

Chapter 7: Infrastructure and the Built Environment

Core Strategy Policy 10

Community Infrastructure

Working within the overall context of the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area, the Borough Council will work with Local Strategic Partnerships and the key infrastructure providers to establish a Local Infrastructure Partnership that will prepare, keep under review and implement the Local Infrastructure Plan.

Developer contributions will be sought and used to ensure that new development meets the appropriate and necessary on and off site infrastructure requirements which are required to support the development and mitigate or compensate for the impact of the development on existing community interests and the local environment.

This policy will assist in the delivery of Spatial Objectives 8: Sustainable Design and Infrastructure, Spatial Objective 9: An Accessible Borough and Spatial Objective 10: Promoting Healthy Lifestyles.

- 7.1 New development creates additional pressures on a locality by increasing the need for or pressure on facilities such as healthcare provision, schools, highways, public transport and the environment – the community infrastructure. This policy aims to ensure that infrastructure or facilities delivered as a result of developer contributions are to time and to the appropriate quality and, overall, reflect the impact of the development on the local community and environment.
- 7.2 The Borough Council has worked in partnership with Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and other Leicestershire district councils to prepare a Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Authorities Growth Infrastructure Plan. This was commissioned from Roger Tym and Partners and the Plan was produced in 2009. The Plan identifies the infrastructure implications of housing and jobs growth in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area to 2026. It shows, at a high level, the cumulative infrastructure requirements that arise from growth; how much the infrastructure costs; and how the infrastructure might be funded. It also looks at how the infrastructure requirements of growth might be delivered. Preparation of the Plan involved a wide range of consultation and involvement from both primary and secondary infrastructure providers.
- 7.3 The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing, Planning and Infrastructure Group are responsible for taking forward the Plan, particularly with respect to prioritising infrastructure delivery in the context of available funding streams. However, their emphasis is likely to be directed towards Leicester City and Sustainable Urban Extensions where the vast majority of growth in the Housing Market Area to 2026 is expected to be delivered.
- 7.4 In the Borough of Oadby and Wigston a Local Infrastructure Partnership has been established as a sub group of the Local Strategic Partnership. This is a relatively fluid grouping, seeking to involve those partners and infrastructure providers who are appropriate for each discrete development.





- 7.5** The Local Infrastructure Partnership has prepared a Local Infrastructure Plan. This provides a more detailed and locally focused perspective of the cumulative infrastructure requirements that arise from growth in the Borough. The plan is in conformity with and complements the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Authorities Growth Infrastructure Plan. It builds on the Spatial Objectives and the Core Strategy policies to establish what needs to be done and by when, who needs to do it and what the priorities for action are. Where possible, it identifies capital and, if appropriate, revenue costs together with sources of funding.
- 7.6** The Borough Council has prepared a Green Infrastructure Plan which has a similar role and function to the Local Infrastructure Plan, but deals specifically with Green Infrastructure. This will provide a local context to the 6Cs Growth Point Green Infrastructure Strategy that is being prepared at a regional level. This aims to protect, enhance and extend networks of green spaces and natural elements in and around the three cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby, connecting with their surrounding towns and villages.
- 7.7** The Local Infrastructure Plan and the Green Infrastructure Plan have identified those aspects of infrastructure that are essential in order to support development and mitigate or compensate the impact of the new development on existing community interests. These are identified in Appendix 2.
- 7.8** The plans have also identified those aspects of infrastructure that are optional. These will be identified in a Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document.
- 7.9** Developer contributions is a generic term which can be used to refer to planning gain, planning contributions, Section 106 Agreements and planning obligations. Developer contributions can be provided either as planning agreements or unilateral undertakings made by developers. In most cases the local planning authority and developers finalise developer contributions through a Section 106 planning agreement, within the context of granting planning permission. On occasions a unilateral undertaking may be submitted by a developer to support a proposal. The Planning Obligations Circular (05/05) requires that planning obligations are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, relevant and reasonable. Developer contributions may be provided by way of land, buildings and/or financial contributions. They can take the form of a maintenance payment to allow for the longer term upkeep and maintenance of the facilities and infrastructure.



- 7.10** Examples of infrastructure which may be sought through developer contributions include;
- affordable or specialist housing needs;
 - open space and play facilities;
 - sporting and leisure centre facilities;
 - local education investment provision;
 - highways and public transport improvements;
 - healthcare provision and social services;
 - local waste management and recycling;
 - environmental works including benefits to local biodiversity, the cultural and historic environment and other Green Infrastructure;
 - new provision of repairs and/or improvements to community buildings
 - public art in the community;
 - crime prevention and community safety provision; and
 - flood protection.
- 7.11** The Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document will incorporate a review of all existing policy and guidance relating to developer contributions in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. The involvement of Local Strategic Partnerships and the local community will be sought to ensure that the requirements of all partners, infrastructure providers and communities are taken into account. Where relevant, the Supplementary Planning Document will identify thresholds of development that may require the provision of, and developer contributions towards, infrastructure.
- 7.12** The Community Infrastructure Levy 2010 was enacted on Tuesday 6 April 2010 and therefore the Borough Council will consider its position with regards to how it will take the Community Infrastructure Levy into consideration as Government guidance to Local Authorities becomes clearer. The Local Authority is committed to the production of a Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document and shall consult on this in autumn of 2010 with a view to adoption in February 2011. Should the Borough Council seek to pursue a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Regime, a separate legal document will be subject to an independent examination.





Core Strategy Policy 11

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing will be sought to meet identified local needs on all developments of 10 dwellings or more.

Affordable housing is sought to support the creation of balanced and sustainable communities. There is no upper limit to the level of affordable housing that can be delivered on a site. In line with the current Affordable Housing Viability Assessment, the following targets apply:

- Oadby - 30 per cent
- Wigston – 20 per cent
- South Wigston – 10 per cent

Based on these figures, some 160 affordable homes will be provided in the Borough from 2009 to 2026, disaggregated within the main settlements as follows:

- Oadby - 40
- Wigston – 90*
- South Wigston – 30

Proposals for development which would not provide affordable housing in line with or in excess of the targets should be accompanied by an individual site viability assessment to justify the level of provision. An individual site viability analysis will be required in relation to the Direction for Growth.

