (Baxter's Place)



OAD/014, Sewage Works Employment Extension, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/014
Site name:	Sewage Works Employment Extension, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby St Peter's Ward
Site area:	2.67 ha
Easting / Northing:	461503 / 300228
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Employment Land - B2, B8 use and / or E(g) uses
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 2.67 hectare and forms the entirety of Severn Trent Water's Oadby Sewage Treatment Works. The Site is located off Sandhurst Street, to the east of The Parade and to the north of Chestnut Avenue. The Site is set back from the road, but access is possible via the private access road serving the Oadby Recycling And Household Waste Site.
Asset description:	This Site is currently in active use by Severn Trent Water as Oadby Sewage Treatment Works.
Adjacent use:	The Site is located adjacent to Kenilworth Drive Identified Employment Area; Leicester Racecourse; the Borough Council's Depot; and, Leicestershire County Council's Recycling and Household Waste Site.

Site Photographs and Map

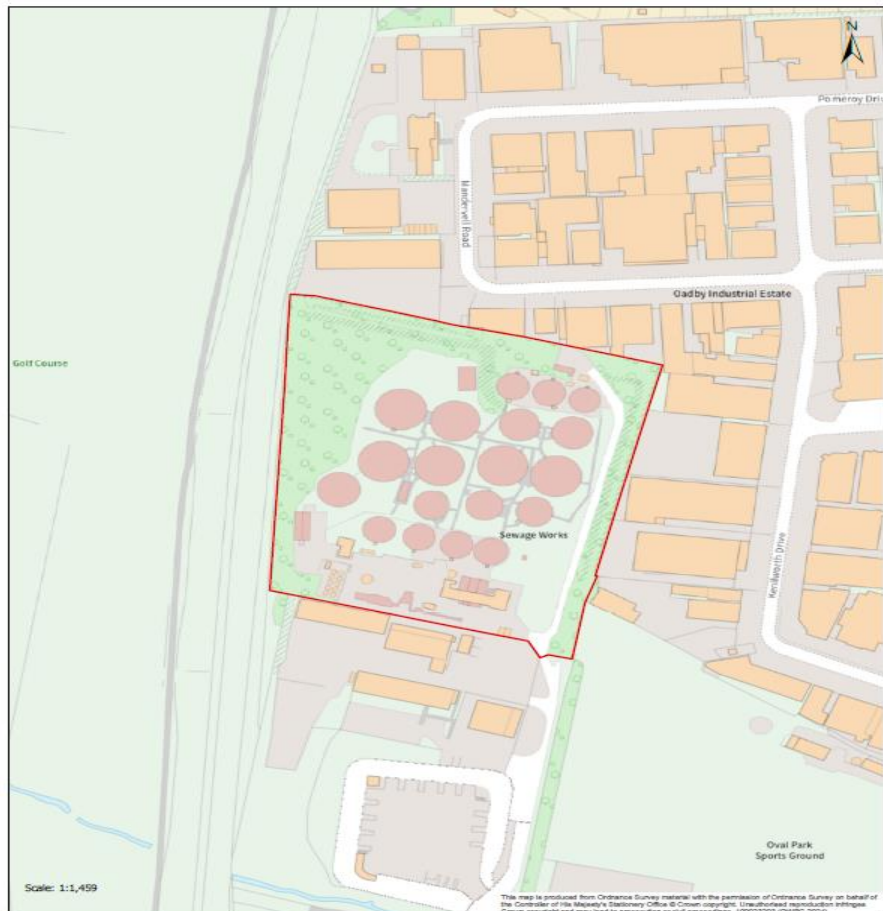
Site photographs:



Aerial photo looking northwards towards Oadby Sewage Treatment Works adjacent to Kenilworth Drive Identified Employment Area.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_014 - Sewage Works Employment Extension, Oadby



OAD/015, Land South of Gartree Road and North of the A6, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	OAD/015
Site name:	Land South of Gartree Road and North of the A6, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Woodlands Ward and Oadby Uplands Ward
Site area:	60.0 ha (OWBC) 203.0 ha (HDC)
Easting / Northing:	464411 / 300426
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	This site forms part of wider site that falls in the neighbouring Authority of Harborough District. Residential (up to 1,000 dwellings in Oadby element, up to 4,000 dwellings overall).
Location description:	The wider proposal is for a total site area of 263.0 ha, of which 203.0 ha is in Harborough District and 60.0 ha is in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. The Site area in the Borough is located south of Gartree Road, east of Oadby.
Asset description:	The element of the Site submission located in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is currently used for agricultural purposes in association with Lodge Farm. The Site is predominantly Greenfield, although there are some brownfield elements at Lodge Farm in the eastern parcel where agricultural buildings are located. There are established hedgerows and sporadic trees separating field boundaries, as well as some clusters of mature trees and woodland in the northern and western parcels. There are Public Right of Way running through the Site.
Adjacent use:	The western boundary of the Site is adjacent to the eastern urban fringe of Oadby. The element of the Site submission located in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is predominantly surrounded by open grassland and some small enclaves of woodland. However, it is important to note that the wider Site that this 60.0 hectare Site forms a part of wraps around this land on three sides, enabling access to Gartree Road to the north and to the A6, Glen Road, to the south.

Site Photographs and Map

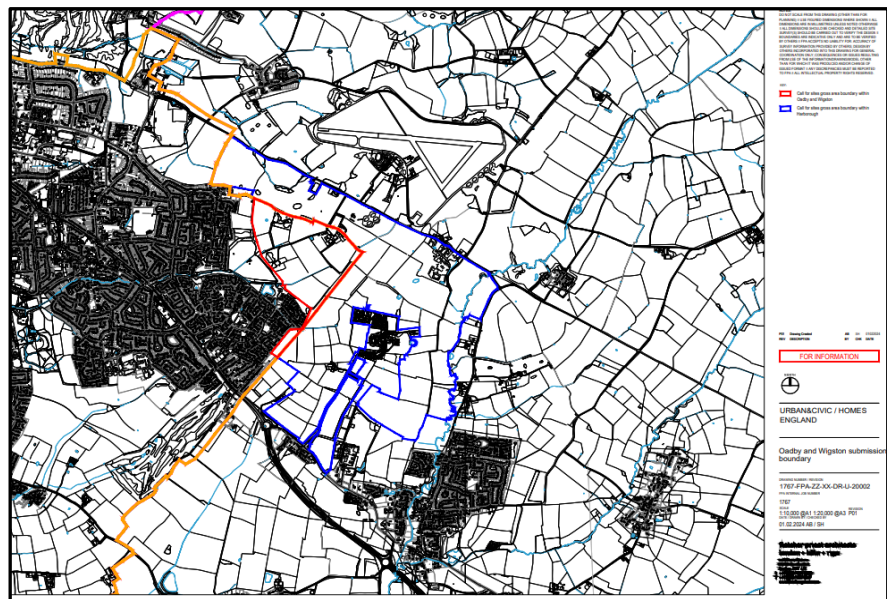
Site photographs:



Aerial photo looking westwards towards Oadby.

Site Map:

Location Plan of OAD_015 - Land South of Gartree Road and North of the A6, Oadby



WIG/001, Land West of Welford Road, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/001
Site name:	Land West of Welford Road, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston All Saints Ward
Site area:	3.25 ha
Easting / Northing:	460997 / 297663
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 60 – 75 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site is immediately adjacent to Welford Road in Wigston and is bound by built-development to the north, east and south, with only the adjacent Rugby Club to the west preserving an open character to the west.
Asset description:	The Site is 3.25 hectares in size and is currently used for agricultural purposes.
Adjacent use:	The Site is bound on its northern border by an existing access road to South Leicestershire Rugby Football Club (SLRFC) and a cemetery beyond, rugby pitches to the west, residential properties to the east of Welford Road, and, a new residential development to the south built developed by Redrow Homes.

Site Photographs and Map

Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards over the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_001 - Land West of Welford Road



WIG/002, Wigston Meadows Phase 3, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/002
Site name:	Wigston Meadows Phase 3, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	Circa 26.0 ha
Easting / Northing:	462053/ 297387
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: at least 400 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to circa 26.0 hectares and would act as a continuation to the Wigston Meadows Phase 2 development (as allocated in the Council's adopted Local Plan).
Asset description:	The current use of the site is predominantly agricultural and farm buildings, together with associated residential dwellings.
Adjacent use:	This Site could represent Phase 3 of the 'live' Wigston Meadows development area extending to the south-east of Wigston, east of Welford Road and South of Newton Lane. The southern boundary is flanked by the Leicester to London Railway Line, but in all other directions, the land uses are currently predominantly open grassland or arable uses with a small number of farm buildings or commercial uses.

Site Photographs and Map

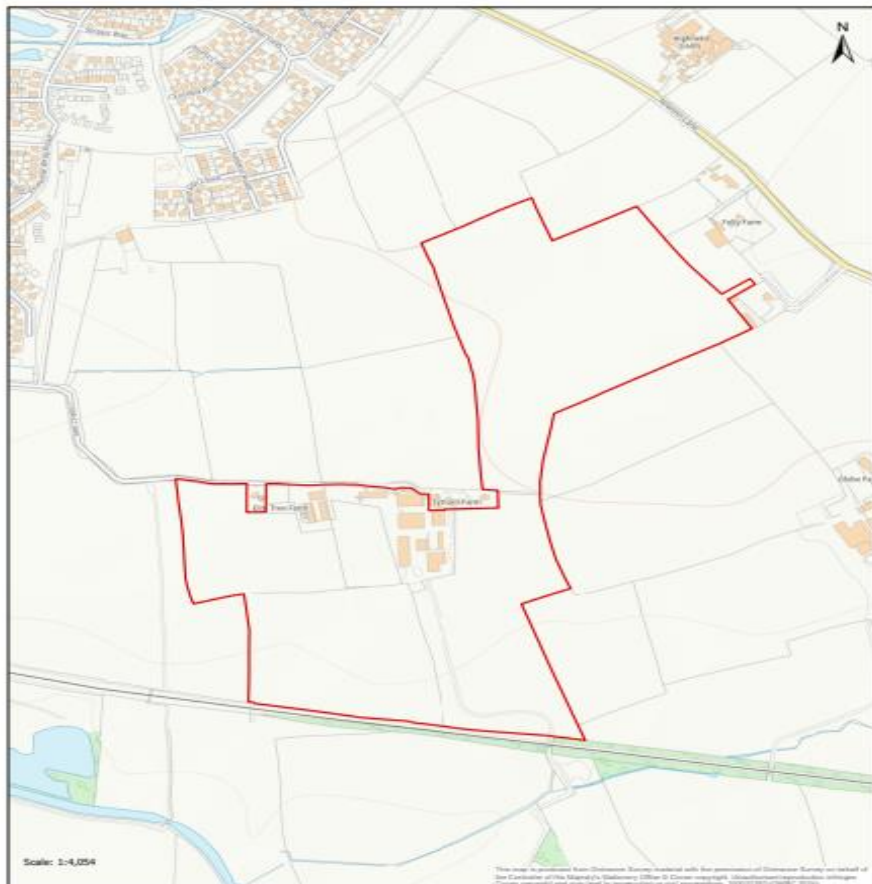
Site photographs:



Aerial view northwards of the full extent of the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_002 - Wigston Meadows Phase 3



WIG/003, Land North of Denbydale, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/003
Site name:	Land North of Denbydale, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	2.33 ha
Easting / Northing:	461785/ 298565
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 50 – 60 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site is 2.33 hectares and is immediately adjacent to the existing urban area, to the east of Wigston.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is flanked on all boundaries by mature hedgerows and sporadic trees.
Adjacent use:	Open fields used for agricultural and arable purposes to the north and east. To the south and west, the site is bounded by residential suburbs of Wigston.

Site Photographs and Map

Site photographs:



Aerial photo looking northwards over the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_003 - Land North of Denbydale



WIG/004, Land North of Newton Lane, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/004
Site name:	Land North of Newton Lane, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	40.64 ha
Easting / Northing:	462106 / 298836
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 1,000 – 1,300 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to 40.64 hectares north of Newton Lane and to the east of Wigston, centrally located in the heart of the Borough.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes and its field boundaries are separated by established hedgerows. The eastern boundary is flanked north to south by a watercourse. The north-western boundary is partially flanked by a public right of way from Tendring Drive, northwards towards Brocks Hill Country Park to the north. Another public right of way runs through the site, east to west.
Adjacent use:	Open grassland / arable fields to the east, Brocks Hill Country Park and woodland to the north, and, suburban residential estates to the south and west. The Site has access onto Newton Lane, to the South.

Site Photographs and Map

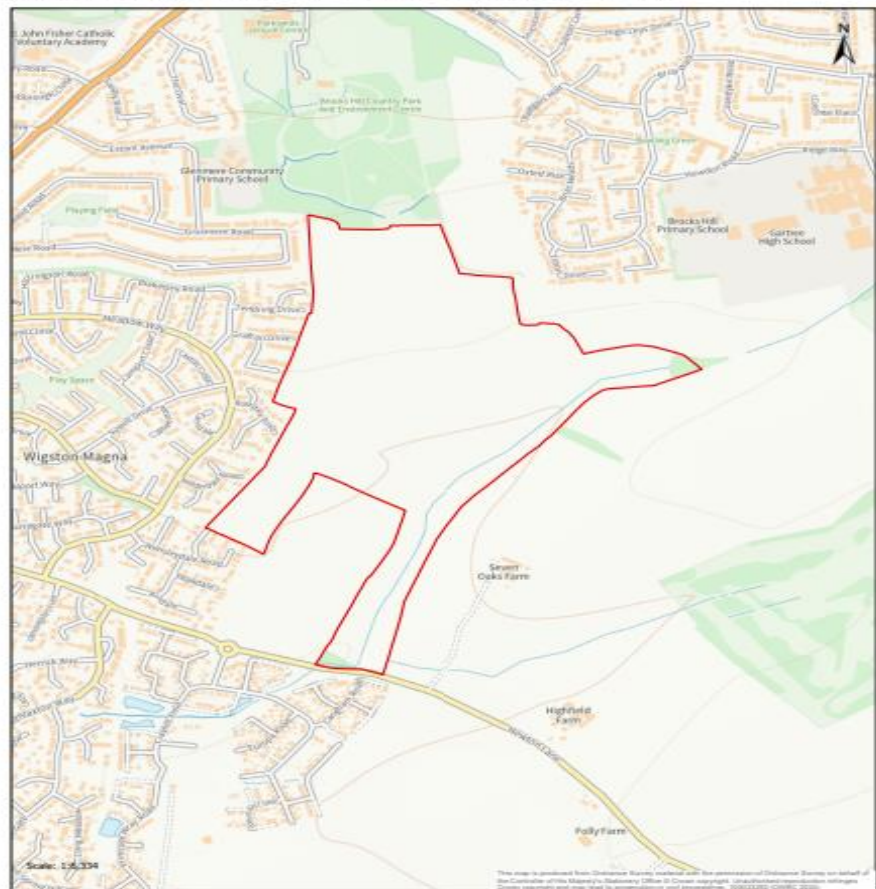
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards over the Site towards Brocks Hill Country Park to the north.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_004 - Land North of Newton Lane



WIG/005, Highfield Farm, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/005
Site name:	Highfield Farm, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	21.08 ha
Easting / Northing:	462406 / 297979
Brownfield/greenfield:	Predominantly Greenfield
Proposed use:	Leisure: approximately 6,000 sqm
Location description:	The Site extends 21.08 hectares and enjoys direct access from Newton Lane, Wigston.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes in association with Highfield Farm and its field boundaries are separated by established hedgerows.
Adjacent use:	The south-eastern boundary is flanked north to south by a public right of way and the south-western boundary by Newton Lane. The Site is currently surrounded in all directions by open arable fields, a small cluster of farm buildings to the south and Glen Gorse Golf Course to the north.

