



TO COUNCILLOR:

N Alam
S S Athwal (Vice-Chair)
L A Bentley
G A Boulter
M H Charlesworth

M L Darr
J K Ford
D A Gamble
C S Gore
S Z Haq

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, 24 March 2026, 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
16 March 2026

Anne E Court
Chief Executive



Meeting ID: 2986

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/23601-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.



Postal Address: Brocks Hill Council Offices, Washbrook Lane, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5JJ

Refuse & Recycling Centre: The Depot, Wigston Road, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5JE

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



oadby-wigston.gov.uk



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

To read, confirm and note the Action List arising from the previous meeting.

6. Motions on Notice

To consider any Motions on Notice in accordance with Rule 14 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

a. Motion to Name a Road in Honour of Howard Riley

8

Proposed by Councillor Michael H Charlesworth

7. 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.

8. Budget Monitoring (Q3 2025/26)

9 - 25

Report of the Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer and the Finance Manager / Deputy S151 Officer

9. Business Rates Discretionary Policy (2026)

To Follow

Report of the Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer and the Revenues & Benefits Manager

10. Artificial Intelligence Policy (2026)

26 - 38

Report of the Head of Policy, Performance & Transformation

11. Draft Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (March 2026)

39 - 104

Report of the Senior Planning Policy Officer

12. Draft Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (Spring 2026)

105 - 135

Report of the Senior Planning Policy Officer

13. Resident's Forum Funding Request

136 - 138

Report of the Community Safety and Youth Officer

Report of the Legal Consultant / Interim 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, 3 FEBRUARY 2026 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT

I K Ridley Chair
S S Athwal Vice-Chair



Meeting ID: 2966

COUNCILLORS

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

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

S A E Ball Finance Manager
A E Court Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service
D Gill Legal Consultant / (Acting) Monitoring Officer
A Thorpe Head of Built Environment
C Warren Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer
S Wheeliker Senior Democratic & Electoral Services Officer
B Wilson Head of Neighbourhood Services

119. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

120. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

None.

121. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors M H Charlesworth and C S Gore declared non-pecuniary interests with regard to item 10 of the agenda, insofar as they both rented allotments in the Borough.

122. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 December 2025 be taken as read, confirmed and approved.

123. ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

None.

124. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None.

125. GREEN SPACES STRATEGY (2025 - 2035)

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 7 – 29 of the agenda reports pack) which sought approval of the Green Spaces Strategy (2025 – 2035).

It was moved by Councillor K J Loydall, seconded by Councillor S Z Haq and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The feedback from the consultation be noted; and**
- ii) The Green Spaces Strategy (2025 – 2035) (at Appendix 1) be adopted.**

126. CEMETERY AND BURIAL STRATEGY (2026 - 2036)

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 30 – 75 of the agenda reports pack and pages 3 – 7 of the second agenda update) which sought approval of the Cemetery and Burial Strategy (2026 - 2036).

It was moved by Councillor L A Bentley, seconded by Councillor S Z Haq and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The contents of the report, appendices and consultation responses be noted; and**
- ii) The Cemetery and Burial Strategy (2026 - 2036) be adopted.**

127. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGIES AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS (2026/27)

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 76 – 125 of the agenda reports pack) which sought approval of the Treasury Management Policy, Strategies and Prudential Indicators (2026/27).

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The Capital Strategy 2026/27 including the Prudential Indicators (as set out in Appendix 1) be approved;**
- ii) The Treasury Management Policy, Treasury Strategy and Plan 2026/27 (as set out in Appendices 2 & 3) be approved;**
- iii) The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2026/27 (as set out in Appendix 4) be approved;**
- iv) The Investment Strategy 2026/27 (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.

128. 2025/26 REVENUE BUDGETS, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND 2026/27 - 2030/31 CAPITAL PROGRAMMES

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 126 – 164 of the agenda reports pack and 3 – 15 of the first agenda update) which presented the 2026/27 Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and 2026/27 – 2030/31 Capital Programmes for recommendation to Full Council.

Councillor G A Boulter proposed an amendment to recommendation B to only increase the council tax rate by 2.5% instead of 2.99%, and not to increase garden waste or car park fees to be fair to residents in light of the cost-of-living crisis, and the unfairness of making local residents pay for the costs of local government reorganisation. Councillors queried what the impact of this proposal would be and whether the Council would be able to deliver a balanced budget.

The Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer advised the overall impact would be £546K over the entire period for the MTFP and that while the budget for the 2026/27 financial year would be balanced, it may not be possible to balance the budget for future years. The Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer and the Legal Consultant / (Acting) Monitoring Officer advised that these effects would be cumulative and with unavoidable future costs around homelessness and the impact of rent reform, then the Council could go into deficit. The Officers also advised that residents may face much more significant increases to council tax once rates are equalised following local government reorganisation as the majority of authorities would be increasing the rates by the recommended amount of 2.99%. The Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer stated explicitly that she opposed this amendment in her professional opinion.

Councillors stated that the arguments raised were speculative and that residents needed support. Councillors also commented on the fact that the Borough's town centres had bucked the national trend in seeing increased footfall, and that increases to parking fees could jeopardise this. Councillors also raised objections to the requirement that local authorities be made to front the bill for local government reorganisation, stating that this reorganisation was not wanted by local Councils or by residents, that the costs should be covered by central government and expressed their dissatisfaction with the imposition of local government reorganisation.

It was moved Councillor G A Boulter, seconded by Councillor N Alam and

RESOLVED THAT:

Recommendation B ii be amended to read "to increase Council Tax by 2.5%" and recommendation B vi be amended to read "The Scale of Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 4 and approves an ongoing annual increase by the September CPI rate, *except for garden waste and car park fees.*"

For 11
Against 0
Abstentions 2

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

RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The content of the report and appendices be noted;
- ii) The below recommendations as amended be recommended to Full Council for approval:
 - 1. The General Fund Revenue Budget for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1;
 - 2. To increase Council Tax by 2.5%;
 - 3. A housing rent and service charge increase of 4.8%;
 - 4. The HRA budget for 2026/27, as detailed in Table 4 and notes the HRA MTFP;
 - 5. The adoption of rent convergence at up to £3 per week when legislation allows;
 - 6. The Scale of Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 4 and approves an ongoing annual increase by the September CPI rate, except for garden waste and car park fees;
 - 7. The Capital Schemes of the General Fund and HRA as set out in Appendix 5;
- iii) The below recommendations be recommended to Full Council to note:
 - 1. The MTFP for 2026/27 to 2030/31 as set out in Table 7; and
 - 2. 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.

For 12
Against 1
Abstentions 0

129. LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES - STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO HOUSING DISTRIBUTION FOLLOWING NPPF AND NEW STANDARD METHOD PUBLISHED DECEMBER 2024

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendix (as set out at pages 165 – 191 of the agenda reports pack) which sought approval of the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing Distribution.

Councillor M L Darr left the meeting at 8:35pm.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor G A Boulter and

RESOLVED THAT:

The signing of the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) which has been prepared by the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities be approved.

For 10
Against 1
Abstentions 1

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.37 pm

Agenda Item 6a.

MOTION ON NOTICE

Policy, Finance & Development Committee | Tuesday, 24 March 2026

Motion to Name a Road in Honour of Howard Riley

Committee notes that;

Howard Riley has made a significant contribution to Wigston through his sporting and educational achievements.

Committee proposes to;

Name a road after Howard Riley as soon as is practical and work with all developers to achieve this.

Councillor Michael H Charlesworth

Proposer

The above motion was duly received by the Legal Consultant / Interim Monitoring Officer on 15 March 2026 in accordance with Rule 14, Section 1 of Part 4 of the Constitution of the Council.

Agenda Item 8



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 24 March 2026	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Budget Monitoring Report (Q3 2025/26)**

Report Author(s): **Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer)**
Simon Ball (Finance Manager / Deputy S151 Officer)
Aseel Qassim (Senior Finance Business Partner)

Purpose of Report:	To provide the Committee with the forecast Outturn position for the Council for the financial year 2025/26, at the end Quarter 3, April – December.
Report Summary:	<p>The outturn position for the year on the General Fund is a £494k overspend compared to the revised budget of £7.718m for 2025/26.</p> <p>The outturn for the HRA is an underspend of £39k, compared to the budget of £71k.</p> <p>Spending on the Council’s HRA Capital Programme currently shows slippage.</p>
Recommendation(s):	<p>That the Committee:</p> <p>A. Notes the contents of the Quarter 3 report and the Appendices; and</p> <p>B. Approves the carry forward of slippage as shown in the Capital projects.</p>
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer) (0116) 257 2759 colleen.warren@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Simon Ball (Finance Manager / Deputy S151 Officer) (0116) 257 2624 simon.ball@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Aseel Qassim (Senior Finance Business Partner) (0116) 257 2890 aseel.qassim@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place to Be" (Vision) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications: -	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out in this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Reputational Damage (CR4) Economy / Regeneration (CR9)

Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments: -	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Interim Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Leadership Team • Heads of Service • Budget Managers
Background Papers:	2025/26 Revenue Budgets, Medium Term Financial Plan and 2025/26 - 2029/30 Capital Programmes – Full Council February 2025
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General Fund Variance Detail 2. Housing Revenue Account Variances 3. Statement of Movement on Reserves 4. Capital Programmes (General Fund and HRA) 5. Treasury Management Indicators

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2025, the Council approved its revenue and capital budgets for the general fund and the HRA for the 25/26 Financial year.
- 1.2 This is the Quarter 3 monitoring report for the 2025/26 financial year and this report details the forecast outturn position for the year. Although inflationary pressures have eased, there is still considerable pressure on the Council's budgets, most notably due to homelessness, and therefore the ability to deliver services within the budget set by Full Council.

2. Summary

- 2.1 This report covers the General Fund Revenue, Housing Revenue Accounts and the Capital Programmes for the current financial year.
- 2.2 The General fund outturn is currently forecast to be £494k overspent compared to budget, an improvement of £86K over the previous quarter.
- 2.3 The Council has made considerable efforts to achieve a balanced out-turn and whilst this has been largely successful in most services areas, the council has seen overspends due to the national homelessness crisis, and the attendant cost upon the Council of providing temporary accommodation to the homeless in our area.

(Continued overleaf)

Table 1

Service	Revised Budget 25/26	Forecast 25/26	Variance 25/26
	£	£	£
Senior Leadership Team	378,400	404,907	26,507
Finance & Resources	3,256,211	3,205,999	(50,212)
The Built Environment	1,205,214	1,782,291	577,077
Law & Democracy	486,010	497,629	11,619
Community & Wellbeing,	(311,818)	(305,732)	(3,914)
Corporate Assets	552,772	492,508	(60,264)
Depot	1,047,110	1,069,184	22,074
Customer Services & Business Transformation	1,094,120	1,065,234	(28,886)
Net Revenue Expenditure	7,718,019	8,212,020	494,001
Financed by:			
Funding	8,050,735	8,351,620	300,885
Earmarked Reserves	(197,000)	(514,239)	(317,239)
General Fund Reserve	(135,716)	374,639	510,355
Total Financing	7,718,019	8,212,020	494,001

2.4 The HRA has seen a reduction in expenditure resulting in a favourable variance of £39k as shown below in Table 2.

Table 2

HRA	Revised Budget 25/26	Forecast 25/26	Variance 25/26
	£	£	£
Housing Revenue Account	(4,437,600)	(4,464,803)	(27,203)
Estate Management	2,161,450	2,187,966	26,516
Repairs & Maintenance	1,260,090	1,309,862	49,772
Older Persons Service & Community Care	132,900	113,651	(19,249)
Cleaning	193,160	182,980	(10,180)
Capital Charges	761,400	702,251	(59,149)
Net Revenue Expenditure	71,400	31,907	(39,493)
Financed by:			
Housing Revenue Reserve	71,400	31,907	(39,493)
Earmarked Grants	0	0	0
Total Financing	71,400	31,907	(39,493)

3. General Fund and HRA Balances

3.1 The General fund outturn is expected to be a deficit of £375k, as opposed to the £146k surplus that was budgeted for.

3.2 The HRA outturn shows a favourable variance, making a net contribution to the HRA reserves, in Table 3.

- 3.3 Per item 7.2 of the 2024-25 outturn report, a transfer of £834K from the HRA reserve will be made to an HRA contingency reserve, leaving the HRA reserve at a minimum balance equal to 15% of the budgeted gross income for 2025-26, as is best practise.

Table 3

Balances	Opening Balances 2025/26	Adjustments 2025/26	Forecast Outturn 2025/26	Closing Balances 2025/26
	£	£	£	£
General Fund Balances	(1,540,066)	0	374,639	(1,165,427)
Housing Revenue Account Balances	(1,758,702)	834,057	31,907	(892,738)

4. General Fund Revenue Outturn Position 2025/26

- 4.1 Table 4 below shows the major variances. Detailed analysis of the variances are shown in **Appendix 1**.

Table 4 – Major Variances over £30k

Service Area	Team	Q2 Under/Over spends	Q1 Key reasons for forecast variance
Depot	Refuse Collection	48,209	£59K additional staffing cost due to long term sickness partly offset by £9K salary savings due to vacancies.
	Fleet Management	(32,658)	£28K saving on fuel due to price decrease
Finance & Resources	Corporate Management Financial	(51,164)	£67K saving on contingency budget for audit fees, £7K additional costs for previous year ill-health insurance
	Corporate Management Non-Financial	(49,473)	£72K saving on debt charges due to reduced interest rates partly offset by a £17K overall increase in insurance costs.
	Council Tax	61,894	£47K agency staff partly offset by £14K salary savings due to maternity cover and vacant posts, £18K additional postage charges.
The Built Environment	Homelessness	644,959	Increase in demand for temporary accommodation. Primarily caused by S21 evictions, care leavers and hospital discharges. Pressures caused by statutory rent allowance rates not keeping up with cost of rented property.
	Development Control	(59,061)	£24K vacancy savings, £16K additional income from planning performance agreements, and £33K additional planning application fees

(Continued overleaf)

4.2 Income – The table below details the income as at Quarter 3.

Table 5

	Prior Year Outturn £	Forecast Income 25/26 £	25/26 Budget £	Variance
Law & Democracy				
Environmental Protection	(1,141)	0	0	0
Dog Control Service	(456)	(1,000)	(1,000)	0
Legal and Admin Fees	(19,676)	(22,000)	(25,000)	3,000
Taxi Licences	(236,509)	(215,812)	(209,350)	(6,462)
Other Licences	(22,438)	(10,035)	(10,900)	865
Alcohol and Entertainment Licences	(22,736)	(35,035)	(34,700)	(335)
Gambling Act Licences	(3,116)	(1,772)	(900)	(872)
Selective Property Licence Scheme	(33,530)	(397,661)	(360,000)	(37,661)
The Built Environment				
Planning Application Fees	(165,810)	(290,000)	(273,000)	(17,000)
Pre Application advice	(18,598)	(22,500)	(22,500)	0
Corporate Assets				
Allotment Rent	(12,601)	(14,000)	(15,000)	1,000
Bowls Season Tickets	0	0	0	0
Cricket Pitch	0	0	0	0
Football Rugby	(19,110)	(17,326)	(14,100)	(3,226)
Pavilion Hire	(37,263)	(27,400)	(24,890)	(2,510)
Cemeteries	(150,650)	(176,000)	(150,000)	(26,000)
Parking Income	(767,181)	(786,000)	(834,000)	48,000
Parking Penalties	(51,921)	(26,200)	(11,000)	(15,200)
Depot				
White Goods & Special Collections	(30,312)	(33,200)	(28,000)	(5,200)
Green Waste	(601,555)	(586,260)	(610,000)	23,740

5. Business Rates

5.1 The only element of the Council Funding that is not fully fixed for the year at budget stage is Business Rates. The table below shows the outturn in respect of Business Rates for 2025/26.

(Continued overleaf)

Table 6 – Business Rates 2025/26

	Original Budget 2025/26	Outturn	Variance
	£	£	£
NNDR Income	(5,250,788)	(5,250,788)	0
Tariff	3,885,494	3,885,494	0
Section 31 Grants - Funded Reliefs	(1,353,186)	(1,467,707)	(114,521)
Levy	295,764	406,942	111,178
Renewable energy	(11,456)	(11,456)	0
Previous year's (surplus)/deficit	178,840	178,840	0
Total Financing	(2,255,332)	(2,258,675)	(3,343)

5.2 Due to the complexities of the Collection Fund, it is important to note that the largest element of this position 'NNDR income' is fixed based on the amount forecast at budget setting. Any variance from the actual NNDR income in 2025/26 will impact on the budget in 2026/27, in the form of the surplus/deficit for the previous year. The cumulative deficit at the end of 2024/25, that will impact on the budget in 2025/26 is £660k but this deficit will be split within the pool.

6. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

6.1 For 2025/26 the Councils Housing Revenue Account (HRA) net revenue budget was set with a net contribution from reserves of £71k. As at Q2, it is anticipated that there will be a net deficit of £32k, leaving the HRA reserve at £893k at year end.

6.2 The major variances over £30k for the HRA are shown below. Detailed analysis of the variances are shown in **Appendix 2**.

Table 7

Service Area	(Under)/ Overspends	Key reasons for variance
Capital Charges	(59,149)	Impact of slippage of £871K related to the New Housing Initiatives capital project on short-term borrowing costs and interest receivable.

7. Earmarked Reserves

7.1 The Council holds a number of earmarked revenue reserves over both the General Fund and HRA. These reserves are sums set aside for specific purposes and to mitigate against potential future known or predicted liabilities. A number of these reserves are budgeted for use over the period of the MTFS.

7.2 The £350K increase in general fund earmarked reserves over what was budget for 25/26 is due to an increase in the expected receipts under the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme.

- 7.3 The increase in housing revenue earmarked reserves is due to the movement of £834K to a contingency reserve, as referenced in 3.3.
- 7.4 Contributions to/from reserves are noted below and detailed analysis of reserves are shown on **Appendix 3**.

Table 8

Reserves	Opening Balance 01/04/25	Increase	Decrease	Closing Balance 31/03/26
	£	£	£	£
General Fund Earmarked Reserves	(691,172)	(890,239)	292,882	(1,288,529)
General Fund Grants	(1,032,017)	(200,823)	45,999	(845,841)
Housing Revenue Reserves	(974,946)	(2,334,057)	1,963,501	(1,345,502)
1-4-1 Housing Reserve	(1,421,450)	(100,000)	788,500	(732,950)

8. Capital Programme

- 8.1 The 2025/26 Capital Programme was set at Full Council in February 2025. Table 9 below shows a summary of the 2025/26 capital programme; the full capital programme is shown in **Appendix 4**.
- 8.2 The outturn for the General Fund capital programme is forecast to be £3.569m. Slippage on fleet replacement of approximately £480K is expected due to long lead times on new vehicles.
- 8.3 The outturn for the HRA capital programme is £1.760m with slippage of £2,075k due to a delay on the New Housing Initiatives scheme, as further development options are being investigated. There has been slippage on other projects due to issues with contractors, and capacity constraints.

Table 9 – Capital Programme Summary

Fund	Revised Budget	Outturn	Variance to Budget
	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26
	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund Schemes			
Vehicle Refurbishment	1,349	862	(487)
Waste Project	580	593	13
Sports Facilities Improvement Programme	524	524	0
UKSPF	81	118	37
Other	830	767	(63)
GF Total	3,364	2,864	(500)
Housing Revenue Account			
New Housing Initiatives	1,871	789	(1,082)
Decarbonisation of Housing Stock	0	39	39
Other	1,964	932	(1,032)
HRA Scheme Total	3,835	1,760	(2,075)
Total	7,199	4,624	(2,575)

Details of the Capital Programme financing are included in **Appendix 4**.

9. Treasury Management as at Quarter 3

- 9.1 The report includes an update on Treasury Management activities to 31 December 2025. This is required to comply with both the "Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Government" and the Council's own Treasury Management Policy Statement.
- 9.2 The Code requires the Section 151 Officer to ensure that the treasury management function operates in accordance with treasury management practices adopted by Council. There are no issues of non-compliance with these practices that need be brought to Member's attention.
- 9.3 As at 31 December 2025, the total debt portfolio of the Council (including HRA debt) was £33.784m offset by investments of £6.2m, resulting in an overall net debt position of £27.584m.

External Borrowing	As At 31/03/25 £m	As At 31/12/25 £m
Fixed Rate PWLB	16,877	16,784
Other Local Authorities	18,500	17,000
Total Gross External Debt	35,377	33,784
Investments	(1,600)	(6,200)
Total Net External Debt	33,777	27,584

- 9.4 The total accrued interest received to 31 December 2025 on temporary investments amounted to £162,107 (2024/25 £165,802). A summary of the total amount invested in 2025/26 to date is given at **Appendix 5.1**.
- 9.5 **Prudential Indicators**
The Local Government Act 2003 requires Councils to comply with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities when carrying out their budgeting and treasury management activities. Fundamental to this is the calculation of a number of prudential indicators which provide the basis for management and monitoring of borrowing and investments. These indicators were agreed by Council on 20 February 2025. An update on the indicators is provided at **Appendix 5.2**.

Service Area	Cost Centre	Q3 Forecast Variations Above £5K	Q3 Reason for Forecast Variance Summarised
Community & Wellbeing	Grants	(10,000)	Implementation of Community Grant Scheme delayed
	Grants	10,000	Appropriation of unspent Community Grant to reserve for use in 26/27
	Other Variances Less than £5K	(3,914)	
Corporate Assets	Peace Memorial Park Pavilion	7,476	Water charges higher than anticipated
	Blaby Road Park	7,186	Historic NDR charges for previously unrated property.
	Blaby Road Park	(18,428)	Additional income from lease of pavillion to football club
	Tythorn Hill	(9,800)	Better than expected commercial rental income
	Coombe Park	(8,301)	Better than expected commercial rental income
	Cemeteries	(19,195)	Vacancy saving
	Cemeteries	8,379	6 month contract for Monument Safety Officer
	Cemeteries	6,611	Cost of memorial benches - offset by additional income
	Cemeteries	(26,000)	Cemetaries income is demand-led, and difficult to forecast.
	Car Parks	(7,000)	Pay & display repairs less than expected.
	Car Parks	(6,405)	New, lower-cost maintenance contract.
	Car Parks	11,100	Service fees previously deducted from income
	Car Parks	(13,910)	Staffing issues with civil enforcement contract have resulted in reduced recharges.
	Car Parks	48,000	Parking income less than expected.
	Car Parks	(15,200)	PCN income higher than expected.
	Grounds Maintenance Holding Ac	(7,858)	Vacancy savings.
	Grounds Maintenance Holding Ac	(14,700)	Saving on floral display budget - funded from UKSPF
	Neighbourhood Services	(7,247)	Saving on employee superannuation.
	Brocks Hill Council Offices	6,000	Additional repair and maintenance costs for Council Offices
	Brocks Hill Council Offices	(9,100)	Electricity savings
Brocks Hill Council Offices	(5,725)	Alarm costs savings	
Other Variances Less than £5K	13,853		
Customer Services	Information and PR	18,781	Communications Officer for Food Waste Project. Costs to be covered by implementation grant.
	Information and PR	6,700	Reduced screen advertising income.
	Information and PR	(28,204)	Implementation grant for Food Waste Project
	Personnel Section	(8,119)	Vacancy savings.
	Customer Services Improvement	9,167	Reduced capitalisation of salary
	Customer Services Improvement	(19,095)	Appropriation of EPR funding for Admin Officer
Other Variances Less than £5K	(8,115)		
Depot	Refuse Collection	(9,708)	Savings from long-term sickness
	Refuse Collection	58,850	Agency staff due to long-term sickness
	Refuse Collection	(5,200)	Improved income from white goods collection
	Garden Waste Collection	(6,000)	Reduced use of agency staff
	Garden Waste Collection	7,600	New green waste bins
	Garden Waste Collection	(5,775)	Reduction in anticipated printing and stationery costs
	Garden Waste Collection	(14,440)	Travelling allowance from LCC for us having to take garden waste to Theddingworth/Ling Hill as opposed to Kibworth.
	Garden Waste Collection	23,740	Reduction in expected income on garden waste collection
	Food Waste	9,214	Costs of food waste collection implementation over and above grant funding.
	Mechanics Workshop	(7,864)	Vacancy savings.
	Mechanics Workshop	10,500	Agency staff backfill for vacant post
	Oadby Depot	(7,782)	Additional income from rental of land at depot
	Fleet Management	(28,000)	Decrease in price of fuel
	Fleet Management	(10,000)	Savings on repairs due to disposal of older vehicles
Other Variances Less than £5K	6,938		
Finance & Resources	Corporate Management	7,272	Ill-health insurance additional cost
	Corporate Management	(66,723)	Contingency budget for audit overrun unnecessary.
	Corporate Management non Fin	19,000	Increased corporate insurance costs
	Corporate Management non Fin	(77,300)	Reduction in debt charges due to reduced interest rates.
	Council Tax	(14,521)	Maternity leave savings
	Council Tax	47,732	Agency staff for maternity cover and additional capacity
	Council Tax	18,068	Increase in postage costs.
	Housing Benefits	(17,397)	Maternity leave savings
	Housing Benefits	30,381	Agency staff cover for long-term sickness
	Housing Benefits	(17,000)	Improvement in housing benefit overpayment collection
	Housing Benefits	(18,000)	Improvement in housing benefit overpayment collection
	Finance	(67,894)	Savings from Finance Manager post, vacancy savings on Finance Business Partner post.
	Finance	48,913	Cover for vacant Finance Business Partner post & year-end assistance
	Finance	13,457	Cost of Financial Resilience Benchmark and Collection Fund modules
	Finance	(16,335)	Reduction in costs for asset valuation
	ICT Section	(6,040)	Reduction in cost of corporate mobile phone contract
	Revenues and Benefits Manager	(12,495)	Vacancy savings on Revenues and Benefits Manager post
	Revenues and Benefits Manager	27,423	6 mths interim backfill for Revenues and Benefits Manager post.
	Revenues and Benefits Manager	16,500	Increase in printing and postage costs for Council Tax billing
	Systems Administration	(5,852)	Vacancy savings.
Other Variances Less than £5K	40,599		

Law & Democracy	Env Health Admin/Enforcement	5,329	New Environmental Health Manager full-time.
	Env Health Admin/Enforcement	(5,876)	Recovery of welfare funeral costs impossible to forecast.
	Democratic Representation &Mgt	5,848	Honorarium for new Monitoring Officer
	Legal and Admin Section	11,176	Costs of part-time paralegal post
	Taxi Licences	(10,000)	Improvement in taxi licensing income
	Selective Property Licence Sch	6,603	Costs of additional unbudgeted post required to support expanded scheme
	Selective Property Licence Sch	(37,661)	Additional income due to size of selective licensing scheme. Backlog in processing licences will result in about £60K of income slipping into 26/27
	Selective Property Licence Sch	(13,759)	Additional grant income
	Selective Property Licence Sch	31,480	Recharge of grant officer salary - covered by grant and additional licensing income
	Licensing Section	9,491	Additional staffing costs
	Other Variances Less than £5K	8,987	
SLT	COVID-19 External	10,000	Cancellation of outstanding sales ledger on instruction of BEIS
	Senior Management Team	9,123	Secretarial Support for maternity cover
	External Consultancy	(10,000)	Net income from external consultancy work
	Devolution	19,000	Share of costs for communications/PR expertise brought in for North-City-South proposal development.
	Other Variances Less than £5K	(1,616)	
The Built Environment	Private Housing	11,005	Management costs for private sector renewal increased by more than expected.
	Homelessness	13,320	Agency staff - additional capacity
	Homelessness	71,004	Redecoration and new equipment costs for HRA properties being used for temporary accomodation
	Homelessness	5,165	Medical advice in respect of homeless persons
	Homelessness	622,895	Increase in demand for temporary accomodation. Primarily caused by S21 evictions, care leavers and hospital discharges. Pressures caused by statutory rent allowance rates not keeping up with cost of rented property.
	Homelessness	(23,000)	Higher homelessness levels leading to higher recovery of charges
	Homelessness	(16,495)	UKSPF to fund part of the Temporary Accomodation Officer post
	Homelessness	(35,000)	Service charge income from HRA and leased temporary accomodation properties
	Development Control	(24,573)	Vacancy savings
	Development Control	(16,063)	Planning Performance Agreement income
	Development Control	(17,000)	Improvement in planning fee income.
	Forward Planning	(13,782)	Vacancy savings
	Forward Planning	5,430	For Graduate scheme course at Oxford Brookes.
	Other Variances Less than £5K	(5,830)	
	TOTAL	494,001	

Housing Revenue Account Variances

Cost Centre	Q3 Forecast Variations Above £5K	Q3 Reason for Forecast Variance
General Repairs	(3,228)	Vacancy savings & rechargeable repairs
Churchill Close older Persons	3,462	Minor saving on legionella testing & life maintenance
Marriott House Older Person	(1,368)	Minor saving on legionella testing
Kings Drive Older Person	(103)	Minor savings on security alarm
Communal Services	(21,240)	Alarm costs higher than expected.
Housing Revenue Account	(27,203)	Write-offs forecast to be lower than budgeted.
Estates Management	26,516	£36K vacancy savings. £20K increase in pension lump sum attributable to HRA due to bringing cleaning in-house. £5K inflationary increases on software and subscriptions being greater than budgeted.
HRA Cleaning	(10,180)	Vacancy savings
Capital Charges	(59,149)	Impact of slippage of £870K related to the New Housing Initiatives capital project on short-term borrowing costs and interest receivable.