Off-site contributions for affordable housing in lieu of on-site provision will only be supported where there is clear evidence that the site is not suitable or viable. Where 100 per cent provision of affordable housing is proposed by a Registered Social Landlord the Council will consider negotiation on other planning obligations.

Where possible, affordable housing provided through this policy should be retained within the affordable housing stock for the longer term, regardless of tenure. Where the affordable housing is not maintained by a Registered Social Landlord, appropriate planning conditions will be imposed or a planning obligation will be negotiated.

In order to meet local needs a target of 80 per cent of affordable housing should be for social rent and 20 per cent for intermediate housing.

The targets for affordable housing and tenure split will be subject to regular monitoring and measured against changes in the housing market and local circumstances.

** Note: the figure for Wigston does not include the Direction for Growth as it will be subject to individual site viability analysis and it is anticipated that it will deliver affordable housing in excess of the current 20 per cent target for Wigston.*



- 7.13** Although Oadby and Wigston is a relatively wealthy Borough there is still a significant need for affordable housing which is likely to rise over the plan period. It appears many households needing to access affordable housing are masked by this perception of affluence. This has been evidenced through the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment prepared in 2008.
- 7.14** The study identifies trends across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (as defined in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment) and the sub-markets that function within it. The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (December 2008) indicated that there was an annual shortfall of 214 dwelling units up to 2016. New housing in the Borough will be provided at a level of 90 dwellings per annum. This would require the Council to set a threshold for affordable housing provision of 238 per cent.
- 7.15** The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment acknowledge that 238% is not a target percentage that is realistic or achievable. It further states that percentage targets over 40% would be impracticable in terms of viability, the wider market and mixed communities. The study recommends that local planning authorities set appropriate local percentage targets, taking into account the factors above. This is in line with Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (June 2010).
- 7.16** The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment further indicates that currently an appropriate tenure split should be 80% of affordable housing for social rent and 20 per cent for intermediate needs (definitions of each tenure are contained in the Glossary). The Borough Council have adopted this recommendation within Core Strategy Policy 12 but have set the tenure split as a target to allow flexibility in its application on a site by site basis in consultation with developers and the Council's Strategic Housing Department.
- 7.17** A Borough-wide Affordable Housing Viability Assessment was prepared in August 2009. The aim of the study was to provide further evidence in relation to:
- appropriate local targets;
 - funding sources (e.g. public subsidy, developer contributions);
 - priority infrastructure needs;
 - land viability; and
 - the level of commuted sums
- 7.18** The Affordable Housing Viability Assessment identified five sub market areas based on post code vectors. These are: Prime Oadby; Oadby; Wigston; South Wigston (north of the railway line) and South Wigston (south of the railway line). Between these sub areas current market values vary significantly which has a marked effect on residual values. The findings of the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment recommended that due to the considerable variation in residual values between the sub markets in the Borough, the Council could adopt a split percentage threshold across the Borough's three settlements. The study proposed percentage targets for affordable housing based on identified local needs for each settlement of: Oadby – 30 per cent; Wigston – 20 per cent and South Wigston – 10 per cent.





- 7.19** The policies and targets within the Core Strategy will be subject to regular monitoring in line with Planning Policy Statement 12 Local Spatial Planning and Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide (ODPM 2005). In addition, over the plan period it is likely that elements of the evidence will be reviewed, such as the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment and the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, in order to keep abreast of changes in the housing market and local circumstances. The Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document will include guidance for calculating developer contributions for off site affordable housing provision or commuted sums in line with the methodology set out in the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment.
- 7.20** With regard to the Direction for Growth at Wigston, an individual site viability analysis will be required in order to inform masterplanning work, relevant local development documents and any subsequent planning application. This is because the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment and the Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities Growth Infrastructure Plan indicate that a minimum threshold higher than the 20 per cent identified for Wigston is achievable on a site of this nature. However, due to the fact that market conditions and viability will change during the life of the Core Strategy and that the Direction for Growth is not scheduled to begin until 2017 at the earliest it is more appropriate to undertake such an analysis closer to the time that development is likely to start.
- 7.21** Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (June 2010) advocates that local planning authorities should set a plan-wide target in local development documents for the amount of affordable housing to be provided. Between 2009 and 2026 the overall Borough-wide target for affordable housing provision is 160 dwellings. This is split between the Borough's settlements as being 40 dwellings for Oadby, 90 dwellings for Wigston and 30 dwellings for South Wigston. Market conditions will change during the life of the Core Strategy so it is desirable that policies put in place for affordable housing delivery are designed and applied with considerable flexibility otherwise future housing development may be stunted. There are likely to be developments in some areas which can support a higher percentage of affordable housing contribution (subject to individual site viability analysis). Proposals for a higher provision of affordable housing will be supported. With regard to the target for Wigston, this does not include the Direction for Growth. This is because it will be subject to individual site viability analysis and it is anticipated that it will deliver affordable housing in excess of the current 20 per cent target for Wigston. Reference should be made to paragraphs 3.41 to 3.44 of the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment (August 2009). The amount of affordable housing expected to be delivered in the Direction for Growth will be set out in the Allocations Development Plan Document and will also include an updated overall Borough Affordable Housing target to take account of the amount to be delivered through the Direction for Growth.
- 7.22** The Allocations Development Plan Document will contain site specific policies, in relation to housing development. In addition, it is likely that some allocated sites will have specific targets for affordable housing based on individual site viability analysis and identified local needs.
- 7.23** In terms of an appropriate site size threshold, the Council has established a dwelling size threshold of 10 or more dwellings in line with the findings of the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment. This reflects the predominately urban nature of the Borough and the fact that many of the sites developed for housing are often small in size.
- 7.24** Although Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (June 2010) states that the national indicative minimum site size threshold is 15 dwellings. Local Planning Authorities are able to set lower minimum thresholds, where viable and practicable.