Site Photographs and Map

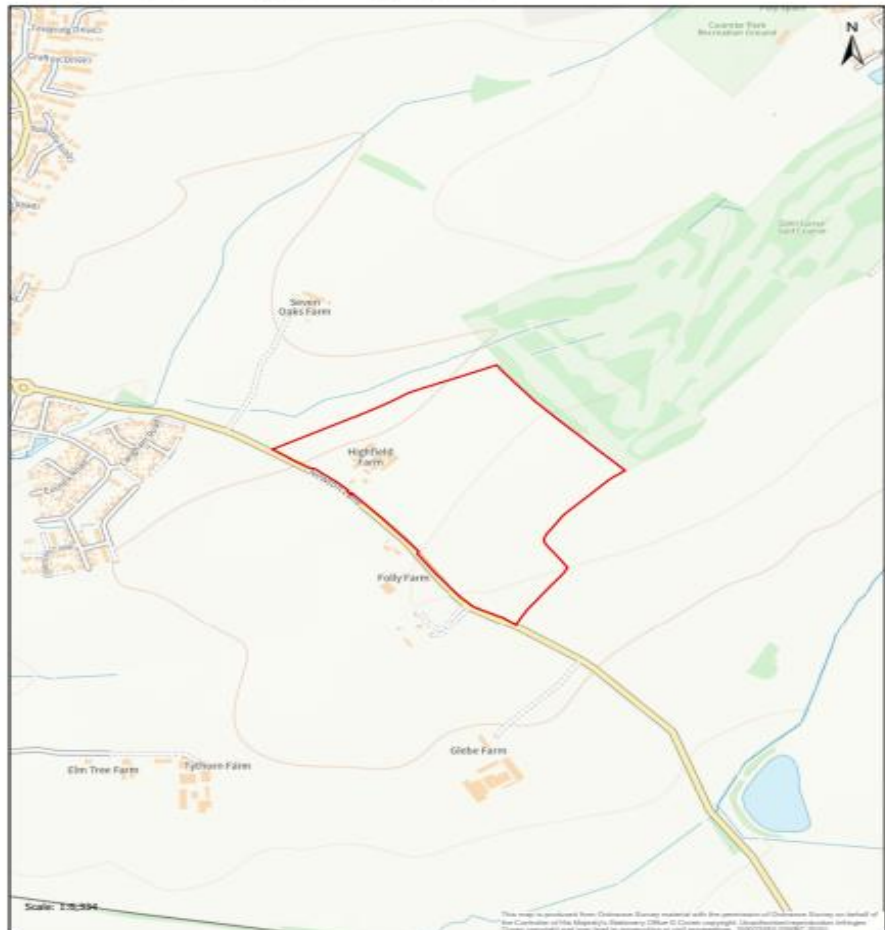
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards over Highfield Farm, Wigston, with Glen Gorse Golf Course in the distance.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_005 - Highfield Farm



WIG/006, Land off Denbydale and Rosedale Road, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/006
Site name:	Land off Denbydale and Rosedale Road, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	8.29 ha
Easting / Northing:	461869 / 298720
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential and Agricultural: approximately 150 – 155 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 8.29 hectares and is immediately adjacent to the existing urban area, to the east of Wigston.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is flanked on all boundaries by mature hedgerows and sporadic trees.
Adjacent use:	Open fields used for agricultural and arable purposes to the north and east. To the south and west, the site is bounded by residential suburbs of Wigston.

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Site Photographs and Map

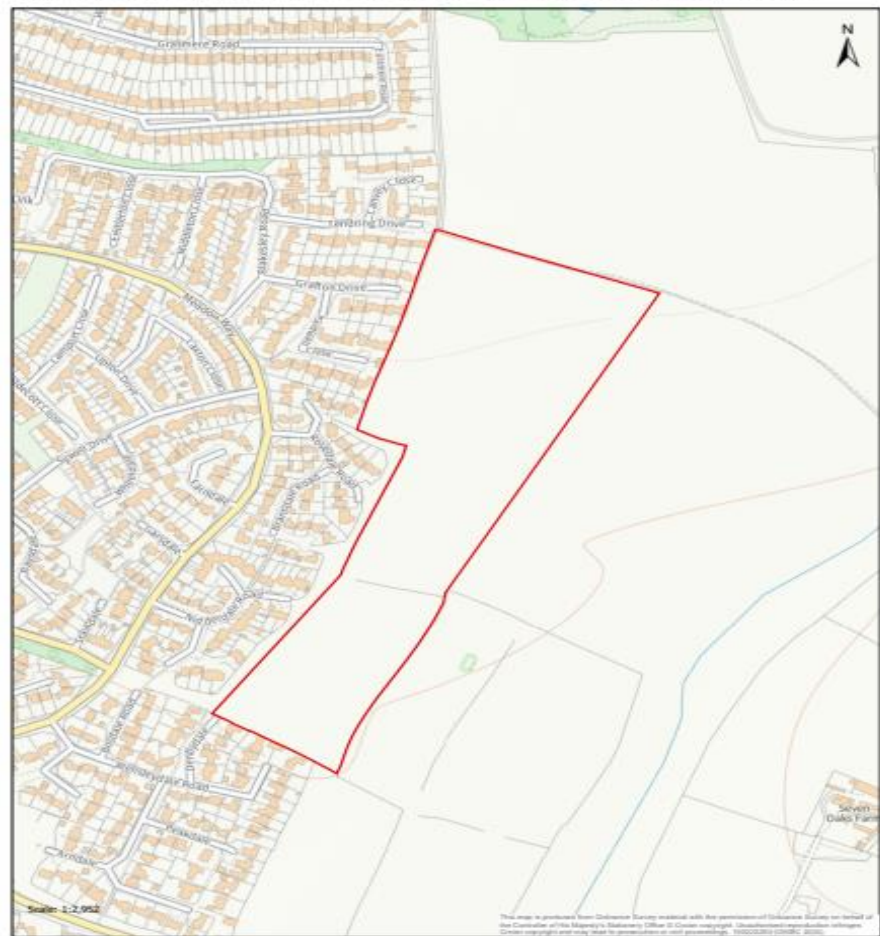
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards over the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_006 - Land off Denbydale and Rosedale Road



WIG/007, Land at Seven Oaks Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/007
Site name:	Land at Seven Oaks Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	29.0 ha
Easting / Northing:	462252 / 298279
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 610 – 810 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 29.0 hectares and benefits from access onto Newton Lane, Wigston. The Site wraps around Sevenoaks Farm (which has been excluded from the submission) and the north-eastern corner adjoins Glen Gorse Golf Course.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes and its field boundaries are separated by established hedgerows and sporadic trees.
Adjacent use:	A watercourse runs through the southern and eastern parcels of the Site and the southern boundary by Newton Lane. The Site is currently surrounded in all directions by open arable fields, except to the south-west where Wigston Meadows has formed on the opposite side of Newton Lane, Wigston. The site wraps around Sevenoaks Farm (excluded from the submission) and Glen Gorse Golf Course adjoins the north-eastern corner of the Site.

Site Photographs and Map

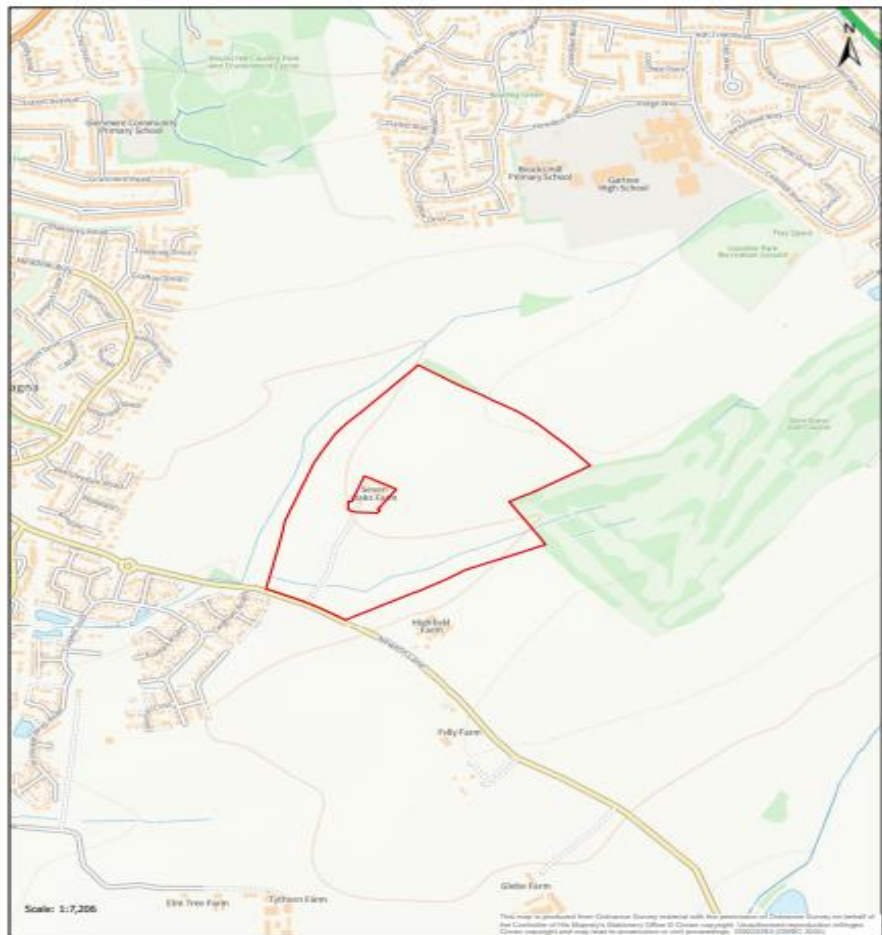
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards over the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_007 - Land at Seven Oaks Farm, Newton Lane



WIG/008, Land at Newton Lane, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/008
Site name:	Land at Newton Lane, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	69.0 ha
Easting / Northing:	462181 / 298519
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 1,400 – 1,700 dwellings, a Local Centre and a new 1 FE Primary School.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 69.0 hectares north of Newton Lane and to the east of Wigston, centrally located in the heart of the Borough. The Site wraps around Sevenoaks Farm (which has been excluded from the submission) and the north-eastern corner adjoins Glen Gorse Golf Course.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes and its field boundaries are separated by established hedgerows and sporadic trees. There are watercourses and public rights of way running through the site.
Adjacent use:	Open grassland / arable fields to the east, Brocks Hill Country Park and woodland to the north, and, suburban residential estates to the south and west. The Site has access onto Newton Lane, to the South. The Site is currently surrounded in all directions by open arable fields, except to the south-west where Wigston Meadows has formed on the opposite side of Newton Lane, Wigston. The site wraps around Sevenoaks Farm (excluded from the submission) and Glen Gorse Golf Course adjoins the north-eastern corner of the Site.

Site Photographs and Map

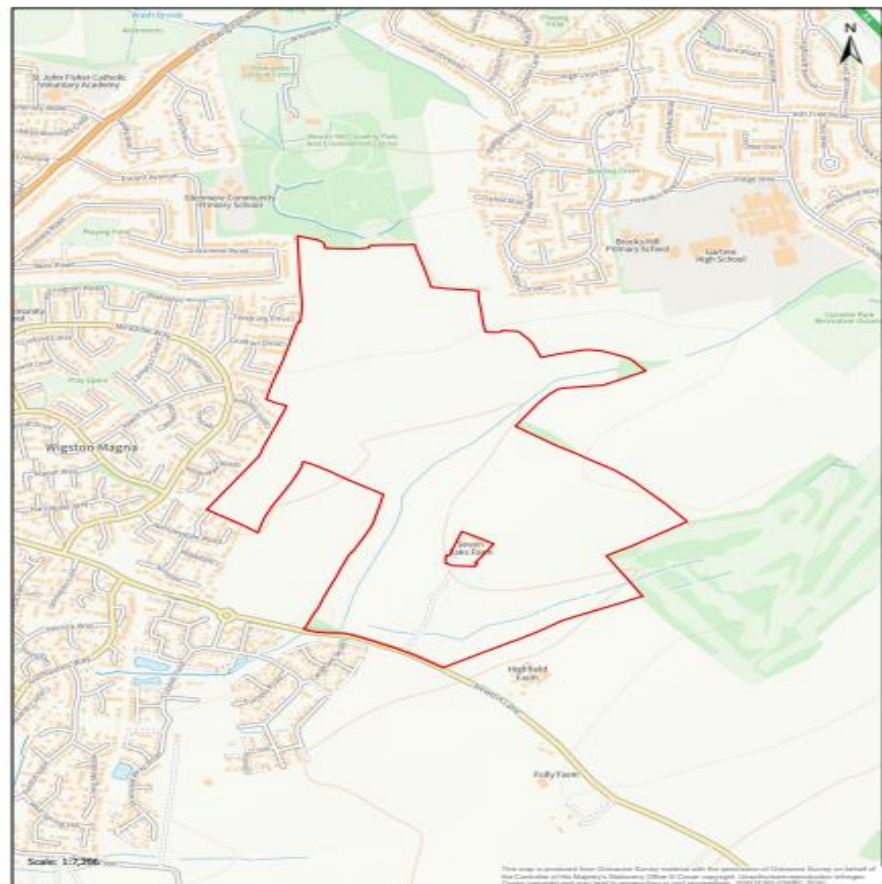
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards over the arable fields making up this Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_008 - Land at Newton Lane



WIG/009, Land West of Welford Road, Kilby Bridge**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/009
Site name:	Land West of Welford Road, Kilby Bridge
Ward:	Wigston All Saints Ward
Site area:	3.59 ha
Easting / Northing:	460783 / 297203
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 78 – 103 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 3.59 hectares and is located to the west of Welford Road (A5199), north of the Grand Union Canal and south of the Leicester to London Railway Line in Kilby Bridge.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes. The Site is predominantly open grassland and has mature hedgerows and trees throughout. Access into the Site is via a gated entrance off Welford Road, south of the Railway Bridge in Kilby Bridge.
Adjacent use:	Railway line to the north, open grassland to the east, the Grand Union Canal to the south and open grassland to the west.

Site Photographs and Map

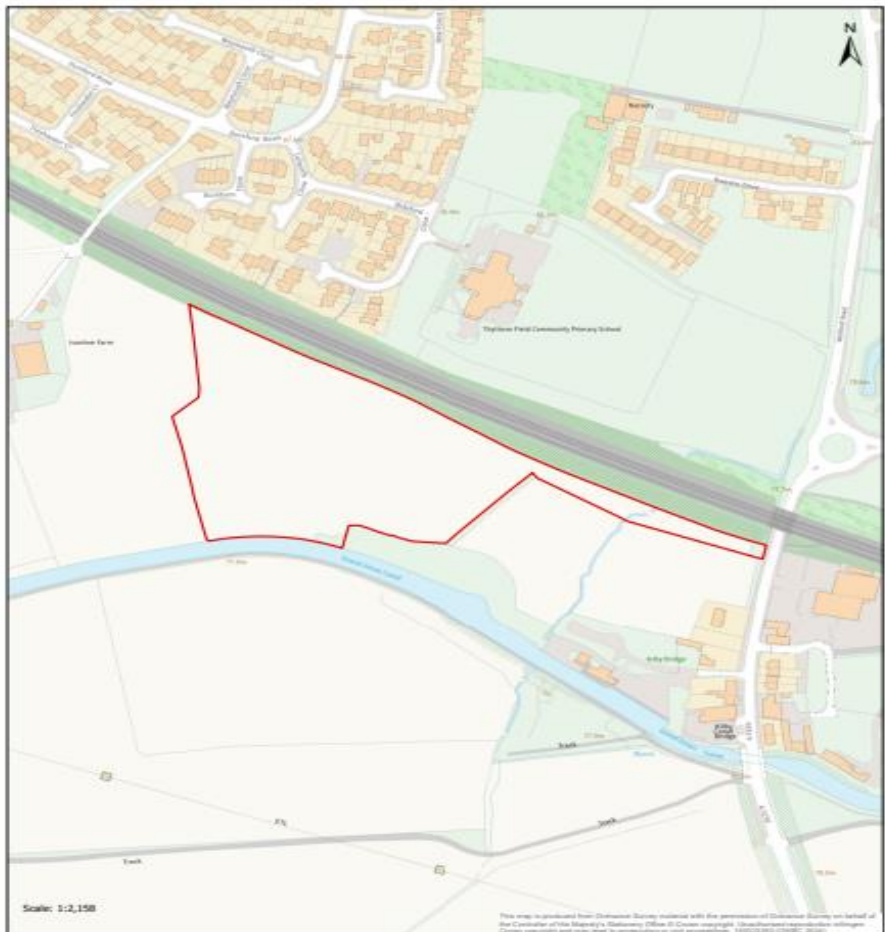
Site photographs:



Aerial view of the site looking northwards towards Wigston.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_009 - Land West of Welford Road, Kilby Bridge



WIG/010, Land North of Glen Gorse Golf Course, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/010
Site name:	Land North of Glen Gorse Golf Course, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	12.8 ha
Easting / Northing:	462719 / 298706
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 280 – 370 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 12.8 hectares and is currently surrounded in all directions by open fields or Glen Gorse Golf Course to the south.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes. The site is mainly bounded by hedgerows and sporadic trees, although this lessens in the south-eastern boundary.
Adjacent use:	Open grassland and arable fields in all directions, except to the south, where the Site adjoins Glen Gorse Golf Course. The Site currently has no access to a road network, however to the north-east, the Cottage Farm development (Bloor Homes) will eventually adjoin the boundary of this site (once fully built out).