Statement of Movement on Reserves

	Opening Balance at 1st April 2025	Corrections to 2024/25	Revised Balance	Additions in 2024/25	Useage in 2024/25	Closing Balance as at 31 March 2025
	£					
<u>General Fund Earmarked Reserves</u>						
Contingency Reserve	(139,207)		(139,207)			(139,207)
Budget C/F Reserve	(50,613)		(50,613)	(10,000)	50,613	(10,000)
Land Valuation Reserve	(1,000)		(1,000)			(1,000)
Local Elections Reserve	(17,500)		(17,500)	(17,500)		(35,000)
GF Cost Of Living Reserve	(41,738)		(41,738)			(41,738)
Lottery Reserve	(11,708)		(11,708)	(7,500)		(19,208)
Local Plan Reserve	(429,406)		(429,406)		210,000	(219,406)
EPR Reserve	0		0	(855,239)	32,269	(822,970)
Total GF	(691,172)	0	(691,172)	(890,239)	292,882	(1,288,529)
<u>General Fund Grants</u>						
Collection Fund Reserve	0		0			0
Business Rates Retention Reserve	(382,358)		(382,358)		306,000	(76,358)
Earmarked Revenue Grants Reserve	(235,751)		(235,751)	(200,823)	45,999	(390,576)
Grounds Maintenance Reserve Balance	(413,907)		(413,907)		35,000	(378,907)
Total GF Grants	(1,032,017)	0	(1,032,017)	(200,823)	386,999	(845,841)
<u>General Fund Reserve</u>	(1,540,066)		(1,540,066)	0	374,639	(1,165,427)
Total General Fund Revenue Reserves	(3,263,255)	0	(3,263,255)	(1,091,062)	1,054,520	(3,299,797)
<u>General Fund Capital Receipts Reserve</u>	(358,762)	0	(358,762)	(4,450,000)	1,837,914	(2,970,848)
<u>HRA Revenue Reserves</u>						
Major Repairs Reserve Balance	(555,003)		(555,003)	(1,500,000)	1,963,501	(91,503)
HRA Contingency Reserve	0		0	(834,057)		(834,057)
Regeneration Reserve	(361,443)		(361,443)			(361,443)
Budgets Carried Forward HRA Reserve Balance	(8,500)		(8,500)			(8,500)
HRA Cost Of Living Reserve	(50,000)		(50,000)			(50,000)
Total HRA	(974,946)	0	(974,946)	(2,334,057)	1,963,501	(1,345,502)
<u>HRA Reserve</u>	(1,758,702)		(1,758,702)	0	865,964	(892,738)
Total HRA	(2,733,648)	0	(2,733,648)	(2,334,057)	2,829,465	(2,238,240)
<u>HRA Capital Reserves</u>						
1-4-1 Housing Reserve	(1,421,450)	0	(1,421,450)	(100,000)	788,500	(732,950)

Project Code Reference	Scheme	Finance BP	2025-26 Proposals	2024-25 Budgeted C/F	2025-26 Approved Budget	2024-25 Final C/F	Additions/Remov als/Transfers	2025-26 Total Budget	Actual to 31st January 2026	Variance to Budget	Forecast	Variance to Forecast	Comments
			£	£	£	£	£	£	£				
	Funding Available B/F Estimated Additions In Year												
	Total Funding Available												
	Housing Revenue Account												
50029	New Housing Initiatives	Ade Taiwo	0	1,772,499	1,772,499	(23,020)	121,208	1,870,687	389,588	(1,481,099)	788,500	(1,082,187)	Currently in the process of using our LAHF funding to purchase existing properties. Future plans still under development.
	New Housing Initiatives - Subtotal		0	1,772,499	1,772,499	(23,020)	121,208	1,870,687	389,588	(1,481,099)	788,500	(1,082,187)	
50050	Decarbonisation of Housing Stock	Ade Taiwo	0	198,453	198,453	(101,559)	(96,894)	0	0	0	38,500	38,500	Work to get 11 properties up to a EPC C. Part grant funded as part of ECO4. Work expected to be completed by the end of March 2026.
	Decarbonisation of Housing Stock Subtotal		0	198,453	198,453	(101,559)	(96,894)	0	0	0	38,500	38,500	
50003	Central Heating	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	(58,906)	258,906	200,000	196,865	(3,135)	197,000	(3,000)	Planned replacement programme of up to 80 boilers as they come to the end of their useful life.
50006	Front & Rear Doors	Ade Taiwo	0	125,000	125,000	1,264	223,736	350,000	267,848	(82,152)	90,000	(260,000)	Door replacement programme for 5 blocks - Chartwell and Churchill Close. Delayed into 26/27 due to issues with doors not being compliant. Estimate around 30 doors expected to be fitted by the end of March 2026. Issues have been communicated with contractor.
50009	Fire Safety Marriott House	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	(12,077)	12,077	0	1,765	1,765	0	(0)	This will be used on bringing void properties up to decent homes standards which will enable us to let properties. E.g. kitchens & bathroom replacements etc.
50016	Decent Homes Work	Ade Taiwo	1,500,000	0	1,500,000	(59,358)	(1,190,642)	250,000	83,392	(166,608)	160,000	(90,000)	No planned replacement programme. Currently reactive, so budget will be carried into 26/27
50017	Major Adaptations	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	91,482	108,518	200,000	121,713	(78,287)	150,000	(50,000)	This is for work generated by an occupational therapist referral making recommendations for stairlifts, level access showers etc. Currently reactive, so budget will be carried into 26/27
50019	Fire Safety	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	296,294	103,706	400,000	137,174	(262,826)	136,000	(264,000)	Compliance work to communal schemes and blocks to implement remedial works identified in the fire risk assessments. Implementation proceeding into 26/27
50021	Window Replacement	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,543	5,543	0	0	
50024	Ventilation Insulation	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	(13,394)	13,394	0	0	(0)	0	(0)	
50031	Bathroom Replacement	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,681	9,681	0	0	
50041	Stock Condition Survey	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	130,000	(130,000)	0	0	(0)	0	(0)	
50046	Kitchen Replacements Decent Homes, incl Bathrooms	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	(12,490)	12,490	0	18,591	18,591	0	0	
50047	Housing Block Improvements	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	300,000	300,000	4,695	(295,306)	10,000	(290,000)	No contractor in place to carry out this work due to resource constraints. Plans for new door entry systems, communal bins and bin stores have been slipped into 26/27.
50051	Boulter Crescent Housing	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
50052	Damp & Mould Works	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	100,000	100,000	29,158	(70,842)	50,000	(50,000)	Works associated with duties under new legislation for damp and mould. Improve ventilation systems, insulation and damp proofing etc.
	Capitalisation of Salaries	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	163,500	163,500	0	(163,500)	139,100	(24,400)	
	HRA Other Subtotal		1,500,000	125,000	1,625,000	362,815	(24,315)	1,963,501	876,425	(1,087,076)	932,100	(1,031,401)	
	Total - HRA		1,500,000	2,095,952	3,595,952	238,236	0	3,834,188	1,266,013	(2,568,174)	1,759,100	(2,075,088)	
	General Fund												
54108	Torro Triple Mower rep 77032	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	50,125	50,125	50,125	0	50,125	0	Vehicle now delivered
54122	Ford Transit Custom Van	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	40,840	40,840	0	0	Delivery expected in 26/27
54128	Ride on Mower Cemeteries	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	22,574	22,574	10,692	(11,882)	22,574	0	Vehicle now delivered. 2nd Mower for cemeteries.
54133	Replacement RCV	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	503,596	503,596	503,596	0	503,596	0	Both vehicles now delivered
54162	Vehicle Refurbishment	Emma Garrard	1,035,000	129,199	1,164,199	42,290	(806,676)	399,813	0	(399,813)	0	(399,813)	To fund three RCV refurbishments and the purchase of a new 7.5T litter bin truck. Order pending for replacement of LL18PGE 7.5T litter bin truck. Will slip into 26/27 due to lead times on specialised vehicles
54174	Cemetery Rear Tipper	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	22,000	0	22,000	25,582	3,582	25,582	3,582	Purchased: Polaris Ranger YX25 WNO.
54175	SCARAB Merlin 62 Road Sweeper	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	169,381	169,381	169,750	369	169,381	0	Vehicle now delivered
54176	KARCHER MC250 Road Sweeper	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	86,000	86,000	86,000	0	86,000	0	Vehicle now delivered
54196	Fortis Mower	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	15,000	0	15,000	4,468	(10,532)	4,468	(10,532)	Replacement of Grounds Maintenance Dennis bowling green mower. Now complete.
	Replacement of Grounds Maintenance Vehicle FE09 XOT	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	37,000	0	37,000	0	(37,000)	0	(37,000)	Advised due to lead time this is likely to be 26/27.
	Replacement of Grounds Maintenance Vehicle FG12 MVN	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	44,000	0	44,000	0	(44,000)	0	(44,000)	Likely to be cfwd 26/27.
	Replacement of cemeteries vehicles- Mower trailer	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	25,000	(25,000)	0	0	0	0	0	Vehicle delivered on 54174. Merge budget with 54162
	Vehicle Refurbishment Subtotal		1,035,000	129,199	1,164,199	185,290	0	1,349,489	891,053	(458,436)	861,726	(487,763)	
54173	Food Waste Project	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	579,690	579,690	592,738	13,048	592,738	13,048	Orders placed for 4x food waste vehicles, caddies and external bins.
	Food Waste Project Subtotal		0	0	0	0	579,690	579,690	592,738	13,048	592,738	13,048	
54522	New Facility at Uplands Park	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	134,363	149,893	284,256	56,369	(227,887)	284,256	(0)	Construction of new tennis courts at Uplands in September, infrastructure, disabled parking, & bike stores. £40K funded by Lawn Tennis Association
54579	Willow Park Skate Park	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	11,982	11,982	11,982	0	11,982	0	New half-pipe installed.
	Cricket Nets at Uplands Park	Emma Garrard	0	40,000	40,000	0	20,000	60,000	0	(60,000)	60,000	0	Upgrade of cricket squares commences in August
	Residue of reassigned sports budgets	Emma Garrard	0	310,000	310,000	0	(141,875)	168,125	0	(168,125)	168,125	0	Projects to be developed for residue of budget.
	Sports Facilities Improvement Programme Subtotal		0	350,000	350,000	134,363	40,000	524,363	68,351	(456,012)	524,363	(0)	
53910	UKSPF Street Furniture New Equipment	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,085	12,085	12,765	12,765	Litter bins in town centres - grant funded
53913	UKSPF Play Park	Emma Garrard	81,000	0	81,000	0	0	81,000	74,796	(6,204)	74,796	(6,204)	Work has commenced. Aiming to be complete by Feb half term.
53917	UKSPF Green Initiatives	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	25,272	25,272	30,000	30,000	
	UK Shared Prosperity Fund Subtotal		81,000	0	81,000	0	0	81,000	112,152	31,152	117,560	36,560	
52002	Disabled Facilities Grant	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	0	0	44,803	44,803	0	0	DFG to Blaby. Move to revenue.
52092	Oadby Pool Housing Project	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,500	1,500	Costs associated with sale
52094	Boulter Crescent Flat Conversion	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	0	0	52,190	52,190	58,455	58,455	Conversion of the Boulter Crescent Community Flat for use as temporary accommodation for homelessness purposes.
54003	Brocks Hill Drainage	Emma Garrard	30,000	0	30,000	0	11,400	41,400	7,264	(34,136)	41,400	0	Report received. Compiling improvement plan. Phase 1 complete. Phase 2 (ponds) in progress. Phase 3 not commenced. Cfwd to 26/27.
54010	Play Area Refurbishments	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,199	1,199	1,199	1,199	Maintenance work - does not currently meet threshold for capitalisation
54017	Christmas Decoration Infrastructure	Ade Taiwo	7,500	0	7,500	0	0	7,500	7,500	0	7,500	0	Full spend expected
54030	Pavilion Infrastructure	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,950	6,950	4,800	4,800	Shower replacement work at Uplands and Coombe Park completed.
54068	Parklands Improvements	Emma Garrard	70,500	0	70,500	0	0	70,500	27,263	(43,238)	70,500	0	Residual fascia works to slip into 26/27
54094	Website accessibility	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	5,000	(5,000)	0	0	0	0	0	Obsolete project - budget not required.
54147	Recycling Wheelie Bins	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	29,558	29,558	3,858	3,858	Additional wheelie bins. Jnl to reallocate GW & Bin swap bins to revenue at end 25/26.
54150	CCTV Cameras	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	62	62	0	0	Residual costs - to revenue.
54151	Air Quality Monitoring	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	39,805	39,805	36,475	(3,330)	39,805	0	Expecting installation of monitoring equipment by end of September. Funded by S106 for Welford Road development
54159	Pay & Display Scheme	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	Complete.
54169	Waste Transformation	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	(6,602)	(6,602)	0	0	Cancelled PO: 021001971 Jett Trade
54177	Allotment Improvement Works	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	115,000	115,000	49,277	(65,723)	115,000	0	Allotment refurbishment work - to be funded from allotment-specific S106 from Stoughton Park development
54576	Repairs to play area surface various play areas	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	9,510	35,000	44,510	60,095	15,584	72,077	27,567	Overspend to be funded from grounds maintenance reserve
54590	Wigston Pool Photovoltaics	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Grants for Parklands photovoltaics. Miscoded. Move to grants received in advance code.
54592	Brocks Hill Barn Portacabin	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	18,000	0	18,000	18,441	441	17,685	(315)	Project complete.
54594	Wigston Cemetery Mess Room	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	15,000	0	15,000	11,780	(3,220)	15,000	0	Project complete.
54595	Parklands Photovoltaics	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	156,704	156,704	164,161	7,457	163,586	6,882	Project now complete.
56003	Customer Services	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	(146)	(146)	0	(146)	Obsolete PO
56010	IT replacements	Emma Garrard	66,000	0	66,000	0	3,560	69,560	25,750	(43,810)	69,560	0	Laptops being replaced as needed in rolling programme. Balance to be cfwd to 26/27.
56027	41 Canal St CPO	Ade Taiwo	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,223	6,223	0	0	Costs related to claim on proceeds of CPO sale. To be netted off ultimate receipt.
56055	Document Management System Software	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	6,454	0	6,454	0	(6,454)	0	(6,454)	Obsolete budget
56072	South Wigston Shop Fronts	Ade Taiwo	0	1,992	1,992	(1,992)	0	0	0	0	0	0	Project completed last year
56085	New Council Offices	Emma Garrard	10,000	0	10,000	5,277	0	15,277	7,540	(7,737)	15,277	0	Minor capital works on Brocks Hill
56092	Laptop Renewal	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	3,560	(3,560)	0	0	0	0	0	Residual budget. Merge with IT replacements.
56095	Transformation	-	0	0	0	0	78,894	78,894	32,118	(46,776)	0	(78,894)	Waste service transformation and digital transformation - funded from invest-to-save
56101	Sale of Bushloe House	Emma Garrard	0	0	0	0	0	0	820	820	820	820	To be netted off proceeds of sale as cost of disposal.
56102	Webpay 2 Implementation	Ade Taiwo	26,000	0	26,000	(8,000)	0	18,000	18,000	0	18,000	0	Upgrade now complete.
56103	Server Host Refresh	Emma Garrard	0	0	0								

Appendix 5

Appendix 5.1

Treasury Management

Total investments placed during the period
1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025

	Cumulative No. Of Investments To 30 June	Total Value Invested To 31 December	Average Interest Rate	Average Duration	Interest Earned (Accrued)
		£ 000's	%		£ 000's
British Clearing Banks					
National Westminster Bank PLC	175	88,455	1.12	1 day	1
Government Bodies					
Debt Management Office	106	523,500	4.08	3 days	151
Local Authorities					
Cornwall County Council	1	2,500	4.05	3 months	10
Total	192	614,455			162

Appendix 5.2

Prudential Indicators

- 1. The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)** – This represents the Council’s underlying need to borrow for capital purposes, based on the cumulative value of capital expenditure not fully paid for. The CFR will change year-on-year in accordance with the value of capital spending.

The key control over treasury activities is to ensure that over the medium term, net borrowing will only be for capital purposes. The Authority must ensure that net external borrowing does not, except for short periods, exceed the total of the CFR. A comparison of the estimate against the actuals is shown in the table below.

	2025/26 Original Estimate At Year End £000’s	2025/26 Revised Estimate At Year End £000’s
Gross Borrowing	34,778	33,778
Investments	0	0
Net Borrowing 31st March	34,778	33,778
Total CFR 31st March	41,761	41,987

The Section 151 Officer reports that the Council is expected to comply with the requirement to keep borrowing below the relevant CFR in 2025/26 and no difficulties are foreseen for the current or future years.

- 2. Borrowing Levels** – The following two indicators control the overall level of borrowing;
 - The Authorised Limit** – This represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and needs to be set and revised by Members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003;
 - The Operational Boundary** – This indicator is based on the probable external debt during the course of the year. It is not a limit and actual borrowing could vary around the boundary for short times during the year. It should act as a barometer to ensure the authorised limit is not breached;
 - The actual borrowing compared to the Authorised and Operational limits agreed by Council are as follows.**

	2025/26 Original Limit £000's	2025/26 Revised Limit £000's
Authorised Limit	46,000	46,000
Operational Boundary	41,000	41,000

- 3. Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream** – This indicator compares net financing costs (borrowing costs less investment income) to net revenue income from revenue support grant, business rates, housing revenue account subsidy, Council tax and rent income. The purpose of the indicator is to show how the proportion of net income used to pay for financing costs is changing over time.

	2025/26 Original Estimate %	2025/26 Revised Estimate %
General Fund	13.1	10.9
HRA	13.0	12.0

The above indicator shows that within the General Fund, financing costs were originally expected to be 13.1% of the net revenue income. This has decreased to 10.9% in Q3, primarily due to the receipt of the Extended Producer Responsibility grant.

In the case of the HRA there is net interest payable which was expected to be 13.0% of the net revenue income. This is now estimated at 12.0% due to the slippage of £2,075K of capital expenditure, which has reduced the need for short-term borrowing.

- 4. Limits on Activity** – The following indicators constrain the activity of the treasury function to within certain limits, thereby reducing the risk of an adverse movement in interest rates impacting negatively on the Council's overall financial position.
- **Upper Limits on Variable Rate Exposure** – This indicator identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates;
 - **Maturity Structures of Borrowing** – These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing;

- **Total Principal Funds Invested** – This limit is set to reduce the need for early sale of investments and is based on the availability of investments after each year-end.

	2025/26 Original Indicators		2025/26 Revised Indicators		2025/26 Actual Maturity Structure	
	%		%		%	
Fixed Interest Rates Limit	100		100		100	
Variable Interest Rates Limit	100		25		0	
Maturity Structure of Borrowing	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Under 12 Months	0	50	0	50	0	56
12 Months to 2 Years	0	50	0	50	0	3
2 Years to 5 Years	0	50	0	50	0	9
5 Years to 10 Years	0	100	0	100	0	15
10 Years & Above	0	100	0	100	0	17
Total						100

While the Council is currently exceeding the limit for borrowing under 12 months, this is expected to be temporary. New long-term borrowing had been planned towards the end of 24/25, but capital slippage negated the need for it. It is expected that £2M of PWLB borrowing will be undertaken during Q4 25/26.

The Prudential Code requires indicators to be set for the maturity structure of fixed borrowings only.

Agenda Item 10



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 24 March 2026	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Artificial Intelligence Policy (2026)**

Report Author(s): **Trish Hatton (Head of Policy, Performance & Transformation)**

Purpose of Report:	To share the Council's new Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy with Members for approval.
Report Summary:	<p>This report introduces Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's new Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, created to ensure the responsible, ethical, and effective use of AI across the organisation.</p> <p>As Generative AI (GenAI) becomes increasingly prevalent in both the public and private sectors, it is essential that the Council adopts a clear and consistent approach that safeguards data, supports staff, and enhances service delivery.</p> <p>The policy sets out how AI can be used to improve efficiency, strengthen decision-making, and support innovation, while ensuring that these tools do not replace human judgment.</p>
Recommendation(s):	A. That the content of this report be noted; and B. That the Committee formally approve the Artificial Intelligence Policy (2026) at Appendix 1.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Trish Hatton (Head of Policy, Performance & Transformation) (0116) 257 2700 trish.hatton@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Ravinder Gill (IT Operations & Security Manager) (0116) 257 2669 ravinder.gill@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<p>Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Economy (SO3) Our Environment (SO4) Our Partners (SO5)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>Customer & Community Focused (V1) Proud of Everything We Do (V2) Collaborative & Creative (V3) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	No corporate risk(s) identified

Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. Full EA Assessment (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:	Unable to complete review.
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. Artificial Intelligence Policy (2026) 2. AI Policy Equality Impact Assessment

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As technology continues to advance, the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is accelerating across all sectors. At Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, we recognise the potential of Generative AI (GenAI) to deliver time-saving efficiencies and enhance our services. By leveraging this technology responsibly, we aim to strengthen our ability to achieve the Council's strategic objectives—providing high-quality, value-for-money services that meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors, while building a more resilient future.
- 1.2 This report introduces the Council's new Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy. It highlights the growing importance of AI in public service delivery and sets out our approach to using AI responsibly and ethically.
- 1.3 The policy applies to all Council employees, elected members, agency workers, contractors, consultants, and any third parties using or accessing Oadby and Wigston Borough Council IT systems.

2. Importance of having an AI Policy

- 2.1 The policy provides a clear framework for the ethical adoption, deployment, and management of approved AI systems and tools across the Council. It ensures alignment with our organisational values, legal obligations, and strategic goals.
- 2.2 A robust AI policy promotes good governance and responsible use. By clearly defining what users can and cannot do, it helps manage risks, safeguard data, and maintain compliance with relevant legislation.
- 2.3 Furthermore, a well-defined approach to AI supports the Council's commitment to innovation and strategic planning, ultimately improving service delivery for our residents and community, while upholding strong governance standards.

3. Principles of Use

- 3.1 GenAI is increasingly used across industries, including the public sector. While it offers significant benefits, such as improved efficiency and cost savings, it also presents risks and challenges that must be carefully managed.
- 3.2 At Oadby & Wigston Borough Council, GenAI will not be used to replace decision-making activities. It will be used as a tool to support work, not to replace human judgment.
- 3.3 GenAI should enhance professional expertise, not substitute it. Users must still apply their own judgment and ensure outputs are accurate, appropriate, and aligned with Council standards.

4. Associated Risks

- 4.1 AI can present a range of potential risks these include:
 - Data privacy concerns
 - Bias and discrimination
 - Accuracy and misinformation
 - Legal and copyright issues
 - Environmental impact
 - Cybersecurity vulnerabilities
 - Confidentiality breaches
- 4.2 To mitigate these risks, the Council will only permit the use of Microsoft Copilot for AI-related tasks. This approach aligns with best practices adopted by other local authorities, as Microsoft Copilot offers enhanced security and compliance features.
- 4.3 Enterprise-grade security ensures that:
 - Microsoft Copilot follows our Microsoft 365 permissions which means Copilot can only access data it has permissions to view.
 - Data used in Copilot will stay inside our tenant and Microsoft secure boundaries.
 - Copilot complies with Microsoft security standards, including data protection, audit logging, retention, and sensitivity labels.
 - Copilot does not store or use customer data for public model training unlike other AI Tools.

5. Monitoring

- 5.1 The policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure compliance with legislation, regulations, and organisational policies.
- 5.2 If a user wishes to use a GenAI tool other than Microsoft Copilot for work purposes, they must seek approval from the IT Operations & Security Manager or the Head of IT. If approved, usage will be monitored to ensure compliance with data protection and information security requirements.

6. Ethical Use

- 6.1 GenAI must be used ethically and in compliance with all applicable legislation, regulations and organisational policies.
- 6.2 It must not be used to generate and publish content that is discriminatory, offensive, or inappropriate. All AI-generated content must be carefully checked before use.

6.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed (see **Appendix 2**).

Artificial Intelligence Policy

2026

Artificial Intelligence Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy is intended to help 'users' (Council employees, elected members, agency workers, contractors, consultants or other third parties) to understand the Council's position on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Large Language Models (GenAI).
- 1.2 This policy is designed to ensure that the use of GenAI is ethical, complies with all applicable laws, regulations and Council policies, and complements the Council's existing information and security policies.
- 1.3 GenAI is increasingly being used across industries, including the public sector. Whilst it has the potential to bring numerous benefits to the Council, which may include improved efficiency and cost savings, the risks and challenges associated with safe and responsible GenAI adoption must be taken into consideration at all times.
- 1.4 GenAI allows computers to learn and solve problems in ways that can seem human. It is important to remember however that computers cannot think, empathise or reason, therefore this policy sets out the Council's intention to only use GenAI as a tool to support work, and not as a full replacement of human intervention.
- 1.5 Due to the rapid changes and advancements within the field of GenAI this policy will be in a constant state of review. The policy will be formally reviewed at a minimum every 12 months.

2. What is AI?

- 2.1 The UK Government defines AI as:

'The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages. Modern AI is usually built using machine learning algorithms. The algorithms find complex patterns in data which can be used to form rules.'
- 2.2 GenAI refers to computer systems capable of performing tasks that would normally require human intelligence.
- 2.3 GenAI programmes can process large amounts of data, identify patterns and follow detailed instructions about what to do with that information
- 2.4 Common forms of GenAI technology include algorithms and predictive analysis, chatbots and virtual assistants, machine learning, remote monitoring tools, smart technologies, text editors and autocorrect, automatic language translation, and facial recognition or detection. It should be noted that the Council does not intend to use any image-based AI tools such as MidJourney, Google Gemini or Adobe Firefly.

3. Use

- 3.1 Users are permitted to explore and use Microsoft Copilot for work purposes on Council devices.
- 3.2 Whilst it is recognised that users may use other GenAI tools on personal devices or for personal use, Microsoft Copilot is the only approved General AI tool to be used to carry out Council work on any IT device.

- 3.3 Microsoft Copilot offers a wide range of AI-assisted capabilities that simplifies tasks like document creation, data analysis, project management and communication. The use of Microsoft Copilot is subject to the restrictions in this and related Council policies.
- 3.4 GenAI can provide valuable support while still incorporating users' professional judgment and expertise.
- 3.5 Users at Oadby & Wigston Borough Council will not use GenAI to replace any decision-making activities. GenAI can only be used as a tool to support work, not to replace human intervention.
- 3.6 GenAI tools can completely make up 'facts' because they have ingested information from a large amount of data sources, some of which may be fiction. As a result, it is important to fact check any content produced by GenAI. If there is any doubt about the accuracy of the GenAI generated output, it must not be used.
- 3.7 Before using Microsoft Copilot for work purposes, the user must evaluate and test the validity of the information it produces. The IT Team have a good working knowledge of this tool and may be able to help with this.
- 3.8 Microsoft Copilot needs to be used responsibly, ensuring it complements staff's professional judgement and expertise. Users remain professionally responsible and accountable for any work they produce with the help of Microsoft Copilot.

4. Governance, Risk and Legal Considerations

- 4.1 There is currently no legislation in place that directly refers to the use of GenAI. However, where an AI system is using or collecting personal data, it will fall within the scope of the UKGDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).
- 4.3 If a user wants to use different GenAI tool for work purposes, they need to seek approval from the IT Operations and Security Manager or the Head of IT before doing this. Software should never be downloaded or accessed on the Council's network without prior authorisation.
- 4.4 System modules, API and plug-in tools which enable access to GenAI must not be used without prior approval by the Senior Leadership Team and the IT Team.
- 4.5 Copyright law must be adhered to when utilising GenAI. It is prohibited to use GenAI to generate content that infringes upon the intellectual property rights of others, including but not limited to copyrighted material. If a user is unsure whether a particular use of GenAI constitutes copyright infringement, they should contact the Council's Legal Service before using it.
- 4.6 In addition to UKGDPR and DPA implications, users also need to consider the risks associated with the use of confidential and personal data, including commercially sensitive data. This type of information must not be entered into Copilot as there is a risk that it may enter the public domain. For example it is deemed acceptable to use Copilot to assist you with writing a letter to a customer, but you must not include any personal data into Copilot, like the customer's name or address. You must also not include any confidential information, like details on the customer's arrears, or a fine they have not paid. Commercially sensitive information relating to a Council contract for example, should also not be entered into Copilot. It is important to also note that once data is entered into a GenAI tool, there is no way to remove it, so if the user is unsure, they should not enter data into the GenAI tool.

- 4.7 Users must follow all applicable data privacy laws and organisational policies when using Copilot. If a user has any doubt about the confidentiality of information, they should not use this tool.
- 4.8 While a GenAI platform may be hosted internationally, information created or collected in the United Kingdom (UK), under data sovereignty rules, is still under jurisdiction of UK laws. The reverse also applies. If information is sourced from GenAI hosted overseas for use in the UK, the laws of the source country regarding its use and access may apply. GenAI service providers should be assessed for data sovereignty practice by any organisation wishing to use their GenAI.
- 4.9 The Council is under a legal duty to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010. This means that when developing using or procuring AI technologies the Council needs to consider the potential impact on people with protected characteristics. This consideration must be made and evidenced through an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) where relevant.
- 4.10 Bias and discrimination must also be considered. Copilot may make use of and generate biased, discriminatory or offensive content. Users should use Copilot responsibly and ethically, in compliance with Council policies and applicable laws and regulations.

5. Compliance

Any violations of this policy should be reported to the Council's IT Team or the Senior Leadership Team. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, in accordance with Council's HR policies and procedures.

6. Ethical Use

Copilot must be used ethically and in compliance with all applicable legislation, regulations and organisational policies. Copilot must not be used to generate and publish content that is discriminatory, offensive, or inappropriate and careful checking of any content created must be undertaken.

7. Acknowledgment

By using Copilot, users acknowledge that they have read and understood these guidelines, including the risks associated with the use of GenAI.

This policy is based on guidance prepared by ALGIM (Aotearoa - New Zealand) and Socitm (UK).

www.algim.org.nz

www.socitm.net

Please refer to the ‘*Equality Impact Screening and Assessment Guidance*’ document for advice on how to carry out an EIA and to help you fill in this form.