- 7.25** In relation to proposals for off-site contribution in lieu of on site provision of affordable housing, this will only be acceptable if the developer can demonstrate clear evidence that on-site provision is not suitable or viable. In addition the Council will encourage residential site layouts that have all dwelling units developed to the same architectural standards, with no noticeable change in elevations of property or landscaping, irrespective of tenure. Adopting a 'tenure blindness' approach on all sites will help towards the objective of creating balanced and inclusive communities in line with paragraph 16 of Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (January 2005).
- 7.26** Further guidance will also be contained in the subsequent local development documents: Allocations Development Plan Document, Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plans, Guidelines for New Development Supplementary Planning Document (in relation to allocated sites) and the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (in relation to off-site provision).
- 7.27** Where 100 per cent provision of affordable housing is proposed by a Registered Social Landlord the Council will consider negotiation on other planning obligations. Further guidance in relation to the appropriate amount of contribution will be contained in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 7.28** With regard to specific proposals where provision of affordable housing might prejudice other objectives of the Core Strategy, the Council may consider adopting a flexible approach towards the provision of affordable housing.

Retention of Affordable Housing Stock

- 7.29** It is desirable to ensure that affordable housing delivered through this policy remains available to meet local housing needs beyond the first occupier. To ensure the delivery and long term occupation of affordable housing, it will be preferable for a specialist organisation, such as a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) or Trust, to be involved in the ownership and management of the resultant dwellings. Management of affordable housing by a Registered Social Landlord or Trust will be formalised through the use of a legal agreement. However, the right of occupants of shared ownership housing to staircase to full ownership means that shared ownership housing cannot remain affordable in perpetuity. In addition, Right to Acquire schemes allows eligible Registered Social Landlord and Trust tenants to buy their property at a reduced cost. Both systems effectively convert former affordable housing into market housing. The Council will support agreements that seek to enable the affordable housing provider to buy back the unit for affordable housing should the owner move on.





Core Strategy Policy 12

Housing Needs of the Community

Development will be permitted which contributes to meeting the identified housing needs of different groups in the community through the provision on suitable sites of one or more of the following:

- a range of housing types, unit sizes and tenures to help create mixed and inclusive communities, provide a choice of housing and meet identified local housing needs;
- dwellings designed with the capability of being adapted to meet the needs of all occupiers in line with national best practice

Where proposals are made for development to meet specific local housing needs, the following criteria should be applied:

- proposals should be located within or adjoining the Leicester Principal Urban Area where there is access to a range of essential local services and facilities;
- proposals should be located close to public transport routes and accessible by a range of transport modes; and
- proposals should be integrated into the existing wider community to help create mixed and inclusive communities.

Proposals that seek to meet the needs of specific groups identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment or other appropriate evidence will be supported.

This policy will assist in the delivery of Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of Town and District Centres, Spatial Objective 6: Growth of the Principal Urban Area, Spatial Objective 7: A Balanced Housing Market and, Spatial Objective 8: Sustainable Design and Infrastructure

- 7.30** Local Development Documents should contain policies which seek to address the needs of different households and groups, for both affordable and market housing. This accords with the Government's key housing policy goal of ensuring that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. This is in line with the Council's objective of creating balanced, mixed and inclusive communities and the Local Strategic Partnership's priority of meeting the housing needs of local people. The Borough Council attempts to influence housing variety through negotiation, the preparation of development briefs and by entering into legal agreements with developers. The Borough Council seeks to encourage a reasonable mix of house sizes and types to cater for a range of identified housing needs. Core Strategy Policy 12 seeks to encourage developers to provide that mix.



- 7.31** All new residential development should seek to address the need for differing household sizes and the needs of diverse groups within the Borough. The Borough's household needs are varied and include single people, couples with and without children, black and minority ethnic groups, older people and the frail elderly. Some households will also have special needs such as people with physical disabilities, learning difficulties, mental health problems and sensory disabilities. Sometimes these specific needs occur in the same households i.e. a couple where one partner has a disability. Homes required to help address these differing needs can also be diverse, ranging from dwellings with more or less bedrooms and/or different styles of accommodation: flats, houses, bungalows, communal living units etc. All proposals for new housing, including those that affect existing housing stock, will need to be of a high quality and design. The delivery of new housing should not only meet existing needs but also the aspirations of people as their needs change over time.
- 7.32** The appropriate mix of different household types, sizes and tenures will be identified through sub-regional and local housing market assessments and other relevant studies. The shortfalls in particular housing types will vary across the Borough and over the plan period. The current Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008) identified demographic trends and the types of housing likely to be needed by 2016. As the urban area of the Borough lies within the Leicester Principal Urban Area, many of the trends and wider housing needs relevant to Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston are contained in the section relating to Leicester City.
- 7.33** The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment estimated the types of household that would need to be accommodated in the Borough by 2016 based on demographic trends. Although some variation throughout the Borough was identified, the study highlighted the following household types as having the most dominance and growth in the Borough, up to 2016 and likely beyond:
- families with children;
 - single person households, especially a significant 'patch' within South Wigston;
 - couples with no children, this is likely to include new family formation and families where the children have grown up and left home (empty nesters); and
 - older couples and single elderly (aged over 65 years).
- 7.34** Although there is an understanding of the type of households requiring housing, assumptions still need to be made regarding the unit size and type of housing that would need to be provided to meet this need. The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment gave an estimate of the likely profile of household types that will require market housing to 2016. The estimate is based on an assumption of the type of accommodation that may be suitable and acceptable to each group. It cannot be guaranteed that groups will find the assumed accommodation suitable or acceptable. The study assumed that to respond, the dominant household types in the Borough's new residential developments should seek to provide the following dwelling types at the stated percentages.