Site Photographs and Map

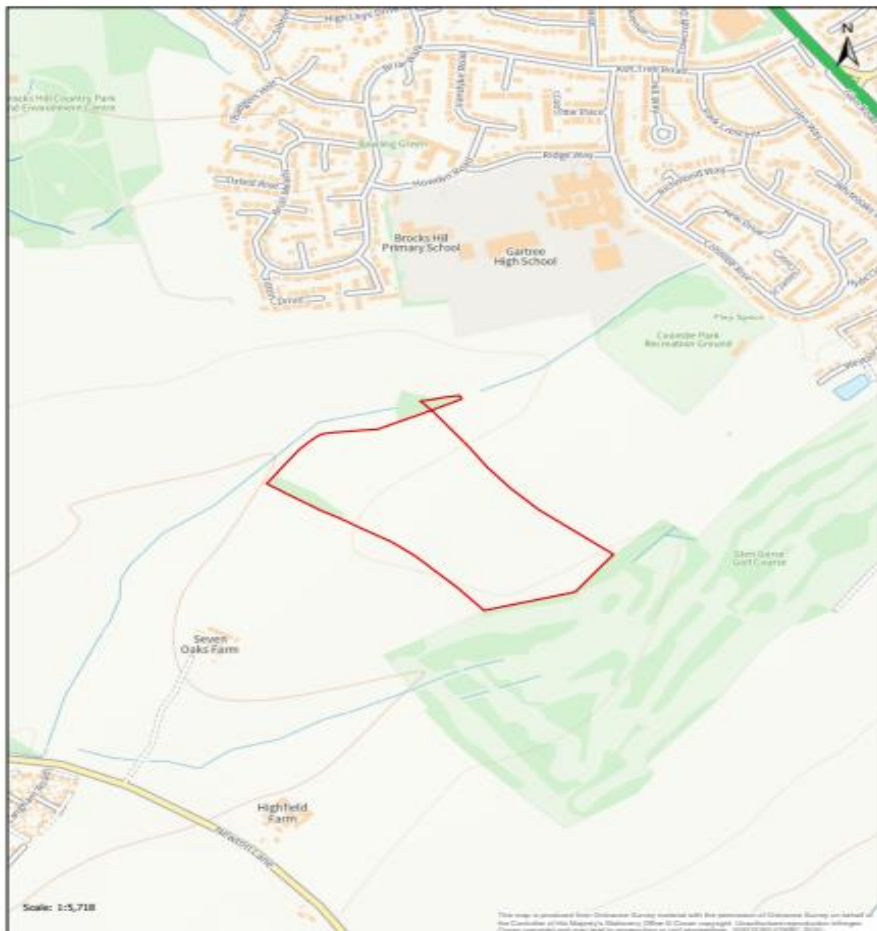
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking north-east over the Site and wider landscape, illustrating the Site's central location.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_010 - Land North Of Glen Gorse Golf Course, Wigston



WIG/011, Land Adjacent to Newton Lane, Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/011
Site name:	Land Adjacent to Newton Lane, Wigston
Ward:	Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	7.87 ha
Easting / Northing:	461839 / 298187
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential or Residential Institution: approximately 350 – 395 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 7.87 hectares and is currently surrounded in all directions by open fields, except for residential development to the south.
Asset description:	The Site is currently used for agricultural purposes and is flanked on all boundaries by mature hedgerows and sporadic trees. The Site enjoys direct access onto Newton Lane.
Adjacent use:	Open fields used for agricultural and arable purposes to the north, west and east. To the south, the site is bounded by residential suburbs of Wigston beyond Newton Lane.

Site Photographs and Map

Site photographs:



Aerial view looking northwards over the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_011 - Land Adjacent to Newton Lane, Wigston



WIG/012, Land north of centre (primarily focused on Junction Road car park) adjacent to Wakes Road / Junction Road, Wigston (Burgess Junction)

Proposed Site Option Summary

Site reference:	WIG/012
Site name:	Land north of centre (primarily focused on Junction Road car park) adjacent to Wakes Road / Junction Road, Wigston (Burgess Junction)
Ward:	Wigston St. Wolstan's Ward
Site area:	Circa 1.0 ha
Easting / Northing:	460772 / 299248
Brownfield/greenfield:	Brownfield
Proposed use:	Mixed Use: 43 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
Location description:	This circa 1.0 hectare site on land north of centre (primarily focused on Junction Road car park) adjacent to Wakes Road / Junction Road, Wigston (Burgess Junction).
Asset description:	The Site is predominantly car parking, as well as commercial units with a host of other uses above these shops, including storage.
Adjacent use:	The Site is bounded in all directions by built-up suburban Wigston. This includes a variety of uses including residential, retail, commercial and amenity land and highways land.

Site Photographs and Map

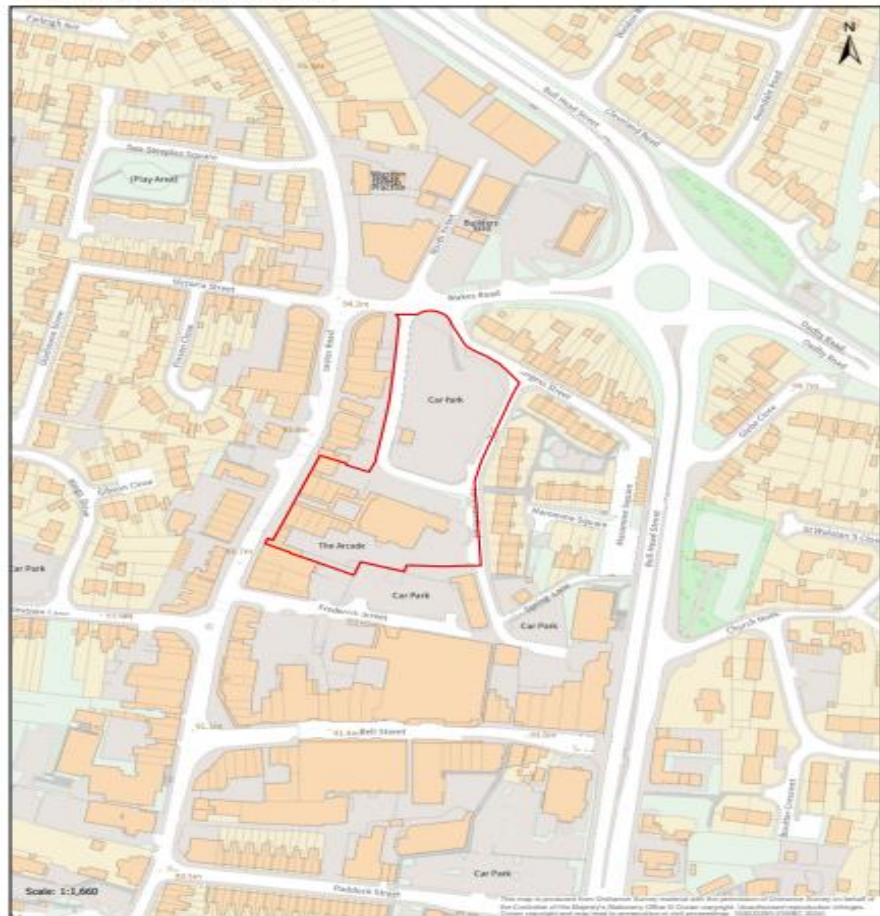
Site photographs:



Aerial view of the Site looking northwards. The dominance of the car / surrounding road network is evident.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_012 - Land North of centre (primarily focused on Junction Road car park) adjacent to Wakes Road / Junction Road, Wigston (Burgess Junction)



WIG/013, Frederick Street towards the north of Bell Street, Wigston (Chapel Mill)**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	WIG/013
Site name:	Frederick Street towards the north of Bell Street, Wigston (Chapel Mill)
Ward:	Wigston St. Wolstan's Ward
Site area:	Circa 1.0 ha
Easting / Northing:	460814 / 299111
Brownfield/greenfield:	Brownfield
Proposed use:	Mixed Use: 43 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
Location description:	This circa 1.0 hectare site on land at Frederick Street towards the north of Bell Street, Wigston (Chapel Mill) sits to the west of Bull Head Street and north of Bell Street in the heart of Wigston.
Asset description:	The Site is fully brownfield and is occupied by a range of uses that include car parking, retail and commercial units, residential dwellings, community uses including a Church and a Library, as well as supporting amenity land and highways.
Adjacent use:	The Site is bounded in all directions by built-up suburban Wigston. This includes a variety of uses including residential, retail, commercial and amenity land and highways land. Bull Head Street and Bell Street flank the southern and eastern boundaries.

Site Photographs and Map

Site photographs:



Aerial view looking north-west over the Site.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_013 - Frederick Street towards the North of Bell Street, Wigston (Chapel Mill)



WIG/014, Land towards the south of the centre (primarily focussed on Paddock Street car park) between Bell Street and Paddock Street, Wigston (Long Lanes)

Proposed Site Option Summary

Site reference:	WIG/014
Site name:	Land towards the south of the centre (primarily focussed on Paddock Street car park) between Bell Street and Paddock Street, Wigston (Long Lanes)
Ward:	Wigston St. Wolstan's Ward
Site area:	Circa 1.0 ha
Easting / Northing:	460810 / 298966
Brownfield/greenfield:	Brownfield
Proposed use:	Mixed Use: 43 Residential Units, Office Space and Retail. Retention of at least the same number of existing public car parking spaces
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 1.0 hectares and sits to the west of Bull Head Street and north of Paddock Street in the heart of Wigston.
Asset description:	The Site is fully brownfield and is occupied by a range of uses that include car parking, retail and commercial units, residential dwellings, a pub and a gym, as well as supporting amenity land.
Adjacent use:	The Site is bounded in all directions by built-up suburban Wigston. This includes a variety of uses including residential, retail, commercial and amenity land and highways land. Bull Head Street, Paddock Street and Bell Street flank three boundaries.

Site Photographs and Map

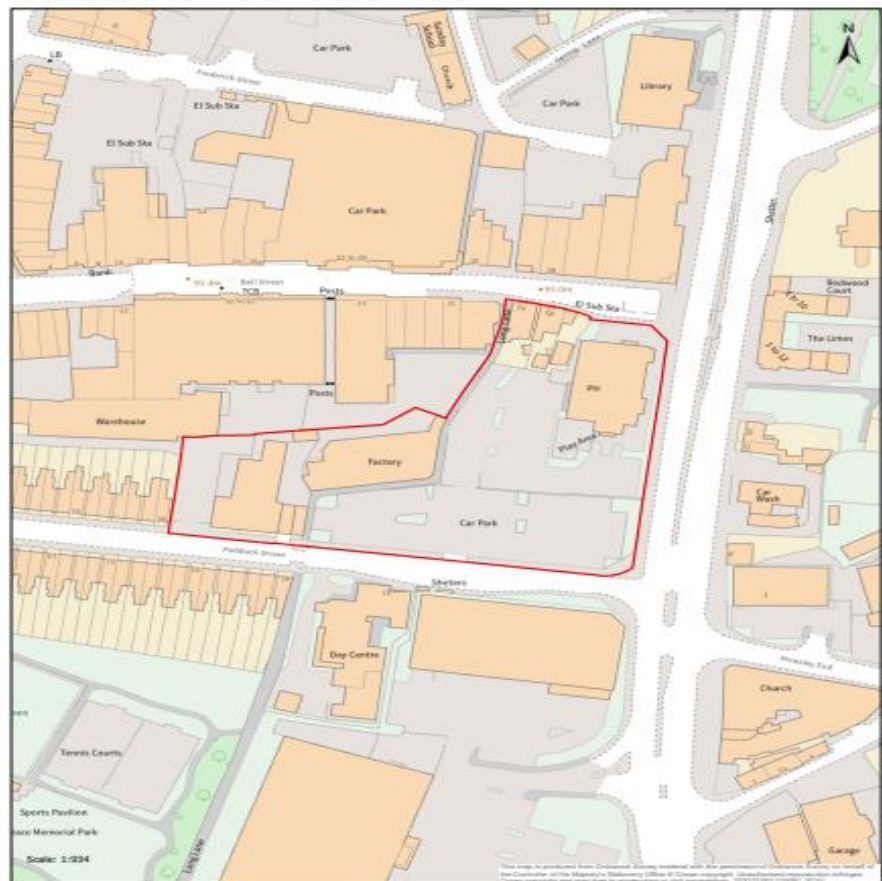
Site photographs:



Aerial view looking north-west through the site towards Bell Street and beyond.

Site Map:

Location Plan of WIG_014 - Land towards the South of the centre (primarily focussed on Paddock Street car park) between Bell Street and Paddock Street, Wigston (Long Lanes)



SWIG/001, Magna Road Employment Extension, South Wigston**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	SWIG/001
Site name:	Magna Road Employment Extension, South Wigston
Ward:	South Wigston Ward
Site area:	0.55 ha
Easting / Northing:	459468 / 298117
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Employment Land - B2, B8 use and / or E(g) uses
Location description:	The Site extends 0.55 hectares and is immediately south of the Magna Road Identified Employment Area in South Wigston.
Asset description:	The Site is greenfield in nature and has semi-matured, self-seeded plants and trees throughout. There is visual evidence that the area is used locally for leisure and recreational space.
Adjacent use:	The Site is bounded by open space to the south, east and west, together with a watercourse flanking the western boundary. To the north, the Site is adjacent to the Magna Road Identified Employment Area in South Wigston.

Site Photographs and Map

Site photographs:



Aerial view northwards through the Site with the Identified Employment Area immediately adjacent.

Site Map:

Location Plan of SWIG_001 - Magna Road Employment Extension, South Wigston



O&W/001, Glen Gorse Golf Course, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	O&W/001
Site name:	Glen Gorse Golf Course, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Brocks Hill Ward and Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	45.27ha
Easting / Northing:	463686 / 299099
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential: approximately 630 – 1,080 dwellings.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 45.27 hectares and forms the entirety of the Glen Gorse Golf Course in Oadby. The Site is located off the A6, Glen Road, in the south-east of the Borough.
Asset description:	This Site consists of existing Glen Gorse Golf Course, incorporating the existing Club House and car park adjacent to the A6, Glen Road, as well as all 18 holes. The current use of the Site is considered to be Leisure-based.
Adjacent use:	Residential development to the north and east, agricultural and leisure uses to west and south. There are a few Public Rights of Way and watercourses running through and adjacent to the site. The site has direct access onto the A6, Glen Road.

Site Photographs and Map

Site photographs:



Aerial view north-eastwards over the entirety of the Site with the Borough of Oadby and Wigston in the distance.

Site Map:

Location Plan of O&W_001 - Glen Gorse Golf Course



O&W/002, Glen Gorse Golf Course and Highfield Farm, Oadby**Proposed Site Option Summary**

Site reference:	O&W/002
Site name:	Glen Gorse Golf Course and Highfield Farm, Oadby
Ward:	Oadby Brocks Hill Ward and Wigston Meadowcourt Ward
Site area:	66.49
Easting / Northing:	463686 / 299099
Brownfield/greenfield:	Greenfield
Proposed use:	Residential and Leisure: approximately 630 – 1,080 dwellings and 6,000 sqm of non-residential floorspace.
Location description:	The Site extends to approximately 66.49 hectares and forms the entirety of the Glen Gorse Golf Course in Oadby, plus Highfield Farm, Wigston. The Site is located off the A6, Glen Road, and Newton Lane, Wigston in the south-east of the Borough.
Asset description:	The current use of the Glen Gorse Golf Course element of the site is predominantly Leisure, with a Club House and Car Park located adjacent to A6, Glen Road, Oadby. The current use of the Highfield Farm element of the Site is predominantly agricultural (associated with the farm) and one residential dwelling, all located north of Newton Lane, Wigston.
Adjacent use:	The Site is bounded in all directions by open grassland and arable fields, except to the north, where the site adjoins the A6, Glen Road and the urban fringe of suburban Oadby (residential). The Site has access to Newton Lane to the south.