If you are unsure whether you need to carry out a full EIA, please complete an Equality Impact Screening Form first.

For this EIA form, any reference to ‘*workstream*’ refers to the development or review of a service, policy, strategy, or plan the Council is responsible for. It should be completed by the OWBC employee who is leading this area of work.

1. Name of workstream	AI Policy
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2. Date of assessment	24/02/2026
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3. Name and role of assessor	Trish Hatton – Head of Policy, Performance & Transformation
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4. What are the aims and objectives of the workstream?

The AI policy provides a clear framework for the ethical adoption, deployment, and management of approved AI systems and tools across the Council. A robust AI policy promotes good governance and responsible use. By clearly defining what users can and cannot do, it helps manage risks, safeguard data, and maintain compliance with relevant legislation.

5. Which Stakeholders have been involved in the development of this workstream?
--

A small group of staff members have been involved in the development of the policy and feedback has been given and considered

6. Which stakeholders will be affected by the workstream? (i.e. residents, businesses, staff, contractors, visitors)

AI will only be used as a tool to assist staff or contactors with their work, human intervention will always be needed therefore this policy should not affect residents, business or other partners. Staff have the choice to use AI, it will not be mandatory. It may affect some staff who struggle with technology changes due to their age or disability.

7. What involvement and consultation activity has been undertaken or is planned on this workstream?

The use of AI is not mandatory, Training workshops will be carried out for staff to help people become familiar with the technology and to encourage people to use this. On going support will be provided by the IT team to all users.

8. What data and evidence did you use to assess the impact of the workstream?

No specific data, but we did speak to other councils that have implemented AI in their authorities to see the impact.

9. Please specify all the impacts you have identified for each of the characteristics below, whether positive, negative, or neutral. Where there is a positive or negative impact include further details of the impact and explain how you will mitigate any negative impact.

Age	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable) Potential negative impact for those who are less confident with IT, training workshops will be run and on-going support for staff who wish to use Co-Pilot AI tool
Disability	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable) Potential negative impact for those who are less able to use IT, training workshops will be run and on-going support for staff who wish to use Co-Pilot AI tool, adaptations will be identified and used where possible
Gender Reassignment	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable)
Marriage or Civil Partnership	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable)

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable)
Race	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable)
Religion or Belief	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable)
Sex	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable)
Sexual Orientation	Positive / Negative / Neutral (delete as applicable)

10. If the workstream cannot be changed, please note the justification of any negative impact. The *Equality Impact Screening and Assessment Guidance* provides further information or contact equalities@oadby-wigston.gov.uk for further advice.

AI technology is advancing all the time, many staff already use this, so it is essential to have an AI policy to both govern and direct use. The use of AI as a tool to help people with their roles will be encouraged but it will not be mandatory for people to use this. It is acknowledged that some people who are less able to use technology, due to age or disability may find it more difficult to embrace this technology but there will be IT workshop sessions, and the IT team will provide ongoing support to anyone that needs it.

11. How will you monitor, evaluate, and check whether further changes are required in the future?

We will do feedback sheets from the training workshops to rate their effectiveness, and we will monitor AI usage

12. When will the next review of the workstream take place?

12 months time

Please sign and retain a copy of this completed Assessment Form for your records.

Name	Trish Hatton
Job Role	Head of Policy, Performance & Transformation
Service Area	Policy, Performance & Transformation
Date	04/03/2026

An electronic copy of this Assessment Form, and any relevant information, should be forwarded to your Head of Service and equalities@oadby-wigston.gov.uk for further consideration. They will let you know if you need to consider any other issues prior to completing this process. If you have any queries, please contact equalities@oadby-wigston.gov.uk.

FOR EDI LEAD ONLY

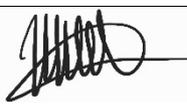
I have discussed the workstream with the relevant Head of Service and have advised that this Equality Impact Assessment be reviewed and amended for the following reason(s):

Rationale for Refusal of EIA Sign Off

Name	
Signature	
Date	

OR

I have discussed the workstream with the relevant Head of Service and I am satisfied that a full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, with no further action required.

Name	Mark Smith
Signature	

Date	05/03/2026
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Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 24 March 2026	Matter for Decision
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Report Title: **Draft Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (March 2026)**

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

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee’s approval to publicly consult on the Draft Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for a 6-week period proposed to commence Friday, 27 March 2026, running until Friday, 8 May 2026.
Report Summary:	<p>The current Conservation Areas SPD was adopted in April 2019. As the emerging draft Local Plan is being progressed, Officers consider it an appropriate time to review and where necessary update the current Conservation Areas SPD.</p> <p>The Draft Conservation Areas SPD sets out guidance for the enhancement and effective management of the nine Conservation Areas within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. It explains the important contribution these areas make to the Borough’s character and heritage and emphasises the need to preserve and enhance them wherever possible. The SPD provides additional detail to support and supplement the planning policies contained within the Council’s Local Plan.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That Members approve the Draft Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (March 2026) for the purposes of public consultation proposed to commence Friday, 27 March 2026, running until Friday, 8 May 2026.
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>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the 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 (Senior Planning Policy Officer) (0116) 257 2650 ed.morgan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<p>Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Environment (SO4) Our Partners (SO5)</p>

Vision and Values:	Customer & Community Focused (V1) Collaborative & Creative (V3) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	No corporate risk(s) identified
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. Initial EA Screening (See Appendices)
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	Unable to complete review.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Interim 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:	Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (2019)
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (March 2026) 2. Equality Assessment (Initial Screening) (March 2026)

1. Information

1.1 The purpose of this draft Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide an update to the existing Conservation Areas SPD adopted in 2019. The document has been fully refreshed, and all nine Conservation Areas within the Borough have been reviewed and included in this updated draft. The draft SPD relates to the following Conservation Areas:

- All Saints Conservation Area
- London Road and Saint Peter's Church Conservation Area
- Midland Cottages Conservation Area
- North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Cottages Conservation Area
- Oadby Court Conservation Area
- Oadby Hill Top Conservation Area
- South Wigston Conservation Area
- Spa Lane Conservation Area
- The Lanes Conservation Area

1.2 A Conservation Area is defined as an "area of special architectural or historic interest, the

character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Section 69, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to identify areas of special interest within their district and to designate them as Conservation Areas where appropriate.

- 1.3 It is considered that each of the existing Conservation Areas continue to meet the statutory definition and that their designations should remain in place. They should be managed effectively and enhanced wherever opportunities arise. Further detail on the management and enhancement of Conservation Areas is provided in the draft Conservation Areas SPD (March 2026), included at **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 1.4 Conservation Area designation provides the Council with additional controls over inappropriate development. Planning applications are assessed in terms of their impact on the character and appearance of the designated area. The designation also introduces tighter controls over the demolition of buildings and structures, and reduces or can remove altogether, the 'permitted development rights' that normally allow certain works to be undertaken without planning permission. In addition, stricter requirements apply to the design and quality of new development within Conservation Areas.
- 1.5 The draft Conservation Areas SPD provides additional policy and guidance to complement and strengthen the provisions of the Council's adopted Local Plan. It ensures that planning decision-makers have clear, detailed guidance when assessing applications that involve development or change affecting Conservation Areas within the Borough.
- 1.6 Note: The draft Conservation Areas SPD does not cover the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area, as this area is designated and managed by Leicestershire County Council.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 Subject to Committee approval, the draft Conservation Areas SPD public consultation period is proposed to commence on Friday, 27 March 2026 for a 6-week period until Friday, 8 May 2026.
- 2.2 Once the draft Conservation Areas SPD has been subject to public consultation, any representations that have been received will be taken account of and factored into a final version, as necessary. The final version will then be submitted to Members for approval at the next appropriate Member Committee.

**Borough of
Oadby and Wigston**

**Conservation Areas
Supplementary Planning
Document**

Consultation Draft

March 2026

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DRAFT

1. Introduction

Definition of a Conservation Area

- 1.1 Conservation Areas are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as places of special architectural or historic interest, where preserving or enhancing their character or appearance is considered desirable. National Planning Policy Framework adds that local planning authorities must be confident that an area genuinely merits this status because of its special interest, and that the value of conservation is not diluted by designating places without clear significance. A Conservation Area therefore recognises the distinctive character and overall quality of an area, rather than individual buildings alone.
- 1.2 The character of a Conservation Area typically arises from the interplay of elements such as the mix and style of its buildings, the pattern and openness of its spaces, and natural features like trees, hedges, and other landscape components.
- 1.3 When a Conservation Area is designated, the Council gains stronger powers to protect its character, and planning proposals are assessed in terms of how they affect the area's appearance and significance. Demolition controls become tighter, and the permitted development rights that normally allow owners to carry out certain works without planning permission are reduced or can be removed entirely. New development is subject to more rigorous design scrutiny, and anyone wishing to carry out works to trees must give the Council six weeks' notice. Planning applications within or affecting a Conservation Area must also be advertised appropriately.

Planning Policy Context

- 1.4 This section sets out the relevant national and local planning guidance which relate to this Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework makes the following statements regarding Conservation Areas:

'When considering the designation of Conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.'

'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.'

‘Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.’

- 1.6 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), in its definition of a conservation area, is consistent with that set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990. NPPG states that a conservation area is an area *‘which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’*.
- 1.7 The Council’s adopted Local Plan (2019) sets out a specific local policy relating to development within conservation areas, Policy 41 Development in Conservation Areas. This document is supplementary to Policy 41. In addition to Policy 41 the Local Plan sets out number of other policies that could also influence development within conservation areas. The relevant policies are as follows:
- Policy 6: High Quality Design and Materials.
 - Policy 10: Public Realm.
 - Policy 11: Housing Choices.
 - Policy 15; Urban Infill Development.
 - Policy 32: Shop Fronts.
 - Policy 33: Security Shutters.
 - Policy 40: Culture and Historic Environment Assets.
 - Policy 44: Landscape and Character.
- 1.8 The Council’s emerging new Local Plan is due to be adopted by 2027. Emerging relevant Policies in that document that will continue to influence development in conservation areas will include the following (please note: policy numbering and titles may be subject to change prior to adoption):
- Policy 12: Housing Choices
 - Policy 13: Self and Custom Build
 - Policy 14: Retention of Existing Dwellings
 - Policy 17: Urban Infill Development
 - Policy 23: Improving Health and Wellbeing
 - Policy 27: Public Realm
 - Policy 28: High Quality Design and High-Quality Materials
 - Policy 29: Landscape and Character
 - Policy 30: Culture and Historic Environment Assets
 - Policy 31: Development in Conservation Areas
 - Policy 33: Phone Masts
 - Policy 36: Local Green Space
 - Regeneration Policy 1: Kilby Bridge Settlement Envelope
- 1.9 Conservation Area Appraisals including Development Control Guidance have been produced for each of the Borough’s nine Conservation Areas. The Development Control Guidance statements have been brought together within this Supplementary

Planning Document. The relevant Conservation Area Appraisal must be read in conjunction with this Supplementary Planning Document.

Aims of the Supplementary Planning Document

- 1.10 The objectives of the Supplementary Planning Document are as follows:
- To assess and define opportunities and threats within the Conservation Areas; and
 - To provide policy guidance to ensure that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be maintained through the effective management of change and that those opportunities to enhance the character and appearance are maximised.

Structure of Document

- 1.11 Part A of the document sets out generic development control guidance which applies to all Conservation Areas within the Borough.
- 1.12 Each Conservation Area has its own individual and unique character; therefore, Part B sets out management tools relating specifically to each Conservation Area so that proposals can be considered against this guidance.
- 1.13 Once adopted this Supplementary Planning Document will compliment and sit alongside all other adopted Supplementary Planning Documents and the adopted Local Plan for the Borough.

Part A

General Conservation Area Guidance

2. Planning Submissions in a Conservation Area

Outline Planning Submissions

- 2.1 Outline applications for development within a Conservation Area will only be accepted where they include enough supporting detail to allow the impact on the area's character and appearance to be properly assessed.
- 2.2 On major development sites, this should include a masterplan supported by detailed design codes or statements, prepared in line with the Council's adopted Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (2025), to demonstrate the intended form of new buildings.

Full Planning Submissions

- 2.3 As required by the National Planning Policy Framework, proposals must include enough detail to allow their full impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area to be properly assessed. This should address the matters identified in the accompanying Conservation Area Appraisals, particularly the 'Key Characteristics' section, and be supported by a Design and Access Statement that clearly explains how the scheme is considered to preserve or enhance the area's character and appearance.

Listed Building Consent

- 2.4 Listed Building Consent is required for any works, internal or external, that would affect the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building, including any structure built before 1 July 1948 within its curtilage. Applications must be supported by a statement that demonstrates a clear understanding of the elements of the building that will be affected, explains the justification for the proposed works, sets out why alternative approaches were discounted, and identifies how any harm to historic fabric will be minimised.
- 2.6 A Design and Access Statement must also explain how any replacement building will contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and this assessment should accompany any planning submission.

3. Demolition in a Conservation Area

- 3.1 Buildings within a Conservation Area, nationally Listed buildings (including associated outbuildings and lodges), and Locally Listed buildings are generally expected to be retained and preserved. Further guidance on demolition within Conservation Areas is set out in Local Plan Policy 41: Development in Conservation Areas (or any subsequent update).
- 3.2 Demolition of these buildings will only be supported where the proposals comply with the relevant policies set out in the Council's Local Plan.
- 3.3 The demolition of unsympathetic extensions will be supported where the intention is to restore the building to its original form, or where any replacement extension would provide a design that better respects the building's special architectural or historic interest.

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4. Alterations and Extensions within a Conservation Area

4.1 Alterations and extensions should generally be limited to the rear or least prominent elevations unless they would help to sustain or enhance the building's architectural character within its setting. Planning permission will be supported for proposals that:

- respect the established building line.
- retain the symmetry of balanced elevations or groups.
- avoid creating a terraced appearance (except in South Wigston Conservation Area or other areas where terracing is characteristic).
- do not compromise key architectural features.
- remain subordinate to the main building and use either matching materials or an appropriate contrasting palette.
- reinstate traditional features such as original doors, windows, porches, or decorative elements.
- use traditional and, where suitable, reclaimed or recycled materials.
- consider opportunities to incorporate energy-efficiency measures.

4.2 Specific guidance on alterations and extensions is provided within this document.

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5. Works to Listed Buildings

- 5.1 Works that affect the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building require Listed Building Consent. This applies to the main building, any outbuildings or boundary structures built before 1 July 1948, and to all internal works. The acceptability of such proposals is determined in accordance with relevant national and local planning policy.
- 5.2 Additional guidance is provided within this document.

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6. Works to Locally Listed Buildings

- 6.1 Buildings designated as Locally Listed in the Council's Local Plan are recognised for the positive contribution they make to the character and appearance of the Borough and their immediate surroundings. To safeguard these properties and their settings from unsympathetic alteration, the Council may consider introducing Directions under Article 4.
- 6.2 Article 4 Directions remove a householder's permitted development rights, allowing the Council to manage changes that could harm local character. Works that may be brought under control include, but are not limited to:
- painting, cladding or rendering external facades.
 - inserting or replacing doors and windows.
 - removing or replacing boundary walls or fences. and
 - altering roof profiles or changing roofing materials.

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7. Proposals Affecting the Setting of a Conservation Area

- 7.1 Development outside a Conservation Area will be refused if it would harm the area's special character or appearance, including by intruding into any important view or vista into, out of, within, or across the area that has been identified as significant.
- 7.2 Any development on sites adjoining a Conservation Area should respond directly to the special character set out in the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal. Particular care is required in the design, layout and massing of new buildings, their relationship with the Conservation Area, and the effects on parking and landscaping.

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Part B

Conservation Area Specific Guidance

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8. All Saints Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 8.1 The Wigston All Saints Conservation Area was first designated in 1977. Changes were made to the Conservation Area Boundary in January 2007 following a Conservation Area Appraisal.

Overview of the Area

- 8.2 This part of Wigston Magna formed the village's southern core and contains several of the Borough's most historically and architecturally significant buildings. Preserving these traditional properties offers a glimpse of how the original village appeared before its growth into an urban town.
- 8.3 This southern core centres on the Church of All Saints, one of the two steeples that by 1529 gave Wigston Magna its name, the District of Two-Steeples. The church remains the Conservation Area's principal landmark and a defining feature of the local landscape.
- 8.4 Newgate End keeps a distinctly village-like character, marked by its appealing cluster of older vernacular buildings. This stands in contrast to the more varied mix of mainly late-nineteenth and twentieth-century development found along Moat Street and Bushloe End.
- 8.5 It is mainly a residential area, but traces of Wigston's hosiery industry remain along Bushloe End and Moat Street, where several former framework knitters' houses and workshops still stand. The Framework Knitters Museum on Bushloe End is a notable local attraction.
- 8.6 This area sits at the south-western edge of the old rectangular village centre, which includes The Lanes, a network of footpaths linking the two original cores of Wigston Magna.

Protection of Open Spaces

- 8.7 The area centres on the junction of Newgate End and Moat Street, where the largely fourteenth-century Grade I-listed All Saints Church forms a prominent local landmark. The quiet back water of Newgate End, with its older vernacular brick buildings, some still set within generous plots, offers a sense of the village's early character. Much of the original frontage along Moat Street and Bushloe End, which would once have shared this appearance, was replaced by nineteenth and twentieth-century infill development. The Manor House grounds extend west to Launceston Road, forming part of the Conservation Area's western boundary. The survival of the orchard, along with the mature trees surrounding the later buildings of the Menphys Centre and Pochin's Close, reinforces the semi-rural quality of views from Launceston Road and creates an important area of urban open space.
- The Council will oppose any proposals to develop the orchard adjoining the Manor House.

- 8.8 Numbers 42-44 Bushloe End are Grade II* listed and include an eighteenth-century cottage with a rear framework-knitting workshop once occupied by a Master Hosier, reflecting Wigston's industrial heritage. The buildings and their original contents, unchanged since before the First World War, are now preserved as the Framework Knitters Museum.
- The Council will seek to enhance the setting of the Framework Knitters Museum, and development that would harm the special character or setting of these Grade II* listed buildings will not be permitted.
- 8.9 Gas Lane has a distinctly informal, rural character created by the enclosing hedges and trees and by its unmade surface. Preserving this rural quality is important.
- The Council will ensure, in collaboration with the Leicestershire County Council Highways Authority and other statutory undertakers, that appropriate surfacing materials are used in this area.

The Design of New Buildings

- 8.10 Very few development opportunities remain within the Conservation Area. A potential site includes the former Birkett House school site,. Development within the curtilage of the Manor House, at 10 Newgate End, or on the green space at the corner of Bushloe End and Launceston Road will not be permitted.
- 8.11 To be acceptable, any new building must be designed to complement the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:
- having a mass, form, and scale appropriate to the predominantly two-storey residential context;
 - respecting established building lines where they exist;
 - incorporating varied roof forms that contribute to an interesting skyline;
 - using materials that either reflect those of traditional local buildings or provide a well-considered, high-quality contrast;
 - responding to characteristic architectural details such as bay windows, door and window surrounds, and decorative eaves, and acknowledging differences in detailing where a scheme spans more than one street;
 - creating strong street corners with active frontages on all visible elevations; and
 - including a Design and Access Statement within any planning submission to explain the design rationale.
- 8.12 Infill development will need to comply to all relevant planning policy and reflect the prevailing character and quality of the surrounding townscape. Its design should take account of:
- established building and boundary lines, along with the local development scale;
 - the typical overall heights, storey heights, and massing of neighbouring buildings;
 - characteristic frontage or plot widths;
 - the roof profiles and silhouettes of adjoining properties;

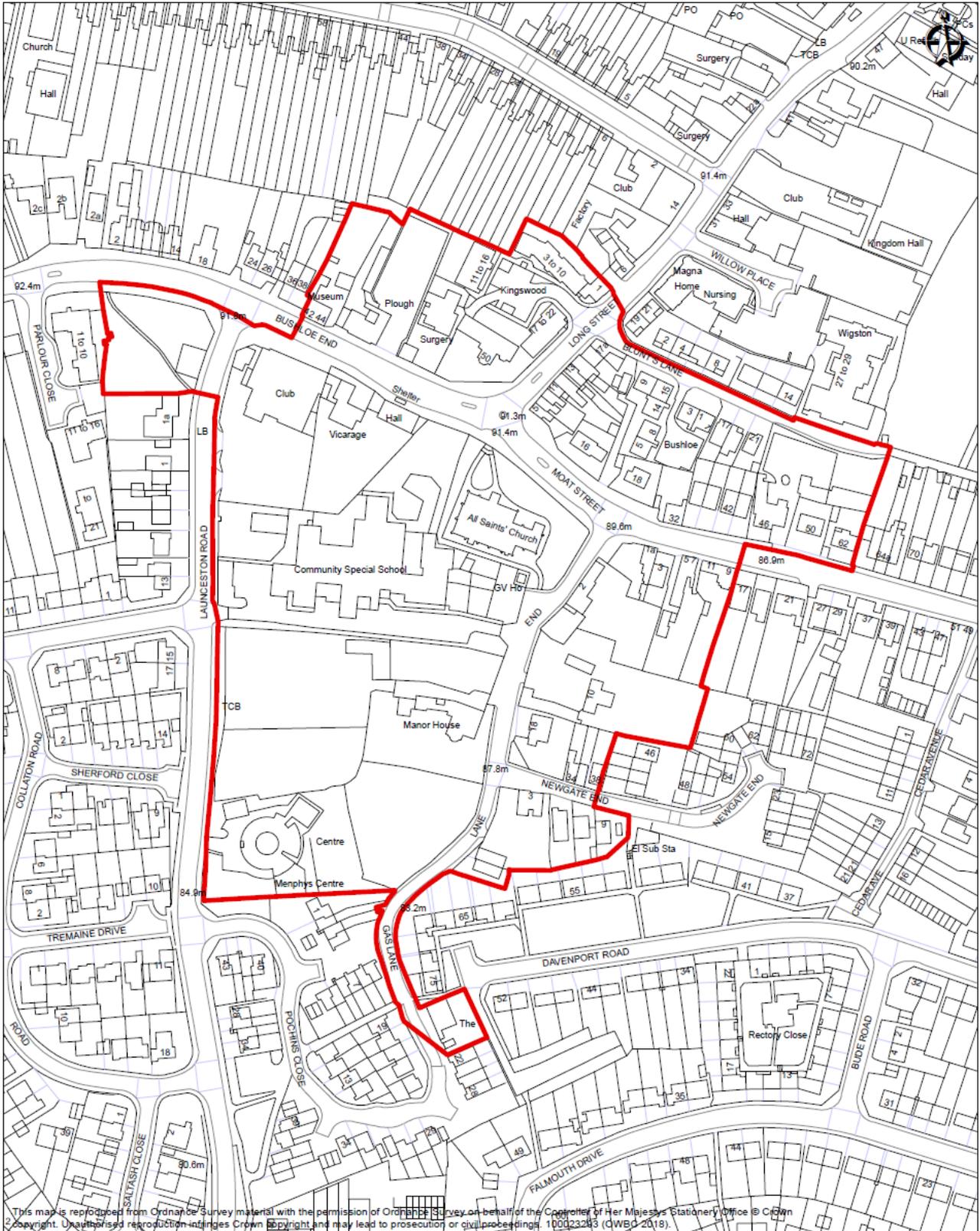
- the colour, type, source, and texture of facing, roofing, and paving materials;
- distinctive architectural forms or detailing common in the immediate area;
- typical dwelling sizes and net residential densities; and
- any unified architectural compositions or notable building groups present nearby.

8.13 High standards of energy efficiency should be encouraged in new buildings, and opportunities for generating renewable energy on site should be considered. However, the visual impact on the Conservation Area must be carefully assessed, and any energy-efficiency or energy-generation measures must avoid harming its character or appearance.

Enhancement Opportunities

- 8.14 Removing the on-street parking bays at the Newgate End entrance to the former Birkett House School would significantly enhance the overall setting of All Saints Church.
- 8.15 Enhancing the façade of the Georgian building at the corner of Bushloe End and Launceston Road would also be encouraged.
- 8.16 The parking and garden areas of the two public houses, The Plough and The Old Crown (the latter being temporarily closed at the time of writing), could also be improved through additional hard landscaping and/or the introduction of soft landscaping.
- 8.17 The pavements along Newgate End are attractively edged with historic stone, but the tarmacadam surfacing has been repeatedly patched, introducing a noticeably urban element into an area with a traditionally rural character. Resurfacing the pavements with a more suitable material, such as bonded gravel, would significantly enhance the public realm.
- 8.18 Gas Lane's informal, rural character stems from its unadopted nature, but its unmetalled surface is prone to flooding and can appear untidy. Using an appropriate informal surfacing material would improve both its appearance and its practical function.
- 8.19 The greenspace at the corner of Bushloe End and Launceston Road contributes positively to the character of the area, but the seating area on the Launceston Road side could be improved. Refurbishing the existing benches or replacing them with new ones, along with adding planters, would enhance this space.
- 8.20 The Borough Council could also consider using Article 4 Directions to preserve traditional external detailing on non-listed buildings within the conservation area, where such features still survive.

ALL SAINTS CONSERVATION AREA



9. London Road and Saint Peters Church Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 9.1 The London Road and Saint Peters Church Conservation Area was first designated in 1988. Changes were made to the Conservation Area Boundary in March 2007 following a Conservation Area Appraisal.

Overview of the Area

- 9.2 The area retains elements of its village character, with a mix of uses that reflect its organic development. It is centred on the oldest surviving part of Oadby around St Peter's Church and extends south-east along London Road.
- 9.3 The linear form of the Conservation Area reflects the way the original settlement developed along Leicester and London Road, with the village green lying to the southeast of St Peter's Church. Agriculture shaped village life, and the settlement was therefore surrounded by open fields.
- 9.4 There is considerable variation in building scale, and this creates an engaging roofscape that enriches views into, out of, and within the Conservation Area. While most buildings sit directly on the back of the footpath, the contrast in their sizes adds visual diversity to the street scene. Part of the Conservation Area now also functions as Old Oadby Local Centre.
- 9.5 A small number of listed buildings are dispersed throughout the Conservation Area. These are generally two-storey houses that are grander than the surrounding terraced properties. The exception is the short row of cottages on London Road, a surviving example of the type of dwelling once occupied by artisans. Several Locally Listed Buildings are also present.
- 9.6 The Conservation Area includes several Baptist-related buildings, the most prominent of which is the distinctive Baptist Church on London Road.
- 9.7 The village green has long since disappeared as the settlement grew and took on a more urban character. Its former presence is hinted at only by the orientation of two large houses, The Hermitage and The Nook, which once overlooked it. Today the space functions as a car park, and the land to its west was redeveloped during the twentieth century.
- 9.8 The main public green space in modern Oadby is the former driveway of The Elms, locally known as 'Chicken Alley'. It now serves as a public footpath, much of it bordered by vegetation and trees. The north-south section, in particular, contains some of the area's most significant trees and contributes to the lush character of the southern part of the Conservation Area.
- 9.9 Saint Peter's Church remains the focal point of the 'village', positioned at the junction of London Road and Wigston Road and once overlooking the former village

green. Its steeple is a prominent feature in long views, and the church itself stands as a key local landmark.

The Design of New Buildings

- 9.10 New development or redevelopment within the London Road and Saint Peter's Conservation Area should relate closely to the character of neighbouring buildings and maintain the existing mix of uses and building styles, helping to preserve the form and scale of the historic village street scene.
- 9.11 The London Road and Saint Peter's Conservation Area Appraisal outlines Oadby's 'grain', i.e. the way buildings relate to the street. Its 'Key Characteristics' section summarises features such as building heights, building line, materials, and detailing. Focusing closely on the specific street where new development is proposed helps establish appropriate design principles and ensures that new buildings respect Oadby's existing character.
- 9.12 To be acceptable, the design of any new building should:
- be of a mass and scale that maintains the existing variety of building sizes without overwhelming the smaller residential properties;
 - adopt a form that fits comfortably alongside the area's mix of residential and commercial building styles;
 - incorporate pitched roofs or create an interesting and appropriate roofline;
 - respect the established building line and plot arrangement;
 - use materials and detailing that follow the design principles shaping the building's form, either reflecting traditional local characteristics or, where of very high quality, providing a successful contemporary contrast; and
 - include a Design and Access Statement explaining the design rationale as part of any planning application.

Change of Use

- 9.13 Appropriate redevelopment or changes of use to retail or commercial purposes should consider:
- the building's appearance, which should be preserved without unsympathetic extensions or alterations;
 - the retention of any original or suitable shopfront elements unless they are entirely beyond repair;
 - the impact on the character of the street scene, which should not be significantly altered;
 - opportunities to reinstate important architectural details that have been lost, altered, or fallen into disrepair;
 - the need for safe and adequate vehicular access, parking, and servicing arrangements; and
 - the requirement to ensure that nearby residential properties are not adversely affected in terms of amenity.

- 9.14 Changing retail premises to non-retail uses will generally not be supported, especially where it would create an excessive concentration of non-retail frontages. Any proposal must also comply with the relevant planning policies.
- 9.15 Where retail use remains viable only at ground-floor level, 'Living over the Shop' will be encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and introduce activity throughout the day. Such proposals will be supported where:
- effective noise insulation can be provided between the living accommodation and the shop below;
 - a separate access to the residential accommodation can be created without harming the character of the building or its original or well-designed shopfront; and
 - adequate waste storage, and suitable car and cycle parking, can be provided for residents.
- 9.16 Planning permission for uses such as restaurants, cafés, drinking establishments, or hot food takeaways will only be granted where proposals comply with relevant planning policy and it can be shown that they will not harm residential amenity or local environmental quality through odours, noise, late-night activity, disturbance, or increased parking and traffic. Adequate parking must form part of the overall design, and any visually intrusive equipment such as air-conditioning units, ducting, or flues, should be properly screened.