	Household type likely to need the unit type and size	Approximate shape of housing stock required in 2016
Small to medium units (1 and 2 bed flats, 2 bed houses, 2 bed bungalows)	Single person households Couples with no children Older couples/single households	32%
Medium to large units (3 to 4 plus bedroom houses)	Families with children	63%

Figure 10: Projected household and optimum housing stock up to 2016
Source: Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008)

7.35 In terms of ethnic makeup, although the Borough is predominantly White British, a significant section of the community is Asian (mainly of Indian descent). In particular, Oadby is a popular residential location for Asian families moving out of Leicester City. Different ethnic communities produce distinct pressures and dimensions and housing needs, choices and options. This is particularly pertinent in terms of the Borough’s aging community. However, at present there is insufficient evidence to quantify what these specific needs may be. Over the course of the plan period the evidence base will be regularly reviewed and additional more focused research on specific groups needs is likely to be prepared. The most up to date assessment of local housing needs should be taken into consideration when applying this policy.

Extra Care Housing

7.36 Extra care housing describes a type of specialised housing that provides independence and choice to adults with varying care needs and enables them to be accommodated in their own homes. Services are provided in a purpose built housing environment with care and support delivered to meet individual resident’s needs. An extra care housing scheme is usually a group of apartments or bungalows built on the same site, providing specialised accommodation and support services on hand 24 hours a day. The accommodation can be rented or bought, either by an individual or couples. This type of housing typically includes communal facilities such as meals, domestic help, leisure and recreational facilities within a protected environment. Where communal facilities are included as part of a development, these should be accessible to neighbouring communities, where possible, to foster balanced inclusive communities.



Life time Homes Standard

7.37 The Council will encourage new housing to be built to meet the Lifetime Homes Standards. These are a set of home design principles which seek to ensure that homes meet the varied and often changing needs of occupiers over time. First developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 1991, the current standard comprises of 16 design features which should be incorporated into new dwellings to make housing more functional for everyone including families, disabled people and older people. They also include future-proofing features that enable cheaper, simpler adaptations to be made when needed, for example, making the getting into and around the home easier for everyone, whether due to limited mobility, being elderly or families with small children. Good accessibility is relevant to everyone. The Standards go beyond those currently required by the Building Regulations. However, the Government is currently promoting the Standards through the Code for Sustainable Homes with the overall aim of all housing being built to meet the Standards from 2013. Details regarding the current 16 design features which make up the Standards can be found at www.lifetimehomes.org.uk.

Special and Adapted Accommodation Needs

7.38 The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment estimates that the need for special and adapted accommodation within the wider housing market area will be around 150 units up to 2016. This figure has not been broken down further to district level at this time. Should a proportion of this need be allocated to the Borough, Core Strategy Policy 12 will provide the policy framework by which this could be delivered.

7.39 Leicestershire County Council's Adult Social Care Service produce plans and strategies in relation to the specific housing requirements of particular groups, for example adults and young people with mental health conditions and extra care housing for older people. Core Strategy Policy 12 seeks to provide the policy framework by which these plans and strategies can be realised through the planning system in the first instance. More detailed proposals will be taken through the Allocations Development Plan Document.





Core Strategy Policy 13

Provision of Gypsy and Traveller Sites

The Council will allocate land through the Allocations Development Plan Document for at least 1 residential pitch for Gypsies and Travellers.

The following criteria should be applied in the determination of proposals for new or existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites:

- be reasonably accessible, by a range of transport modes, to essential local services and facilities including shops, schools and doctors' surgeries
- preference would be given to sites which are within or adjacent to the Leicester Principal Urban Area
- there is safe and appropriate access to the highway network, with adequate provision for parking and servicing of vehicles;
- is, or can be, served by adequate water and sewerage facilities where possible;
- is not located within Flood Zones 2 or 3, is not on contaminated land or within an area of poor ambient air quality;
- is capable of sensitive visual integration into existing surroundings;
- would not adversely impact upon environmentally sensitive areas or areas of heritage and landscape character importance; and
- would not have an unacceptable impact on adjoining neighbours and land uses.

All proposals for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site development should be in accordance with current National design guidance where possible and/or appropriate.

This policy will assist in the delivery of Spatial Objective 7: A Balanced Housing Market, Spatial Objective 9: An Accessible Borough, Spatial Objective 10: Promoting Healthy Lifestyles and Spatial Objective 11: Empowering a Safe Community

- 7.40** It is important to provide for the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the wider context of meeting identified local housing needs. Definitions for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople can be found in the glossary.
- 7.41** In order to assess these needs, a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland was carried out. This provided the evidence necessary to inform the development of policy in the now revoked East Midlands Regional Plan.
- 7.42** For Oadby & Wigston, the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment identified a need arising for 1 residential pitch. The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment defines a pitch as an 'area of land on a Gypsy and Traveller caravan site developed for a single family'. The location of a site to meet this need will be identified through the Allocations Development Plan Document.



- 7.43** In relation to Travelling Showpeople there is no net additional requirement in the Borough identified at this time.
- 7.44** The Core Strategy must also contain a criteria based policy for the provision of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites. This should be used to guide the allocation of sites to meet identified accommodation needs and unexpected demand. The policy should seek to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers are accommodated in sustainable locations with access to a range of essential services such as education, healthcare, welfare, shops, water and sewerage facilities where possible (such as connection to the main sewer or through provision of a septic tank). The location of the site should not result in unacceptable living conditions for its occupants such as contaminated land, poor ambient air quality or being within an area liable to flooding.
- 7.45** Where permission is granted, appropriate conditions or planning obligations are likely to be used to ensure occupation of the site is restricted to those persons genuinely falling within the appropriate definition of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. In addition, proposals should be in accordance with guidelines contained in Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, Good Practice Guide (CLG May 2008).
- 7.46** The Council will give preference to locations firstly within, and then adjacent to the Leicester Principal Urban Area in line with Core Strategy Policy 1: Spatial Strategy for Development in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston.
- 7.47** Core Strategy Policy 8 Climate Change and Renewable Energy requires new residential development to demonstrate how it reflects current nationally prescribed sustainable buildings standards for energy efficiency. Gypsy and Traveller sites are defined as residential development. It would be unreasonable to expect residential caravans to accord with Policy 8 on measures to combat climate change and promote use of renewable energy. However, proposals for any permanent dwellings will be subject to Core Strategy Policy 8.