Site Photographs and Map

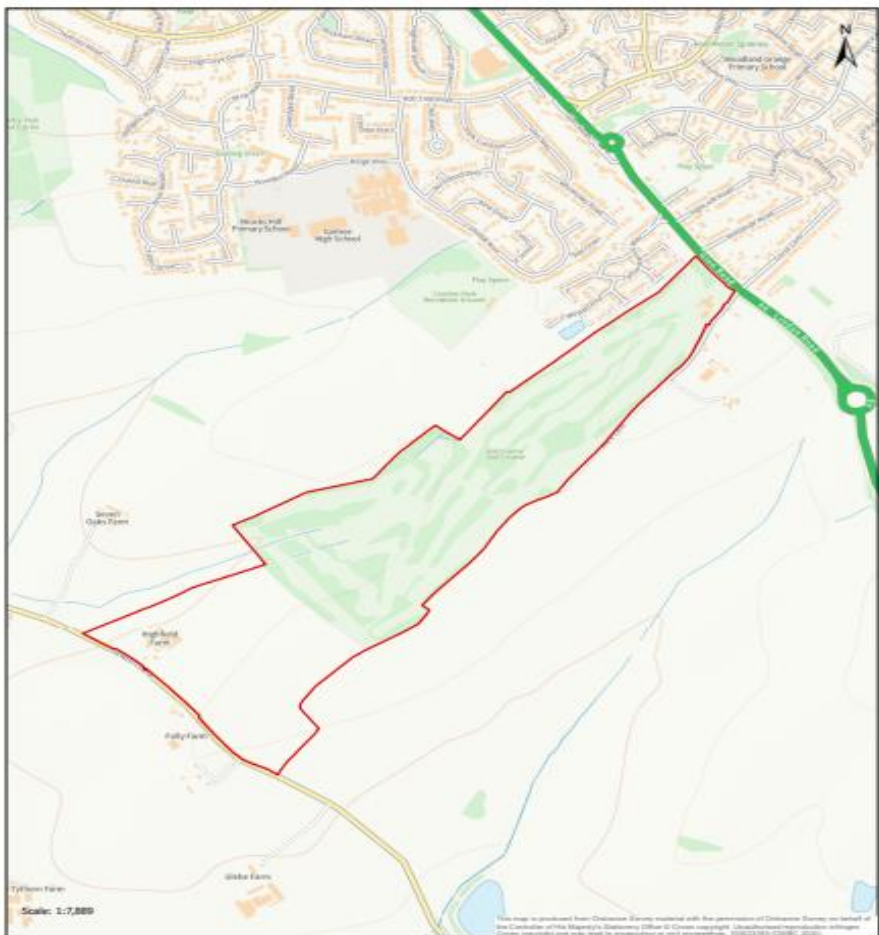
Site photographs:



Aerial view north-eastwards over the entirety of the Site with the Borough of Oadby and Wigston in the distance.

Site Map:

Location Plan of O&W_002 - Glen Gorse Golf Course and Highfield Farm



Appendix 2 – Glossary of Terms

Content to be confirmed.

DRAFT



Oadby & Wigston
BOROUGH COUNCIL

EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

Name of Policy/Function:	✓	This is new
	✓	This is a change to an existing policy
		This is an existing policy, Function, not previously assessed
		This is an existing policy/function for review

Date of screening	Thursday 22 February 2024
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1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

The Council is committed to building a strong, empowered and healthy community to achieve high quality planning and development.

The Borough of Oadby and Wigston emerging draft New Local Plan is the overarching policy document for the authority area and sets out the vision and framework for all future development for the Plan period 2020 to 2041.

Once adopted, the new Local Plan will supersede the Council's currently adopted Local Plan (2019).

2. Are there external considerations?

e.g. Legislation/government directive etc.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023; National Planning Practice Guidance 2016; Localism Act 2011; Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

3. Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Members and Staff; landowners and / or developers who may wish to promote the development of their land; statutory and non-statutory consultees, including all of the Borough's community.

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom?

The draft new Local Plan contains the vision, objectives and preferred policies and approaches, that seek to fulfil the vision and the objectives over the Plan period up to 2041. The Plan seeks to address needs and opportunities relating to key objectives including housing choices; the economy; the environment; community facilities; local infrastructure; climate change; and, good design.

5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

The Council has already undertaken the first stage of public consultation for the new Local Plan (Issues and Options – Regulation 18A consultation). The Issues and Options consultation and its outcomes has helped shape the production of the Preferred Options Local Plan document. This took place between Midday Friday, 25 September 2020 until Midday Friday, 20 November 2020.

6. Are there any concerns at this stage which indicate the possibility of Inequalities/negative impacts?

Consider and identify any evidence you have -equality data relating to usage and satisfaction levels, complaints, comments, research, outcomes of review, issues raised at previous consultations, known inequalities) If so please provide details.

No

7. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?

Positive – *It could benefit*

Negative – *It could disadvantage*

Neutral – *Neither positive nor negative impact or not sure.*

	Type of impact, reason & any evidence
Disability	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.
Age	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.
Gender Reassignment	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.
Sex	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.
Sexual Orientation	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.

Religion/Belief	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive – The Local Plan does not favour one particular group. It seeks that all development is accessible equally by everyone within the community.

8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?

e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes, homeless?

The Local Plan will seek to deliver a range of infrastructure to mitigate the impact of new development, including but not limited to, affordable housing for the Borough's community.

9. Are there any human rights implications?

Yes/No (If yes, please explain)

No.

10. Is there an opportunity to promote equality and/or good community relations?

Yes/No (If yes, how will this be done?)

Yes. New infrastructure and facilities such as sports pitches, community buildings, schools and health infrastructure improvements will be provided as part of new developments coming forward. This will be to the benefit of the whole community within the Borough. New development will also provide construction job opportunities to the Borough. New local employment opportunities will also be created.

11. If you have indicated a negative impact for any group is that impact legal?

i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation

No.

12. Is any part of this policy/service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

The Local Plan document is prepared by the Council's Officers, however, some of the supporting evidence base supporting this Draft Plan has or will be contracted out. Any contractors commissioned to produce evidence base documents are directly appointed and project managed by Officer's in the Planning Policy team who have a good knowledge of the Council, as well as the Borough itself.

13. Is a Part 2 full Equality Assessment required?

No.

14. Date by which a Part 2 full Equality Assessment is to be completed with actions.

Not applicable.

Please note that you should proceed to a Part 2, the full Equality Impact Assessment if you have identified actual, or the potential to cause, adverse impact or discrimination against different groups in the community.

We are satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out and a full equality assessment **is not required*** (please delete as appropriate).

Completed by: Lisa Chevallereau Date: 22 February 2024
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Completed by: Ed Morgan Date: 22 February 2024
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Equality Assessments shall be published on the Council website with the relevant and appropriate document upon which the equality assessment has been undertaken.



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 26 March 2024	Matter for Decision
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Report Title: **Revised Local Development Scheme (Spring 2024)**

Report Author(s): **Lisa Chevallereau (Planning Policy & Monitoring Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	This report seeks Committee’s approval for the adoption of the revised Local Development Scheme as the Council’s most up to date Local Development Scheme.
Report Summary:	<p>The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a statutory document that sets out the Council’s proposal for the preparation of the Local Plan and other planning policy documents. The LDS is a statutory document that is required by Government and needs to be kept up to date.</p> <p>This LDS has been produced in line with the Government Announcement that sets out that all local authorities should have submitted a new Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination by June 2025.</p> <p>The Local Development Scheme establishes a programme of work for the period Spring 2024 to Summer / Autumn 2026 and identifies milestones that the Council will need to meet.</p> <p>It is important that the Council meets the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme to enable the Council to have a Plan examined under the existing Local Plan Legislation. The Local Development Scheme will ensure that planning policy and guidance documents are robust, up to date and in line with the target of Local Plan submission by June 2025.</p> <p>Having up to date planning policy and guidance documents ensures that the Council is able to make robust, justified and informed planning decisions. It also reduces the risk of developer appeals.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That the Local Development Scheme (Spring 2024) be approved.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Jamie Carr (Planning Policy & Development Manager) (0116) 257 2652 jamie.carr@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Ed Morgan (Principal Planning Policy Officer) (0116) 257 2650 ed.morgan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Lisa Chevallereau (Planning Policy and Monitoring Officer)</p>

	(0116) 2572 636 lisa.chevallereau@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Economy (SO3) Our Environment (SO4) Our Partners (SO5)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Local Development Scheme (Spring 2024)

1. Information

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a statutory document that sets out the Council's proposal for the preparation of the Local Plan and other planning policy documents. The LDS is a statutory document that is required by Government and needs to be kept up to date.
- 1.2 On a periodic basis, the Local Development Scheme is updated to reflect the ongoing preparation and development of the Council's Local Plan and other planning policy related documents, for example, Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents such as the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.3 The Local Development Scheme breaks down the preparation of the Local Plan and other planning policy related documents into specific stages and gives a timescale by which

these stages will be completed as well as outlining the potential risks to meeting these timescales.

- 1.4 This LDS has been produced in line with the Government Announcement that sets out that all local authorities should have submitted a new Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination by June 2025. This deadline exists for local authorities to have a Plan examined under the existing Local Plan legislation. If a Plan is submitted after the June 2025 deadline, it will be subject to a new Local Plan process which has yet to be published and is therefore currently unknown. By not meeting the deadline, the Council will no longer have an up-to-date Local Plan which manages development and the Council could be forced into a position where it must permit poor development and poor contributions to local infrastructure without control on the location of such growth. By meeting the June 2025 deadline, the Council ensures a level of continued control on forthcoming development and its infrastructure requirements and allows for a smooth transition into the new Local Plan period.
- 1.5 The various milestones set out for the new Local Plan within the Spring 2024 Local Development Scheme are as set out below:
- Regulation 18B (Issues and Options): Spring 2024
 - Regulation 19 (Pre-Submission Consultation): Spring 2025
 - Regulation 22 (Submission to the Planning Inspectorate): April 2025
 - Regulation 24 (Estimated Examination Hearing Sessions): Autumn 2025 (date to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate)
 - Main modifications as recommended by the Independent Planning Inspectorate: Winter / Spring 2026 (date to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate)
 - Regulation 26 (Adoption): Summer / Autumn 2026 (date to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate)
- 1.6 The need to amend the Local Development Scheme is to ensure that planning policy and guidance documents are robust, up to date and in line with the target of Local Plan submission by June 2025.
- 1.7 More detailed information regarding preparation timescales and the key milestones for Local Development Documents is contained within the Local Development Scheme document.

Local Development Scheme

Spring 2024

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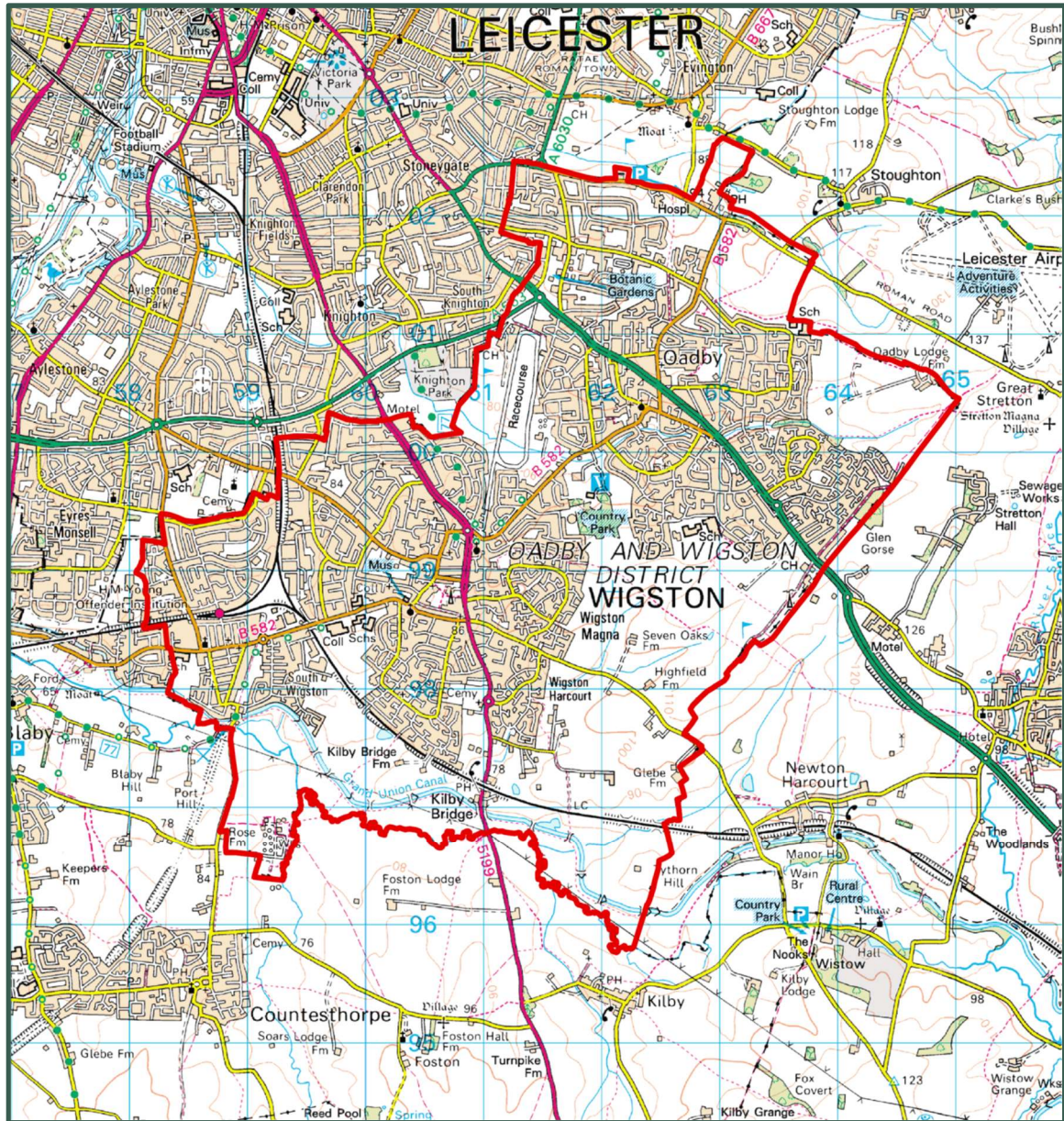
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a document which contains a local authority's timetable / programme of works for the production of their Development Plan and other planning related documents. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) requires local planning authorities to prepare, maintain and publish an LDS. This enables local communities and stakeholders to find out which key planning documents are to be prepared for the area within the foreseeable future.
- 1.2 The Council generally seeks to update its LDS approximately every two to three years, and this LDS is updating the Council's previously adopted LDS of Winter 2022. This LDS will cover the period Spring 2024 to Summer / Autumn 2026.
- 1.3 This LDS will outline the Council's timetable for producing the new Local Plan. It also makes reference, where relevant to other planning related documentation, such as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) (and planning guidance), however does not set out any specific programme for future SPD, due to the focus of resource being on the production of the new Local Plan. Having such information and timetabling enables the community, businesses, developers, service and infrastructure providers and other interested organisations to know which planning related documents are being and / or are to be prepared for the Borough area and when they will be able to participate in public consultation.
- 1.4 The Council is committed to working with its partners, stakeholders, and all members of the local community in the preparation of new planning policy. Together, the LDS and the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) set out how and when stakeholders can participate in the process. External participation throughout the process is integral to shaping the Boroughs future.
- 1.5 The Council's most up to date LDS will be published on its website – www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk.

2. Geographical Coverage Area

- 2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) requires local planning authorities to set out the geographical area to which each planning document set out in this Local Development Scheme (LDS) applies.
- 2.2 The extent of the coverage area for the Development Plan, is the administrative local authority boundary of the Borough of Oadby and Wigston (see redline boundary in map below).