Shopfronts, Signage, Blinds and Security Measures

- 9.17 The area's village origins are reflected in the mix of small shop units along London Road, which now form part of a designated Old Oadby Local Centre.
- 9.18 Several good late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century shopfronts survive along London Road. Planning permission will not be granted for their removal, or for the removal of any of their components, unless they are genuinely beyond repair.
- 9.19 Where elements of an original shopfront survive, they should be retained and used either as the foundation for restoring the original frontage or incorporated into a suitably designed new shopfront. Original features should only be removed if they are entirely beyond repair or cannot be successfully integrated into a new design.
- 9.20 Shopfronts. Replacing inappropriate shopfronts is supported where the new design respects the character of the building, any adjoining group or terrace, and the wider area. Acceptable designs should:
- have a clear structural logic, with a well-defined frame of pilasters, fascia and, where suitable, stall risers;
 - relate to the proportions and character of the original building;
 - maintain or improve accessibility for people with disabilities;
 - use appropriate materials;
 - avoid spanning more than one building frontage; and
 - include a suitably designed separate entrance where upper-floor living accommodation is proposed.

- 9.21 Where a change of use is proposed to convert a shop into residential accommodation, any surviving elements of a historic shopfront should be retained unless they are entirely beyond repair.
- 9.22 Signage. Signage on several Oadby buildings has been harmed by unsuitable or poorly executed designs. To be acceptable, new signage must:
- avoid obscuring, overwhelming, or damaging the building's proportions or architectural features;
 - use lettering of a size, material, and font appropriate to the building;
 - remain clear and simple, avoiding garish or unsuitable colours; and
 - include no more than one well-designed and suitably placed hanging sign per shop frontage.
- 9.23 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most illuminated signs in the Conservation Area, and bulky internally lit box signs will not be allowed. Fascia and hanging signs should follow traditional designs and use external lighting where needed. Illuminated signs must:
- use a discreet light source that does not disrupt the building's proportions or harm architectural features;
 - avoid causing any nuisance to nearby residential properties; and
 - maintain a subdued and consistent level of illumination.
- 9.24 Blinds and canopies. Blinds and canopies will be permitted in the Conservation Area only where there is historical precedent and an existing blind box remains, and where they can be introduced without harming the character of the building or its shopfront while relating well to the building's existing features and detailing. Consent from the Local Highways Authority may also be required if they project over a public footpath.
- 9.25 Shop front security. Designing a new shopfront should take the occupier's likely security needs into account, as it is far easier to incorporate suitable security measures from the outset than to add them later to an existing frontage.
- 9.26 Solid external shutters will be allowed in the Conservation Area only where it is clearly demonstrated that they are the sole viable means of providing security necessary for the shopkeeper's livelihood. Even where such a need is proven, an open, removable mesh shutter should be considered before resorting to a solid external shutter.
- 9.27 External shutters, whether solid or grille-type, will be permitted only where they respect the proportions and features of the shopfront, do not cover the pilasters or fascia, and are finished in an appropriate colour and material.

Car Parking

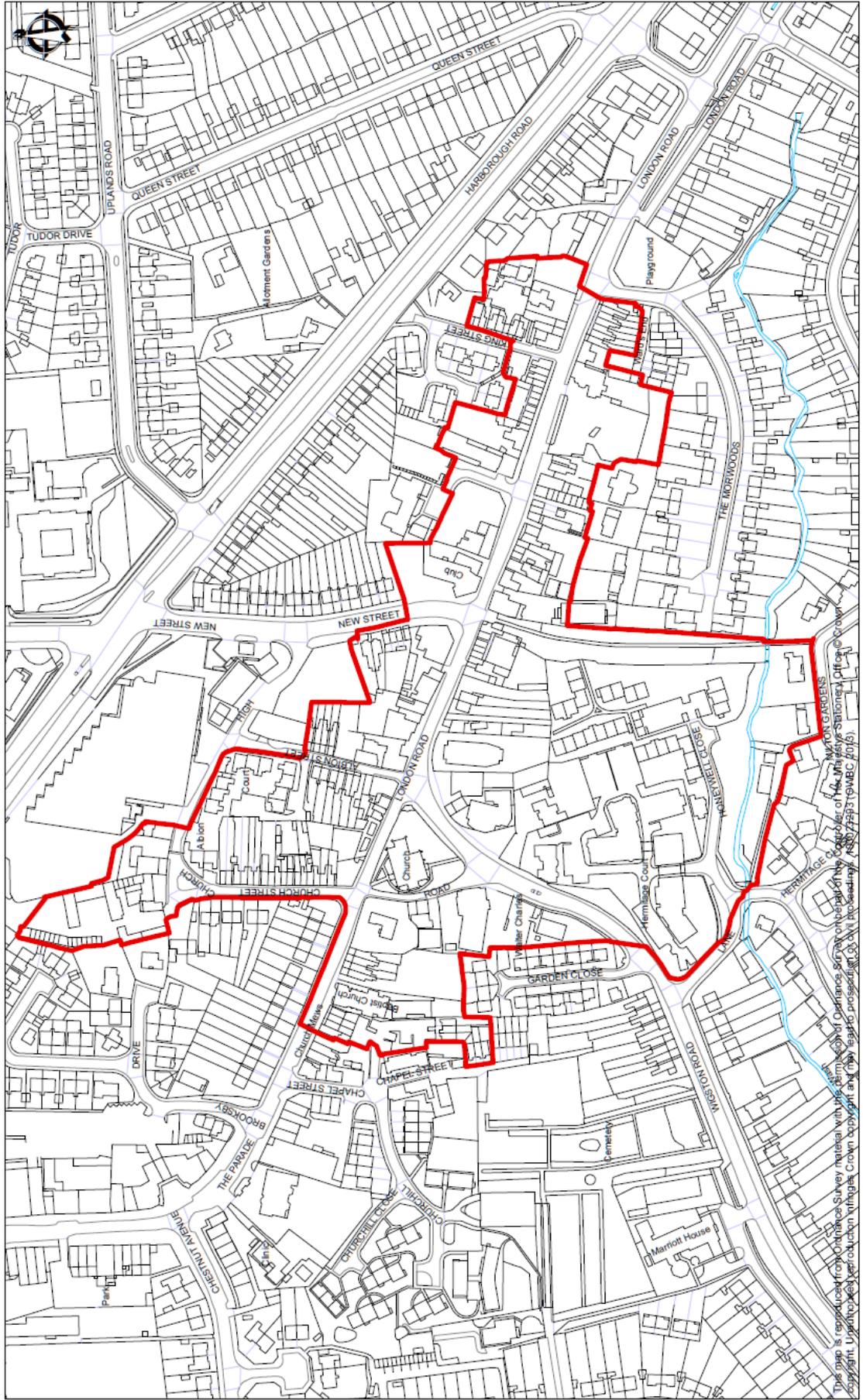
- 9.28 Several parking areas in Oadby are poorly landscaped and visually overpower the surrounding buildings. The layout of these parking spaces has a major influence on the character of the townscape, and thoughtful landscaping is needed to soften their impact. Landscaping plans should take into account:

- using planting to screen vehicles and help parking areas blend into the urban environment;
- providing direct pedestrian routes that link clearly to nearby buildings;
- introducing shared surface treatments, as long as pedestrian paths remain easy to identify; and
- breaking up large parking expanses with trees and other soft landscaping.

Enhancement Opportunities

- 9.29 A major opportunity for improving the London Road and Saint Peters Conservation Area lies in replacing the less sympathetic buildings with new development that better reflects the character of the surrounding townscape. Any such redevelopment should follow the accompanying Development Control Guidance and any future planning briefs prepared for specific sites.
- 9.30 Redeveloping or improving the landscaping and screening of parking areas within the Conservation Area would significantly enhance the streetscape, as these open parking spaces are currently unattractive and add little to the overall townscape. The most prominent examples are the parking area between 62a and 64 London Road and the car park on New Street.
- 9.31 If an opportunity arises to update street lighting in the Conservation Area, the Borough and County Council will work together to select a style that is appropriate for the setting.
- 9.32 Street signage has become excessive in some locations, especially along London Road, and this visual clutter detracts from the character of the Conservation Area. If the chance arises, reducing and streamlining the signage would be a worthwhile improvement.
- 9.33 The footpath along Lawyers Lane has been resurfaced with modern tarmac, giving it an overly urban appearance. Using a material that softens its look and provides a more rural character, in keeping with the nature of the lane, would be preferable.
- 9.34 The Borough Council may use 'Article 4 Directions' to help preserve traditional external detailing on non-listed buildings within the conservation area, where those features still survive.

LONDON ROAD / ST PETERS CONSERVATION AREA



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10. Midland Cottages Conservation Area Guidance

Background

10.1 The Midland Cottages Conservation Area was first designated in 1989.

Overview of the Area

10.2 The Midland Cottages Conservation Area is a compact enclave made up of a row of twenty former railway workers' cottages and the former Railway Hotel. All of the buildings were constructed between 1871 and 1881 using almost identical materials. Although the Railway Hotel is a more prominent structure, it shares the cottages' two-storey form and originally stood on the road that crossed the railway at a level crossing. When a new road bridge was built in the early twentieth century, the buildings were left at the foot of the embankment that now carries the road.

10.3 The cottages and the former hotel hold significant architectural and historic value and are included on the Local List, though the character of the cottages has been diminished in recent years by gradual alterations to individual homes. While each change may seem small, together they have weakened the terrace's once uniform appearance. Restoring lost features and removing paint or cladding would offer a strong opportunity to recover the terrace's original character. The former hotel, by contrast, remains largely intact and was operating as a public house serving the local community.

10.4 The embankment forms the effective southern edge of the Conservation Area, while the railway line marks its western limit. Housing lies to the east, with modern homes and industrial premises situated to the north.

10.5 The setting is distinctly urban, with limited greenery apart from the vegetation that has naturally grown along the railway line and embankment, plus the occasional garden tree. Even so, the track in front of the cottages and the public house forecourt offer strong opportunities to enhance the area's character. Improvements to the railway land opposite the cottages and to the embankment would also greatly benefit the cottages' outlook and overall setting.

Control of Minor Alterations to the Midland Cottages

10.6 Preventing further loss of original cottage features is as important as encouraging their reinstatement. Article 4 Directions could therefore be introduced, requiring Planning Permission for the following types of work:

- cladding or painting external walls, including window surrounds and reveals;
- replacing or altering external windows and doors;
- making changes to the roof, such as altering the covering or adding dormers or rooflights;
- removing or modifying chimney stacks;
- demolishing or altering rear boundary walls;
- adding porches, canopies, or window shutters; and

- installing satellite dishes or any other form of optional external physical technology.

10.7 The Borough Council will encourage the reinstatement of lost architectural features. This includes installing new windows that follow the original designs (3-over-3 sashes for the first-floor window above the front door and plate-glass sash windows elsewhere), adopting a consistent front-door style, and restoring front-door canopies similar to those on numbers 17 and 18.

Rear Extensions to the Midland Cottages

10.8 The rear elevations of the cottages are highly visible from Blaby Road and replacing the original single-storey pitched-roof service wings with flat-roofed extensions has undermined the terrace's once unified appearance.

10.9 Alterations to the rear wings will only be supported where they are of high quality and respect the historic character of the area.

Retention of Public House

10.10 The former public house is a key element of the Conservation Area's character, reflecting its historic role as the former railway hotel. A change of use will be opposed unless it can be clearly demonstrated that its current function is no longer economically viable, as even if the building's appearance were retained, its historic association with the railway would be lost.

10.11 If it can be demonstrated that operating as a public house is no longer viable, conversion to an appropriate alternative use in line with current planning policy may be supported, provided that:

- interpretation material is installed in a publicly accessible part of the building to explain its former role and its links to the railway.
- the façade, overall appearance, and historic features are retained, with restoration carried out where needed.
- improvements to the public realm and the building's setting are made in a way that respects its character and history.

Demolition and Redevelopment

10.12 Demolition of any Locally Listed Building will only be supported where it is clearly shown that the structure is unsound, cannot continue in its existing use, cannot be adapted for another acceptable use, or where the public benefits of demolition would significantly outweigh its architectural and historic value and its contribution to the Conservation Area. Any new development within the Midland Cottages Conservation Area, or affecting its setting, must:

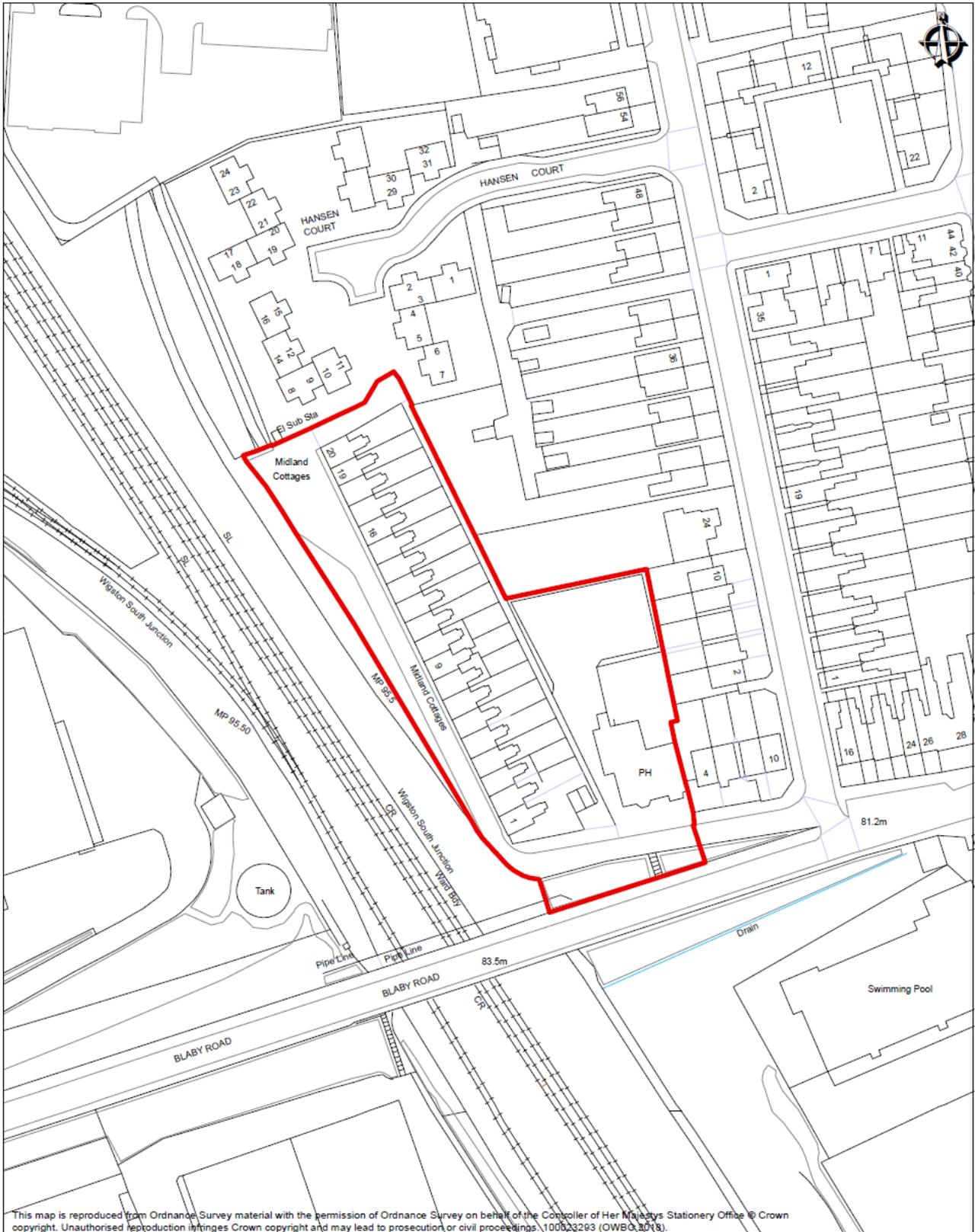
- respect the scale of all buildings in the area;
- use materials that either match the existing buildings or provide a well-judged contrast;
- position windows, doors, bays, chimneys, and other elements to create a clear rhythm consistent with neighbouring buildings;

- face directly onto the street and maintain a strong vertical emphasis
- include appropriate architectural detailing to window and door heads, eaves, verges, and gable ends;
- maintain a simple roofline, with ridges interrupted only by chimney stacks; and
- incorporate boundary treatments that are suitable for the setting.

Enhancement Opportunities

- 10.13 The most significant opportunity for improving this Conservation Area lies in restoring features that have been lost. This may include carefully removing stone cladding, render, and paint from façades; reinstating sash windows in their original patterns; and potentially reintroducing front-door canopies. The use of Article 4 Directions could also be explored to prevent further loss of original features.
- 10.14 Poor-quality rear extensions, which are visible from Blaby Road, would benefit from a consistent, unified design approach that could gradually improve the appearance of the terrace. This issue is addressed in the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance.
- 10.15 Repairs are needed to the brick wall behind the cottages, and part of the wall bordering the public house car park will also require rebuilding. In addition, replacing the fence around No. 1 with a more suitable alternative would further enhance the area.
- 10.16 Efforts should be made to encourage the railway company to paint the unattractive galvanised fence and improve planting to lessen its visual impact. Planting the grass verges between the fence and the cottages would also help soften its appearance and significantly enhance the cottages' setting.
- 10.17 The garages at the ends of the terraces are in very poor condition and lack the quality and detailing of the cottages. Replacing them with structures built from more appropriate materials and incorporating pitched roofs would greatly enhance the character of the area.
- 10.18 Repaving the public house's front apron in historically appropriate materials, such as setts or blue brick pavers, would greatly enhance its appearance.
- 10.19 The track on the western side of the road in front of the cottages could be resurfaced with bonded gravel or another suitable material, while the footpath could be repaved using setts or blue brick pavers. Existing York stone kerbs should be retained, with any damaged sections replaced in matching stone.
- 10.20 Improved maintenance of the embankment would greatly enhance the outlook, particularly for the public house. The retaining wall has the potential to be an attractive feature, though it is in need of repair. The steps down the embankment, which have disappeared over time, should be reinstated; if reinstatement is not possible, their former position should be indicated through appropriate detailing within the retaining wall.

MIDLAND COTTAGES CONSERVATION AREA



11. North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Cottages Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 11.1 The North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Cottages Conservation Area was first designated in 1988.
- 11.2 Most of the land and properties within the Conservation Area fall under the ownership of the North Memorial Homes and the Framework Knitters Cottages. Both organisations operate as social housing providers, with their properties overseen by Boards of Trustees.

Overview of the Area

- 11.3 The Conservation Area contains two groups of well-maintained, open-plan almshouses facing each other on the east and west sides of Stoughton Road. Although both were built in the early twentieth century using red brick and clay tile roofs, each group sits within attractive, carefully tended grounds and is approached through private gateways. Despite these shared qualities, the two sets of buildings have distinctly different characters.
- 11.4 The Framework Knitters Cottages are all single-storey buildings. Most are arranged around an open lawn and gardens, though some face directly onto Stoughton Road. More recently built cottages to the south of the site form informal courtyard groups. The earliest cottages date from 1909, with some new additions currently under construction. While the cottages share similar overall forms, including hipped roofs and tile-hung gables, there are notable differences in detailing, particularly between the older and newer buildings. They are arranged in pairs or small groups of three. Two communal buildings, Corah Hall and Corah House, stand opposite each other across the central lawn; Corah Hall is part of the original foundation and designed as a focal building, while Corah House is modern and follows the general form of the cottages.
- 11.5 The North Memorial Homes consist of two-storey pairs, some of which have been subdivided into flats. They are formally arranged around the central gardens and are well screened from Stoughton Road. All were built in 1927 and appear almost identical at first glance, though closer inspection shows two main building types, with one pair, forming the focal point of the main eastward view, differing slightly. Each pair features sweeping roofs with central chimney stacks, verandas, gables (some hipped), and, in some cases, hipped-roof dormers. The former Memorial Hall, set prominently along the western boundary, is now leased to the Evangelical Church and is designed in a restrained Neo-Georgian style.
- 11.6 Both the North Memorial Homes and the Framework Knitters Cottages sit within attractive grounds, largely laid to lawn and complemented by flower and shrub beds. In the Framework Knitters site, most mature trees are positioned along the boundaries, with the notable exception of the Canadian Oak behind the main gate. At the North Memorial Homes, trees are especially concentrated along the western

edge and the eastern and southern boundaries, with additional specimens placed strategically within the gardens.

- 11.7 Cars are limited to the area in front of the Evangelical Church within the North Memorial Homes site, allowing most of the gardens to remain free of vehicles since all houses have rear access lanes. At the Framework Knitters site, vehicles can circulate around the edge of the gardens, but the parking area is well screened, so cars seldom disrupt the attractive setting of the cottages. Streetlighting on the Knitters site uses traditional lantern-style fittings that suit the surroundings, while the modern lights at the North Memorial Homes are painted dark green and remain unobtrusive.
- 11.8 All of the North Memorial Homes are Locally Listed Buildings, as are the Framework Knitters properties constructed before 1925. Tree Preservation Orders also apply within the Conservation Area.

Protection of Open Spaces

- 11.9 The open, unenclosed layout of both the Framework Knitters Homes and the North Memorial Homes is a defining aspect of the Conservation Area's character. This openness should be preserved, and any development that would erode or alter it would be unacceptable.

The Design of New Buildings

- 11.10 Very few sites within the Conservation Area offer development potential, and the Council aims to safeguard its spacious, open-plan character. For any new development to be acceptable, its design must respect the Conservation Area's character and appearance by:
- being of a mass, form, and scale appropriate to neighbouring residential properties (single storey for the Framework Knitters Homes and two storey for the North Memorial Homes);
 - following established building lines where they exist;
 - incorporating varied roof forms that contribute to an interesting skyline silhouette;
 - using materials that either reflect those of the area's traditional buildings or provide a high-quality, distinctive contrast.
 - responding to prevalent architectural details such as bay windows, window and door surrounds, and decorative eaves, and acknowledging differences in detailing between terraces where development spans more than one street.
 - creating positive street corners with active frontages on all elevations.
 - including a Design Statement within any planning application explaining the design rationale.
- 11.11 Sensitive infill development will be allowed, as long as it would not undermine the spacious, open-plan character of both sites.
- 11.12 High energy-efficiency standards will be encouraged in new buildings, and opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation may be explored. Any such

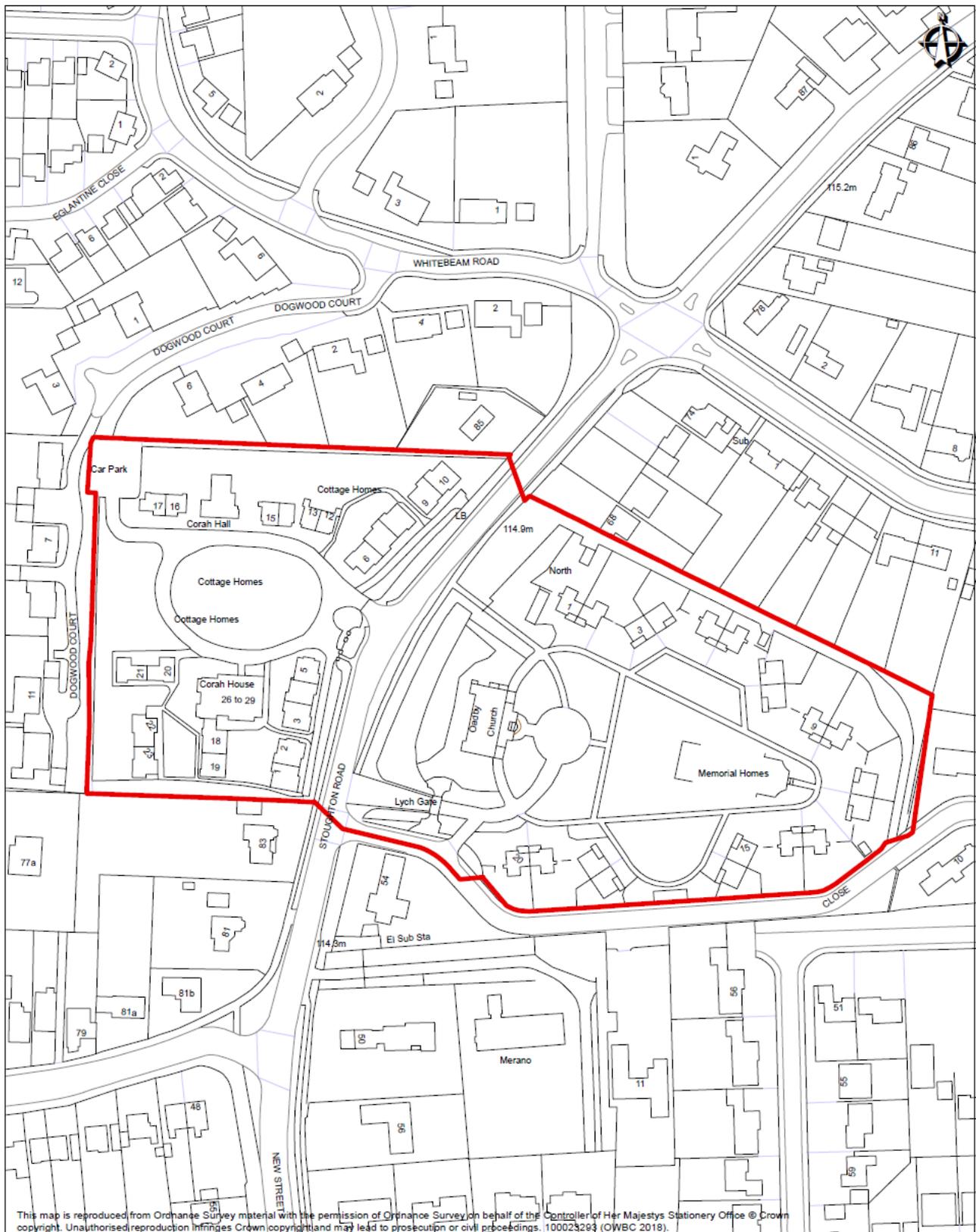
measures must, however, be carefully assessed to ensure they do not harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Enhancement Opportunities

- 11.13 Both sites within the Conservation Area are highly attractive, so the priority is to manage them in a way that preserves their essential character. Maintenance, repair, and sensitive enhancement should take precedence over redevelopment.
- 11.14 Some of the paths within the Framework Knitters site have modern black-top surfacing that gives them a rather urban appearance. While a smooth finish is essential, bonding aggregate or gravel into the tarmac would soften their look while still providing a safe, even surface. This approach has recently been used at the North Memorial Homes, where it has greatly improved the appearance of the paving and is far more in keeping with the setting.
- 11.15 The street lighting at the North Memorial Homes could be improved. Although the columns are painted dark green and remain generally unobtrusive, their modern design is out of keeping with the area's character. Replacing them with a more traditional style would be more appropriate.

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NORTH MEMORIAL / FRAMEWORK KNITTERS CONSERVATION AREA



12. Oadby Court Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 12.1 The Oadby Court Conservation Area was first designated in 1997.

Overview of the Area

- 12.2 Oadby Court is a small Conservation Area that includes a large Victorian house and part of its original extensive grounds, on which five Modern Movement–style houses were built in 1933.
- 12.3 The 1930s houses, which give the Conservation Area its name, are the most prominent buildings and, despite substantial extensions and alterations, still retain their cubic forms and white rendered walls. A number of impressive, mature trees surround the original Victorian house, which served as an office for many years and has since been converted into residential apartments. These trees make a significant contribution to the area’s amenity and enhance the setting of both the Victorian house and the 1930s properties. A small number of similarly mature trees also remain within the gardens of Oadby Court, surviving as remnants of the tree screen that once enclosed the south-eastern corner of the Victorian property’s extensive grounds.
- 12.4 The Oadby Court houses have lost some of their original uniform character. Although enough remains for them to still be understood as a coherent group, it is important that future alterations help to restore this character rather than diminish it further.
- 12.5 The Victorian house, originally built as Oadby Hill and now known as Brook’s House, is an attractive mid-nineteenth-century villa that has remained largely unaltered externally. Its setting, however, has been significantly reduced by the creation of Oadby Hill Drive, Granville Avenue, and several other twentieth-century residential streets on land to the northeast. Portions of the original tree belts to the east and west survive, helping to screen the house from the busy A6 and the newer surrounding development. Although much of the remaining garden has been converted to car parking, this still provides the building with a degree of space around it.
- 12.6 Oadby Court is therefore a small enclave, sheltered by mature trees and partly by the verge and planting that remained after the road was realigned in the late twentieth century.

Alterations and Extensions of Oadby Court Houses

- 12.7 Although the Oadby Court houses are Locally Listed, all have undergone some degree of alteration or extension. Even so, they still retain a shared character, largely due to their angular forms and white rendered walls. While the original windows have been replaced with modern versions, these continue to reflect the 1930s horizontal emphasis and provide a good approximation of the original Crittall patterns. Going forward, it is important to ensure that these window styles are preserved and that the render remains white, helping to maintain both the individual

and collective character of the buildings. The Borough Council will therefore consider using Article 4 Directions to control:

- Repainting the external walls of the houses; and
- Replacement of windows and doors.

12.8 Extensions to the Oadby Court houses will be supported, provided they comply with all other relevant planning policies and meet the following criteria:

- they maintain or reinstate the shared character of the group;
- they respect the original houses' angular form, proportions, materials, and detailing; and
- they preserve or enhance the setting and do not harm any significant trees or hedges.

Alterations and Extension of Brook's House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.9 Brook's House is a Locally Listed Building, and any alteration that materially changes its external appearance requires Planning Permission. Proposals that would remove original architectural features will be opposed unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the feature is beyond repair or that its removal or alteration would provide a long-term benefit to the building.