Core Strategy Policy 14

Design and Construction

The Council will require high quality inclusive design for all new development and major refurbishment in Oadby and Wigston.

Proposals for new development and major refurbishment will need to demonstrate how the proposed development:

- respects local character, patterns of development, is sympathetic to its surroundings and should contribute to creating buildings and places that are attractive with their own distinct identity;
- promotes safe and inclusive communities able to be accessible to all members of the community regardless of any disability or background and to encourage sustainable means of travel;
- will provide opportunities to promote biodiversity;
- will create, enhance or improve accessibility, legibility, permeability and connectivity;
- will provide opportunities for well designed and integrated public art;
- incorporates measures to minimise waste and energy consumption, conserve water resources and provide for renewable energy generation, in accordance with Core Strategy Policies 8 and 9;
- utilises inclusive design principles including layout, orientation, landscape, streetscape, scale, materials, natural surveillance and sustainable construction; and
- achieves layout and design that is safe, secure and enhances community safety.

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

Major development including large-scale refurbishment will require preparation of a Masterplan, Development Brief, Concept Statement and/or Design Code where appropriate.

Proposals for innovative design or construction that contributes to the aims of sustainable development and reducing the impacts of climate change will be considered favourably by the Council.

This policy will assist in the delivery of Spatial Objective 8: Sustainable Design and Infrastructure, and Spatial Objective 11: Empowering a Safe Community

- 7.48** In essence design is a creative process. It is a cross-cutting issue which permeates nearly all other policy areas. Design in planning should be about making places good for people to use in terms of functionality, durability, accessibility and viability. High quality and inclusive design should reflect local character and distinctiveness and be the basis for shaping balanced, safe, healthy and integrated communities. It is important to recognise that design is not just about the visual and functional aspects of a development but also its influence on social and environmental aspects.



Core Strategy

Part of the Oadby and Wigston Local Development Framework

- 7.49** Core Strategy Policy 14 Design and Sustainable Construction sets out the context for achieving the level of high quality design the Council wishes to see realised in the Borough. All significant developments in the Borough should consider both the 'Association of Chief Police Officers Secured by Design Initiative' and the 'Home Office and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Safer Places' guidance.
- 7.50** The cross-cutting nature of design is particularly emphasised through National planning policy. Several Planning Policy Statements contain guidance about the importance of inclusive design and the benefits that can be gained from making good design integral to new development and refurbishment. Those Planning Policy Guidance/Statements that provide design advice that is key to the delivery of the spatial strategy include:
- Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (January 2005) advocates a considered and consistent approach to design policies, based on a thorough understanding of a local area especially it's defining characteristics and needs;
 - Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (June 2010) states that good design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing and thus contributes to the creation of sustainable mixed communities;
 - Planning Policy Statement 4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (December 2009) reiterates the importance of high quality inclusive design in relation to development in town centres and, in particular, the public realm;
 - Planning Policy Guidance 13 Transport (March 2001) highlights how design has a part to play in shaping patterns of development which can help reduce the need to travel, reduce the length of journeys and making access to jobs, shopping and leisure facilities easier by non-car modes of transport.
- 7.51** By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System (2000) is the Government's companion guidance to that contained in Planning Policy Guidance/Statements on issue of design. By Design, sets out seven key urban design objectives that are fundamental to guiding new development:

Character	To promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture
Continuity and enclosure	To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public areas
Quality of the public realm	To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people
Ease of movement	To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport
Legibility	To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around
Adaptability	To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions
Diversity	To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs

Figure 11: Seven Key Urban Design Objectives
Source: By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System (2000)





- 7.52** By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System (2000) was prepared by the Commission for Architecture and Built Environment (CABE) which is a statutory body established in 1999 to provide guidance and advice on matters of design in relation to buildings, parks and open spaces.
- 7.53** In line with Government Circular 01/2006 Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System, all applications for new development must be supported by a Design and Access Statement. The Borough Council will expect the Design and Access Statement to show how all design issues covered in the policy have been met in developing the proposal. The level of detail required will vary according to the scale and nature of the development.
- 7.54** Applicants for major and complex proposals, as defined by the Borough Council, will be required to produce either a masterplan or development brief to accompany a planning application, in order to clearly demonstrate how the development process will deliver a high quality development with an appropriate sense of place. In some cases, such proposals may alternatively be dealt with through an Area Action Plan.
- 7.55** Design codes and concept statements can also be utilised to aid understanding of a proposal and clarify compliance with the policy. Annex B of Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (June 2010) describes design codes as *“a set of illustrated design rules and requirements which instruct and may advise on the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code are detailed and precise, and built upon a design vision such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.”* Concept statements are simple documents, usually only a page or two in length, that show how the design has been developed. Concept statements do not address the details of design, and the development of the statements themselves does not require design expertise. They do, however, offer a way of getting the basic principles right.

Sustainable Construction

- 7.56** Developments should be adaptable and designed to reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change, throughout the proposed lifetime of the development. The use of sustainable building materials and the re-use of materials in all developments will be encouraged, as will the use of recycled aggregates in the construction of buildings. This will be subject to the impact on the amenity of the local environment, taking into account the existing character of the area. Developers should seek to optimise design, layout and orientation of development to minimise energy use. Reference should also be made to Core Strategy Policy 8 Climate Change and Renewable Energy where it relates to sustainable construction.
- 7.57** In Policy RWS 1.1 of the Regional Waste Strategy for the East Midlands (January 2006), local development documents are required to encourage re-use and recycling in design, construction and demolition, in particular planning applications for developments which are likely to generate substantial volumes of waste through their development should include a waste audit.
- 7.58** Further guidance in relation to specific areas, sites and development on design issues and requirements for masterplans and development briefs will be contained in the planned Allocations Development Plan Document, Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plans, Guidelines for New Development Supplementary Planning Guidance. Further supplementary design policy or advice is likely to be prepared during the life of the Core Strategy, for example, a Public Realm Strategy. Developers are reminded to ensure current site specific design guidance is taken into account prior to submission of an application.