3. The Planning System

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published on 27th March 2012 and came into immediate effect. The NPPF document has been reviewed and updated by Government a number of times since, with the latest version having been updated in December 2023. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It also provides a framework in which local authorities can produce their own distinctive Local Plans.
- 3.2 The NPPF confirms that the planning system is "plan-led" which means that planning applications have to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise.
- 3.3 The NPPF also confirms that the policies in emerging plans will gather more weight as development plans progress towards adoption.
- 3.4 During March 2014 the Government published the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which gives further guidance on specific aspects of the planning system, for example the Duty to Cooperate and housing and economic land availability assessments. The NPPG is a web-based 'live' resource and is updated on a regular basis by Government as and when required to do so.

4. The Council's Current Development Plan

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that a local authority Development Plan comprises adopted Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, and the London Plan (where relevant). A local authorities Development Plan can also be supplemented by Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and relevant local planning guidance.
- 4.2 The Council's current Development Plan comprises the adopted Local Plan April 2019 (and its associated Adopted Policies Map) that sets out the spatial and development strategy for the Borough area for the period up to 2031. The Borough area does not currently have any adopted Neighbourhood Plans. The Council's Local Plan is supplemented by the following SPD and local planning guidance:
- Residential Development SPD
 - Conservation Areas SPD
 - Developer Contributions SPD
 - Public Realm Strategy SPD
 - Identified Employment Land SPD
 - Town and District Centre guidance
 - Supplementary local development control planning guidance
- 4.3 The Council forms part of a two-tier local government structure. The Council comprises the lower tier and the planning function for the local authority area; the upper tier is coordinated by Leicestershire County Council. It is therefore the County Council that produce and manage the delivery of Minerals and Waste Plans.

5. The Council's Local Plan

- 5.1 National planning policy places Local Plans at the very heart of the planning system. It is essential that they are in place and kept up to date. The Council's current Local Plan was adopted on Tuesday 16 April 2019.
- 5.2 The Council's Local Plan sets out the vision, framework, and spatial strategy for all future development within the entire Borough area for the period 2011 to 2031. The Plan addresses the needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure; it also safeguards vital green open spaces and the environment, and illustrates how the Borough area can secure high quality sustainable design.
- 5.3 The Local Plan is also a critical tool in guiding decisions about individual development proposals, as the Plan is the starting point for considering whether applications for development can be approved.
- 5.4 Government planning policy and guidance sets out that local planning authorities should review their Local Plans at least every 5 years from the date of adoption, to ensure that they are up to date and based on the most reliable and up to date evidence. It is also clear from national planning policy and guidance that relevant local policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the local authority cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 5.5 The Council monitors the policies set out within the Local Plan on an annual basis through the production of the Annual Monitoring Report and other associated monitoring documents. These are all available on the Council's website.
- 5.6 It should be noted that the Council's current adopted Local Plan is not considered out of date. However, the Council has taken the decision to be proactive in the preparation of its next Local Plan after taking into consideration the Government announcement that set out that all local authorities should proactively work towards having an up-to-date Local Plan submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by June 2025.
- 5.7 The Council will continue to proactively work to deliver a New Local Plan within this timeframe. It should be noted that the date of adoption is very much in the hands of the Planning Inspectorate once the Council submits the new Plan for Examination.

6. Timetable for New Development Plan Documents

- 6.1 The following tables set out the delivery of the Council's Local Plan and the related planning documents that the Council will be preparing over the next two - three year period.
- 6.2 A profile for each document is provided, that sets out the documents role and subject, its geographical coverage, and its planning status. A timetable of preparation is also illustrated for each document. It should be noted that although the Council will seek to follow the preparation timetables, it is difficult to be precise at the outset, therefore timings should be regarded as indicative. Should there be a need to update the preparation timings of a particular document this will be done so through regular review and will be highlighted on the Borough's dedicated Local Development Scheme (LDS) webpage.
- 6.3 It should be noted that the production and consultation of each of the documents set out in this chapter will be done so in conformity with the Duty to Cooperate, as well as the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Table 1. Local Plan Development Plan Document

New Local Plan Overview	
Role and Subject	The Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan document provides the overall spatial and development strategy for the Borough area for the period up to 2041. It contains both strategic and specific planning policy, as well as relevant designations and allocations. All planning decisions made within the Borough will need to be consistent with the Council's Local Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
Geographical coverage area	The entire Borough area
Document Type	Development Plan Document
Chain of Conformity	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance and reflect the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan
Timetable (key stages)	
Initial Call for sites	Autumn 2020 and 2021
Regulation 18a (Issues and Options)	Autumn 2021
Regulation 18b (Preferred Options)	Spring 2024
Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Consultation	Spring 2025
Regulation 22 Submission to the Planning Inspectorate	April 2025
Regulation 24 Estimated Examination Hearing Sessions	Autumn 2025 (date to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate)
Main modifications, as recommended by the Independent Planning Inspectorate	Winter / Spring 2026 (date to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate)
Regulation 26 Adoption	Summer / Autumn 2026 (date to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate)
Production Arrangements	
Lead Section	Planning Policy
Project Manager(s)	Planning Policy and Development Manager and Principal Planning Policy Officer
Internal resources	All internal Council departments
External resources	Specific expert consultants
Community Involvement	As per the Council's SCI

Table 2. Adopted Policies Map

Adopted Policies Map Overview	
Role and Subject	The Adopted Policies Map is directly related to the Council's new Local Plan and illustrates the Plans key proposals, relevant policy areas, designations, allocations and locations of development within the Borough area.
Geographical coverage area	The entire Borough area
Document Type	Local Plan Adopted Policies Map
Chain of Conformity	The new Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Timetable (key stages)	
Stage	The Adopted Policies Map is produced alongside the Council's Local Plan and will be published alongside the Council's Local Plan during Summer / Autumn 2026 (date to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate).
Production Arrangements	
Lead Section	Planning Policy
Project Manager(s)	Planning Policy and Development Manager and Principal Planning Policy Officer
Internal resources	Planning Policy and Regeneration
External resources	Leicestershire County Council
Community Involvement	As per the Council's SCI

7. Other New Documents

- 7.1 In addition to the documents highlighted in Chapter 6 of this document, the Council will also be producing a number of other planning related documents that will assist in the production and delivery of the new Local Plan.
- 7.2 The additional planning related documents that the Council will be producing over the next two – three years could include guidance relating to the Borough’s town and district centres; guidance relating to climate change and renewable energy; and guidance relating to high quality design and use of high-quality materials.
- 7.3 In addition to the guidance documents set out above, the Council regularly update its evidence base documents, and will continue to do so. For example, over the next two – three years, the Council could be updating evidence relating to housing need, employment need, highway capacity and sustainable transport and viability.
- 7.4 It should be noted that a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment) will be produced for each Development Plan Document (DPD) that the Council produces, as well as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) where relevant to do so.

8. Resourcing Document Production

- 8.1 The successful completion of the programme of works outlined in Chapter 6 of this document will be very challenging for the Council. The programme of works will be completed in the main by the Council's Planning Policy team. The Planning Policy team consists of; a Planning Policy and Development Manager post (overseeing the Planning Section); a Principal Planning Policy Officer post; a Senior Planning Policy Officer post; and a Planning Policy and Monitoring Officer post.
- 8.2 Of the posts illustrated above, the following resources will need to be made available to ensure delivery of the programme of works.

Table 3. Officer Time spent on Local Plan Production

Post	Percentage of Time (%)
Planning Policy and Development Manager	10 - 15 %
Principal Planning Policy Officer	80 - 85 %
Senior Planning Policy Officer	95 - 100 %
Planning Policy and Monitoring Officer	80 - 85 %

- 8.3 In addition to that highlighted above, limited staff resources will be required from a number of other Council teams, including but not limited to: the Development Control Team, the Economic Regeneration Team, the Planning Technical and Administration Team, as well as the ICT and Legal Departments of the Council.

Councillors

- 8.4 As well as Council officer time, the successful completion of the programme of works outlined in Chapter 6 of this document will require Councillor time. A cross party Place Shaping Member Working Group involving elected Members meets throughout the calendar year to discuss the Local Plan as well as other planning related projects. The group has the following terms of reference:
- Provide input in relation to issues where guidance from Councillors is required
 - Provide advice on issues where guidance is needed quickly in order to meet milestones set out in this Local Development Scheme (LDS)
 - Provide advice on the various methods for undertaking public consultation
 - Represent the Council in relation to Local Plan issues, including chairing meetings and providing statements to the press through official press releases and interviews.
- 8.5 Place Shaping Member Working Group does not make decisions regarding the Council's Development Plan or related documentation. Such decisions are made at Full Council or Policy, Finance and Development Committee depending on the nature of the decision required. Through reporting to the committee's and working groups, Councillors will have the opportunity to shape the planning related documents set out in this LDS. It is vitally important that Councillors have these opportunities.

9. Potential Risks to Delivery of the Programme of Works

9.1 A number of potential risks could arise over the next two – three-year period, which could affect the delivery of the programme of works set out in this Local Development Scheme (LDS). A number of potential risks are outlined below.

Table 4. Potential Risks

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Notes	Action
Insufficient staff resource available.	Likely	Being a small local authority, the Planning Policy team has required involvement in many projects not necessarily associated to planning policy. The Planning Policy team is involved in an ever-broadening work programme. In addition, should experienced staff leave the authority, recruiting equivalent experience and knowledge could be extremely challenging.	Continue to work as efficiently as possible. Be able to concentrate on the production of the Local Plan. The completion of the work programme outlined in this LDS is the priority for the Planning Policy team.
Duty to Cooperate delays	Likely	The Duty to Cooperate requires local authorities to work together spatially and produce joint pieces of evidence base work. Delays can occur from the different governance processes.	The Council will continue to work closely with local authorities and will timetable work and projects accordingly, taking account of potential delays.
Planning Inspectorate taking time to assess the Plan	Likely	The timetabling and requirements of the Planning Inspectorate are beyond the Council's control and the Council can only be reactive once the plan is submitted for examination.	Continue to work as efficiently as possible. Use external resources where relevant and appropriate to do so.
Loss of financial resource due to government funding cuts.	Possible	Government funding cuts have already required the Council to review its staffing structure and use of external expertise. Further structure reviews could mean that the use of additional external expertise could be required.	Local Plan funding has been set aside. Continue to work as efficiently as possible. Always seek cost savings where possible as well as 'value for money' opportunities.
Missing project milestones and deadlines set out in this Local Development Scheme.	Possible	The Planning Policy team is undertaking an ever increasing and diverse workload and is seeking to achieve an ambitious Local Plan production timetable.	Continue to work as efficiently as possible. Use external resources where relevant and appropriate to do so.
Lack of public interest in the planning process.	Possible	The general public may not want to get involved in the planning process.	The Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council will consult with the public. The SCI sets out how the Council goes 'above and beyond' when consulting the public to ensure that as many people as possible can get involved.

10. Monitoring and Review

- 10.1 A number of planning monitoring reports, for example the Residential Land Availability Assessment and the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, are produced on an annual basis by the Council to feed into the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR - formerly known as an Annual Monitoring Report). This all-encompassing report (AMR) is produced each year and published on the Council's website. The report assesses progress towards the implementation of the Local Development Scheme, and the extent to which the policies in Council's Development Plan are being achieved. If necessary, the Local Development Scheme will be revised in light of these monitoring reports.

Agenda Item 12



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 26 March 2024	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Statement of Community Involvement (2024)**

Report Author(s): **Lisa Chevallereau (Planning Policy & Monitoring Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	<p>The purpose of this report is to highlight to Members the comments that were received during the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) public consultation that took place between midday Wednesday 13 December 2023 and midday Wednesday 7 February 2024.</p> <p>This report also highlights how the comments have been taken into account in the final SCI which is now recommended for approval.</p>
Report Summary:	<p>The SCI sets out the Borough Council’s approach to involving and consulting local people and stakeholders in the planning process, more specifically the preparation of the various components of the Local Plan and in making development management decisions on planning applications.</p> <p>A total of five bodies submitted representations to the Council during the consultation process. Representations were received from the Environment Agency, Historic England, the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board, Natural England and a South Wigston Tree Warden.</p> <p>There were no key topics or main issues raised within any of the representations received. The Environment Agency, Historic England and the Integrated Care Board made no specific comment. Natural England supported the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the community, and the South Wigston Tree Warden suggested an amendment to the list of consultation bodies.</p> <p>Having considered the amendment suggested by the Tree Warden, the additions of The Tree Council, The Woodland Trust, and The Open Spaces Society have been made to the list of general consultation bodies in the final SCI document. This is considered a minor change to the report. No other changes have been made to the consultation document.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That Committee approves the Statement of Community Involvement for adoption (as set out at Appendix 1).
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Jamie Carr (Planning Policy & Development Manager) (0116) 257 2652 jamie.carr@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Ed Morgan (Principal Planning Policy Officer)</p>

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Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Partners (SO5)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty to Cooperate partners • Specific Consultation bodies • General Consultation bodies, and • Other stakeholders held on the Local Plan consultation database
Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) • The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statement of Community Involvement (2024) 2. Public Consultation Statement (2024)

1. Information

- 1.1 The Council is committed to building a strong, empowered and active community to achieve high quality and sustainable planning and development. It is intended that the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will allow all local people, businesses and

stakeholders to become fully engaged in the planning process in order for the local planning system to be a positive tool in shaping the future growth and improvement of the Borough.

- 1.2 The SCI will ensure that consultation and participation takes place in a timely manner and that a range of involvement techniques are in place to allow people to have a real influence over planning in the Borough.
- 1.3 On Tuesday 5 December 2023, Policy, Finance and Development Committee approved the revised SCI for public consultation. On Wednesday 13 December 2023, the Council undertook an 8 week public consultation on the revised SCI.

2. Consultation Response and Next Steps

- 2.1 To ensure that there was an opportunity for the whole community to get involved, the consultation was advertised as widely as possible. In addition to a notification letter being sent out to every contact on the Local Plan Database, the Council; made all elected Council Members aware of the consultation; advertised the consultation on the Council's website; made available for inspection hard copies of all relevant information and documentation at the Brocks Hill Council Offices; and, made available for inspection electronic copies of all relevant information and documentation on the Council's website.
- 2.2 A total of five bodies submitted representations to the Council on the revised SCI. Representations were received from the Environment Agency, Historic England, the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board, Natural England and a South Wigston Tree Warden.
- 2.3 Of all the representations received, there were no key topics or main issues raised. The Environment Agency, Historic England and the Integrated Care Board made no specific comment, whilst Natural England supported the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the community. The South Wigston Tree Warden suggested the amendment of adding The Tree Council, The Woodland Trust, and the Open Spaces Society to the list of consultation bodies.
- 2.4 Taking account of the consultation comments received, the additions of The Tree Council, The Woodland Trust, and The Open Spaces Society have been made to the list of general consultation bodies under 'Environmental Protection and Conservation Organisations'. This is considered a minor change to the report. There have been no other changes made to the consultation document.
- 2.5 Further information relating to the consultation is contained within the Council's 'SCI Statement of Consultation 2024'.
- 2.6 Subject to Member approval, the SCI will be adopted as the Council's latest Statement of Community Involvement and will be made freely available to the public on our website.

Draft Statement of Community Involvement

2024

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The Council's Vision for Community Involvement

This statement is part of a wider commitment made by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council to create a healthy and empowered community. The Council will always ensure that everyone who lives and works in the Borough is able to help shape its future through consistent, meaningful and far-reaching engagement, particularly in making sure that residents and businesses have wide-ranging and continuous opportunities to influence planning policies put in place by the Council.

The Council recognises the importance of community involvement in planning and its role in shaping growth through the effective delivery of well-designed homes, places and services that meet local needs in the Borough. This growth in turn contributes to improving people's health, happiness and well-being, and giving the opportunity to enjoy peaceful, harmonious, high quality and active lifestyles.

The Council will always seek to go above and beyond the minimum requirements set, where appropriate. This Statement of Community Involvement sets the Council's statutory duties for community involvement, as well as additional, non-statutory ways in which it makes best attempt to reach all members of the community.

This statement sets out the how, when and where you can engage with the consultation process to make important contributions heard and reflected in your area.