12.10 Extensions to Brook House will be supported, provided they comply with all other relevant planning policies and meet the following criteria:

- they do not harm any significant elevations of the building;
- they do not remove important architectural features or disrupt the proportions of the elevation;
- they do not result in the loss, now or in the future, of important trees or landscape features; and
- their design, materials, and detailing match or complement the original building.

Change of use of Brook's House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.11 Brook's House, No. 81 is currently in use as residential apartments, and the change of residential properties to non-residential uses will generally not be permitted.

Development within the Grounds of Brook's House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.12 Development within the grounds of Brook's House will be supported, provided it complies with all other relevant planning policies and meets the following criteria:

- the proposal does not harm the setting of Brook's House or obstruct key views of its principal elevations;
- the design of any new buildings respects or complements Brook's House in scale, massing, form, materials, and detailing;
- Brook's House retains an appropriate setting and amenity space, and any new buildings are given adequate, well-landscaped amenity areas;
- the existing level of car parking is maintained;

- vehicle access is sufficient, or can be improved without affecting the building's setting or requiring the loss of important trees, boundaries, or hedges; and
- no significant trees are lost or inappropriately pruned as a result of the development, any alterations, or the future needs of occupants regarding natural light.

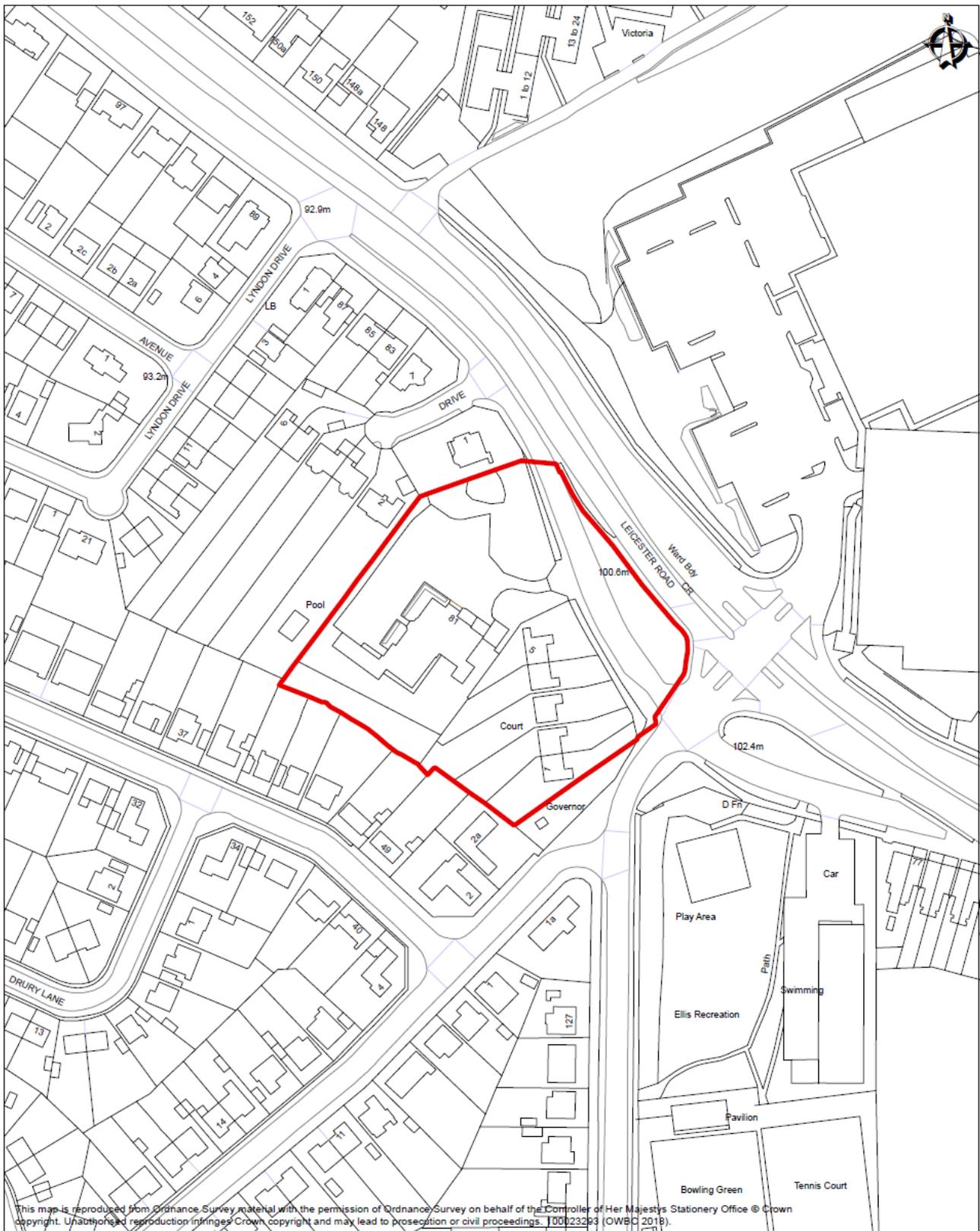
Enhancement Opportunities

12.13 The main opportunity for enhancing the Oadby Court houses lies in achieving greater consistency in the design of extensions and window treatments.

12.14 The setting of Brook's House, No. 81 Leicester Road, would be greatly improved if some of the car parking were broken up with carefully placed trees or soft landscaping.

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OADBY COURT CONSERVATION AREA



13. Oadby Hill Top and Meadowcourt Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 13.1 The Oadby Hill Top and Meadowcourt Conservation Area was first designated in 1987 with the comparatively much smaller area of Meadowcourt designated in the following year.

Overview of the Area

- 13.2 The Oadby Hill Top Conservation Area is a strong example of a district created to accommodate the wealthy industrialists of a rapidly expanding manufacturing town. These individuals sought cleaner air and more generous space, amenities increasingly scarce in the town itself, largely due to industries such as brickmaking, machinery production, hosiery, and footwear. The release of substantial land, primarily following the sale of the Powys Keck estate, made it possible to build large houses on exceptionally spacious plots.
- 13.3 The largest plots were located along Stoughton Drive South, and to a lesser extent on Glebe Road and Manor Road. These streets became the setting for the area's most distinguished houses, many now nationally or locally listed, set within particularly impressive gardens. Designed by leading local architects, most notably the father-and-son team Stockdale and Shirley Harrison, the houses were built in the fashionable Arts and Crafts style. Evolving from the Victorian Gothic Revival, this style embraced elements from various periods of vernacular architecture and offered considerable creative freedom to both architect and client. Many of the earliest and grandest homes incorporated Jacobethan features, enabling Leicester's wealthy industrialists to create their own interpretations of Elizabethan "prodigy" houses as a display of taste, prosperity, and social standing.
- 13.4 On the surrounding streets, there are similarly impressive houses, though the plots are generally smaller unless several were combined. These homes display even greater stylistic variety than the larger properties, incorporating Jacobethan, Vernacular Revival, Art Nouveau, and Neo-Georgian influences, the latter becoming especially fashionable in the 1920s, even for substantial residences such as Southmeade. Together, they create an area of remarkably strong character. After the Second World War, Leicester University began acquiring many of the larger houses for student accommodation, ensuring that these significant buildings, now too large for single households, continue to be used and appreciated. The only discordant elements are the occasional 1960s bungalow or house, and more notably, the large student accommodation blocks.

Change of Use

- 13.5 To residential uses. The conversion of single-family homes into halls of residence, boarding houses, guest houses, flats, or other more intensive residential uses (including hospitals or nursing homes) will only be permitted where all other relevant planning policies are met and it can be demonstrated that:

- the amenity of neighbouring residents will not be significantly harmed;
- adequate car and cycle parking, along with refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view;
- existing vehicle access points are sufficient, or new appropriately sized accesses can be created without detracting from the building's setting or requiring the removal of important trees, boundaries, or hedges;
- car parking can be accommodated without extensive areas of hard surfacing;
- the appearance of the dwelling can be maintained without the need for intrusive extensions or alterations;
- the building's setting will be preserved, with suitable arrangements in place for the upkeep of gardens, trees, and hedges;
- no important trees will be removed or inappropriately pruned as a result of the change of use, any alterations, or the likely future needs of occupants regarding natural light;
- any signage will respect the residential character of the area and will not be illuminated; and
- the proposal will not lead to a significant increase in traffic generation or on-street parking.

13.6 Change of Use to Non-Residential Use. There will be a general presumption against converting existing family homes to non-residential uses. Any proposal for such a change must comply with all relevant policies set out in the Council's Local Plan.

Subdivision of Plots

13.7 A defining feature of much of the area is the presence of substantial historic buildings set within generous plots. Any proposals for plot subdivision, infill development, backland or tandem schemes, or the loss of open space will be assessed individually and must comply with all relevant local and national policies and guidance.

The Design of New Buildings

13.8 Subject to compliance with all other relevant planning policies, any new building will only be considered acceptable if its design respects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of a suitable mass and scale that avoids overdevelopment and does not overpower the traditional 2–2.5-storey houses that define the area;
- adopting a form that sits comfortably alongside the Jacobethan, Vernacular Revival, and Neo-Georgian styles found locally;
- incorporating varied and engaging roof forms that create an interesting silhouette;
- using materials that either reflect those of the area's traditional buildings or provide a high-quality, well-judged contrast;
- drawing inspiration from the distinctive plan forms, bays, oriels, gables, and sweeping roofs characteristic of the area's historic architecture; and
- including a Design and Access Statement with the planning application that clearly explains the design rationale.

Works to Listed Buildings

13.9 The acceptability of any works to Listed Buildings is determined by relevant local and national planning policy. Within the Oadby Hill Top Conservation Area, most Listed Buildings are now used as flats or student accommodation. While these uses have helped ensure the buildings remain well maintained and appreciated, the need to adapt them to meet evolving legislation can sometimes result in inappropriate, incremental alterations. This section therefore provides additional guidance to help manage such changes appropriately.

General.

- Before proposing any work to a historic building, applicants must have a thorough understanding of how the changes would affect its historic fabric;
- For complex buildings or major proposals, a Conservation Plan or Statement of Significance should be used to identify the key features of the building, its group value, and its setting; and
- Applications to alter a Listed Building must include a Design and Access Statement explaining the need for the changes, the alternative options considered, and why the proposed works represent the least harmful approach to the building's special interest.

Fire precaution works.

- Ensure that any internal subdivision of the building does not harm principal rooms, staircases, corridors, or hallways;
- Explore ways to upgrade historic doors and glazing—such as using intumescent products—rather than replacing them;
- Where floor insulation is required, install it from above to avoid damaging plaster ceilings;
- Position alarms, detectors, and similar equipment as discreetly as possible, ideally near existing features like light fittings;
- Avoid fixing equipment to panelling, and ensure cable routes do not cut across cornices, dados, panelling, or open wall surfaces; and
- Consider external fire escapes only as a last resort, and place them away from prominent elevations and key architectural features.

Kitchens and bathrooms.

- Avoid principal elevations if doing so would require external soil-vent pipes, vents, or obscured glazing;
- Keep installations out of sensitive rooms with decorative plasterwork or panelling, and do not position them above such spaces;
- Group services vertically wherever possible to minimise the length and visibility of pipe runs; and
- Route vents through redundant chimney flues when feasible.

Disabled access.

- Fully understand the issues before proposing any modifications, and carry out an access audit for larger buildings or groups of buildings;

- Maintain the symmetry of façades when designing ramps;
- Use materials that are appropriate to the building and its setting; and
- Position lifts away from principal rooms and main staircases.

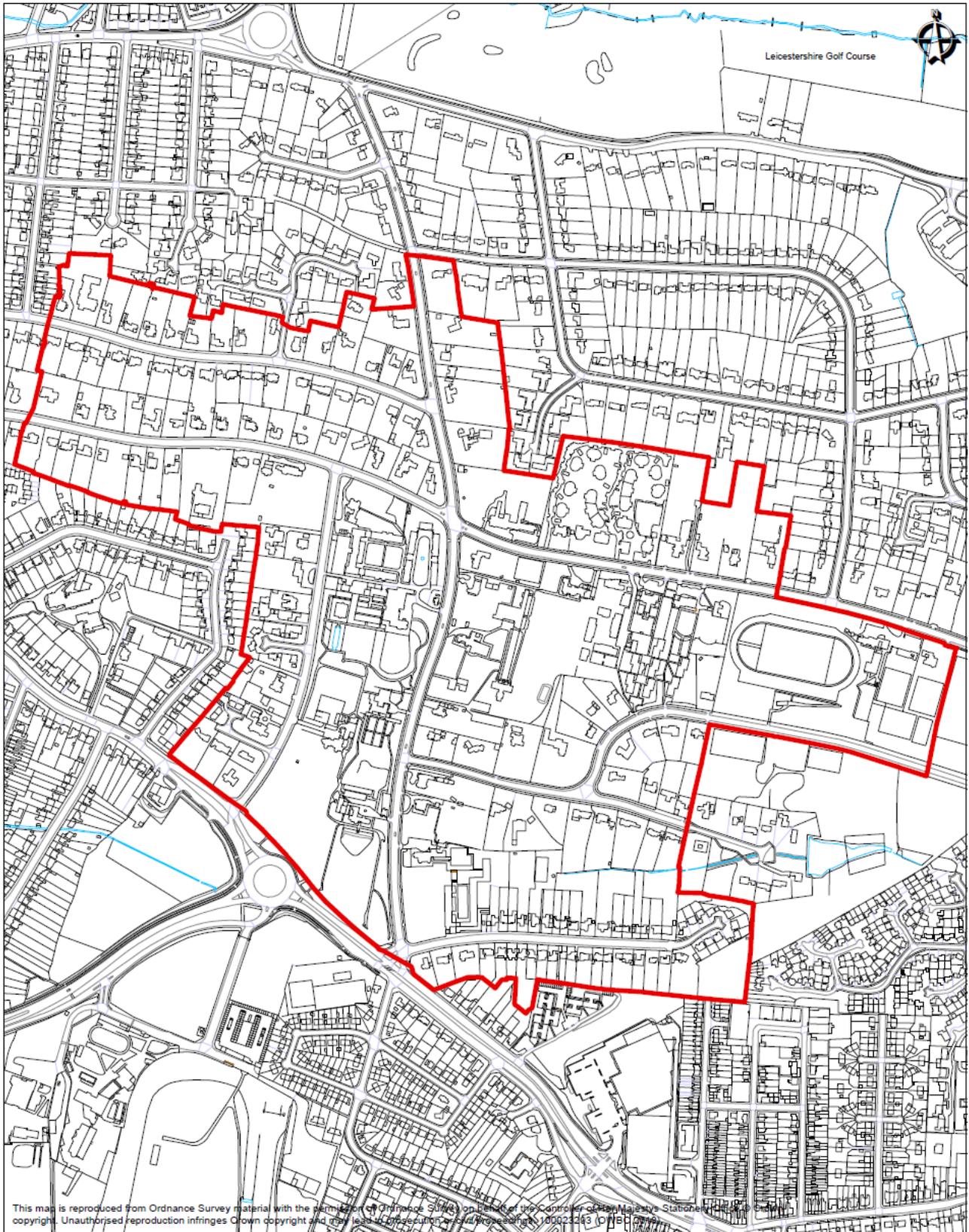
Trees and Landscaping

- 13.10 Trees. All trees within the Conservation Area already benefit from a level of protection, as owners must give the Borough Council six weeks' notice before carrying out any works to them.
- 13.11 Development that involves felling trees, carrying out major pruning (either now or in the foreseeable future), or creating a risk of root damage will only be permitted where clear public benefits can be demonstrated. Where tree removal is approved, replacement planting will be required wherever possible, and planning conditions will be used to secure the replanting and ongoing maintenance of new trees.
- 13.12 New buildings will not be permitted close to important trees unless it can be clearly demonstrated that their presence will not cause any harm to the tree.
- 13.13 Landscaping. Landscaping schemes will be required to accompany proposals for new development where they are appropriate to the character of the scheme. Planning permissions will include conditions to ensure that approved landscaping is fully implemented.
- 13.14 Open Spaces. Development on major areas of public or private open space will only be supported where clear and demonstrable public benefits can be shown, and where there are no significant adverse effects on ecological habitats.

Enhancement Opportunities

- 13.15 The potential use of 'Article 4 Directions' may be considered to help manage and control incremental alterations to Locally Listed Buildings.
- 13.16 Repair and restoration of greenhouses, such as those located to the rear of Highgrove.
- 13.17 Improved screening to the rear of university properties, particularly behind Gilbert Murray Hall.
- 13.18 Improved screening of Beaumont Hall from the Botanic Gardens, as well as from Knighton Grange Road and Aigburth.
- 13.19 Where the gardens of historic buildings have been hard-surfaced for parking, the resulting expanses of tarmac, which detract from their character, could be softened and broken up through appropriate planting.
- 13.20 Enhance the contribution that the Botanic Gardens make to the surrounding area.

OADBY HILLTOP / MEADOWCOURT CONSERVATION AREA



14. South Wigston Conservation Area Guidance

Background

14.1 South Wigston Conservation Area was first designated in 1989.

Overview of the Area

- 14.2 South Wigston was developed in the late nineteenth century by the owner of a major brickworks. Its creation followed the tradition of Victorian philanthropists who established 'model' towns such as New Lanark and Saltaire, a movement later continued in places like Bournville and Port Sunlight. However, unlike most of these settlements, South Wigston was not intended solely to house brickyard workers. From the outset, it also incorporated a range of commercial premises, particularly those linked to the clothing industry.
- 14.3 Like other model settlements such as Saltaire, the town is largely arranged on a grid, with most housing built as terraces. The majority of homes follow a similar pattern, although some were constructed on a larger scale and included front gardens. A small number of bigger houses were built on Orange Street, Blaby Road (before many were converted to shops), and especially Saffron Road to accommodate wealthier residents. However, the distinction between different sizes and standards of housing for different social groups is less pronounced here than in many other model towns.
- 14.4 Although the terraces and groups of houses vary in their detailing, the area as a whole has a very strong and distinctive character. Most traditional buildings are constructed in red brick, ranging in tone from orange to purple, with occasional use of gault brick either for entire façades or as decorative detailing. The settlement expanded rapidly and was largely complete by 1913, after which development mainly consisted of local authority housing on the remaining undeveloped plots, some built as terraces, others in more typical semi-detached forms.
- 14.5 Today, South Wigston retains much of its strong character despite more recent development and alterations to many houses. Some industrial activities have reduced or ceased altogether, and the buildings they left behind now offer opportunities for enhancing the area.

Development of Large / Sensitive Sites

- 14.6 The following sites offer long-term opportunities to enhance the character of the Conservation Area:
- Station Street – Bus garage. Allocated for residential development in the 2019 adopted Local Plan. The Council also issued a Local Development Order for the site, although this has since expired.
 - Lower Canal Street/Park Road. An area containing large industrial buildings alongside residential properties, presenting potential for redevelopment for housing.

- Countesthorpe Road – Alpha House. A former office block occupying a site that fronts both Orange Street and Countesthorpe Road. The site offers scope for redevelopment with a building that respects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Countesthorpe Road – tyre depot. (southern end of Countesthorpe Road): A small site currently used as a car park with a single-storey building, associated with car spares sales in the adjoining premises. There is potential for redevelopment for residential use.

The Design of New Buildings

14.7 To be acceptable, the design of any new building must respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of a suitable mass and scale so that it does not dominate the small two-storey residential terraces and, in mixed commercial–residential streets, maintaining an appropriate relationship between different building sizes;
- adopting a form that sits comfortably alongside the area’s mix of residential, industrial, and commercial architectural styles;
- respecting established building lines where these are clearly defined;
- incorporating varied and engaging roof forms that contribute positively to the skyline;
- using materials that either reflect those found on traditional buildings in the area or provide a high-quality, well-considered contrast;
- responding to prevalent architectural details, such as bay windows, window and door surrounds, and decorative eaves, and acknowledging differences in detailing between terraces where a development spans more than one street;
- creating strong and active street corners with frontages that engage all elevations; and
- including a Design and Access Statement within any planning application to explain the design rationale.

14.8 Appropriate infill development will be supported, provided it complies with all other relevant planning policies and its design responds sensitively to the prevailing character and quality of the surrounding townscape. In particular, such development should take account of:

- established building and boundary lines, as well as the local scale of development;
- prevailing overall heights, storey heights, and the massing of neighbouring buildings;
- characteristic frontage or plot widths;
- the roof profiles and silhouettes of adjoining properties;
- the colour, type, source, and texture of facing, roofing, and paving materials;
- distinctive architectural forms or detailing typical of the immediate area;
- average dwelling sizes and net residential densities; and
- any set-piece or otherwise unified architectural compositions or significant building groups.

Change of Use

- 14.9 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings that contribute positively to the townscape will be actively encouraged, provided that:
- the building's appearance can be retained without requiring unsympathetic extensions or alterations;
 - where a property was originally built as a shop and elements of an original or appropriate shopfront survive, these features are retained unless they are beyond repair;
 - the amenity of neighbouring residents is not significantly affected;
 - adequate car and cycle parking, as well as refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view;
 - existing vehicle access points are sufficient, or new appropriately sized accesses can be created without harming the area's townscape quality, the building's setting, or any important trees or boundaries; and
 - any significant architectural details that have been lost, altered, or fallen into disrepair are reinstated.
- 14.10 There is a general presumption to retain retail uses along Blaby Road. However, it is recognised that shopping patterns in the area are changing. Many properties, particularly those at the western end and the terrace featuring Gothic detailing, were originally built as houses and later converted to shops. Where retail use is no longer commercially viable, and subject to compliance with all relevant planning policies, conversion back to residential use will be supported when:
- the architectural character and detailing of the original houses are reinstated;
 - front gardens and appropriate boundary treatments are restored;
 - adequate car and cycle parking, along with refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view; and
 - the living accommodation meets the technical housing standards set out in Policy 11 of the Local Plan and provides an acceptable level of amenity for future occupants.
- 14.11 Where retail use remains viable only on the ground floor, 'Living over the Shop' will be actively encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and introduce activity throughout the day. Such proposals will be supported provided that:
- suitable noise insulation can be installed between the living accommodation and the shop below;
 - where a separate entrance is required, it can be created without harming the character of the building or any original or appropriately designed shopfront; and
 - adequate waste storage and car and cycle parking can be provided for residents.
- 14.12 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential purposes will generally not be permitted.
- 14.13 Planning permission for proposals such as restaurants, cafés, drinking establishments, or hot food takeaways, subject to compliance with all other relevant

planning policies, will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity or local environmental quality arising from odours, noise, increased late-night activity and disturbance, or additional parking and traffic.

14.14 The subdivision of a single residential property into multiple dwellings, subject to compliance with all other relevant planning policies, will only be permitted where:

- the building's appearance can be retained without requiring unsympathetic extensions or alterations;
- the amenity of neighbouring residents is not significantly harmed;
- satisfactory car and cycle parking, along with refuse storage, can be accommodated and appropriately screened;
- the property's location and surrounding land uses do not compromise the quality of residential amenity for future occupants;
- the resulting living accommodation is of an acceptable standard;
- any required separate entrances are safe, adequate, and can be provided without detracting from the building's character; and
- appropriate noise insulation can be installed between dwellings.

Shopfronts, Signage, Blinds and Security Measures

14.15 The provision of shops was a key feature of South Wigston's original development. Blaby Road emerged as the main shopping street, but shops were also located at the ends of many residential streets to both the north and south. While some historic shopfronts remain, many others have been lost or altered through unsympathetic modern changes or poorly designed signage.

14.16 The Council is committed to improving the quality of shopfronts within the Conservation Area and will apply the following guidance to support this aim. Restoring original shopfronts in South Wigston is often straightforward, as many were designed consistently within terraces and good photographic records of the area still exist.

14.17 Shopfronts. Several high-quality late nineteenth and early twentieth-century shopfronts still survive in South Wigston. Planning permission will not be granted for their removal, or for the removal of any of their components, unless they are genuinely beyond repair.

14.18 Where elements of an original shopfront remain, they should be retained and used as the foundation for restoring the original frontage or incorporated into a suitably designed new shopfront. The removal of original features will only be permitted where they are completely decayed or cannot be successfully integrated into a new design.

14.19 The replacement of inappropriate shopfronts will be encouraged, provided the new design respects the character of the building, any adjoining properties within a group or terrace, and the wider area. To be acceptable, new shopfronts should:

- have a clear structural logic, with a well-defined framework of pilasters, fascia, and, where appropriate, stallrisers;
- relate to the proportions and character of the original building;

- maintain or enhance accessibility for people with disabilities;
- use appropriate materials;
- avoid spanning the frontage of more than one building; and
- include a suitably designed separate entrance where upper-floor living accommodation is proposed.

14.20 Where a change of use is proposed to convert an original shop back into residential accommodation, any surviving elements of an original or otherwise appropriate shopfront must be retained unless they are genuinely beyond repair.

14.21 Signage. Several buildings in South Wigston have been visually harmed by inappropriate or poorly designed signage. To be acceptable, new signage must:

- avoid obscuring, overwhelming, or damaging the building's proportions or any of its architectural features.
- use lettering of a suitable size, material, and font for the building.
- be clear and simple to read, avoiding garish or unsuitable colours.
- include no more than one well-designed and appropriately positioned hanging sign for each shop frontage.

14.22 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most types of illuminated signage within the Conservation Area. Internally illuminated 'box' signs, which are visually intrusive, will not be permitted. To be acceptable, illuminated signs must:

- use a discreet light source that does not disrupt the proportions of the building or frontage, nor harm any architectural features.
- avoid causing any adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residential properties.
- maintain a subdued and consistent level of illumination.

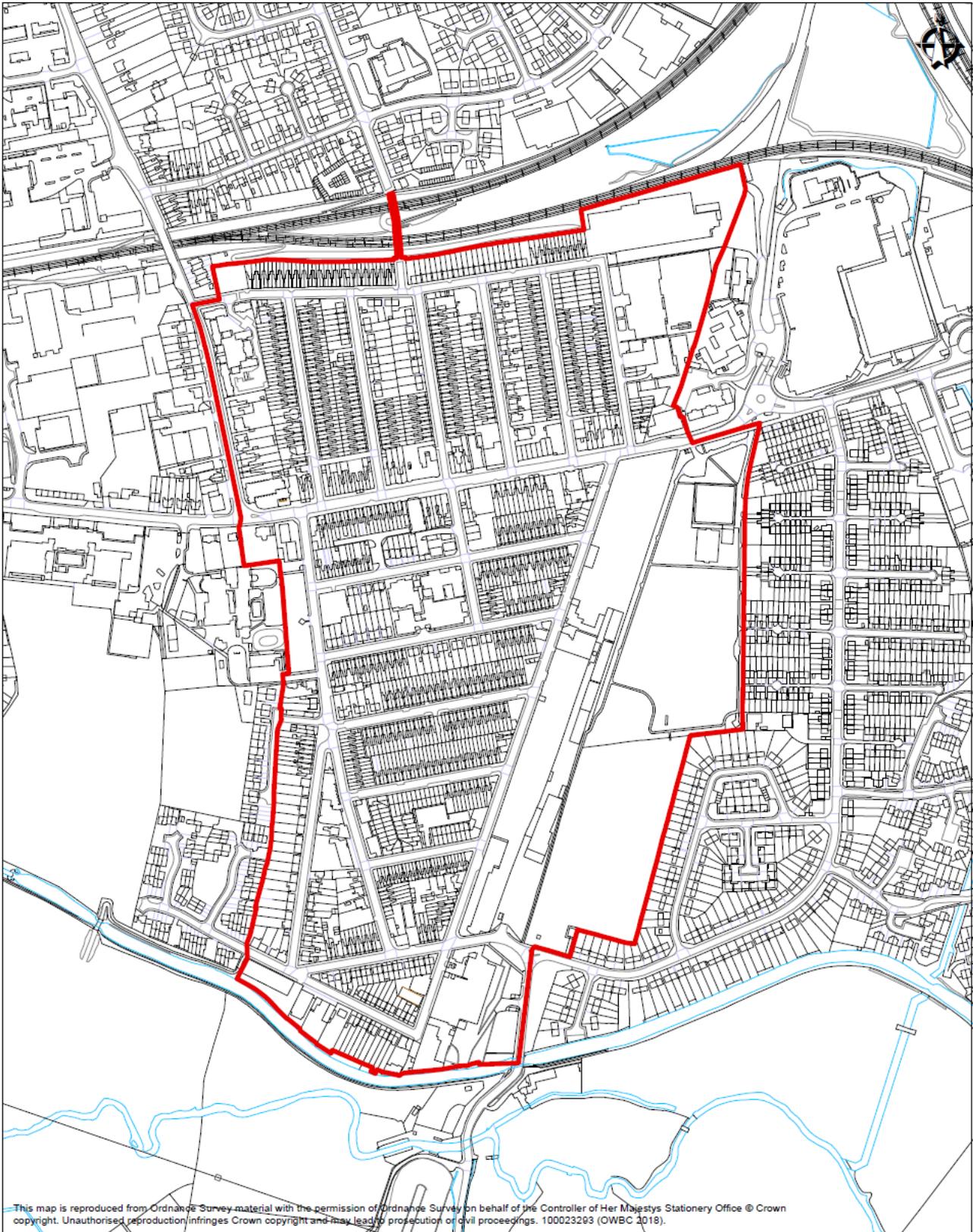
14.23 Blinds and Canopies. Blinds and canopies will only be permitted within the Conservation Area where there is historical precedent and an existing blind box remains, and where they can be installed without harming the character of the building or shopfront, while relating appropriately to the building's existing features and detailing.

14.24 Shopfront Security. When designing a new shopfront, the likely security needs of the occupier should be considered from the outset. It is far easier to incorporate appropriate security measures into a new design than to add them later to an existing frontage.

14.25 Solid external shutters will only be permitted within the Conservation Area where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are the sole viable security option necessary for the shopkeeper to protect their livelihood.