Core Strategy

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- 7.59** Reference should also be made to the following Core Strategy policies where they relate to design: Core Strategy Policy 1 Spatial Strategy; Core Strategy Policy 2 Development in the Centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston; Core Strategy Policy 3 Regeneration Schemes; Core Strategy Policy 5 Green Infrastructure; Core Strategy Policy 7 The Countryside; Core Strategy Policy 8 Climate Change and Renewable Energy; Core Strategy Policy 11 Affordable Housing; Core Strategy Policy 12 Housing Needs of the Community; Core Strategy Policy 13 Provision of Gypsy and Traveller Sites; Core Strategy Policy 15 Landscape and Character; and, Core Strategy Policy 16 Community Facilities and Places of Worship.

Core Strategy Policy 15

Landscape and Character

All development proposals will be considered against the need to protect and enhance the distinctive landscape and historic character of the Borough. They should reflect the prevailing quality, character and features such as settlement pattern, views, biodiversity and local distinctiveness.

The Borough Council will take into account any potential impacts on the character and quality of the landscape and built environment, particularly where this relates to nationally designated areas or features of landscape and cultural significance. Landscape Character Assessments, Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans will be prepared and used to improve the quality of development, to assess potential impacts and support the enhancement of landscape as part of site restoration.

The Leicestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation will be taken into account when proposals are being considered.

The Borough Council will encourage the preservation and enhancement of the distinctive character and appearance of archaeological sites, listed buildings and buildings of local importance, Conservation Areas and other cultural assets that are of significant value.

The preservation and enhancement of local distinctiveness will be enabled by the publication of a list which identifies key local buildings, structures and features which are not eligible for listing under the statutory regime but contribute to the local character. Special consideration should be given to development or works which would likely prejudice known sites of archaeological interest.

The historic character and ecological value of the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area will be protected.

This policy will assist in the delivery of Spatial Objective 8 Sustainable Design and Infrastructure and Spatial Objective 14: Enhancing Local Heritage