Councillor Samia Haq

Leader of the Borough Council

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (the Council) is committed to building a strong, empowered and active community to achieve high quality planning and development.
- 1.2 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a formally adopted document that sets out how the Council will engage with local people, businesses and stakeholders in planning processes. Having members of the community fully engaged with local planning decisions and systems is a positive tool in shaping positive social, economic and environmental growth and improvement of the Borough.
- 1.3 The Council uses a range of communication channels to ensure community involvement happens in a timely an effective manner. This allows people to have an influence in planning the place they live, work and visit. This SCI responds to the Council's strategic objective 'Our Partners: to ensure we are engaged and listening to all sections of the community'. This also allows consultation to reach groups who have traditionally found it difficult to engage in the planning process, in turn giving the Council community feedback that best reflects its stakeholders.
- 1.4 The consultation practices contained in this SCI satisfy the statutory requirements set out in the relevant Legislation, as set out in 'The planning system and legal requirements' section of this report.
- 1.5 The Council intends to exceed the statutory requirements, where appropriate, to ensure wide and inclusive consultation to reflect local circumstances, the character and composition of the local community, however in certain circumstances the resources available may mean that only the statutory requirements are met.

2. The Planning System and Legal Requirements

- 2.1 All Local Planning Authorities are required to produce an SCI under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This SCI set out the how, where and when consultation takes place in the planning process with persons who have an interest in development within their area. Key areas of consultation are on components of the Local Plan and development management decisions on planning applications.
- 2.2 Minimum requirements for consultation are set out in '*The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)*' (The Regulations) in the case of Planning Policy Documents and '*The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended)*' (DMPO) for planning applications.
- 2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework states that plans should '*be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees*'.
- 2.4 The Council adopted their first SCI in March 2006. There have been considerable changes since then, including the replacement of 'Local Development Frameworks' with 'Local Plans' and changes to the planning Regulations that set the ways in which the Government expects plans to be produced. The Local Plan contains the planning policies and proposals that will shape the future of the Borough. These policies and proposals are used to allocate or safeguard land for or against development, as well as to help inform the determination of planning applications.
- 2.5 When preparing planning policy documents and determining planning decisions, the Council must also comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.6 The Council is required to review its SCI regularly to ensure that it is up-to-date and robust. This SCI is the latest review and has enabled the Council to reflect on and update its methods of consultation based upon the techniques that have worked best in the Borough since the previous SCI's publication in 2019. This updated SCI demonstrates how the Council complies with the minimum legal requirements and standards for consultations and how, in most cases, exceeds them.
- 2.7 Once adopted, the Council will follow the procedures for consultation and engagement as set out in this SCI.

Duty to Co-operate

- 2.8 Current Legislation and planning policy and guidance places great weight on the Duty to Cooperate. The Duty sets out how local authorities should engage with partnering organisations during the Plan making process. To ensure that the Duty is met, the Council will engage with its partners such as neighbouring Councils and government bodies throughout the formulation of its plans. Duty to Cooperate partners are listed in Appendix 2.

Local Development Scheme

- 2.9 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a regularly updated document outlining the local authority's programme of completion of planning related documents. The LDS for the Borough area establishes the programme for the preparation of, and consultation on, all the components of the Council's Development Plan, including the Local Plan.
- 2.10 The LDS document is available to view on the planning pages of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council website.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004

- 2.11 Members of the public have the statutory right, under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004, to request information held by the Council.
- 2.12 The Council always aims to make as much information accessible online through the website. If you cannot find information online, please do contact the Council in the first instance, however you have the right to request information held by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council under the FOI and EIR.

Privacy and Data Collection

- 2.13 The Council will maintain an address and personal contact information database of individuals, groups and other interested parties wishing to be informed when planning policy documents are published. The database will be kept up to date and amended as and when necessary. The information held on this database is done so in conformity with the Data Protection Act (2018) and the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Accessibility

- 2.14 The Council is committed to making its website accessible in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.
- 2.15 All documents and communication are, where possible, limited in their use of technical terms and jargon. However, the use of technical terms cannot be avoided when set out as a requirement under Legislation that the Council has a statutory to complete. A glossary of technical terms may be included at the end of reports published by the Council.
- 2.16 Most of the Council website can be navigated using speech recognition software.
- 2.17 For a step-by-step guide on how to access planning services on the website, such as how to make a planning application or comment on a planning application, please contact the Council's planning team by email planning@oadby-wigston.gov.uk or call us on 0116 288 8961.
- 2.18 If you require any information from the website in a different format, such as an accessible PDF, large print, language translation, audio recording or braille, please contact the Council by email communications@oadby-wigston.gov.uk or call us on 0116 288 8961 where staff also have access

to a telephone translation service. If you contact the Council before you visit, we can arrange a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.

- 2.19 Please visit the Council's online accessibility statement for further information on how the Council fulfils accessibility requirements.

The Need for Review

- 2.20 As mentioned earlier, the need for review comes with the statutory duty to update the SCI every 5 years. The Council's last SCI was updated in 2019.
- 2.21 In general, there have been no major governmental changes in relation to consulting with the public regarding planning matters since the last updated SCI.
- 2.22 The only notable change to processes has been the transition towards a digital-first approach to communication with the public, largely seen as a natural incline resulting from the pandemic. Although the Council acknowledge the value of having in-person meetings, technology and the flexibility it allows for is recognised as a desired first approach to communication. Therefore, while the Council offices and hubs are open to in-person meetings on demand, digital pathways of communication are encouraged. Examples are through the website, phone calls and online meetings.

3. Planning Documents

- 3.1 Depending on the type of planning policy document or planning application being considered, there are a number of consultation bodies that the Council must notify and invite to make representations in order to comply with the Regulations set by Government.

Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.2 Development Plans can be made up of a number of separate 'Development Plan Documents (DPDs)' or be a comprehensive Local Plan document. These provide strategic policies for the area's growth, non-strategic policies, policies maps and Site Allocations.
- 3.3 The Regulations set out that Duty to Cooperate partners should be consulted during the production of a Development Plan.
- 3.4 The Regulations also set out specific consultation bodies that the Council must consult in the production of a Development Plan document and / or a Supplementary Planning Document. Specific consultation bodies are listed in Appendix 3. Chapter 4 also contains further information regarding who is consulted and at what stage of document production.
- 3.5 At the Council's discretion, it may also consult with a number of other bodies that it deems appropriate to engage with at an appropriate time / stage of consultation. These are referred to as general consultation bodies within the Regulations and are listed in Appendix 4.
- 3.6 These lists may change as a result of amendments to the Regulations and / or by the Council choosing to update or amend its list of general consultation bodies. The Council therefore reserves the right to amend the details held within the Appendices for either of these reasons.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made>

Planning Submissions

- 3.7 As set out in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, the Council is required to consult various organisations and bodies on planning applications. A complete list of these consultees can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595/contents/made>

4. Who and How We Consult – Key Stages of Consultation

- 4.1 There are a wide range of consultation methods open to the Council when producing planning policy documents and determining planning applications.
- 4.2 In the case of planning policy documents, there is a distinction between ‘formal stages’ of plan production (where the nature of consultation is governed by the Regulations) and ‘ongoing consultation’ with the community as part of the development and assessment of emerging options. The type of consultation method will vary depending upon the stage of production and this document makes the distinction between consultation that is ‘required’ by the Regulations and that which is invited by the Council through its SCI over and above the minimum requirements. Table 2 in this section outlines the methods of communication for the statutory and non-statutory notification of the Local Plan process stages.
- 4.3 The Council is the ‘Local Planning Authority’ (LPA) for the area and is therefore responsible for the determination of most planning submissions, other than those determined by Leicestershire County Council. It is also responsible for producing up to date and robust planning policy documents, including the Local Plan. The minimum legal consultation requirements in relation to the production of planning policy documents at formal stages of consultation and in determining planning applications are set out below.
- 4.4 The Council regards the statutory requirements set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012) (as amended) as the minimum requirements for consultation. Along with being in accordance with Legislation, the Council will seek to go beyond the minimum requirements outlined throughout the plan preparation process where appropriate and when resources allow for it.

Local Plan Process

- 4.5 The Town and Country Planning Regulations set out the stages of plan production where considerable, well documented, consultation is required. The Regulations sets out the definitive process.
- 4.6 There are many opportunities for the community to be involved throughout the Local Plan process. The earlier people become involved, the greater the opportunity to influence the spatial strategy and direction of policies in the Local Plan.
- 4.7 Usually, Development Plan Documents require a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). These documents are produced in tandem with the production of the Development Plan Documents to assess their economic, environmental and social impact.
- 4.8 The tables below set out the Local Plan process and indicates how SA / SEA / HRA can be aligned with plan production. The tables set out who will be consulted at each stage. For up to date information on the current stage at which the Local Plan process is at, please visit the Council website.

Table 1. Process and requirements for the production of a Local Plan

Stage 1: Issues and Options and Preferred Options. Includes the SA/ SEA / HRA. (Regulation 18)
<p>There will be at least one 'formal' consultation, lasting for at least 6 weeks, for bodies identified to comment on the Plan and what it should contain. The following bodies will be notified and invited to consult on the 'formal' consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific consultation bodies (see Appendix 3 for full list)• General consultation bodies (see Appendix 4 for full list)• Residents or other persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area <p>At a minimum, bodies will be notified of the consultation period by a letter or email. Consultation documents will be available through the website and at the Council offices.</p> <p>This is a stage of formal consultation. It should be noted that the Council may consult on more than one occasion during this Regulation 18 consultation stage, for example at Issues and Options stage and Preferred Options stage.</p>



Stage 2: Pre-submission. Includes SA / SEA / HRA. (Regulation 19 and 20)
<p>Before submitting a Local Plan, the Council must ensure the proposed Plan is available for inspection by bodies notified under Regulation 18.</p> <p>All representations made under Regulation 18 will be available upon inspection of the Local Plan proposed.</p> <p>Copies of the proposed Plan and its associated documents will be available for inspection through the website or at the Council offices for a minimum of 6 weeks. The specific and general consultation bodies invited to make representations under Regulation 18 will be notified of consultation on the draft Plan by a letter or email.</p> <p>The Council invites comments for further representations about the proposed Plan.</p>



Stage 3: Submission to the Secretary of State. Includes SA / SEA / HRA. (Regulation 22)

The Plan and accompanying documents are sent in electronic form to the Secretary of State. Once the LPA has submitted a Local Plan, the following will be publicly available:

- A copy of the proposed Plan and supporting documents that are, in the opinion of the LPA, relevant to the Plan's preparation.
- The submitted Policies Map (if the adoption would result in changes to the Adopted Policies Map and SA).
- A statement on the website and notification to specific and general consultation bodies that the proposed Plan, supporting documents and proposed Policies Map are available to view.
- A statement on the website setting out bodies invited and how they were invited to make representation under Regulation 18, a summary of the issues raised in representations and how representations made have been taken into account. The statement will also include if representations were made under Regulation 19 and 20, and if so the number of representations made with a summary of issues raised.
- Copies of representations made under Regulation 19 and 20.

The Council will also give notice to those persons who have requested the notification of submission of the draft Local Plan. This is not a consultation stage.



Stage 4: Independent examination of the Local Plan and its supporting documents including the SE / SEA / HRA. (Regulation 24)

Six weeks prior to the independent examination, the Council will provide a statement on the website of the date, time and place at which the hearing is held, as well as the name of the Inspector appointed to carry out the independent examination.

Any person who made a representation in accordance with Regulation 19 and 20 will be notified of the independent examination.

Should the Inspector require the Council to make main modifications to the Plan in order to make it 'Sound', it is likely that the Inspector will require the modifications to undergo further consultation (usually six weeks). This may be an additional informal opportunity to consult. Any representations submitted are then considered by the Inspector.



Stage 5: Proposed modifications

If main modifications are proposed, there is formal consultation with those who made representations in accordance with Regulation 19. The consultation period is usually 6 weeks and consultant bodies will be notified by letter or email. A public notice will also be posted on the website.

This is an additional informal opportunity to consult.



Stage 6: Publication of Inspector's Recommendations. (Regulation 25)

Once the Inspector's recommendations are received, all persons who requested to be notified will be given notice that the recommendations are available.

This is not a consultation stage.



Stage 7: Adoption of the Local Plan and its supporting documents including the SE / SEA / HRA. (Regulation 26)

The final version of the Local Plan will be presented to the Councillors at an appropriate committee to seek resolution to adopt.

Once adopted, the Plan and its accompanying evidence will be made available on the Council website along with an adoption statement and outline the places and times at which the Local Plan is available for inspection.

The following will be notified when the Plan is adopted:

- Secretary of State
- Council Members
- Duty to Co-operate partners (see Appendix 2 for full list)
- All persons who requested will be notified

This is not a consultation stage.

4.9 Different methods of communication on the Local Plan process are deployed by the Council to notify stakeholders of consultations and how to make a representation, and also notify the public on the current Local Plan stage. This variety of communication channels enables the Council to reach as many of its residents and stakeholders as possible, especially those otherwise hard to reach.

4.10 Table 2 below outlines methods of communication used, coded as:

- **statutory means of communication to bodies mentioned in Table 1**
- **non-statutory means of communication by which the Council may seek to announce and notify on the stage of the Local Plan**

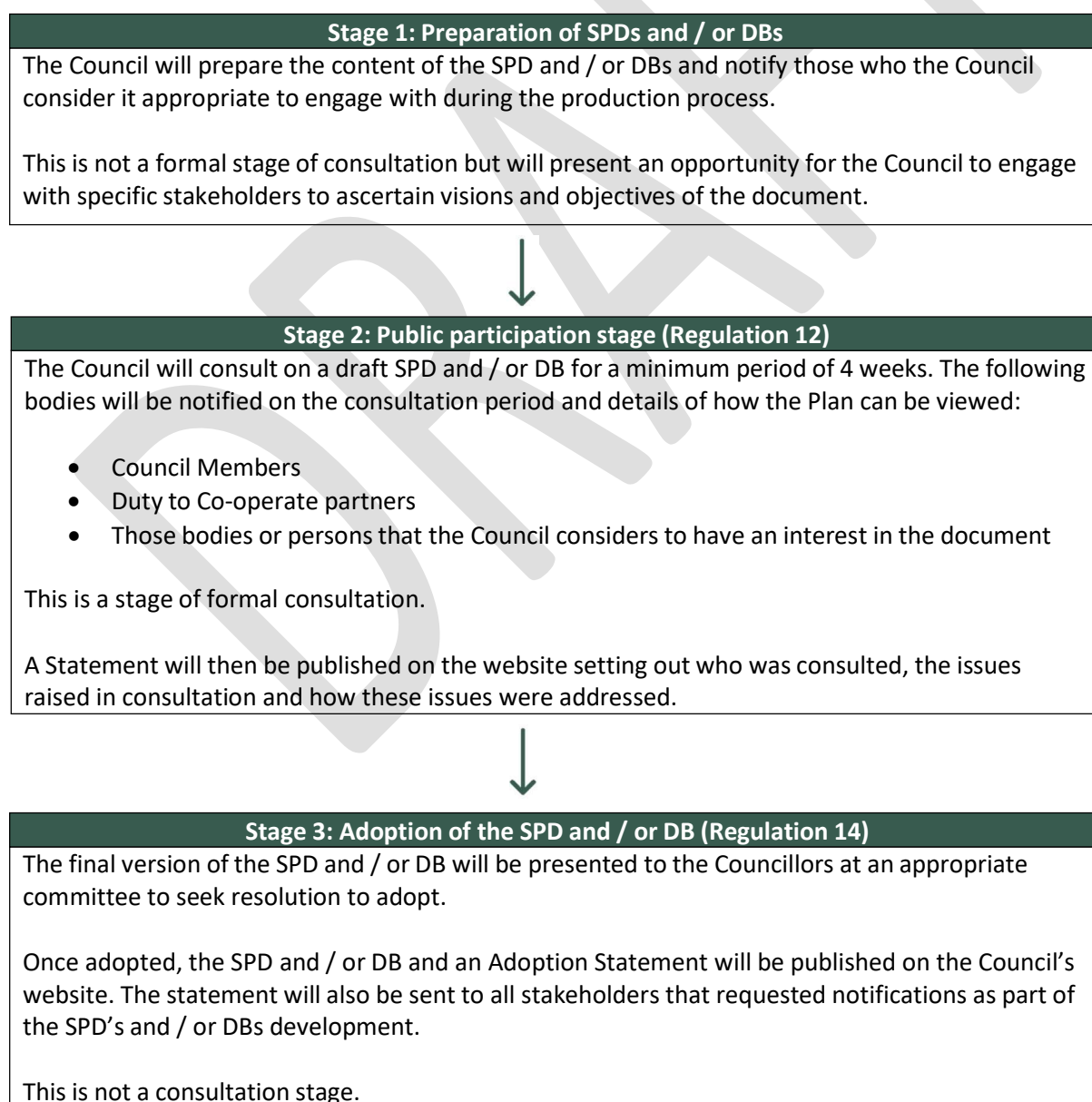
Table 2. Methods of communication in the Local Plan process

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6	Stage 7
Letter or Email or other virtual means	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Council's website https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Press release to local newspaper, radio and regional TV.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes
Public events, forums and/or exhibitions.	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Stakeholder group meetings.	Yes	Yes					
Summary Leaflet prepared which may be circulated to households in the Borough.	Yes	Yes					
Council Newsletter article	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes
Social Media consultation notifications, for example Twitter and Facebook.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes
Advertisement of the consultation on the digital display screens.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes

Supplementary Planning Document and / or Development Briefs Process

- 4.11 As part of the on-going production of planning documents, the Council will produce Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Development Briefs (DB). These documents seek to add greater depth to a planning area or topic and support planning policies as well as the Council's objectives. Although SPDs and DB's do not have the same status as Development Plan Documents and do not contain policies, they are important documents in decision making.
- 4.12 The Town and Country Planning Regulations set out the requirements for the production of SPDs and / or DBs. The requirements involve formal stages of involvement. The Regulations sets out the definitive process, however a summary of these requirements is set out below. The summary tables set out who will be consulted at each stage, and how they will be consulted.