14.26 External shutters, whether solid or grille-type, will only be permitted where they respect the proportions and features of the shopfront, do not obscure the pilasters or fascia, and are finished in an appropriate colour and material.

SOUTH WIGSTON CONSERVATION AREA



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15. Spa Lane Conservation Area Guidance

Background

15.1 Spa Lane Conservation Area was first designated in 1989.

Overview of the Area

- 15.2 This part of Wigston forms the original northern core of Wigston Magna village. Although only St Wistan's Church, albeit rebuilt, survives from the village's earliest origins, the area still contains a mix of residential and industrial uses that reflect a later stage in the village's development and provide a valuable record of Wigston's working past. A notable example of this industrial heritage is the former Broughton's Hosiery Factory, now The Kings Centre, which retains many original features, including a stone 'Bulls Head' above one of its entrances.
- 15.3 The area is separated from the centre of the modern borough by Bull Head Street, a dual-carriageway A-road. This wide stretch of fast-moving traffic forms a significant physical barrier and has harmed the setting of the few remaining traditional buildings along the street by removing their original village context.
- 15.4 There are several vacant or unsightly sites within the Conservation Area that currently detract from its overall character. However, these locations also present opportunities for appropriate, well-designed development in the future.

Development of Vacant Sites

- 15.5 The vacant land within the Conservation Area creates gaps that detract from its overall appearance. It is essential that any proposed development on these sites is of high quality, in both design and materials, to ensure that the Conservation Area is visually enhanced by the scheme.
- 15.6 The following sites offer opportunities to enhance the character of the Conservation Area:
- Former Filling Station site, Bull Head Street. Currently operating as a hand car wash and flanked by two residential Locally Listed Buildings (Nos. 20–22 and Spoutewell Cottage, one of Wigston's oldest buildings). This site has strong potential to improve the appearance of Bull Head Street and could be suitable for housing or commercial development.
 - Mowsley End / Spa Lane. Currently occupied by a Kwik Fit garage, various light-industrial buildings, and vacant plots. The site has potential for housing or commercial development, possibly in conjunction with the former Filling Station site. Any Locally Listed Buildings or structures of townscape value should be retained and integrated into new proposals. Development here could significantly enhance the appearance of Mowsley End, Spa Lane, and Bull Head Street. Main vehicular access should be taken from Mowsley End or Spa Lane.

- Ford Dealership, Spa Lane. Currently a workshop, garage, and showroom with surrounding car parking. Redevelopment offers the opportunity to improve the appearance of Spa Lane and the setting of nearby Locally Listed Buildings. The site may be suitable for housing and provides a chance to establish an appropriate building line.

Change of Use

- 15.7 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings of townscape value will be supported where the redevelopment would make a positive contribution to the environment and would not result in an unacceptable loss of the building's historic integrity. Proposals will be encouraged where:
- the building's appearance can be retained without requiring unsympathetic extensions or alterations;
 - the amenity of neighbouring residents is not significantly harmed;
 - adequate car and cycle parking, along with refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view;
 - existing vehicle accesses are sufficient, or suitably sized new accesses can be created without harming the area's townscape quality, the building's setting, or any important trees or boundaries; and
 - any significant lost, altered, or deteriorated architectural details are reinstated.
- 15.8 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential purposes will generally not be permitted.

The Design of New Buildings

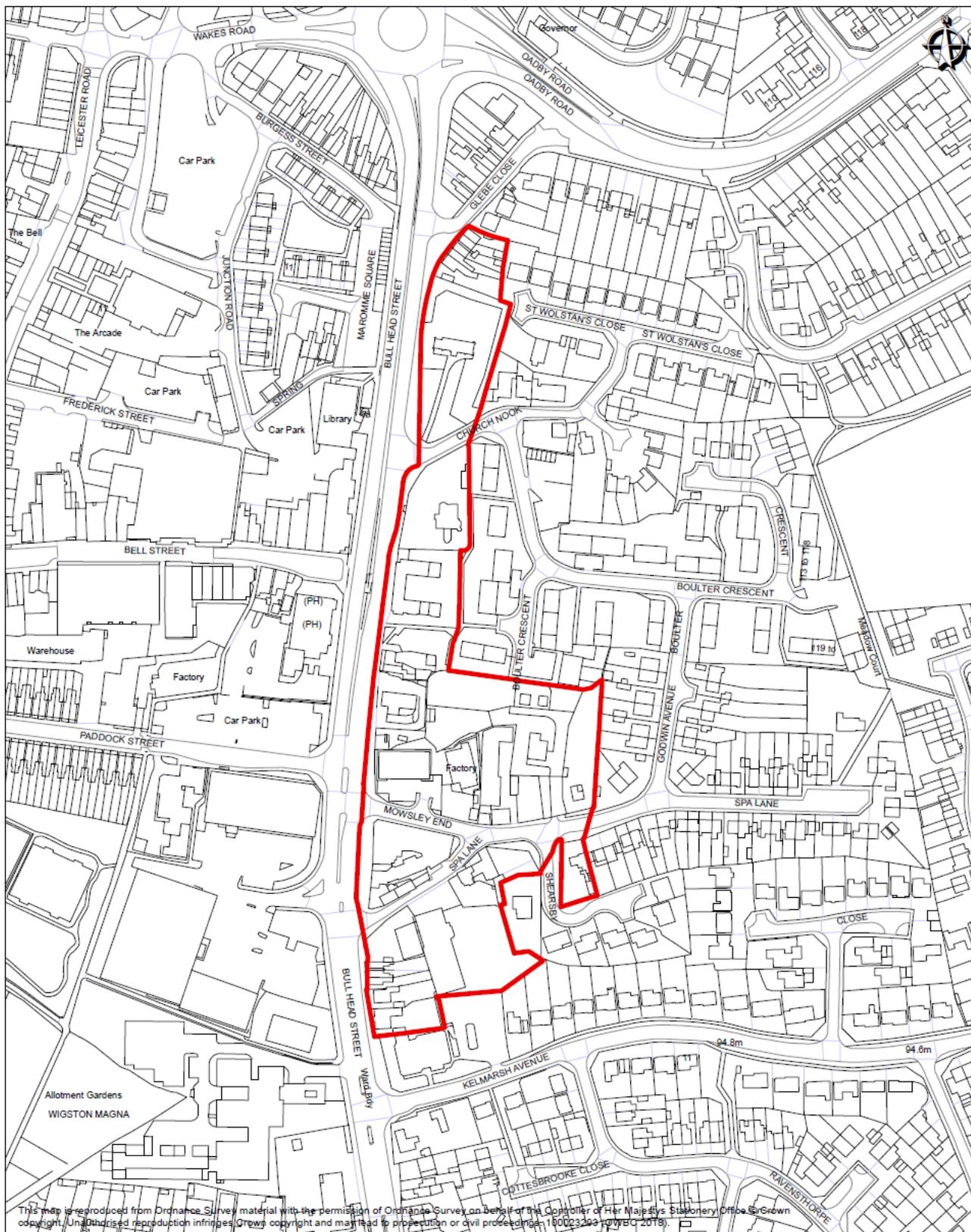
- 15.9 The Spa Lane Conservation Area Appraisal describes the area's 'grain', that is, the way existing buildings relate to the street. It summarises key characteristics such as boundary treatments, building heights and lines, materials, and architectural detailing. Careful consideration of the street in which new development is proposed will help establish appropriate design principles and ensure that new buildings respect the existing character of the Conservation Area.
- 15.10 To be acceptable, the design of any new building must respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:
- being of a suitable mass and scale so it does not dominate the surrounding two-storey residential properties and maintains an appropriate relationship between building sizes;
 - adopting a form that sits comfortably alongside the area's mix of residential, industrial, and commercial building styles;
 - incorporating interesting roof forms that create an engaging silhouette;
 - using materials and detailing that follow the design principles underpinning the building's overall form, either reflecting traditional local characteristics or, where of exceptionally high quality, providing a successful contemporary contrast;
 - including a Design and Access Statement with the planning application that explains the design rationale;
 - responding appropriately to variations in detailing where a development spans more than one street; and

- creating positive street corners with active frontages on all elevations.

Enhancement Opportunities

- 15.11 The vacant land along Spa Lane (to the east of No. 6A Spa Lane) creates an unattractive gap that detracts from the overall appearance of the Conservation Area. It is essential that any future development on this site is of high quality, in both design and materials, to ensure the scheme enhances the visual character of the Conservation Area.
- 15.12 The unattractive car parking area in front of the Kwik Fit garage, along with the adjacent gravelled space, undermines the character of the Conservation Area. Introducing appropriate screening or enhanced landscaping would help improve the setting and overall appearance of the area.
- 15.13 Similarly, the Ford dealership on Spa Lane and the hand car wash on Bull Head Street have a negative visual impact on the Conservation Area. Relocating these uses to more suitable sites would be the most effective long-term solution. However, a well-designed landscaping scheme could help soften the visual impact of the vehicles, utilitarian buildings, and extensive signage.
- 15.14 The Council may use 'Article 4 Directions' to help retain traditional external detailing on non-listed buildings within the Conservation Area, where such features still survive.

SPA LANE CONSERVATION AREA



16. The Lanes Conservation Area Guidance

Background

16.1 The Lanes Conservation Area was first designated in 1981.

Overview of the Area

- 16.2 'The Lanes' Conservation Area is defined by the striking contrast between the secluded green space of Manchester Gardens (the allotments) and the surrounding urban development.
- 16.3 The Lanes themselves are a reminder of the village's early origins and likely once linked the two cores of the original settlement. Today, they provide a series of quiet, traffic-free routes at the heart of an urban area, offering a valuable sense of calm and creating the feeling of a secluded backwater within the town centre.
- 16.4 The continued presence of Manchester Gardens at the heart of 'The Lanes' provides significant value as an open green space within such an urban setting. Today, it serves as a vital 'green lung', offering relief from the surrounding streets' dense built frontage, broken only by the Peace Memorial Park.
- 16.5 The four perimeter streets of the rectangular village centre, Long Street to the west, Bull Head Street to the east, Bell Street to the north, and Moat Street to the south, are characterised by their predominantly commercial nature, with small clusters of residential properties. In contrast, the streets extending west from this central rectangle are largely made up of nineteenth-century housing. The northern and eastern edges of the built frontage facing the central green space are mainly commercial buildings and form part of the core of modern Wigston Magna.
- 16.6 The northern and eastern sides of the built frontage facing Manchester Gardens are largely made up of commercial buildings and form part of the centre of modern Wigston Magna. A significant portion of the Conservation Area is also occupied by the expansive mid-twentieth-century concrete Police and Fire Stations, along with large twentieth-century superstores.
- 16.7 The southern and western sides of the built frontage facing the central green space are far more residential in character, featuring numerous terraces with subtle variations in their architectural detailing.

Protection of Open Space

- 16.8 Wigston is unusual in having such an intricate network of footpaths. These Lanes link across the town centre, from Junction Road to the Little Hill Estate, providing a series of quiet, traffic-free routes. Improvements to enhance these paths will be carried out as opportunities arise.
- The Council will protect and enhance the Lanes footpath network and will use development control powers to ensure that the character and appearance of the area are not harmed by unsympathetic development on adjoining land.

- 16.9 The Black Pad, located at the western edge of the Conservation Area outside 'The Lanes', links Central Avenue to Bushloe End. This public footpath has an informal, semi-rural character similar to that of the Lanes, largely due to the vegetation that lines it. It is therefore important that this key vegetation is retained and properly maintained.
- The Council will work with statutory undertakers and the Highways Authority to ensure that vegetation is preserved during any works along the Black Pad and reinstated where necessary. Where suitable, sustainable drainage methods and materials should be used, provided they do not adversely affect the historic environment.
- 16.10 The informal character of the Lanes is central to the quiet atmosphere of this green space in the heart of the town centre. As they are well used by the local community, it is important that these footpaths are properly maintained and surfaced in an appropriate manner.
- The Council will work with the Highways Authority and statutory undertakers to ensure the Lanes are adequately maintained and that suitable surfacing materials are used. Where appropriate, sustainable drainage methods and materials should be incorporated, provided they do not have a negative visual impact on the historic environment.
- 16.11 The continued presence of Manchester Gardens as an open space at the heart of the Conservation Area is highly valuable, helping to create a sense of a quiet retreat close to the town centre.
- The Council will oppose any proposals for development within Manchester Garden
- 16.12 Although Manchester Gardens is surrounded by built development, except along the Chapel Lane frontage where it adjoins the Memorial Park, most of the surrounding buildings are set back from its boundary and turn their backs to it. This arrangement contributes to the strong sense of openness experienced by those using the Lanes.
- The special character of Manchester Gardens will be a material consideration when the Council assesses planning applications on adjacent land within the Conservation Area.

Change of Use

- 16.13 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings with townscape value will be supported where it would make a positive contribution to the environment and where the building's historic integrity would not be unacceptably compromised. Proposals will be encouraged provided that:
- the building's appearance can be retained without requiring intrusive extensions or alterations;

- where a property was originally built as a shop and elements of an original or appropriate shopfront survive, these features are retained unless they are entirely beyond repair;
- the amenity of neighbouring residents is not significantly affected;
- adequate car and cycle parking, as well as refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view;
- existing vehicle access points are sufficient, or new appropriately sized accesses can be created without harming the area's townscape quality, the building's setting, or any important trees or boundaries; and
- any significant architectural details that have been lost, altered, or fallen into disrepair are restored.

16.14 Where retail uses remain viable only on the ground floor, 'Living over the Shop' will be actively encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and introduce activity at different times of day. Such proposals will be supported provided that:

- suitable noise insulation can be installed between the living accommodation and the shop below.
- where separate access to the accommodation is required, an appropriate entrance can be created without harming the character of the building or any original or well-designed shopfront.
- adequate waste storage, as well as car and cycle parking, can be provided for occupants.

16.15 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential purposes will generally not be permitted.

16.16 Planning permission for uses such as restaurants and cafés, drinking establishments, or hot food takeaways will only be granted, subject to compliance with all other relevant planning policies, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity or local environmental quality from smells, noise, late-night activity, disturbance, or increased parking and traffic. Adequate parking must form part of the overall design, and any unsightly plant, such as air-conditioning units, ducting, or flues, should be appropriately screened.

The Design of New Buildings

16.17 To be acceptable, the design of any new building must respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of a suitable mass and scale so that it does not dominate the predominantly two-storey residential properties and, in mixed commercial-residential streets, maintains an appropriate relationship between different building scales;
- adopting a form that fits comfortably alongside the area's mix of residential, industrial, and commercial building styles;
- respecting any established building lines;
- incorporating roof forms that create visual interest and contribute to an attractive silhouette;
- using materials that either reflect those found on traditional buildings in the area or provide a high-quality, well-considered contrast;

- including a Design and Access Statement within the planning application that explains the design rationale; and
- respecting the prevailing architectural detailing within the Conservation Area.

Alterations and Extensions

16.18 Rear Extensions. Rear extensions are the most common type of addition, as they usually offer the greatest flexibility and privacy. However, care must be taken to ensure that any impact on neighbouring properties is minimised. This is especially important for the terraces along Central Avenue, where rear extensions are visible from public footpaths. In addition to all other relevant policy and guidance:

- an extension should not dominate a neighbour's house or garden, nor significantly reduce their light;
- two-storey extensions on shared boundaries are unlikely to be supported;
- the eaves of a rear extension should be kept as low as possible, and particular attention should be given to ensuring the new roof ridge does not conflict with the existing one; and
- the extension should not be visible from the front of the building.

16.19 Roof Extensions. Roof extensions are a popular way to enlarge a home, but they can present significant challenges if the character of the property is to be preserved. On terraces and groups of similar houses, such as those along Central Avenue and Paddock Street, they can be particularly intrusive due to the uniformity of the buildings, so their impact on the street scene must be carefully considered.

- roof extensions should relate well to the existing roof form and complement the character of both the property and the wider area;
- ridgelines and chimneystacks are often key elements of a building's character and should not be altered unless it can be clearly demonstrated that doing so would create a positive feature;
- the design must address any potential overlooking;
- the size and number of dormer windows should be kept to a minimum, and they should generally not be placed on the front elevation (or the elevation most visible from the public realm) unless this is appropriate to the building's design or history.
- window styles should be guided by the design, proportions, and arrangement of the building's existing windows; and
- roof lights should be traditional 'Conservation' types that sit flush with the roof slope, and they should be avoided on the front roof plane, especially on more formal buildings.

Shopfronts, Signage, Blinds and Security Measures

16.20 Parts of Leicester Road and the northern end of Long Street lie within Wigston's primary shopping area.

16.21 Although many of the retail units in these shopping areas occupy nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century buildings, most have lost their traditional shopfronts and were significantly altered during the later twentieth century. The following guidance is intended to enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area by setting out

detailed design principles to help ensure that new and refurbished shopfronts are appropriate to their context.

16.22 Shopfronts. Number 2 Leicester Road, a Locally Listed Building, retains a high-quality 1940s shopfront. Planning permission will not be granted for its removal or for the removal of any part of it.

16.23 Where elements of an original shopfront remain, they should be retained and used as the foundation for restoring the original frontage or incorporated into an appropriate new shopfront design. Original features should only be removed if they are entirely beyond repair or cannot be successfully integrated into a new scheme.

16.24 The replacement of inappropriate shopfronts will be supported where the new design respects the character of the building, any adjoining properties within a group or terrace, and the wider area. In addition to meeting all other relevant planning policies, acceptable new designs should:

- have a clear structural logic, with a well-defined framework of pilasters, fascia, and, where appropriate, stall risers;
- relate to the character and proportions of the original building;
- maintain or improve accessibility for people with disabilities;
- use appropriate materials;
- avoid spanning the frontage of more than one building;
- include a suitably designed separate entrance where upper-floor living accommodation is proposed.

16.25 Where a change of use is appropriate and would not harm the character of the area, any surviving elements of a good shopfront should be retained and used in the conversion, unless they are entirely beyond repair.

16.26 Signage. Several buildings in Wigston have been visually harmed by poorly designed or inappropriate signage. In addition to complying with all other relevant planning policies, new signage must:

- avoid obscuring, overwhelming, or damaging the building's proportions or architectural features.
- use lettering of a size, material, and font appropriate to the building.
- be clear and simple, avoiding garish or unsuitable colours.
- include no more than one well-designed and suitably positioned hanging sign per shop frontage.

16.27 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most types of illuminated signage within the Conservation Area. Internally illuminated 'box' signs, which are visually intrusive, will not be permitted. To be acceptable, illuminated signs must:

- use a discreet light source that does not disrupt the proportions of the building or frontage, nor harm any architectural features.
- avoid causing any adverse impact on nearby residential properties.
- maintain a subdued and consistent level of illumination.

- 16.28 Blinds and Canopies. Blinds and canopies will only be permitted within the Conservation Area where there is historical precedent and an existing blind box remains, and only where they can be installed without harming the character of the building or shopfront, while relating appropriately to the building's existing features and detailing.
- 16.29 Shopfront Security. When designing a new shopfront, the likely security needs of the occupier should be considered from the outset. It is far easier to incorporate suitable security measures into a new design than to add them later to an existing frontage.
- 16.30 Solid external shutters will only be permitted in the Conservation Area where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are the sole viable security option necessary for the shopkeeper to maintain their livelihood.
- 16.31 External shutters, whether solid or grille-type, will only be permitted where they respect the proportions and features of the shopfront, do not cover the pilasters or fascia, and are finished in an appropriate colour and material.

Street Furniture

- 16.32 The traditional lampposts found throughout The Lanes are recognised as positive features. Their historic style contributes to the character of the old footpath network while also providing lighting and enhancing safety after dark.
- The Council will encourage the proper maintenance of lampposts within The Lanes. Where a traditional lamppost cannot be repaired, any replacement must be appropriate to the historic character of the area. Likewise, opportunities to remove modern lampposts should be taken, with replacements using traditional designs that reflect the area's history.

Enhancement Opportunities

- 16.33 The two shops at 41–47 Bell Street would benefit from shopfront improvements that are more in keeping with the age and character of the buildings, and the first-floor windows, currently boarded over, should be reinstated. Replacing the heavy metal shutters with a style more appropriate to the Conservation Area would also be an improvement.
- 16.34 Views from Paddock Street into the service yards behind the Bell Street commercial units are unattractive, creating a poor pedestrian environment for those using Long Lane. Providing appropriate screening for these areas would significantly enhance the Conservation Area.
- 16.35 The car parking area to the west of Belvoir House on Paddock Street is unattractive and detracts from the street scene. Redevelopment of the site should be explored, as it has the potential to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Any proposals for redevelopment should refer to Development Control Guidance.

- 16.36 Paddock Street Car Park also detracts from the Conservation Area, and its redevelopment should be considered as a means of enhancing the area's overall character and appearance.
- 16.37 Some forecourts, such as those at the Wigston Conservative Club, the Royal Mail Depot, and Nos. 61 and 65 Long Street, would benefit from improved landscaping, which would enhance both the setting of the buildings and the wider street scene.
- 16.38 The vacant site next to the Working Men's Club should be redeveloped, as it currently detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area. Redevelopment offers an opportunity to enhance the area's character, and any proposals should refer to The Lanes Development Control Guidance.
- 16.39 The quiet backwater and historic character of The Lanes is reinforced by the informal network of footpaths that cross the area. Regular maintenance is needed to ensure they remain well used by the community and retain their traditional character. While the surface must be smooth, bonding aggregate or gravel into the tarmacadam would soften the appearance of the paths while still providing a safe, trip-free finish. Likewise, traditional street furniture that contributes to the area's historic character should be maintained and, where necessary, replaced with matching designs.
- 16.40 The vacant office building and the adjoining former shop site on Long Street currently detract from the surrounding streetscape. The area would benefit from being tidied and redeveloped to make a positive contribution to its setting.
- 16.41 The Borough Council may use 'Article 4 Directions' to preserve traditional external detailing on non-listed buildings within the conservation area, where such features still survive.

17. Implementation and Monitoring of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

- 17.1 The nine Borough designated Conservation Areas within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston play a vital role in protecting local heritage.
- 17.2 Once adopted, the SPD will be applied through the planning process and taken into account when determining development proposals within or adjacent to Conservation Areas. Applicants will also be encouraged to consider opportunities for enhancement when preparing their schemes. The Council will work with prospective applicants, such as through pre-application discussions, to help ensure that development contributes positively to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 17.3 The SPD will be monitored by assessing its influence on planning decisions and by tracking how many enhancement opportunities are delivered over time. Periodic reviews of both the Conservation Area Appraisals and the SPD will also be undertaken.

DRAFT



EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

Name of Policy/Function:	✓	This is new
Local Plan - Local Housing Need Consultation Leaflet		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	Monday, 2 March, 2026
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1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

The Draft Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides detailed planning guidance for the enhancement and management of the nine Conservation Areas within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. It sets out the significance of these designated areas, explains their contribution to the Borough's character and heritage, and emphasises the importance of preserving and enhancing them wherever possible. The document supplements and supports the policies contained within the Council's adopted Local Plan, providing additional detail to guide decision-making on development proposals within Conservation Areas.

2. Are there external considerations?

e.g. Legislation/government directive etc

Relevant legislation, national and local planning policy and guidance.

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

All planning applicants, developers, landowners, service delivery partners, statutory consultees and residents who are seeking or proposing any form of change within a designated Conservation Area.

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

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." The Council has nine designated Conservation Areas and recognises their unique

qualities and the important role they play within the Borough. A Conservation Area designation provides additional planning controls to ensure that development proposals preserve or enhance the distinctive character, appearance and heritage significance of these areas. increases the Council's controls to protect the area, to help preserve the historic environment and create a high-quality environment for residents of the Borough to live and work in.

5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

No previous public consultations have taken place. The contents of the document has been largely drawn down from the existing Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (2019), together with research of current planning legislation, national and local planning policy. The current draft of the updated Supplementary Planning Document, subject Member approval, will be subject to a 6-week public consultation commencing on Friday, 27 March 2026.

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 – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.
Age	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.
Gender Reassignment	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.
Sex	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.
Sexual Orientation	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.
Religion/Belief	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.

Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents of the conservation areas equally.

8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?

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

None apparent.

9. Are there any human rights implications?

Yes/No (If yes, please explain)

None apparent.

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

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

None apparent.

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?

None apparent.

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: Ed Morgan

Date: Monday, 2 March, 2026

(Policy/Function/Report written)

Completed by: Adrian Thorpe
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Date: Monday, 2 March, 2026

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, 24 March 2026	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Draft Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (Spring 2026)**

Report Author(s): **Peter Heath (Senior Planning Policy Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee’s approval to publicly consult on the Draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for public consultation for a six-week period proposed to commence Friday 27 March 2026, running until Friday 8 May 2026.
Report Summary:	<p>The current Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in April 2019. With the changes implemented under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 local planning authorities will no longer be able to adopt Supplementary Planning Documents after 30 June 2026.</p> <p>The overwhelming majority of applications dealt with in the borough are householder applications. The guidance in this SPD is a valuable tool used by Development Management officers to determine these applications. It is also helpful to the public who may not be experts on the planning system but wish to do work to their homes that require planning permission. Reconsulting and re-adopting this SPD would enable its guidance to be used by both applicants and the authority after the end of June 2026.</p> <p>A revised version of the SPD is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That Members approve the Draft Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the purposes of public consultation proposed to commence Friday 27 March 2026, running until Friday 8 May 2026.
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>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>Peter Heath (Senior Planning Policy Officer) (0116) 257 2732 peter.heath@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:	Customer & Community Focused (V1) Proud of Everything We Do (V2) Collaborative & Creative (V3) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	There are no implications arising directly from this report.
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	The implications are as set out at Appendix 2 to this report.
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly 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:	Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document April 2019
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (Spring 2026) 2. Equality Assessment

1. Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide further guidance and clarity on what the authority will seek from planning applications that involve works to and around the home, known as householder development.
- 1.2 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 is changing how the land use planning system will operate in England. One of the changes it is introducing is that after 30 June 2026 authorities will no longer be able to adopt supplementary planning documents. Authorities will be able to adopt supplementary plans, but their content is currently proposed to be limited and the process for their adoption is unclear.

- 1.3 Given the possible uncertainty over the status of supplementary documents officers are recommending that the residential development SPD is reconsulted upon and then readopted by the Council before the June deadline so it can continue to be used for development management purposes while the exact role and nature of the new supplementary plans system is being defined.
- 1.4 Once the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (attached as **Appendix 1**) has been consulted upon, finalised and adopted, it will be a material consideration when determining planning applications and should be treated as a starting point for stakeholders to understand the approach the Local Planning Authority will take in regard to householder applications. If adopted, this Supplementary Planning Document would replace the Council's current Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (adopted April 2019).

2. Changes to the Planning System

- 2.1 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) is making substantial changes to how the system for adopting local plans operates. The key issue of relevance to this report are that SPDs are to be replaced by supplementary plans. After the 30 June 2026 authorities will no longer be able to adopt SPDs. They will be able to adopt supplementary plans but, at the moment, they are intended to have a limited scope either a borough wide design code or detailed guidance for a specific site. The residential development SPD is neither of these as it provides general borough wide advice for householder developments. Although Government might change their stance on what supplementary plans may/may not cover at the moment the authority could not adopt the residential development SPD as a new supplementary plan.
- 2.2 In addition, the process of adopting any supplementary planning document is well understood as it is clearly defined by regulations. The regulations for adopting a supplementary plan have not yet been laid before Parliament so the process for adopting a supplementary plan is unknown. It may be quicker than the current process, it may not. In the absence of clarity, it is thought safest to readopt the SPD under the current system.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Subject to Committee approval, the draft Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) public consultation period is proposed to commence on Friday, 27 March 2026 for a 6-week period until Friday, 8 May 2026.
- 3.2 Once the draft Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been subject to public consultation, any representations that have been received will be taken account of and factored into a final version, as necessary. The final version will then be submitted to Members for approval at Full Council on 12 May 2026.

Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document

**Consultation Draft
Spring 2026**

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1. Introduction and general advice

- 1.1 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a planning policy document that focuses on the design, character and use of materials of all new residential related development within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. The document seeks to supplement the related policies set out within the Council's Local Plan, as well as offering advice to any prospective residential related development applicant. In June 2025 the Council adopted a design code SPD which sets out some general advice for residential development but is largely focused on larger developments. Alongside the Local Plan and the Design Code, this SPD will help the Council approach planning decisions in a positive and creative way. The Design Code can be found on the Council's website at https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/files/documents/design_code_supplementary_planning_document_2025/Design%20Code%20Supplementary%20Planning%20Document%202025.pdf.
- 1.2 The following chapters set out specific detailed design, character and use of materials advice and guidance relevant to all new residential development proposals within the Borough area that require planning permission.
- 1.3 It should be noted that not all residential development proposals require planning permission before they can begin works. Works that do not require planning permission are referred to as Permitted Development. Permitted Development rights are set out within the Governments' General Permitted Development Order. Further information can also be found on the Planning Portal website. This includes an interactive house that shows the most common forms of work householders undertake and the permitted development rights for those works <https://interactive.planningportal.co.uk/explore-house>.
- 1.4 Both national planning policy and the Council encourage prospective applicants for residential development to contact the Planning team to discuss their proposals before making any planning application submission. Such approach is referred to as 'Pre-application advice'. Further information relating to Pre-application advice can be found on the Council's website at https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/do_i_need_planning_permission.
- 1.5 Pre-application advice is available to anyone who is thinking about submitting an application to the Council; however, it is always encouraged that an applicant employs the services of a professional architect and / or an independent planning expert if they need help with the design of a scheme, as the Council cannot undertake such work.
- 1.6 In addition, it is advised that prior to Pre-application discussions taking place and / or the submission of a planning application proposal for residential related development, the applicant should check to see whether there are any existing planning restrictions, covenants on the deeds and / or Party Wall Act restrictions related to the proposal site.
- 1.7 Land drainage and flood risk issues may also be relevant to a development site. Advice is available from the Environment Agency's and the Lead Local Flood Authority.