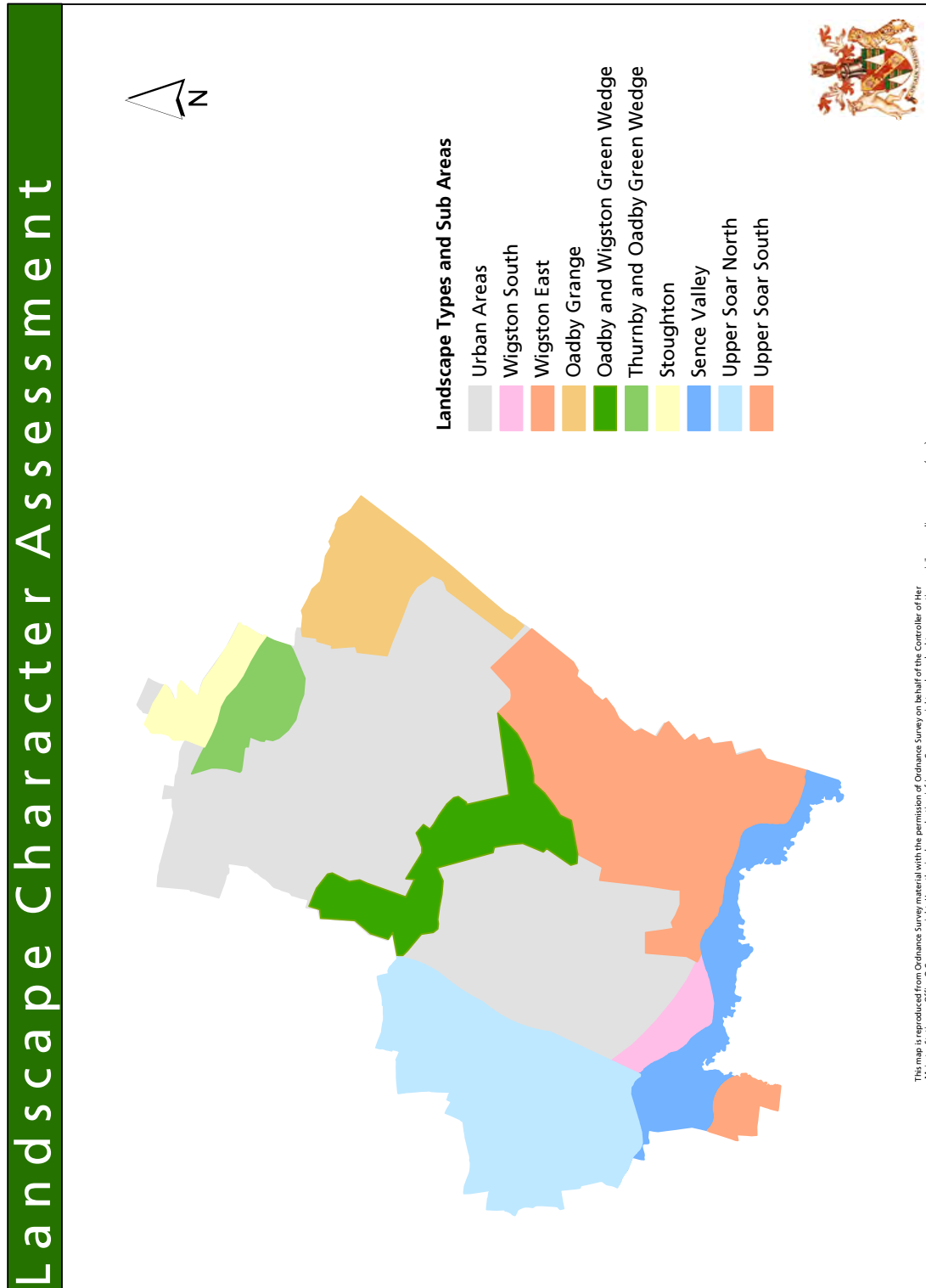


- 7.60** Listed buildings are of national importance, representing the best of our historic and architectural built heritage. The Borough of Oadby and Wigston contains 38 listed structures and it is vital that any works affecting them or other buildings of local importance is guided by appreciation for both their importance and planning controls that apply. There is a presumption in favour of retaining and preserving listed buildings and features of architectural or historic interest, with the best way of securing their future is usually to keep them in active use.
- 7.61** Conservation Areas exist to assist the preservation and enhancement of areas of particular architectural or historic interest. Legislation requires that special attention is paid to this objective in exercising planning control and, therefore, the Borough Council has prepared Conservation Areas Appraisals and management plans for all of its designated Conservation Areas. The character of Conservation Areas is often the product of various elements such as the mixture and style of buildings, the extent and form of open spaces and the natural elements such as trees and hedges.
- 7.62** The demolition of buildings within Conservation Areas can have a damaging effect by removing structures that contribute to their character or leaving unsightly gaps in the built-up area. Hence, as with listed buildings, it is appropriate to employ a presumption in favour of retention. Where a building makes little or no contribution to the street scene, demolition may be considered where detailed plans for the site's redevelopment have been approved, to ensure that the scheme will conserve and enhance the character of the area.
- 7.63** The Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document (September 2008) identifies the boundaries of the Borough of Oadby and Wigston's nine Conservation Areas, including the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area which includes the settlement of Kilby Bridge.
- 7.64** The Borough Council have prepared a Landscape Character Assessment for the Borough which also incorporates a townscape character assessment for all of the urban areas within the Borough. All proposals for development should take the Conservation Areas Appraisals and Landscape Character Assessment into account as well as undertaking more detailed site assessment appraisals, where necessary. Figure 12 indicates the landscape types and sub areas within the Borough.
- 7.65** Development proposals should not only be informed by and sympathetic to townscape and landscape character, but also contribute towards the regeneration, restoration, maintenance and conservation of the area affected.



Core Strategy Part of the Oadby and Wigston Local Development Framework

Figure 12: Landscape Character Assessment





Core Strategy Policy 16

Community Facilities and Places of Worship

Community facilities and places of worship will be supported where;

- there is good access by pedestrian routes, cycle routes and public transport;
- sufficient car parking is already available or can be provided to meet the needs of the development;
- residential amenity can be protected from any detrimental impact in terms of noise, traffic and hours of use; and
- the external appearance of the building can provide a sense of place and can positively reflect the character and appearance of its surroundings.

Generally, town centres, district centres and local centres will be the most appropriate locations for community facilities and places of worship.

Where there is an unmet identified need for a community facility or place of worship, permission for changes of use from D1 or D2 will not be permitted unless the location is not suitable to meet the specific requirements of the community facility or place of worship and/or the criteria above cannot be met.

This policy will assist in the delivery of Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of Town and District Centres, Spatial Objective 2: Wigston Town Centre, Spatial Objective 3: Oadby Town Centre, Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston District Centre, Spatial Objective 6: Growth of the Principal Urban Area, Spatial Objective 8: Sustainable Design and Infrastructure, Spatial Objective 9: An Accessible Borough, Spatial Objective 10 Promoting Healthy Lifestyles and Spatial Objective 11: Empowering a Safe Community

- 7.66** Community facilities include facilities such as community halls, health centres, schools and cultural facilities such as museums, libraries and theatres. These facilities will be supported where impacts are not adverse. Places of worship will also be supported where their impacts are not adverse. The Borough Council recognises the lack of facilities for some worshippers in the Borough. The 'Faith Community Profile and Places of Worship Needs Assessment' (December 2008) was commissioned by the Borough Council in an attempt to clarify the needs of the Borough's different faiths for places of worship and to help address deficiencies in provision. This clearly indicated a lack of provision for some faiths in particular. The assessment concluded that worshippers within the Muslim and Hindu communities were not properly catered for within the Borough. Newer Evangelical and Pentecostal churches may need more space within the timescale of the Local Development Framework.
- 7.67** Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plans, development briefs and Supplementary Planning Documents should seek to meet any identified needs for community facilities or places of worship.
- 7.68** Land or buildings currently classified as D1 and D2 under the Use Classes Order (D1 is Non residential institutions such as schools, church halls and places of worship, D2 is assembly and leisure uses such as cinemas, concert halls and sports halls) will not be granted planning permission for alternative uses where it could meet previously unmet demand for places of worship.



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Core Strategy Policy 17

Open Space and Facilities for Leisure, Recreation and Tourism

The Borough Council will seek to ensure that the proposed quantity, quality and access standards for open space, sport and recreation facilities are met in order to satisfy the leisure and recreation needs of the Borough's residents.

The quantity, quality and access standards will be used in relation to open space, sport and recreation facilities within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston, to allow every resident access to adequate, high quality, accessible open space and play areas.

The standards will be taken into account on all new developments within the Borough and will be used to determine:

- where improvements are needed to existing open space and play provision; and
- where new provision of open space and play are required, to support existing and potential residents in the Borough.

In relation to open space, sport and recreation facilities, the Borough Council will seek to protect existing sites from development where there is a demand to retain them where they incorporate a green infrastructure asset that contributes to the green infrastructure in the Borough; and where the equivalent cannot be provided elsewhere. New development will be expected to contribute either physically or financially to the provision or improvement of open space, sport and recreational facilities. Also, the enhancement and protection of recreational Rights of Way will be sought.

Facilities for open space, sport and recreational facilities should:

- be located close to their intended population catchment areas;
- be accessible by a choice of transport modes other than the private car;
- be of an appropriate scale and design; and
- seek positive impacts to landscape form.

Within the Green Wedges, facilities for outdoor sport and recreation may be appropriate providing they conform to other policies and plans related to these areas.