Table 3. Process and requirements for the production of SPDs and DBs



- 4.13 Different methods of communication on the production of SPDs and DBs are deployed by the Council to notify stakeholders of consultations and how to make a representation at the relevant stages. This variety of communication channels enables the Council to reach as many of its stakeholders as possible, especially those otherwise hard to reach.
- 4.14 Table 4 below outlines methods of communication used, coded as:
- **statutory means of communication to bodies mentioned in Table 3**
 - **non-statutory means of communication by which the Council may seek to announce and notify on the process on the production of SPDs and / or DBs**

Table 4. Methods of communication used to notify on the production of a SPDs and / or DBs

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Letter or Email or other virtual means	Yes	Yes	Yes
Council's website https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/		Yes	Yes
Press release to local newspaper, radio and regional TV.		Yes	Yes
Public events, forums and/or exhibitions.		Yes	
Stakeholder group meetings.		Yes	
Summary Leaflet prepared which may be circulated to households in the Borough.		Yes	
Council Newsletter article		Yes	Yes
Social Media consultation notifications, for example Twitter and Facebook.		Yes	
Advertisement of the consultation on the digital display screens.		Yes	

Representations

- 4.15 Representations help shape planning documents and form part of the robust evidence base used by the Council to justify the making of policies in the Local Plan.
- 4.16 The Local Planning Authority (LPA) must consider any representation made to them in response to invitations. Although the Council will consider all representations thoroughly, proposals may not always change as a result of representations received as the Council has the responsibility to achieve a balanced and effective suite of planning policy and guidance.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 4.17 There are two main mechanisms for neighbourhood planning – Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders.
- 4.18 Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and further strengthened by the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. Neighbourhood plans must be prepared in accordance with Legislation set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and The Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- 4.19 A Neighbourhood Plan is a way of helping local communities influence the planning of the area they live and work in. If a plan is prepared and agreed by the community by referendum, it will become part of the Development Plan for the Local Authority area and will be used in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.20 It is the full responsibility of the community forums or local groups in the Borough to prepare the Plan and to undertake an inclusive consultation. The Council has a duty to assist.

Planning Applications

- 4.21 The Council is aware of the importance of consultation with the community when it comes to considering and deciding formal planning submissions.
- 4.22 As set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the Council is required to consult various organisations and bodies and is advised to consult others depending on the type of planning application being considered.
- 4.23 The Borough Council deals with many hundreds of planning applications each year and the nature of the planning applications dealt with are wide ranging from householder and minor applications, to large scale mixed use proposals including residential, leisure, and other forms of development. The nature, scale and type of planning application submitted will determine how the Council will engage with the Community and other stakeholders.
- 4.24 Planning applications submitted to the Council are either determined at Development Control Committee by elected Council Members or they are delegated to Officers and are determined without the need to be reported at Planning Committee. When a planning application is to be considered at a Planning Committee, there may be the opportunity for interested parties to address

the Committee at the meeting prior to any decision being taken. Further information on this can be viewed on the Council's website.

- 4.25 Chapter 5 explains in more detail how the Council will engage with the community when determining planning applications.
- 4.26 Some planning applications can require special (or additional consultation) procedures due to their particular characteristics, including but not limited to:
- applications which are a departure from the Local Plan
 - applications which are classed as Major Developments, as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)
 - applications which are accompanied by an Environmental Statement
 - applications for Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and certain works that materially affect the character of Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings
 - applications affecting public Rights of Way.
- 4.27 There are some applications where there is no statutory requirement to consult the public. These include Certificates of Lawful Development, internal alterations to a Grade II listed building, advertisements, non-material amendments and approval of details.

Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.28 The Council offers a chargeable pre-application advice service for all planning applications. Pre-application discussions identify issues and requirements at an early stage and are beneficial for applicants to provide clarity as to the process and some degree of certainty where local planning policies and constraints are identified. Details of how to approach pre-application advice, including fees and how to request a meeting, can be found on the Council's website.
- 4.29 The Council cannot require a developer or householder to undertake pre-application discussions, or to engage with local residents and amenity groups, however it is advised as a 'good practice' approach. Pre-application discussions with the Council are encouraged for all development proposals.

Community Involvement

- 4.30 Community involvement on planning applications does not just involve the public. The Council must also consult the appropriate statutory bodies. Statutory bodies are those bodies which have particular powers in the policy making process. In deciding which statutory body is consulted, the Council must take into account the nature and location of the proposal. There are also a significant number of non-statutory bodies including local interest groups which the Council will consult in appropriate circumstances. The public, statutory consultees and non-statutory consultees have 21 days to make any comments they may have on a submission from the initial notification of an application. The results of any such consultation will be taken into consideration in the determination of any planning application.
- 4.31 In publicising planning applications, it is necessary for the Council to strike a balance between the consideration of cost, speed of decision making and providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment.

- 4.32 In the event that an application is significantly amended during its consideration, the Council may send a further round of consultation letters to nearby residents, to those who have already written in with comments and consultees. Further comments can then be submitted regarding the amendments.

What Should Comments Cover?

- 4.33 Comments can be made to support, object, or make a general observation on planning application proposals. It must be noted, that the Council can only take into account material planning considerations within the determination of planning proposals and therefore would only encourage comments that relate to planning related observations only.
- 4.34 Comments which contain unacceptable language, discrimination or harassment of any kind, or contain any content that may be potentially libelous will not be accepted by the Council.
- 4.35 The Council does reserve the right to publish all comments received on a planning proposal.

Permitted Development

- 4.36 It is important to note that certain proposals do not need permission of the Council because these developments fall under 'Permitted Development' and are given permission by Central Government Legislation. What constitutes permitted development is detailed in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order (2015) (as amended). For any further information on what requires planning permission and what constitutes 'permitted development', it is advisable to speak to the Council's Planning Department before you undertake any work.

Petitions

- 4.37 The Council will accept petitions relating to plan-making and planning applications, however each signed petition will be considered as one representation and will have equal weight to any other representation reported on in officer reports.

Appeals

- 4.38 Anyone who has submitted a planning application has a right of appeal to the Secretary of State if an application is refused, not determined, or if the permission contains conditions that are considered to be unacceptable to the applicant. Details on how applicants can appeal against a decision are contained within all decision notices issued by the Council. Third parties do not have the right to appeal.
- 4.39 Upon receipt of an appeal and start date from the Planning Inspectorate, the Council may inform neighbours and all those who have made representations on the application that an appeal has been lodged. Appeals are examined by an Independent Planning Inspector.

- 4.40 An appeal may be considered either through an exchange of correspondence (known as written representations), at an informal hearing, or at a more formal Public Inquiry.
- 4.41 Any comments received during the original consideration of the application will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate. There may be the opportunity to make further representations on the appeal directly to the Planning Inspectorate, and the Council will seek to ensure that the same neighbour notifications as the original planning application are carried out.
- 4.42 If the matter is to be heard by an Inspector at an informal hearing or Public Inquiry, then objectors will be invited to attend the hearing / inquiry where, at the inspector's discretion, they may have the opportunity to make verbal submissions. The Appellant and the Borough Council also appear at the hearing or inquiry. All parties associated to the appeal are informed of the Inspector's decision if they have requested to be notified.

Leicestershire County Council

- 4.43 As mentioned, the Borough Council does not deal with all types of planning applications, as certain applications are the responsibility of Leicestershire County Council. The County Council will deal with applications relating to waste and minerals developments, as well as applications relating to County Council owned properties such as depots.

Planning Aid

- 4.44 Planning Aid provides independent professional advice and information on planning matters and is run by a network of volunteer caseworkers. It is aimed at individuals, community groups and other voluntary groups who cannot afford to pay for private consultants. Planning Aid may be able to help you if you want to find out how to:
- apply for planning permission
 - object to or support another person's planning application
 - appeal against a refusal of planning permission
 - get involved in Local Development Document preparation
- 4.45 Contact details for Planning Aid can be found at: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>
- 4.46 Another source of useful planning information is the Planning Portal. Planning Portal website details are as follows: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk>.

5. Who and How We Consult – Planning Proposals Further Information

- 5.1 This Chapter follows on from the previous, with a more in-depth discussion on the methods used in consultation of planning proposals.
- 5.2 There are a wide range of consultation methods open to the Council when determining planning applications. The planning Legislation sets out the minimum requirements for public participation and the Council will notify all stakeholders and organisations (at least) as set out in the Regulations. The preferred method of consultation is by email, but where a person or organisation does not have an email address, a letter or other methods will be used.
- 5.3 Appendix 1 contains a list of the methods used by the Council and their associated benefits and disadvantages.
- 5.4 The statutory requirements for consultation with regards to planning applications are set out within the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The Regulations require that planning applications are publicised by way of some or all of the following, depending on the type of application:
- neighbour notification letters
 - a notice in a local newspaper
 - a site notice
- 5.5 Some of the ways that the Council may look to achieve appropriate levels of publicity for an application are set out below.
- 5.6 **Neighbour notification by letter or email** - Statutory organisations and neighbours adjoining a site or otherwise directly affected may be targeted. The letter includes brief information about the proposals and gives guidance on how to comment.
- 5.7 **Site notices** – is the principal method of consultation and are a ‘formal’ requirement of the Regulations for applications which affect conservation areas, or for listed buildings, public rights of way and major applications. Site notices are posted on public land on or close to the site as soon as possible upon receipt of a valid application. These notices invite comments for a minimum of 21 days and may, in certain circumstances, be supplemented with letters to individual households. Letters are not statutory on all applications, however the Council will issue site notices on all relevant applications.
- 5.8 **Newspaper advertisements** - are a statutory requirement for applications in conservation areas, listed building, public rights of way and major applications.
- 5.9 **A Weekly List of Planning Applications** - is produced on the Council’s website which details every application received and validated. This information can be viewed on the website.
- 5.10 The Council’s Website is a useful tool to search for and view new planning applications via the online PublicAccess database. If you have any issues accessing the website, please call the Council on 0116 288 8961.

- 5.11 **Posting public notices and press releases** - the local press and radio broadcasters may be an option to communicate with the public on larger planning applications.
- 5.12 Applications can be made available for inspection at the Council offices upon request.
- 5.13 Customers can request face to face appointments to meet with one of our officers at one of the hubs outlined on the website. Customers are also encouraged to attend their local Library or internet café where internet is free to access the website.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Methods of Consultation

Method	Benefit	Disadvantage
Make documents and supporting information available at the Council Offices and public libraries.	Consultation document, information and forms for submitting responses are free of charge to view and available during opening hours.	Not all stakeholders will be able to access this information due to limitations on their ability to travel etc. Also opening times can be limiting.
Make documents and supporting information available on the Council's website.	Information easily accessible from people's own homes and businesses, 24 hours a day.	Not all stakeholders will be able to access this information due to limitations on their access to the internet.
Hold Exhibitions and / or staffed Road Shows where practical and appropriate.	Publicises information in a user friendly way in a variety of locations. It also provides an opportunity for the public to have a conversation with Officers / the Council about the issues in hand, face-to-face.	Not all stakeholders will be able to attend these events. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Include information in a Summary Leaflet and send out to households in the Borough where appropriate, this could also include a questionnaire with collection boxes provided around the Borough.	Provides a brief summary of the document outlining the key headlines to inform plan preparation or to raise awareness of upcoming events or public consultations etc.	Not all residents will read the leaflet. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Council Newsletter	Newsletter could be distributed to all households in the Borough to alert people to upcoming major issues or planning consultations.	Not all residents will read the leaflet. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Attendance of Planning Officers at meetings and community forums.	Allows information to be displayed in public locations in local areas. Gives opportunities for representatives at meetings and forums to raise and discuss issues.	Not all stakeholders will be able to attend / be aware of these events. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Letters and emails sent to stakeholders and organisations.	A formal means of communication with those on the database; ensures communication is received.	Not all stakeholders have an email registered or will check their emails regularly.

Method	Benefit	Disadvantage
		Stakeholders address details may also be out of date.
On-line response form on the Council's website.	Comments can be submitted to the Council, quickly, at any time of the day, with no postage costs.	Not always easily accessible to all stakeholders because it requires them to have access to the internet and an email account. There may also be a charge to the Council for its implementation.
Dedicated email address for planning policy matters.	Means of submitting comments and contacting the Council for further information and assistance for the public.	Not always easily accessible to all stakeholders because it requires them to have access to the internet and an email account.
Press releases to local newspapers, radio and regional TV.	Information to the local community which stimulates debate.	Not always easily accessible to all stakeholders because they may not see or hear it. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Posters around the Borough Including the Council's Digital Display Screens.	Information for the local community that may not be seen by other forms of communication. These can be displayed on Notice Boards, Bus Stops, and on Lamp Posts in the areas that are effected.	Not always easily accessible to all stakeholders because they may not be seen. They can also be removed or vandalised. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Involving Elected Members and providing updates.	By informing Members of the latest publications or consultations, they will then be prepared to inform their constituents of the latest planning policy position.	Information presented may be missed or be misinterpreted.

Appendix 2 – Duty to Cooperate Bodies

Relevant bodies to Oadby and Wigston Borough Council extracted from Part 2, Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) that must be consulted to conform to the Duty to Co-operate:

Local nearby Councils:

Local Authorities in the Housing Market Area

Blaby District Council

Charnwood Borough Council

Harborough District Council

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Leicester City Council

Melton Borough Council

North West Leicestershire District Council

Leicestershire County Council.

Other relevant bodies that may be consulted on:

Active Travel England

Environment Agency

Historic England

Natural England

Civil Aviation Authority

Homes England

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (LLR ICB)

Office of Rail and Road

National Highways

Leicestershire County Council Highway Department

Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership

Appendix 3 – Specific Consultation Bodies

In accordance with Government Regulations, and depending on the scale or nature of a submitted planning application the Borough Council as Local Planning Authority may have a statutory duty to consult the following organisation or bodies, however, notwithstanding any formal requirements to consult these bodies they may also be consulted where the Borough Council considers that they may have a relevant interest in any planning application or document:

This list is not intended to be definitive and it may be appropriate to consult other groups not listed.

Local nearby Councils:

Blaby District Council
Harborough District Council
Leicester City Council
Leicestershire County Council

Other relevant bodies:

Active Travel England
Coal Authority
Canal and River Trust
Control of major-accident hazards competent authority (COMAH)
Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy
Environment Agency
Forestry Commission
The Gardens Trust
Health and Safety Executive
Highways England
Historic England
Homes England
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (LLR ICB)
Leicestershire Police
Natural England
Network Rail
Relevant Telecommunication Companies
Relevant Utility Companies

Severn Trent Water

Sports England

Theatres Trust

The Crown Estate

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Appendix 4 – General Consultation Bodies

This list is not intended to be definitive (it gives an example of the likely groups) and these, or other groups, may be consulted when appropriate.