2. Local Plan related policy

- 2.1 Amongst others, the Council's Local Plan sets out several residential related policies. These policies set out the Council's policy approach to specific residential related aspects and will need to be taken account of when new development is being drawn up / proposed.
- 2.2 Chapter 3 of this document sets out supplemental advice and guidance in relation to specific residential planning policies (listed below).
- Policy 6 High Quality Design and Materials
 - Policy 15 Urban Infill Development
 - Policy 44 Landscape and Character
- 2.3 Chapter 3 also seeks to help an applicant interpret the listed policies. It should be noted that not all residential related policies are listed. It should also be noted that further information and guidance relating to residential development is contained within the Council's Landscape Character Assessment https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/new_local_plan_evidence_base as well as other Supplementary Planning Documents. All such documents can be found on the Council's website.
- 2.4 In addition to other relevant local policies set out within the Council's Local Plan national policy set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), will also be of relevance in certain residential development related cases.
- 2.5 When preparing any planning application, the applicant must take account of NPPF, particularly where it states planning *'permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents'*. The Council will also take account of the NPPF throughout the decision-making process.

3. Specific advice and guidance

- 3.1 This Chapter sets out specific design, character and use of materials advice and guidance for all new residential related development within the Borough.

Design and overall appearance of the development

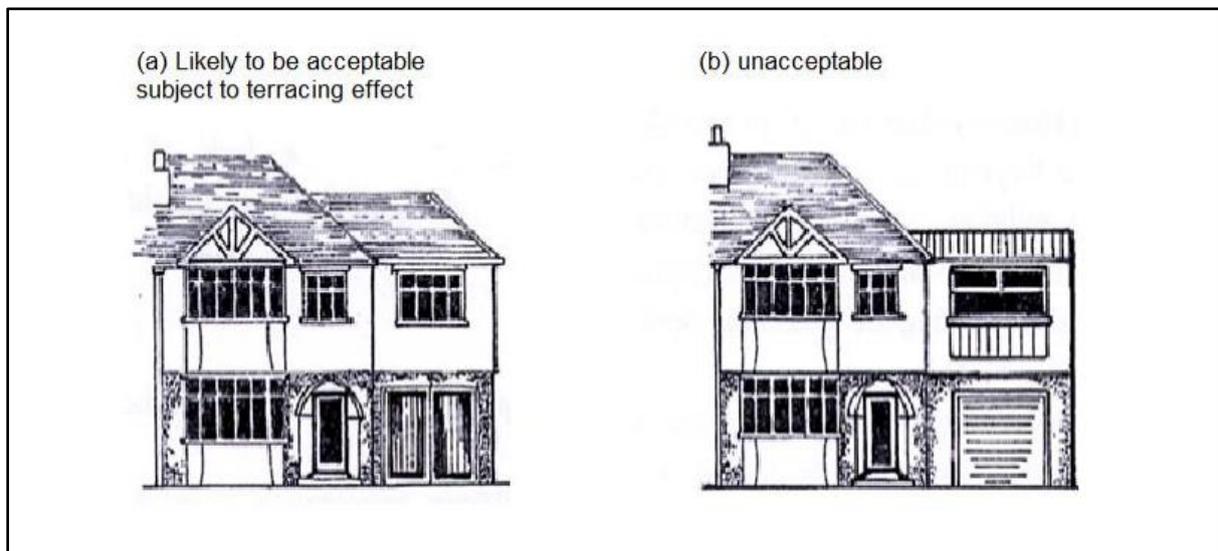
- 3.2 All new residential related development must have a relationship with its surroundings in terms of massing, height, balance, use of materials, roof shape and architectural detailing. The character and appearance of residential related development and how it fits with the local street scene are important considerations when deciding if proposed development is acceptable. All new residential related development should fit with the existing street scene and retain and / or enhance locally distinctive character. In addition, all new residential related development should have regard to Sport England's 'Active Design' guidance, particularly its ten key principles. The Active Design guidance is supported by Public Health England and is part of our collaborative action to promote the principles set out in Public Health England's 'Everybody Active, Every Day', to create active environments that make physical activity the easiest and most practical option in everyday life.
- 3.3 Residential extensions and enlargements must be in keeping with the character and appearance of the dwelling to be extended as well as the wider local area. There is a limit to the number of extensions which can be added to a property or to a site. What constitutes overdevelopment will vary from site to site, as each set of circumstances is unique. If extensions are beginning to overwhelm a property or if there are many outbuildings near each other, site boundaries or the main dwelling, it may be that a site is already overdeveloped. In such circumstances additional development will not be appropriate. A key point of note, is that any extensions or enlargements should be visually subordinate to the existing dwelling that is to be extended. Additional front entrances will not be supported, as they could be read as a separate dwelling, are not subordinate and disrupt the established pattern of one main entrance per dwelling.
- 3.4 Whilst variety in design through changes in roof form or storey height will not be discouraged, new development should not; be over-dominant; create convoluted roof forms; or, be harmful to the locally distinctive appearance of the surroundings. Large dominant extensions are rarely satisfactory, and particular care is needed in the case of front extensions to semi-detached or terraced properties.
- 3.5 In order to improve the architectural quality of the built environment, a high standard of design will be required in all forms of development and external materials and finishes should be chosen to give a high-quality appearance and identity to the scheme. Consideration should also be given to the boundaries (walls, railings, fences, hedges) and trees and vegetation within the area. Reference may also be made to the Council's publication July 2020 – 'OWBC Tree Strategy, Trees for Life' which is available via the Council's website https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/files/documents/owbc_tree_strategy1/OWBC%20Tree%20Strategy%20-%20v.1.2.pdf.

Roof design

- 3.6 Roof form and style often contribute significantly to the appearance and character of a residential dwelling. A Victorian villa and a post war suburban semi-detached property are both residential dwellings which can be built out of red brick but the differences in their roof

form helps define their character. Roof form also has an important part to play in ensuring an extension is appropriately designed.

- 3.7 In order to ensure an extension is sympathetic to the original dwelling its roof should replicate the proportions, pitch, shape and materials of the main house. This is just as important for single storey extensions as those at two storey (or more) level.
- 3.8 Unless the existing residential dwelling dictates, the use of flat or semi-pitched roofs, particularly when extending above single storey level, often make extensions incongruous features within the street scene, particularly when such roofs are on front or side extensions and are inconsistent with the design of the roof on the existing house. Full pitched or hipped roofs should be used to match the style of the existing roof on the dwelling, especially on two storey or first floor extensions unless high quality design considerations dictate otherwise. The use of full pitched roofs on single storey extensions and buildings within the curtilage of dwellings should be used.



- 3.9 The illustrations above (a) show a hipped roof property that has been extended to the side with sympathetic and consistent design that is in principle acceptable and (b) an unsympathetic side extension detailing a flat roof with a mock pitch to the front with the windows out of scale with the existing that would be deemed unacceptable.

Impact of side extensions on the street scene and the terracing effect

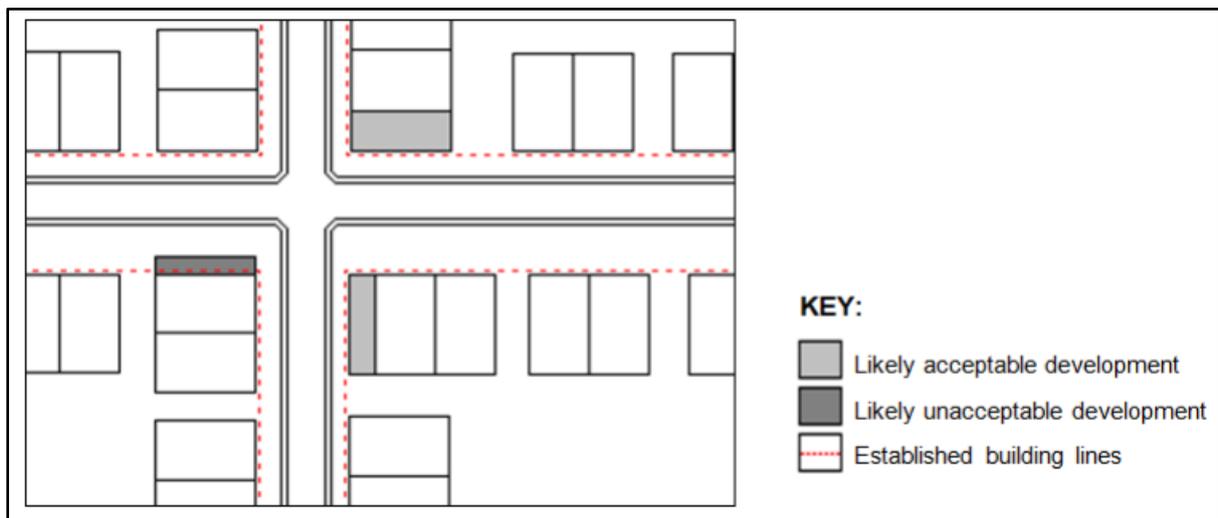
- 3.10 It is very often the case that the only satisfactory means by which detached or semidetached dwellings can be extended is at the side, and because of the restricted nature of some plots, they can only be accommodated flush with the side boundary. Whilst such extensions can provide much needed additional living accommodation, they often have a negative impact upon the house, street and locally distinctive character. Extending a wall all the way to the side boundary can result in unsatisfactory design where on-wall or box gutters are required, as these features often disrupt the proportions of the roof. The use of on-wall or box gutters to extend all the way to the side boundary will not be acceptable and will be refused.
- 3.11 Such development proposals often give rise to unsatisfactory design since two adjacent properties may create a terrace effect by extending at two storey level up to their common boundary. The Council will insist that such extensions are either set in by at least one metre

from the side boundary, or, set back by at least one metre at first floor level behind the front wall of the dwelling so that visual separation is created in order to avoid any detrimental impact on the visual characteristics of the street scene.

- 3.12 However, where the front walls of adjacent dwellings do not follow a common building line there may be some flexibility in this 1 metre set back. For the avoidance of doubt, projecting bays, gables and other features will not be considered as the front wall of the dwelling.

Impact of side extensions to corner plots on the street scene

- 3.13 Side extensions to existing residential dwellings situated on corner plots effectively become front extensions and ultimately can have a major impact upon the appearance of the street scene. It is for this reason, as well their impact upon motorist visibility, that they are deemed unacceptable, unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise.
- 3.14 Existing building lines of development should be respected in all instances. If the building line is not clearly defined, then a projecting side extension may be acceptable if it would not have a detrimental impact on the street scene or motorist visibility or locally distinctive character.



- 3.15 The above drawing illustrates when a side extension to existing residential dwellings situated on corner plots would likely be acceptable and when they wouldn't be acceptable.

Use of materials

- 3.16 All new residential related development should make use of materials that are in keeping and character with the local area in which it is situated. In exceptional circumstances, use of materials not in character with the local area can be deemed acceptable should they enhance the existing local character and street scene.
- 3.17 Residential dwelling extensions and enlargements should not only be designed to match and complement the existing dwelling style, but should also be constructed in matching, similar and / or complementary materials, where the existing materials are of an acceptable quality and standard. It should be noted that the use of matching materials is relevant to the extension in its entirety, for example the façade, the side(s) and the rear.

- 3.18 All external brickwork should be built using a high-quality brick, mortar and pointing that has aesthetic value.
- 3.19 The re-use of building materials is in principle acceptable and encouraged by the Council, unless those materials were to have a detrimental impact on the local character and street scene.
- 3.20 The details of materials to be used for any residential related development should be submitted with the planning application submission documentation to avoid the need for pre-commencement conditions requiring submission of details regarding the proposed external materials before the commencement of any building works (where a favourable planning recommendation has been given).

Windows and doors

- 3.21 The use of inappropriate door and / or window sizing, detailing and materials can have a significant detrimental impact on an otherwise acceptable development proposal and its impact upon local character or upon close neighbours.
- 3.22 All new windows and doors must respect the character and appearance of the local area, and extensions or enlargements should respect the character and the appearance of the existing residential dwelling that is to be extended.
- 3.23 Particular attention should be afforded to all elevations equally. Specific details that will be considered (but are not limited to) by the Council when proposals are put forward are:
- the size, shape, design and materials;
 - the placement of windows and doors within the building;
 - any recessing or reveals;
 - window and door heads and cill details.
- 3.24 Windows and / or doors should be positioned so as not to have a negative impact on the residential amenity or actual and perceived privacy of surrounding properties. The locating of primary windows to habitable rooms such as living rooms or bedrooms on the flank of a property (where they would rely upon the adjacent property for light and air) should be avoided.

Loft conversions and dormers of existing residential dwellings

- 3.25 Utilising roof space of existing dwellings to provide additional living accommodation has proved popular to householders in recent years because it offers economy in space requirements and costs. However, it must be recognised that many dwellings were never designed to accept this form of extension and modern dormers are rarely attractive features unless designed well.
- 3.26 If a loft conversion / extension is to be proposed, particular care should be afforded to the size, design and positioning of dormers on dwellings. Badly designed dormer windows can create incongruous and / or intrusive features which would have a detrimental impact on the character of an area and / or can lead to a substantial loss of privacy and amenity of surrounding properties.

3.27 Measures that will assist in reducing the visual impact of dormers include (but are not limited to);

- the placing of dormers to the rear of the property,
- restricting the size of the dormer so the main roof slope remains the dominant feature,
- positioning the dormer below the ridge of the roof,
- cladding the dormer in materials to match the existing dwelling, and
- providing a pitched roof over the dormer.

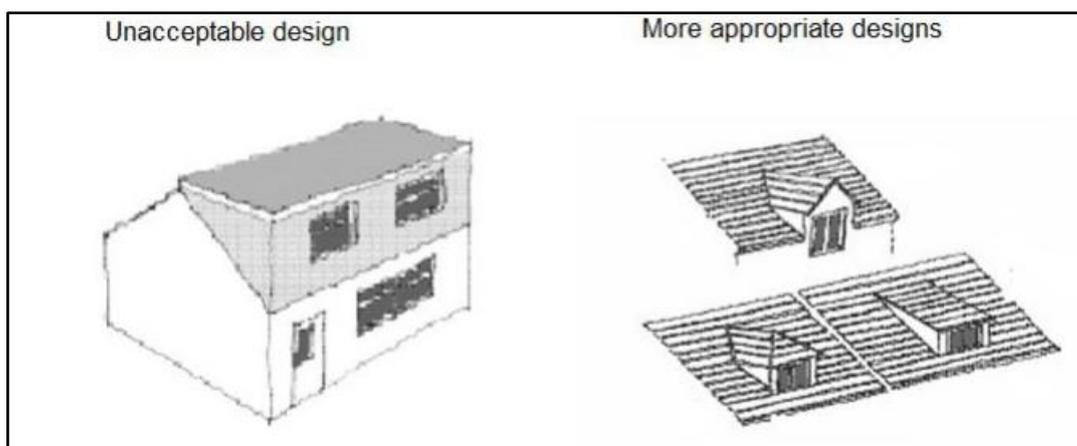
3.28 Like all extensions, dormer windows should relate in scale and style to the original building and be in keeping with its fenestration. It is important for dormers to be designed to incorporate elements of balance and symmetry within their design which relate to the dwelling on which they are to be placed. They should be kept to a minimal size and avoid becoming an over dominant feature within the roof which creates a top-heavy appearance to a dwelling. As a general guide dormers should be the same size or smaller than any windows on the existing property. Flat roofed dormers must be avoided unless in exceptional circumstances.

3.29 Front dormers will only be acceptable where they can create an attractive feature which is in keeping with the style and character of the property on which it will be placed. Side dormers or proposals to create gable end roofs on one side of pairs of semi-detached and detached dwellings where both sides were originally hipped will not be acceptable unless there are exceptional circumstances that dictate otherwise.

3.30 Except in exceptional circumstances, dormers should be set at least 0.5 metres below ridge level.

3.31 Materials used on dormers should be sympathetic to the existing roof to help the dormers blend into their background. The pitches of the dormer must be designed to incorporate the same tiles as on the existing roof.

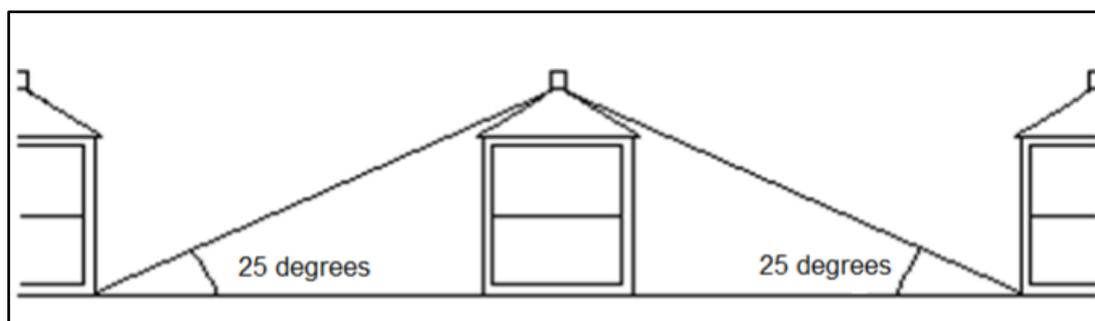
3.32 Except in exceptional circumstances box dormers will not be acceptable.



3.33 It should be noted that for any loft conversion or extension proposals, sections should be prepared, and submitted with any application, to illustrate that there is suitable vertical space within the roof to create a habitable room, with adequate roof space above to meet the requirements of paragraph 3.30 above.

Residential amenity, privacy and visual intrusion

- 3.34 All new residential development, including extensions and alterations, should be designed so that adequate levels of amenity for future and existing residents of the property and neighbouring properties are provided and maintained. This can be achieved either by spacing buildings at a suitable distance apart to avoid overlooking, visual intrusion and loss of daylight, or by the careful design and placing of windows and doors. Such guidance, applies, in the main, to habitable dwelling rooms. A habitable room includes bedrooms, dining rooms, kitchens, conservatories, studies, playrooms and home offices. It does not include bathrooms, en-suites, halls, utility rooms, landings, garages and workshops.
- 3.35 In some circumstances new extensions can be detrimental to the amenity of existing properties because they close the space between the facing windows of the two properties or because a flank elevation is proposed which is too close to the main habitable room windows of the neighbouring property. This kind of situation is particularly likely to arise where properties close to street corners are to be extended.
- 3.36 New housing development or extensions to existing dwellings must conform to separation distances. Separation distances do not normally allow distances of less than 22 metres between facing windows of two storey houses on level ground and, between facing windows and flank or secondary elevations. Development should also not rise above a line drawn at 25° from the ground floor of the neighbouring dwelling fronting onto the new dwelling or extension.
- 3.37 In addition to these separation distances, clear glazed windows on elevations and the use of flat roofs as balconies where this would lead to overlooking of neighbouring properties and gardens will not be acceptable.
- 3.38 It should be noted that all measurements are taken from the original dwelling as built.
- 3.39 The diagram below assumes that a site is entirely level. In considering any particular case, account will be taken of any changes in level between properties to avoid any adverse impact upon loss of amenity due to loss of privacy or potential for overlooking.



The provision and retention of private open space associated with residential accommodation

- 3.40 Private open amenity space (garden space) to the rear of dwellings plays an important role in facilitating the health and wellbeing of current and future occupiers of a dwelling. It is important therefore to protect any provision of open space at a level which can be utilised efficiently and enjoyed.

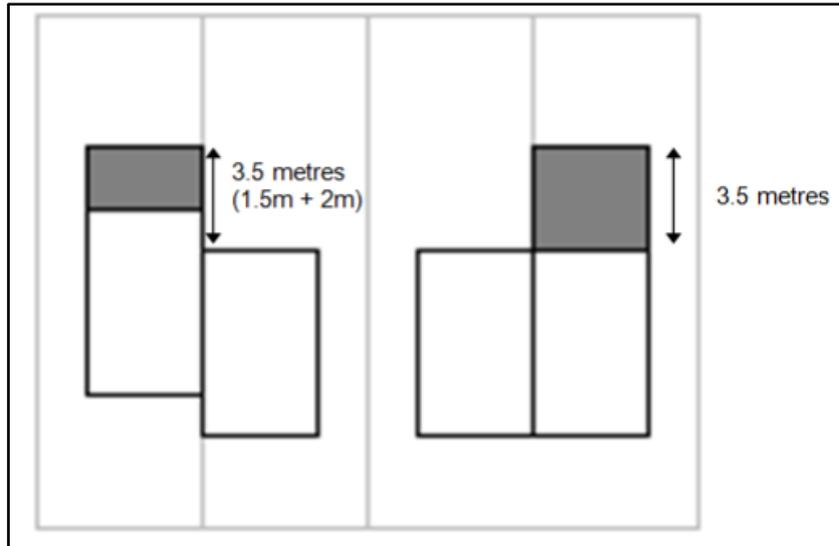
- 3.41 The amount of rear garden space required on all residential related development is dependent on the size of the property and so the practical needs of any household who might live within it. All dwelling house rear gardens should have the following minimum sizes, unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise.
- 1-bedroom properties shall have a minimum private rear garden space of 50 square metres.
 - 2 – 3-bedroom properties shall have a minimum private rear garden space of 75 square metres.
 - 4 – 5-bedroom properties shall have a minimum private rear garden space of 100 square metres.
 - Above 5-bedroom properties shall have a minimum private rear garden space of 115 square metres.
- 3.42 This minimum provision will be applied to new residential development and to the remaining rear garden space should a proposed extension or enlargement to an existing dwelling house be built. The loss of over half of an original garden to extensions or enlargement will not be acceptable.
- 3.43 A bedroom is deemed to be any room which could potentially be used as a permanent bedroom. This includes any room annotated 'study', 'family room', 'store', or the like. The rear garden will usually be classed as the main open section of the rear garden and shall not include alcoves or small un-useable sections of garden land.
- 3.44 Flats and residential care units / homes should have a minimum of 75 square metres for up to 5 units with an additional 15 square metres per unit. That might include a combination of communal open space and 'private' spaces, such as balconies.

Sunlight and daylight

- 3.45 Extensions can be of great benefit to the resident who builds it and at the same time a curse to the neighbour. If designed badly, it can cut out both sunlight and daylight, be overbearing and be too dominant on the boundary separating the neighbours.
- 3.46 To lessen the negative impact and to endeavour to protect the neighbour who will be affected by the extension, the Council will assess the natural lighting implications of any new development. All residential related development will need to conform to the 45-degree code of practice. This code is intended to make sure that extensions do not dominate neighbouring properties and detract from the enjoyment that neighbours have in their property.

The 45 Degree Code of Practice

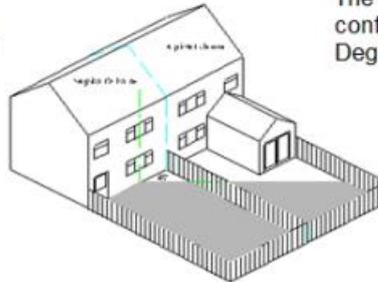
- 3.47 It should be noted that a rear single storey extension projecting a maximum distance of 3.5 metres from the original dwelling, along the boundary will usually be allowed irrespective of these guidelines. On a staggered building line, the 3.5 metres maximum will be measured from the property that is set furthest back, whether it be the host dwelling or the neighbouring – see illustration below.



- 3.48 The code is intended for use in relation to all extensions and other proposed works, which affect neighbouring residential properties and will be applied in the assessment of planning applications in conjunction with all the Council's related planning policies.
- 3.49 The 45 Degree Code is simple in its compliance. An imaginary line is drawn at an angle of 45 degrees from the nearest neighbouring window that may be affected by any proposed building work. This window must be the main source of light to a habitable room such as a living room or bedroom. Secondary windows to a room will not normally be considered. See also the point in paragraph 3.24 regarding flank windows.
- 3.50 A habitable room includes bedrooms, dining rooms, kitchens, conservatories, studies, playrooms and home offices. It does not include bathrooms, en-suites, halls, utility rooms, landings, garages or workshops.
- 3.51 No proposed works should cross this 45 Degree line. The point from which the imaginary line is drawn depends on whether it is a single storey or two or more storeys. The following diagrams illustrate how the 45 Degree Code will be applied in a variety of circumstances.

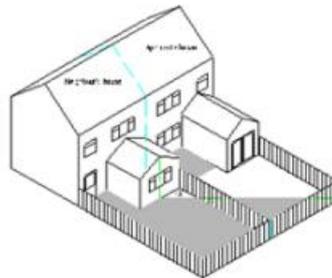
Single storey extensions (including conservatories).

The line is taken from the centre of the nearest ground floor window.



The extension shown conforms to the 45 Degree Code

An existing extension



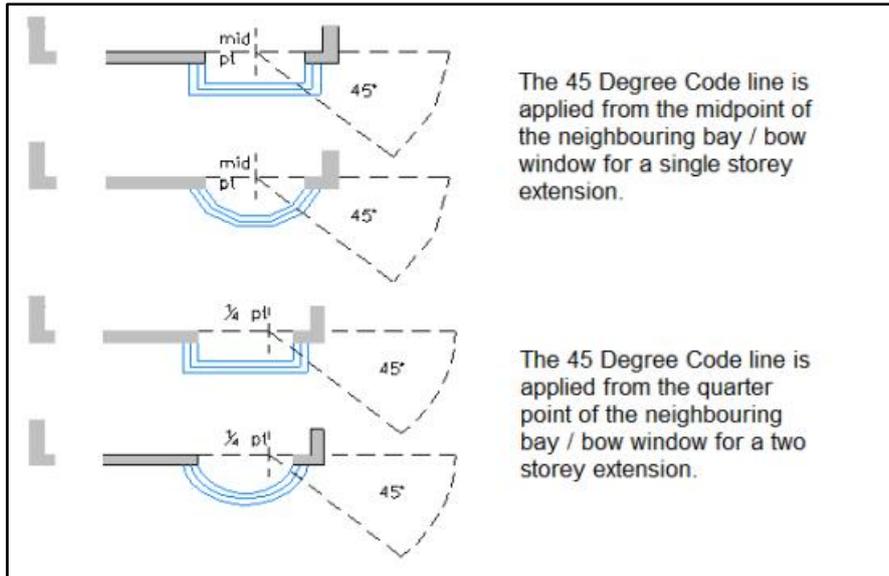
If your neighbour has an existing extension, the 45 Degree Code line is taken from the nearest habitable room window. This is providing it is the most likely to be affected.

Two storey and first floor extensions

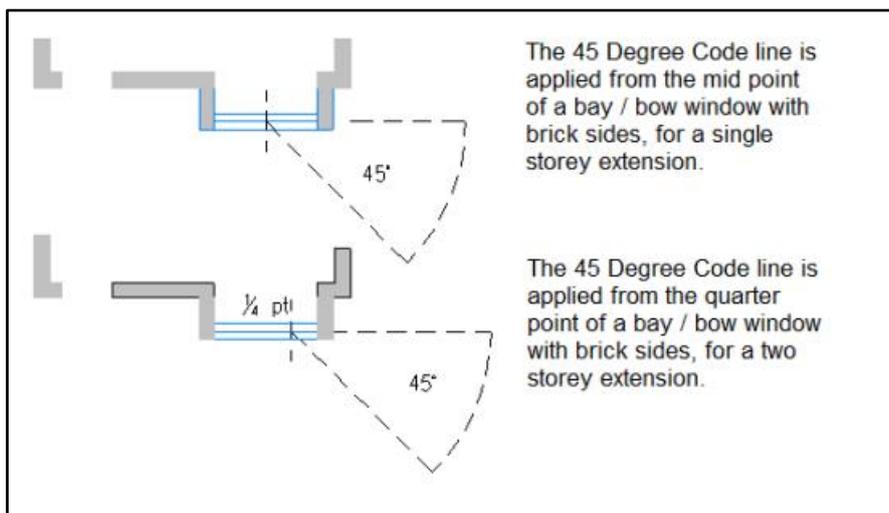
- 3.52 It is important to remember that the Code will be applied when a further storey is added on an existing single storey extension. So, if it is intended to build a first-floor extension at a later date, the ground floor extension on which it is to be built should be designed to meet the requirements of the Code for a two storey extension or the second storey will need to be set back.
- 3.53 The Code is applied in the same way, except that the line is drawn from a point a quarter of the way along the window. The quarter point used should be that closest to the proposed works.

Bay and Bow Windows

- 3.54 If the neighbour has a bow or bay window, the measurement is taken from the same mid or quarter point at the back of the window, in essence, imagining the bay or bow being a standard flat window. See below.

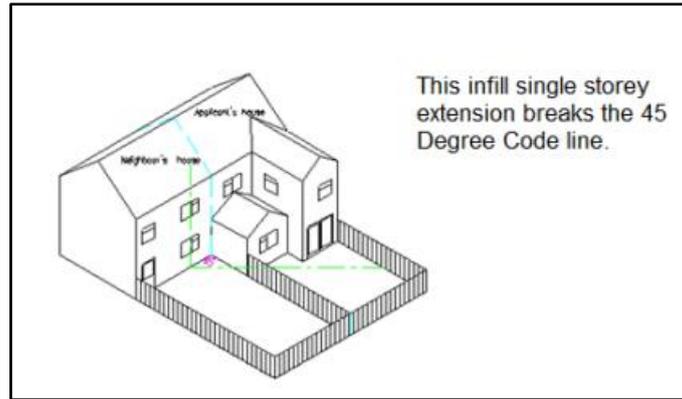


- 3.55 French windows, bay windows, bow windows and those with multiple sashes shall be treated as one opening.
- 3.56 If the bay has solid brick or similar sides, then the measurement is taken from the glazed part of the window. See below.