The Borough Council will support the retention and expansion of existing tourism facilities and strategic areas of open space. Sustainable growth of appropriate tourism will be encouraged through the provision of new facilities. The Borough's industrial and architectural heritage will be further protected, enhanced and promoted as an attraction to local residents, local people and visitors.

The revitalisation of the Grand Union Canal will be enabled through protection of its route and promotion of support initiatives that encourage tourism development around the Kilby Bridge area. These should be in keeping with the scale and character of the settlement and take account of the wider landscape and biodiversity issues including Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

This policy will assist in the delivery of Spatial Objective 8: Sustainable Design and Infrastructure, Spatial Objective 9: An Accessible Borough, Spatial Objective 10: Promoting Healthy Lifestyles, Spatial Objective 11: Empowering a Safe Community, Spatial Objective 12: Protecting and Enhancing Green Infrastructure, Spatial Objective 13: Green Wedges and The Countryside, Spatial Objective 14: Enhancing Local Heritage





- 7.69** Open space, sport, recreation and leisure all underpin peoples' quality of life, with well designed and implemented planning policy for such being fundamental in delivering the broader Government objectives of supporting urban renaissance; supporting rural renewal; promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion; health and well being; and, promoting more sustainable development.
- 7.70** This policy aims to ensure that leisure and recreational facilities are located in areas of greatest need and in line with the Spatial Strategy. This will enable a variety of activities to be developed and linked to the various green and community infrastructure proposals contained within the Core Strategy. This will widen opportunities for people living in the Borough to access leisure and recreation more easily without the need to travel long distances and will also contribute towards healthier lifestyles. Access by sustainable means, for example, cycle ways and improved safer walking routes, as well as improved public transport links are vital in order to provide access for the entire community.
- 7.71** Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (July 2002) requires that an open space, sport and recreation facilities study is carried out. In 2008 JPC Consultants were commissioned to undertake an audit for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston with the overall aim of producing a report that researched, analysed and produced conclusions on the Borough's open spaces, play provision and built facilities. The study undertook assessment and audits of quantity and quality and plotted all open space, sports and recreational facilities in the Borough to identify the needs of residents, the potential for increased use, as well as, to establish an effective strategy for open space, sports and recreational facilities at a local level.
- 7.72** From the report a number of standards emerged with regards to provision for both open space and built facilities, set out in the table below. Together, each of the typologies referred to in the table, combine to form the Borough's open space, sport and recreational facilities, as referred to in the policy.

Typology	Quantity Standard	Access Standard
Parks and Recreation Grounds	0.50 hectares per 1000 residents	800 metres (15 minute straight line walk)
Outdoor Sports Space	1.0 hectares per 1000 residents	480 metres (10 minute straight line walk)
Children and Young Peoples Space	0.30 hectares per 1000 residents	Junior provision – 450 metres (just under a 10 minute straight line walk) Youth Provision – 800 metres (15 minutes straight line walk)
Informal Open Space	0.50 hectares per 1000 residents	480 metres (10 minute straight line walk)
Natural Green Space	0.80 hectares per 1000 residents	480 metres (10 minute straight line walk)
Allotments	0.50 hectares per 1000 residents	480 metres (10 minute straight line walk)
Sports Halls	1 x 4 lane court hall per 13,984 residents	10 minute drive time
Swimming Pools	1 x 4 lane (25 metre) per 20,702 residents	10 minute drive time
Small Halls / Community Venues	1 per 2,500 persons	10 minute walk time

Figure 13: Quality and Access Standards for open space, sport and recreational facilities in Oadby and Wigston
Source: The Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (2009)



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- 7.73** The standards are for minimum levels of provision and will be taken into account in the implementation of the policy. All proposed residential development and some non-residential development, such as, educational facilities will be required to contribute to play and open space provision. The typologies of both open space and built facilities have been developed using guidance within the Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17 (September 2001).
- 7.74** The Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study identifies areas of deficiency and surplus in provision and quality of open space, sports and recreational facilities. This will be used to inform where resources arising from new development will be focused.
- 7.75** All new development in the Borough should contribute to provision of play and open space, whether directly on-site or through developer contributions which can be used off-site. This is considered further in Core Strategy Policy 10 Community Infrastructure.
- 7.76** The Accessible Natural Green Space Standard (ANGST), adopted by English Nature, requires that;
- no person should live more than 300 metres from an area of natural green space;
 - there is provision of at least 2 hectares of natural green space per 1,000 residents;
 - there should be at least one accessible 20 hectare site within 2,000 metres of one's home;
 - there should be one accessible 100 hectare site within 5,000 metres of one's home; and
 - there should be one accessible 500 hectare site within 10,000 metres of one's home.
- 7.77** The Accessible Natural Green Space Standard has been taken into account in setting the standards within the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Study (2009).
- 7.78** Strategic Areas of Open Space are locations that the Borough Council considers to be particularly important in terms of providing access for local people to good quality open spaces, for example, Brocks Hill Country Park, the Botanical Gardens in Oadby and Crow Mills adjacent to the Grand Union Canal in South Wigston. The Borough Council will support the retention and, where appropriate, the expansion of Strategic Areas of Open Space. The actual boundaries of the Strategic Areas of Open Space will be defined in the Allocations Development Plan Document. Green Infrastructure is defined in paragraph 5.105 and the Borough's main Green Infrastructure assets are defined in paragraph 5.113.
- 7.79** Currently, the area around Kilby Bridge consists of scattered residential, commercial and light industrial development, most of which are associated with the canal. With the area likely to become under increasing pressure, consideration will be given to establishing a settlement boundary in the Allocations Development Plan Document. This will safeguard the area from detrimental expansion into the surrounding countryside and loss of valuable green space.
- 7.80** In order to provide a planned approach for the Kilby Bridge area, a regeneration scheme will be developed for the settlement and the adjoining area incorporating the Grand Union Canal. This approach will enable consistent growth of the area that meets community needs and ensures the individual character is not diminished. In addition, the potential to incorporate development related to tourism and the canal would revitalise this southern area of Borough and provide employment and leisure opportunities for local people.