Category	General consultation bodies
Architecture, Design and Heritage Interests	Local Groups and Organisations*, inc. Civic / Historical Societies
Business and economic Development Organisations	Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Chambers of Commerce, East Midlands Chamber
Countryside / Rural Organisations	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, The Countryside Charity National Farmers Union Rural Community Council for Leicestershire and Rutland
Emergency Services	Leicestershire Constabulary Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service
Environmental Protection and Conservations Organisations	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) The National Trust The Tree Council The Woodland Trust Open Spaces Society
Health Organisations	Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board
Housing Providers and Organisations	Home Builders Federation
Libraries	Agency for the Legal Deposit Libraries
Major Landowners	The Crown Estate University of Leicester
Media Organisations	BBC Radio Leicester
Other Government Organisations	H M Prison Services

Other Voluntary Bodies / Charities	British Red Cross Citizens Advice Bureau Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
Planning Consultancies	National and Local Planning Consultancies that have registered their interest
Postal Services	Royal Mail Group Limited
Racial, Ethnic, National, Religious and Minority Groups Representatives and Interests	Local Groups and Organisations where requested
Retailers	National and Local Retailers that have registered their interest
Services for the Disabled or those with Special Needs	Equality and Human Rights Commission Mind
Services for the Elderly	Age UK
Service Providers and Conservation Bodies	National Grid plc
Sport and Leisure Organisations	Sport England Active Together
Telecommunication Groups	Relevant Groups and Organisations
Tourism	Go Leicestershire
Transport Undertakings and Interests	Network Rail Local Bus Companies
Youth Organisations	Schools Youth Council

Appendix 5 – Government Consultation Bodies

Home Office

Ministry of Defence

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities

Ministry of Justice

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Department for Education

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Department of Health and Social Care

Department for Transport

Department of Work and Pensions

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Appendix 6 – Glossary of Terms

Adoption: The final confirmation of a Plan and its policies being deemed acceptable by the Council.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR): Is a report that measures the ‘success’ of planning policies and assesses plan making performance.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Document subject to independent examination, which will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.

Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA): An evaluation tool which analyses the effect that a policy or procedure will have on a particular group of people to highlight whether their needs are being met and if there are any issues requiring further action.

Independent Examination: Development Plan Documents will be examined by an Independent Inspector whose role is to assess whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate, legal and procedural requirements and whether it is sound.

Local Development Scheme (LDS): The Council’s programme for preparing planning documents.

Local Plan: The document setting out the overall planning strategy, policies and proposals for the Borough area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The NPPF sets out the Government’s National planning policies and how these are expected to be applied at a local level.

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended): The Regulations that set out the process by which the Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared.

Planning Inspectorate: A government body whose work involves processing planning and enforcement appeals and holding examinations into Development Plan Documents.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): Document setting out when, with whom and how consultation will be undertaken on Local Development Documents.

Supplementary Planning Document: Document that expands on policies and proposals set out in the Local Plan.

Stakeholder: A person, group, organisation, company etc with an interest in or potentially affected by planning decisions in the Borough.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): Document setting out the appraisal of plans and policies to ensure that their potential impact is assessed and that they reflect sustainable development objectives.

Test of Soundness: A series of questions the Independent Inspector asks during the Independent Examination of the Local Plan to assess whether it has been positively prepared, justified, effective, and if it is consistent with national policy.

The Council: Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

Town and Country Planning (Local Plans) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended): The Regulations that set out the process by which the Local Plans and SPDs must be prepared.

Appendix 7 – Contacts

You can contact the Planning Department by telephoning the Council, or by emailing or writing us:

Tel: 0116 288 8961

Email (Development Management - Applications):

planning@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Email (Planning Policy):

planningpolicy@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Postal Address:

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Brocks Hill Council Offices
Washbrook Lane
Oadby
Leicester
LE2 5JJ

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Appendix 8 – Further Information

Legislation

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Latest available (revised) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents>

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents>

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595/contents>

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/596/contents>

National Policy / Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework, sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance, sets out the government's guidance for implementing policies set out in the NPPF. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Planning Aid, provides independent professional advice and information on planning matters and is run by a network of volunteer caseworkers. It is aimed at individuals, community groups and other voluntary groups who cannot afford to pay for private consultants. <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>

Planning Portal, is the national home of planning and building Regulations information and the national planning application service: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/>

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

Planning, outlines the way planning issues are dealt with by the Council. <https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/planning>

Building Control, provides advice and assistance to achieve quality of design and construction in buildings in accordance with The Building Regulations and associated Legislation. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is part of the Leicestershire Building Control Partnership, which is based at Blaby District Council. <https://www.blaby.gov.uk/building-control/>

Statement of Community Involvement

Public Consultation Statement 2024

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Public Consultation Statement (Statement) has been prepared in support of the Council's revised Statement of Community Involvement Document (SCI) that was publicly consulted upon between midday Wednesday 13 December 2023 and midday Wednesday 7 February 2024.
- 1.2. Since the last SCI was adopted by the Council in 2019, it is no longer a statutory requirement for local authorities to consult on the preparation of the SCI. However, to ensure transparency and robustness, the Council chose to consult the public through an 8 week consultation period to seek high connectivity with local people and stakeholders. This public consultation statement sets out the following:
 - The persons that the Council consulted during the abovementioned 8 week public consultation;
 - A summary of the main issues raised by those persons who submitted comments during the consultation period; and
 - How any issues raised during the consultation period have been addressed by the Council.
- 1.3. Appendix 1 of this Statement sets out a summary of all the comments received during the public consultation period and Council officer responses to each of these comments.

2. Public Consultation Period

- 2.1. A public consultation for the revised SCI was undertaken by the Council between December 2023 and February 2024, as specified in paragraph 1.1 of this document.
- 2.2. The SCI sets out the Council's approach to involving and consulting local people and stakeholders in planning related document production, such as the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).
- 2.3. In line with requirements, the following persons and bodies were notified via notification letter, sent either by email or post, of the consultation that was taking place:
 - Duty to Cooperate partners
 - Specific Consultation bodies
 - General Consultation bodies
 - Other stakeholders held on the Local Plan consultation database
- 2.4. Due to the content of the SCI, the Council also invited representation from local groups and civic societies, due to the role that they play within the local community.
- 2.5. The notification letter explained:
 - The purpose of the consultation;
 - How to find further information;
 - The consultation period;
 - How to make representations; and,
 - How a person or body could be added to the Council's Local Plan consultation database.
- 2.6. In addition to the notification letter, the Council;
 - Made all elected Council Members aware of the consultation;
 - Advertised the consultation on the Council's website;
 - Made available for inspection hard copies of all relevant information and documentation at the Council's Brocks Hill Offices; and,
 - Made available for inspection electronic copies of all relevant information and documentation on the Council's website.

3. Summary of the Main Issues Raised

- 3.1. A total of five persons / bodies submitted representations to the Council relating to the revised SCI. Representations were received from the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England, the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board and a South Wigston Tree Warden.
- 3.2. There were no key topics or main issues raised within any of the representations received relating to the revised SCI. The Environment Agency, Historic England and the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board made no specific comment. Natural England supported the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the community, and the South Wigston Tree Warden suggested an amendment to the list of consultation bodies which has been considered.

4. How the Issues Raised Have Been Addressed

- 4.1. Having considered the amendment suggested by the Tree Warden, the additions of The Tree Council, The Woodland Trust, and The Open Spaces Society have been made to the list of general consultation bodies under 'Environmental Protection and Conservation Organisations'. This is considered a minor change to the report. There have been no other changes made to the consultation document.

Appendix 1. Summary of Comments Received During the Consultation Period and Officer Responses

Name of person / body submitting comment	Date on which comment was received	Nature of comment received	Officer response to comment received
Natural England	22/12/23	We are supportive of the principle of meaningful and early engagement of the general community, community organisations and statutory bodies in local planning matters, both in terms of shaping policy and participating in the process of determining planning applications. We regret we are unable to comment, in detail, on individual Statements of Community Involvement but information on the planning service we offer, including advice on how to consult us, can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-planning-authorities-get-environmental-advice	Thank you for your reply. We have noted the consultation response.
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board	05/02/24	The NHS Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Integrated Care Board (ICB) are pleased to receive the draft publication of the Statement of Community Involvement for adoption. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and I look forward to working together.	Thank you for taking the time to engage in the consultation with the Statement of Community Involvement.
South Wigston Tree Warden	05/02/24	Seems important to add the Tree Council, The Woodland Trust, and the Open Spaces Society to the consultation bodies in the relevant appendix.	Thank you for your engagement with the Statement of Community Involvement consultation. Your comments are appreciated and have been noted.
Environment Agency	06/02/24	Thank you for giving the Environment Agency the opportunity to comment on your Authorities Draft Statement of Community Involvement. Having reviewed the document we have no adverse comments to make.	Thank you for your reply and engagement with the consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement. We have noted the consultation response.
Historic England	06/02/24	Thank you for the consultation on the Draft SCI for the Borough. I am writing to advise that we note the references to Historic England, which are welcomed, but have no additional comments to make on the draft document.	Thank you for your engagement with the Statement of Community Involvement consultation. We have noted the response.



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 26 March 2024	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Standards & Ethical Indicators (Q3 2023/24)**

Report Author(s): **David Gill (Head of Law and Democracy / Monitoring Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	To receive the figures for local determination of complaints and ethical indicators for Q3 2023-24.
Report Summary:	The report provides information in relation to Member Complaints, Corporate and Ombudsman Complaints, Freedom of Information Requests and Anti-Social Behaviour Reports and Resolutions.
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report appendix be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2642 teresa.neal@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>David Gill (Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer) (0116) 257 2626 david.gill@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2)
Vision and Values:	Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Political Dynamics (CR3) Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.

Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Standards & Ethical Indicators (Q3 2023/24)

1. Information

- 1.1 Regular reporting about the Council’s activities under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 is a statutory requirement under the oversight regime of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner. This report to Members covers Quarter 3 (Q3) of 2023/24.
- 1.2 The report also contains other matters which Officers considered would be of interest to Members, including the number and disposal of Member Complaints, the number of Corporate and Ombudsman complaints, the number of Freedom of Information requests and the number of anti-social behaviour reports and resolutions.
- 1.3 The Quarter 3 report for 2023/24 is attached at **Appendix 1** for Members’ information.



OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS AND ETHICAL INDICATORS

QUARTER 3 REPORT

2023/2024

1. Introduction

This is the quarterly report to the Policy Finance and Development Committee detailing both the figures for the Ethical Indicators and the figures for the Local Determination of Complaints process for 2023/2024.

For clarification purposes the months covered by the quarters are as follows:

Quarter 1 – 1 April to 30 June
Quarter 2 – 1 July to 30 September
Quarter 3 – 1 October to 31 December
Quarter 4 – 1 January to 31 March

The report is split into two parts for ease of reference; Part 1 refers to the local determination of complaints, part 2 is the table showing the ethical indicators figures.

The report will enable the Policy Finance and Development Committee to build up a picture over time of how many complaints are received and where these are coming from. The parts of the Code of Conduct which have been breached will also be recorded to enable training to be targeted effectively.

2. Part 1 – Local Determination of Complaints

The Monitoring Officer received 0 complaints in Quarter 3 of 2023/2024.

2.1 Source of Complaint

Not applicable.

2.2 Assessment Sub-committee Decisions

There have been No Assessment Sub-committee meetings in this quarter.

2.3 Timeliness of Decision

The Standards for England Guidance stated that the Assessment Sub-committee should complete its initial assessment of an allegation “within an average of 20 working days” to reach a decision on what should happen with the complaint. The Council has taken this standard and adapted it under the new rules to aim to hold an Assessment Sub-committee within 20 working days of notifying the parties that informal resolution is not possible.

2.4 Review Requests

There have been no review requests in this quarter. Review requests can only be made following a decision of ‘No further Action’ by the Assessment Sub-committee where there is submission of new evidence or information by the complainant.

2.5 Subsequent Referrals

None.

2.6 Outcome of Investigations

No formal investigations were concluded in this period.

2.7 Parts of the Code Breached

This section is intended to show where there are patterns forming to enable the Policy Finance and Development Committee to determine where there needs to be further training for Councillors. Targeting training in this way makes it more sustainable and, hopefully, more effective.

So far this year, the following areas of the code were found to have been breached:

Not applicable.

Ref	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
LG1	Objections to the Council's Accounts	Head of Finance	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG2	Follow up Action relating to reaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (Members)	Head of Law & Democracy	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG3	Disciplinary Action relating to breaches of the Member / Officer Protocol (Staff)	HR Manager	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG4	Number of Whistle Blowing Incidents Reported	Head of Law & Democracy	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG5	No. of Recommendations made to improve Governance Procedures/Policies		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG6	No. of Recommendations Implemented		0	0	0	0	0		0	

Corporate Complaints

Ref	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
LG7	No. Corporate Complaints received	Policy, Compliance, and Data Protection Officer	37	56	29	48	32	50	53	
	No. Corporate Complaints escalated to L2		9	9	5	10	5	2	6	
	No. Corporate Complaints escalated to Ombudsman		2	1	3	1	0	3	0	
LG7a	No. Corporate Complaints Resolved at L1		26	47	24	38	27	48	47	
	No. Corporate Complaints Resolved at L2		7	9	5	10	5	2	6	
LG7b	No. Corporate Complaints where compensation paid		1	0	2	1	0	0	0	
	Service Area		Licensing	-	Housing	Council Tax	-	-	-	
LG8	No. Ombudsman complaints received		2	1	2	1	0	3	0	
	Service Area		-	N/A (General OWBC)	-	Waste	-	Housing, Revenues, EH	-	
LG8a	No. Ombudsman complaints resolved		0	1	0	1	0	2	1	
LG8b	No. Ombudsman complaints not yet determined by the Ombudsman		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
LG8c	No. Ombudsman complaints where compensation paid		0	0	1	0	0	0	0	

Freedom of Information Act Indicators

Ref	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
LG9a	No. of FOI Requests Compliant	Policy, Compliance, and Data Protection Officer	181	178	116	175	112	161	172	
LG9b	No. of Non-compliant FOI Requests		11	10	8	7	8	2	16	
LG9c	No. of FOI Requests still open and within the 20 working days		0	0	0	0	7	4	0	
LG9d	No. of FOI Requests withheld due to exemptions/fees applied		4	7	2	1	2	3	1	

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Indicators

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2022/2023	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
LG10	No. of Directed Surveillance Authorisations granted during the quarter	Head of Law & Democracy	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10a	No. in force at the end of the quarter		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10b	No. of CHIS recruited during the quarter		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10c	No. ceased to be used during the quarter		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10d	No. active at the end of the quarter		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10e	No. of breaches (particularly unauthorised surveillance)		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10f	No. of applications submitted to obtain communications data which were rejected		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10g	No. of Notices requiring disclosure of communications data		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10h	No. of authorisations for conduct to acquire communications data		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10i	No. of recordable errors		0	0	0	0	0		0	

Anti-Social Behaviour Indicators

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
	No. of Complaints Registered	Head of Law and Democracy	24	1/21	17/34	4/27	11/14		3/17	
	No. of Disposals		5	1/4	3/10	1/6	6/8		2/1	
	No. of Complaints still Open		1	1/0	4/0	4/4	5/2		2/0	
	No Further Action (where suspect identified)		3	0/1	1/8	0/4	0/3		0/4	
	No Further Action (no suspect identified)		17	0/17	13/22	3/17	5/8		1/13	

Blue text – Housing

Red text – ASB Officer

ASB Officer Q1 2023/2024 – 2 suspects given a disposal who are named on the same ASB report.

Food Safety Inspections

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
BPE31	No. of high-risk Inspections	Head of Law & Democracy	3	1	2	3	4	3	1	
	No. of medium/low inspections		N/A	8	N/A	25	56	18	56	
	No. new business registered		14	37	9	10	8	13	13	
	Outstanding medium low risk inspections from 2022.		N/A	30		14		11		
No. of high-risk Inspections Completed	3		1	2	3	1	6	4		
No. of medium risk/low inspections Completed/ closed	N/A		3	23	27	40	9			
No. of new business triaged	13		26	7	14	7	12	2		
Formal revisit under the food hygiene rating system							2			

No. of Inspections Outstanding		0		0	0	3	1	0
High risk								
Medium risk		5		N/A	3	16	14	0
New businesses		9		3	0	1	12	0
D's 2022		2			**4		2**	

- High risk are A/B risk rating businesses. Medium/ Low are C/D's. **4 premises were found which had not pull through due to an issues with its scoring. ** 2 premises we are struggling to again access.
- New businesses continue to receive a triage call to assess their activities, if High risk then a physical inspection is selected to be carried out. Low risk is not being carried out now but remain under review.