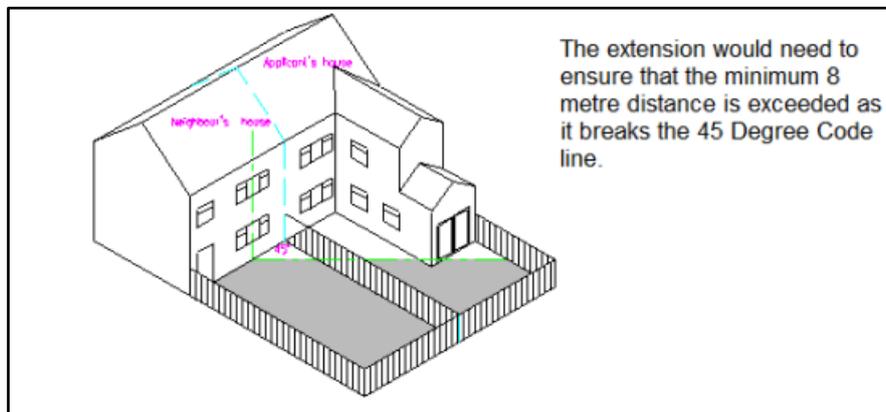


Extensions to terraced properties

- 3.57 In cases of older terraced properties, where the original building has an existing rear projecting 'wing' extension, in fill works will only be allowed if it does not break the 45 Degree Code line. Examples are shown below.



3.58 Single storey extensions at the end of the existing projecting 'wing' extension will be looked at on their own merits as long as they leave enough back garden space. See below. Two storey extensions are not normally acceptable.



Additional factors to consider when applying the 45 Degree Code

3.59 The 45 Degree Code is simple to apply in most cases, but there are some circumstances, where it is not so simple to apply. Such circumstances include.

- If the ground level is different between properties appropriate allowances must be made.
- In some case, extensions may be considered overbearing or too dominant on the neighbouring property even though they comply with the Code. In these cases, planning permission may not be forthcoming.
- If the 45 Degree Code is broken but the break occurs more than 8 metres away, flexibility may be applied.

3.60 The above is not an exhaustive list of circumstances. Each planning application is carefully considered on its own merits. However, this guidance is given in order to assist the applicant to decide whether or not planning permission may be easily obtained or not.

3.61 It should be noted that the code will be applied with regard to all habitable room windows to the front and rear elevation of the affected property. In addition, the Code does not apply to windows in side elevations.

3.62 Obviously staggering the design of an extension in attempt to conform to the Code would not be acceptable unless in exceptional circumstances. The design of any extension must take account of the architectural language and materials used in the main existing building. The extension must also be subservient to the main building. Angled walls on a new extension may only be acceptable if the main building has angled walls.

Joint extensions

3.63 If you and your neighbour submit joint planning applications for extensions which are of the same size and will be built at the same time, the extensions may be allowed even though they would breach the 45 Degree Code if they were built separately. In these cases, neighbours must confirm in writing that the extensions will be built at the same time. It is important to stress that in these cases the 45 Degree Code will also be applied in the normal way to any other neighbouring properties that might be affected. Please note that entirely separate planning applications by each of two neighbours will not be supported, as the Council could not then ensure that both extensions would be completed simultaneously.

Wedge shaped extensions

3.64 Wedge shaped extensions can be detrimental to the street scene and the visual amenities of neighbouring residents. The construction of such extensions often creates an uncomfortable appearance particularly in the roof form of any construction. Particular care is needed to achieve an acceptable design. In prominent locations wedged shaped extension will rarely be acceptable.

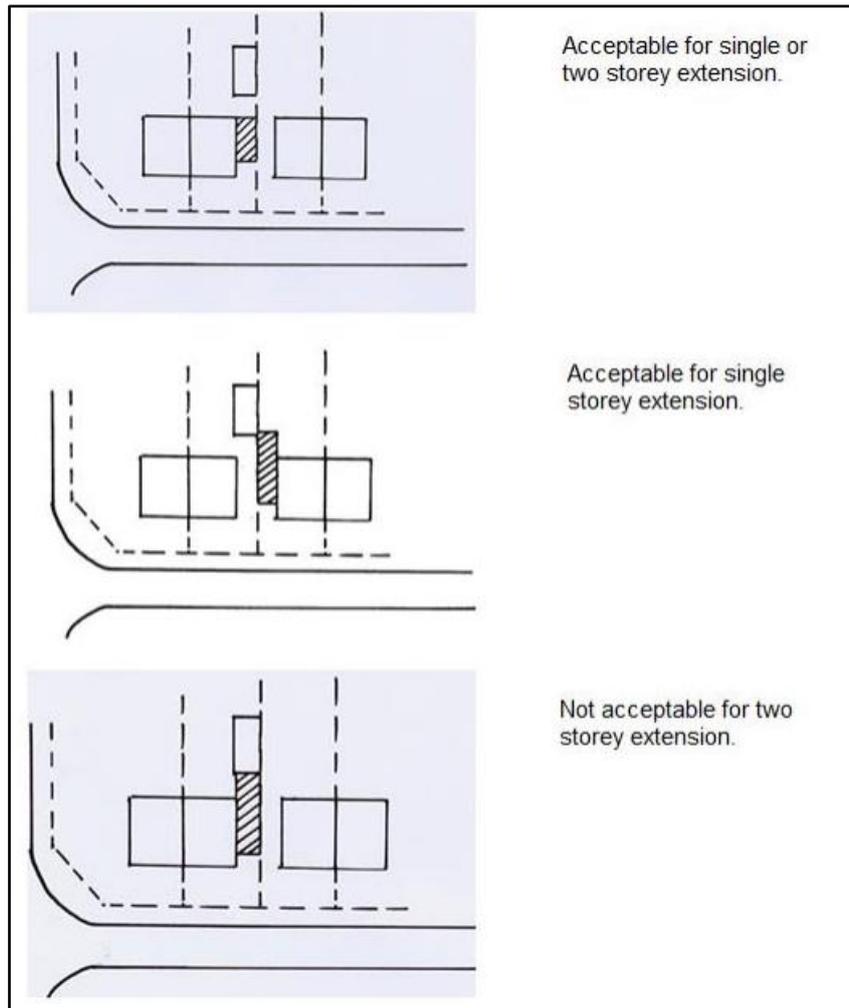
Continuous development on side boundaries

3.65 In some circumstances, extensions on, or close to, side boundaries can be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring residential properties, if they result in long, continuous development along the side boundary, particularly where homes are in line. This can be worsened by two storey extensions and by extensions which link to an existing garage or outbuilding at the rear of the dwelling, filling in the entire gap, from the front of the property to a rearward garage. The excessive length and mass can be overbearing and result in an intrusive and over-intensive form of development, which would detract from the light, outlook and amenities of nearby residents to an unacceptable degree.

3.66 Such extensions can also be out of keeping with the existing form of development in established residential areas and cause harm to its character and appearance.

3.67 This overbearing impact can be reduced by limiting the two-storey part of extensions to the same rear line as the original dwelling and by leaving a gap at the side / rear of the property, to give an open area adjacent to the side / rear of the neighbouring dwelling. Full two storey extensions may be acceptable but will have to mitigate any adverse effect upon the adjacent neighbour in terms of orientation to the sun, outlook and amenity.

3.68 The diagrams below illustrate this.



3.69 In addition, two storey extensions on, or within one metre of, side boundaries will not readily be permitted if they project beyond the rear line of the original dwelling. Single storey extensions on, or within one metre of, side boundaries should not extend for an effective length of more than 3.5 metres beyond the rear of the original dwelling, including any existing development, where this would close the gap to the rear of the adjacent property. This applies to dwellings in line; side extensions to staggered dwellings will be considered on their merits.

Annexes

3.70 The Borough Council has seen a rise in applications for annexes / additional living units to existing residential properties, normally to house a dependent relative of the household. An applicant's proposals for 'granny annexes' are often driven by persuasive family circumstances. However, such personal circumstances can rarely be considered as a material planning consideration since the Council must consider the future of any home over time and well beyond the life of the current household.

3.71 An annexe is an area of enlarged accommodation which is associated with but not used as part of the main house. A proposal that forms its own entirely self-contained residential dwelling will not be considered an annexe. It will not be considered acceptable to create a separate unit with an independent entrance which could either be let or sold separately to the dwelling. The creation of a new habitable dwelling would require planning consent and would be subject to other planning restrictions and policy guidance.

3.72 In determining a planning application for an annexe, unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise, the Council will expect the development to:

- be linked internally to the main existing dwelling.
- remain ancillary in form and function to the main existing dwelling.
- have no boundary demarcation or subdivision of garden areas between the curtilage of the main existing dwelling and the annexe.
- have adequate parking and amenity facilities for the needs of the annexe occupants and other residents of the main household.
- comply with the councils' normal design standards for extensions.
- share a pedestrian and vehicular access with the main existing dwelling.
- be within the curtilage of the main existing dwelling.
- be in the same ownership as the main existing dwelling.
- be designed in such a manner as to easily enable the annexe to be used at a later date as an integral part of the main existing dwelling.
- be used only by persons clearly associated with the occupants of the main existing dwelling.

3.73 Applicants should be aware that there may be other constraints which need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Applicants will also need to comply with other relevant policies contained within the adopted Local Plan, such as, but not limited to, those related to housing allocation, conservation areas, listed buildings and development within areas at risk of flooding.

Parking, highway safety and garages

3.74 Unless a residential development would involve small dwellings in a Town Centre location where there are good and frequent public transport services (i.e. a 'sustainable location'), adequate off street car parking provision will be required for all new dwellings that are built or created within the Borough area. By reducing on-street parking in some locations it may also help to improve road safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

3.75 Occasionally works within the curtilage of a dwelling may involve changes to the means of access or to the parking arrangements which have implications for highway safety. Development will not normally be acceptable where it would cause an obstruction to sight lines at a junction. New garages or car ports, which give access to a public highway, should retain a driveway within the residential curtilage to enable a vehicle to stand clear of the highway whilst the garage doors are opened.

3.76 When assessing a proposal that has an impact on; parking, garaging and / or highway safety, Leicestershire County Council's most up to date adopted parking, garaging and highway safety standards must be complied with.

Garages in communal car parking areas

3.77 There are several areas in the Borough where the layout or density of residential development has resulted in car parking provision in communal areas. At the detailed planning stage, consideration is given to the design of parking areas so that they are adequately supervised, subject to public oversight and that trespass is discouraged. Communal car parking should not be subject to a higher risk of vandalism or auto-crime or become an unsafe area for those using the facility. Such communal car parking areas should ideally be designed, built and

managed as part of the overall landscaping of the development as a whole. They should not be hidden away from the wider public domain.

- 3.78 In the past, some of the communal parking spaces have been used for the construction of single garages. Whilst this may provide enhanced security for the individual, it can result in hidden areas and create opportunities for crime. If natural surveillance is reduced, the potential for unlawful activities increases.
- 3.79 The erection of a garage on a single space can also reduce the effective width of adjoining spaces, as more space is needed to open a car door adjacent to a wall than over the edge of another parking space, thus making the spaces more difficult to use. This can result in additional, unnecessary on-street parking.
- 3.80 Individual garages of differing types and materials in visually exposed areas, do not enhance residential environments and can cause loss of visual amenity.
- 3.81 The erection of individual garages on communal residential car parking areas will not be permitted unless in exceptional circumstances.

Infill and backland development in the Borough

- 3.82 Many of the issues which are relevant to extensions also apply to new residential development which is infilling between existing residential properties. Any infill development will need to conform to all the relevant guidance set out within this document, as well as all other related planning policy and guidance.
- 3.83 Infill development can vary from single dwellings to small clusters of development. It can be located where there are large gardens or where an area of backland is accessible. In some cases, it may involve wholesale redevelopment of a site within a residential area.
- 3.84 Individual plots should fit in with the existing street scene and should have an area, frontage and depth which are comparable with adjoining properties. New residential homes should not be out of character or do harm to the locally distinctive character of the locality in which it is situated.
- 3.85 It will not be appropriate for small dwellings to be tucked into the grounds of larger homes and / or gardens.
- 3.86 In cases where backland infill is in principle appropriate, both the new and existing properties should have sufficient private amenity space to complement the design of the buildings to avoid a discordant street scene or other harm to the locally distinctive character of the locality.
- 3.87 The design of the new dwelling(s) should not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of existing properties through the loss of light or privacy and should normally provide sufficient off-street car parking and garden space to meet the needs of the new development.

Boundary treatments and frontage treatments

Arrangements for collection of Refuse and Recyclables

- 3.88 The Council operate a service to collect refuse and recyclables throughout the Borough for domestic premises (i.e. homes). This service is generally operated using 'Eurobins' which are of a standard or modular size. Ideally these should be stored in a convenient location at the rear of the home, before being placed temporarily on the street frontage ready for routine collection and emptying.
- 3.89 Leaving bins on or near to the street frontage between collections can have a very detrimental effect upon the visual character of any street. This is particularly so when several nearby households behave in a similar way. Section 23 of The Building Act 1984 makes it an offence to *'close or obstruct the means of access by which refuse ... is removed from a building, and the local authority in giving their consent may impose such conditions as they think fit ...'*
- 3.90 All new and existing homes throughout the Borough should have convenient and efficient arrangements for the storage and collection of refuse and recyclables. Proposals to extend or enlarge a home sometimes remove or obstruct the means of access to store refuse and recyclables out of sight at the rear or side of that home, so that the household are then only able to leave them permanently and visibly on or near to the street frontage.
- 3.91 If it is possible to do so in a visually acceptable and practical manner having regards to any competing needs for space in the front garden (such as off-street car spaces) then the Council may grant planning permission subject to a condition requiring prior provision of a suitably sized and visually acceptable 'bin store' structure near the street frontage. The location and appearance of any such bin store should be shown on submitted drawings to enable the Council to consider its implications, along with other aspects of that same proposal.
- 3.92 If in a particular case the visual and practical implications of a proposed bin store are in themselves unacceptable then the proposal as a whole might be refused planning permission due to the adverse visual impact of leaving multiple bins visible from the street, in the absence of satisfactory means of access from the front to rear/side of that enlarged home for the storage and removal of refuse and recyclables.

The Enclosure of Front Gardens

- 3.93 Boundary treatments (fences, walls and hedges) can have many functions. They are used to enclose garden areas around houses and to differentiate between public and private areas. The type of boundary treatment, its materials and its height help to define the character and appearance of an area.
- 3.94 When many estates in the Borough were given planning permission, to retain their 'open plan' appearance, the Council felt it appropriate to take away the permitted development rights by which fences and means of enclosure could be erected. However, the Council recognise the desire of householders for boundary demarcation of front gardens and as such, low level (up to 600 mm) boundary treatments will normally be acceptable on such estates. It will not normally be appropriate to allow higher fences (up to 1 metre) since there may not be adequate visibility at accesses, bends and corners to ensure that a satisfactory level of highway safety is achieved. When the original open plan estate layout was approved, visibility across the front garden areas would have been considered.
- 3.95 Where the permitted development rights have not been removed, a fence or other means of enclosure up to 1 metre high can be constructed along the highway boundary of a property without applying for planning permission as long as it is not obstructing views in relation to

vehicular access and egress. There is no restriction on the height to which a hedge or tree screen can grow. This permitted development maximum of 1 metre has been set in recognition that the front gardens of a property are normally regarded as only semiprivate open spaces because the landscaped area of a front garden and drive all contribute to the quality of the street scene. Taller, tree and hedge screens can provide more privacy without having an intrusive and detrimental impact on the street scene and are therefore acceptable.

- 3.96 The Council recognises the importance of security but considers that it is important to ensure that the visual appearance of the street scene is not harmed by the introduction of inappropriate walls/fences.
- 3.97 Throughout most of the Borough, the Council considers that the most acceptable way to provide adequate security while retaining the quality of the street scene is for fences and walls (or combinations of them) abutting the highway to be restricted to 1 metre high unless the wall / fence is set back from the boundary by a metre and a landscape screen or hedge is grown in front of it. Where metal railings or gates are proposed immediately adjacent to a public footway the Council would strongly prefer that those are 'hoop topped' or interlocking hoop topped, to prevent any possibility of a penetrating injury to passing pedestrians, including school children. Such injuries have arisen from 'arrow head' railings in the past. Railings may be permitted along the boundary provided a landscape screen of the same or a greater height is allowed to grow through them. It may be necessary for pedestrian visibility splays to be provided at driveway entrances in the interest of highway safety.

Front boundary treatments in Oadby Hill Top area

- 3.98 In the Oadby Hill Top Conservation Area and the adjoining streets which have a recognisable open character (The Broadway east from its junction with The Fairway up to Manor Road, The Fairway eastwards from its junction with The Broadway including Ringers Spinney, Southmeads Close and Enysford Close) fences and / or walls will not be acceptable. In these locations existing hedges must be retained and where necessary reinforced.
- 3.99 In general the appearance of the boundary treatments of individual plots can be broken down into two broad types; (1) open, with the property bounded by a low wall or fence, this type of treatment is often backed by dense planting or; (2) enclosed, properties are bounded by hedges between 1.5 and 2 metres in height, these hedges may be backed by fences, walls or railings or have a low fence in front of them.
- 3.100 The street scene is made up of a mixture of this type of treatment. A predominance of either an open or enclosed frontage gives the street its general appearance and so it's locally distinctive character.
- 3.101 Enclosed boundaries by and large have a solid appearance, tall open railings and low walls surmounted by railings would therefore harm the locally distinctive character of the area. Only where this type of feature is backed by a solid screen of vegetation will it conform to the general appearance of the surrounding enclosures and not be objectionably intrusive.

The need to have regard to the character of an area

- 3.101 Where new walls or fences are proposed which require planning permission, the Council will ensure that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the visual environment and / or character of the area. This could mean, for example, that it would be inappropriate for new

fencing to be installed adjoining the highway boundary in an area where all the nearby premises had walls / fences set back from the boundary.

Choice of materials

3.102 Where it is appropriate for new fencing or other boundary treatments to be granted planning permission, the Council will ensure that the impact of the new boundary treatment is as least detrimental to the visual environment and / or character of the area as possible. Building design, scale, form and materials should contribute positively to the overall quality of the environment and that it should be carefully related to existing development.

3.103 The choice of materials is particularly important when fences or walls are constructed. The materials should be chosen to give a pleasant appearance and identity to the scheme. They should be of a permanent texture and colour and should be designed for external use. The use of materials like galvanised metal will not be appropriate. 'Hoop topped' metal fences will need to be painted, preferably by treatment before they are erected. Walls will not be acceptable in common brick and long expanses of brick wall will need the introduction of brick detailing features to provide visual interest. Additionally, gates, both pedestrian and vehicular need to be taken into account when considering materials

Landscaping

3.104 A landscaping scheme should be provided where the characteristic front garden boundary treatments proposed are set off from the site boundaries. This will avoid the need for pre-commencement conditions where the Council has made a favourable approval of the proposed scheme.

Housing Choices and Housing Standards

3.105 The Council's Local Plan provides details about the Council's commitment to providing new homes that are 'fit for purpose' and appropriate for modern living and requirements. The Council will therefore require all new homes, regardless of type or tenure, to be of a size that allows sufficient space for all its proposed inhabitants to live comfortably and sustainably in the future.

3.106 Recognising that the Council has in recent times received a number of planning applications seeking proposals that are not of a size that is suitable for modern day living standards, the Council will use the Government's Technical Housing Standards to inform the planning application decision making process. This will be relevant to new dwellings and extensions.

3.107 The Government's Technical Housing Standards sets out minimal space standards that development must comply with.

3.108 In any submitted planning application that proposes the new dwellings, appropriate information must be provided for each of the proposed dwellings and must include, but is not limited to;

- The total gross internal floor area of the entire dwelling (sqm).
- The total number of bedrooms within the dwelling.
- The gross internal area of each room in the dwelling (sqm).
- The number of persons to be using each bedroom.

- The total gross area of built in storage within the dwelling.

3.109 In the absence of the appropriate information, the Council holds the right to, either;

- Refuse planning permission on the grounds that the information submitted is not sufficient to make an informed and robust planning decision, or
- Make informed presumptions on what the appropriate information would be and make a planning decision based on those presumptions.

Responding to this consultation

This consultation runs from Friday 27th March until 5pm Friday 8th May 2026.
Comments should be sent via either;

Email to planningpolicy@oadby-wigston.gov.uk. Please put 'Response to Residential Development SPD' in the subject line.

Or by post to

Planning Policy
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council
Brocks Hill Offices
Washbrook Lane
Oadby LE2 5JJ.

A copy of all representations will be made available for public inspection, but personal information will be kept in line with the GDPR.



EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

Name of Policy/Function:		This is new
Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document		This is a change to an existing policy
		This is an existing policy, Function, not previously assessed
	X	This is an existing policy for review

Date of screening	23/02/2026
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1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

Update the existing guidance to applicants seeking to extend/improve their homes.

2. Are there external considerations?

e.g. Legislation/government directive etc

Production of supplementary planning documents is governed by Local Plan Regulations 2012 (as amended). The content is at the discretion of the local authority.

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

The Council – so officers have to spend less time negotiating with applicants to improve the quality of their proposals or have to refuse applications and then justify their refusal at appeal.

Applicants – to know upfront what will be required from them so their applications will either be approved quicker as they won't require so much amendment or that they'll be refused so they need to make amendments before submitting.

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

Council - Less time spent on small applications so more efficient,
Applicants – more likely to be approved, decision delivered quicker,

Public – better street scene through higher quality schemes.

5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

Consultation on the document will take place for 6 weeks between Mar-May 2026. The 6 week consultation period is required by the regulations referred to above.

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	Neutral
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Neutral
Age	Neutral
Gender Reassignment	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual Orientation	Neutral
Religion/Belief	Neutral
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral

8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?

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

No.

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. Planning applications are submitted by the public and assessed by the Council's planning department.

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: Peter Heath.....Date: 23/02/2026.....
(Senior Planning Officer)

Countersigned by:Date:.....
(Head of Service)

Screened by:.....Date:.....

Please forward an electronic copy to: mark.smith@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
(*Community Safety & Youth Officer*)

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 13



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 24 March 2026	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Residents' Forum Funding Request**

Report Author(s): **Mark Smith (Community Safety & Youth Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	To inform Members of a funding request that has received approval via the South Wigston Residents' Forums to enable a final decision regarding payment to the requesting party.
Report Summary:	Residents, via the South Wigston Residents' Forums, have agreed a funding request at the May 2025 meeting to be paid via their forum budget totalling £300.00. A breakdown of this is provided in the main body of this report. Members consent is required before the request is finalised and payment made to the requesting party.
Recommendation(s):	A. That the content of the report is noted; and B. Approval given for the funds to be released to the requesting party.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer) (0116) 257 2759 colleen.warren@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Samuel Ball (Legal & Democratic Services Manager / Monitoring Officer) (Solicitor) (0116) 257 2643 samuel.ball@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Mark Smith (Community Safety & Youth Officer) (0116) 257 2675 mark.smith@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Communities (SO2) Our Partners (SO5)
Vision and Values:	Customer & Community Focused (V1) Proud of Everything We Do (V2) Collaborative & Creative (V3)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out at paragraph 1.1 of 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. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.

Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly 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:	Residents present at the South Wigston Residents' Forum meeting in July 2025
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	None.

1. Resident Forum Funding

- 1.1 Each of the Borough's three Residents' Forums has an allocated budget of £2,000.00 through to the end of March 2026 from which these requests will be funded in full.
- 1.2 The current available budgets for the three Residents' Forums are detailed below;

Forum	Expenditure to Date	Available Budget
Oadby	£500.00	£1,500.00
Wigston	£0.00	£2,000.00
South Wigston	£300.00	£1,700.00

- 1.3 All funding requests received through the Residents' Forums align with the Council's Community and Partner Engagement Strategic Objectives due to the open, public route the requests are made through, and by merit of residents themselves providing the first approval of requests during the Forum meetings.
- 1.4 The request contained within this report aligns with the Council's Visions and Values concerning works being Customer and Community Focussed, by being requested by and approved by residents, and Collaborative and Creative in how the requests provide further community value in their application by engaging with varied groups with social investment in the Borough. The criteria of being 'Proud of Everything We Do' is also fulfilled through the open and public route, and further promotion, funding requests received via the Forum experience.
- 1.5 It is recommended that Members approve the funding request as set out below so that funds can be released to the relevant party in a timely manner.

2. South Wigston Residents' Forum

- 2.1 During the meeting of the South Wigston Residents' Forum on 27 May 2025 a request was made for funding to purchase a Union Flag and Standard for Remembrance Sunday.
- 2.2 The Forum heard that the Flag and Standard would be stored at St Thomas' Church and be used across the Borough. Both items would be purchased through the Oadby &

Wigston Armed Forces Veterans Breakfast Club (AFVBC).

- 2.3 It was proposed within the Forum meeting that **£300.00** be made available to the AFVBC to support this purchase. This was voted on within the Forum and received majority approval from residents present at the meeting.
- 2.4 As of the date of this Committee the Flag and Standard have both been purchased, and the approved funds are required for reimbursement of the AFVBC.



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 24 March 2026	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Standards & Ethical Indicators (Q3 2025/26)**

Report Author(s): **Dave Gill (Legal Consultant / Interim Monitoring Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	To receive the figures for local determination of complaints and ethical indicators for Q3 2025/26.
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 and appendix be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer) (0116) 257 2642 colleen.warren@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Dave Gill (Legal Consultant / Interim Monitoring Officer) (0116) 257 2625 dave.gill1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Communities (SO2) Our Council (SO1)
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 2025/26)

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 Q3 of 2025/26.
- 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 Q3 report for 2025/26 is attached at **Appendix 1** for Members' information.



OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS AND ETHICAL INDICATORS

QUARTER 3 REPORT

2025/26

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 2025/26.

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 2025/26.

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	
			2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026
LG1	Objections to the Council's Accounts	Head of Finance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG2	Follow up Action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (Members)	Monitoring Officer	0	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	0	
LG4	Number of Whistle Blowing Incidents Reported	Monitoring Officer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG5	No. of Recommendations made to improve Governance Procedures/Policies		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG6	No. of Recommendations Implemented		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Corporate Complaints

Ref	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026
LG7	No. Corporate Complaints received	Customer Service Supervisor	57	20	60 (38 dealt with as early resolution, 22 were stage 1)	24	11	18	67	
	No. Corporate Complaints escalated to L2		4	2	7	8	6	7	2	
	No. Corporate Complaints escalated to Ombudsman		0	0	3	0	1	0	1	
LG7a	No. Corporate Complaints Resolved at L1		53	18	15	19	5	11	65	
	No. Corporate Complaints Resolved at L2		4	2	7	8	6	5	2	
LG7b	No. Corporate Complaints where compensation paid		0	0	4	2	1	2	1	
	Service Area		Council Tax	NA	Corporate assets, Waste, Housing	Housing	Housing	Housing	Housing	
LG8	No. Ombudsman complaints received		0	0	3	0	1	1	1	
	Service Area		N/A		Housing, Corporate assets	N/A	Housing	Housing	Housing	
LG8a	No. Ombudsman complaints resolved		N/A	0	0	0	1	1	1	
LG8b	No. Ombudsman complaints not yet determined by the Ombudsman		0	1	3	0	1	0	3	
LG8c	No. Ombudsman complaints where compensation paid		0	0	0	0	1	0	1	

Freedom of Information Act Indicators

Ref	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026
LG9a	No. of FOI Requests Compliant	Data Protection Officer	154	190	143	207	169	166	202	
LG9b	No. of Non-compliant FOI Requests		41	3	24	37	9	26	7	
LG9c	No. of FOI Requests still open and within the 20 working days		0	0	0	1	9	0	0	
LG9d	No. of FOI Requests withheld due to exemptions/fees applied		0	0	3	2	0	0	8	

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Indicators

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026
LG10	No. of Directed Surveillance Authorisations granted during the quarter	Monitoring Officer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10a	No. in force at the end of the quarter		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10b	No. of CHIS recruited during the quarter		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10c	No. ceased to be used during the quarter		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10d	No. active at the end of the quarter		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10e	No. of breaches (particularly unauthorised surveillance)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10f	No. of applications submitted to obtain communications data which were rejected		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10g	No. of Notices requiring disclosure of communications data		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10h	No. of authorisations for conduct to acquire communications data		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
LG10i	No. of recordable errors		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Anti-Social Behaviour Indicators

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026
	No. of Complaints Registered	Anti-Social Behaviour Officer	0/13	12/5	13/21	10/12	10/12	7/12	12/12	
	No. of Disposals		0/2	1/1	5/1	8/3	8/3	2/2	2/8	
	No. of Complaints still Open		0/0	0/3	12/1	7/4	7/4	4/4	10/2	
	No Further Action (where suspect identified)		0/1	0/2	3/3	2/1	2/1	4/0	2/1	
	No Further Action (no suspect identified)		0/10	11/2	5/17	1/10	1/10	1/10	8/9	

Blue text – Housing
Red text – ASB Officer

Food Safety Inspections

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026	2024/2025	2025/2026
	No. of high-risk Inspections due	Senior Environmental Health Officer	2	0	2	2	2	2	0	
	No. of medium inspections due		5	10	16	19	5	23	1	
BPE31	No new business registered		14	29	17	11	33	13	16	
	No. of high-risk Inspections Completed		1	0	2	2	1	1	8	
	No. of medium/low risk completed		5	12	7	50	1	16	20	
	No. of new business triaged (Initial contact to see if high or low risk)		8	19	7	11	10	13	10	
	No of new businesses inspected (High risk only)		12	5	10	2	1	3	2	
	Formal revisit under the food hygiene rating system		1	1	1	1	0	3	1	

	New businesses		27	0	15	17	15	13	16	
	No. of inspections Outstanding high risk		0	22	2	0	2	1	1	
	No. of Inspections Outstanding medium risk		0	0	10	21	14	7	24	