

Land at Cooks Lane, Wigston

Proposed Direction for Growth
Assessment for Sustainability



November 2009

Prepared by Regatus Planning Group LLP | EMS:1106



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1 The Vision

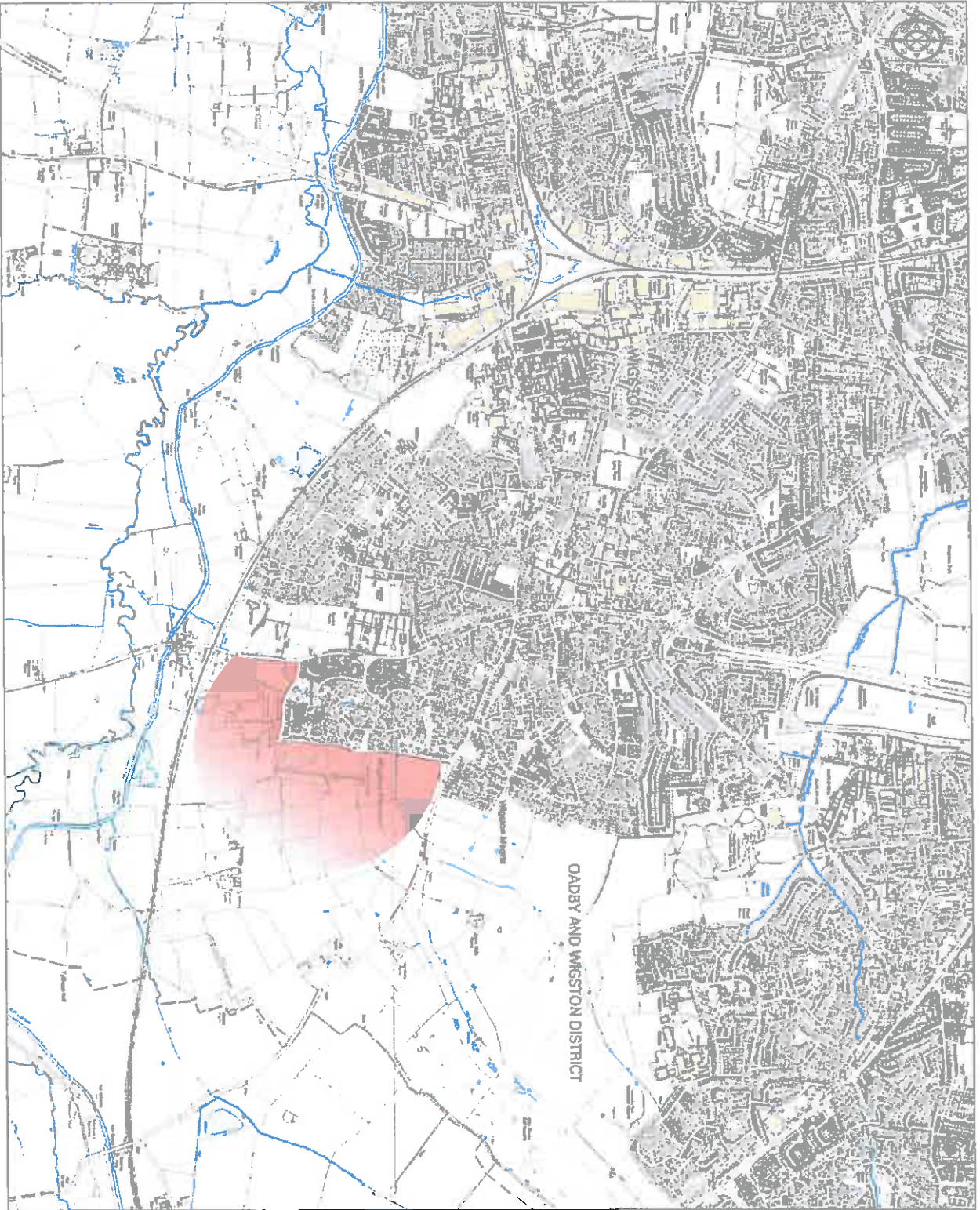
David Wilson Homes' vision for future development to the south-east of Wigston is:

- to produce a living environment of the highest quality with a clear and recognisable identity incorporating a balanced mix of high quality homes, community facilities, open space, recreation, small-scale shopping and jobs;
- to establish safe, attractive and secure neighbourhoods, streets and places with priority for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport;
- to apply the practical use of eco-friendly technology and techniques throughout the development, with the emphasis on carbon reduction, energy saving and the avoidance of waste;
- to improve access to Wigston Town Centre and support its regeneration as the main retail and cultural centre within Oadby and Wigston.

2 Preface







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Land at Wigston

Direction for growth

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26th November 2009

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2.0 Preface

- 2.1 This document has been prepared on behalf of David Wilson Homes (East Midlands) Limited who have a controlling interest in land south-east of Wigston. The land is identified in Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's submission draft Core Strategy as the preferred direction for future growth in the Borough.
- 2.2 David Wilson Homes has made a number of representations on the Core Strategy document, supporting the overall strategy and the proposed direction for growth. Alongside these representations, this document provides further evidence to confirm the sustainability of the Council's strategy and its deliverability within the plan period. Technical studies have been undertaken to assess the potential for development to the south-east of Wigston. The findings of these studies are summarised in the following sections and full copies have been submitted as part of the representations.
- 2.3 On the basis of the work undertaken by the Borough Council, and information provided as part of this submission, the Inspector can be satisfied that the Core Strategy proposals for growth meet the relevant tests of soundness. The proposals are justified and will be effective in delivering new homes and jobs to meet future requirements over the period to 2026.

3 Future Growth in Oadby and Wigston- The Strategic Context



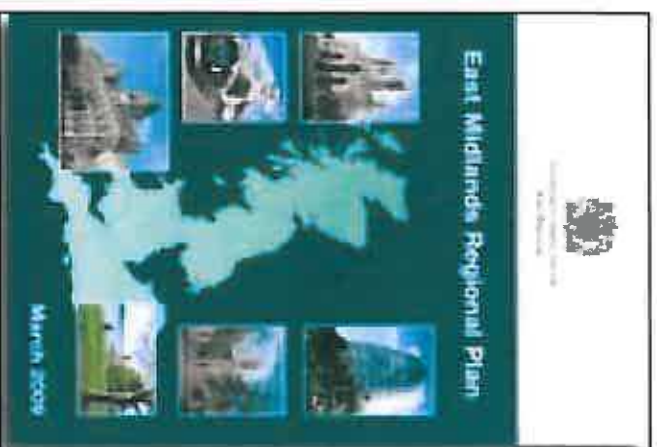


3.0 Future Growth in Oadby and Wigston - The Strategic Context

East Midlands Regional Plan

3.1

The context for strategic planning policy in the East Midlands is the Government's requirement for a step change in housebuilding in order to help address critical affordability issues. The East Midlands Regional Plan, March 2009 pursues a strategy of urban concentration, with most new development directed to the main urban areas including Leicester. The Regional Plan defines the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA) as covering Leicester City and the built up parts of adjoining settlements including Oadby, and Wigston and South Wigston. The PUA is to be the focus for the majority of growth required over the next 20 years. Policy 13a and Three Cities SRS Policy 3 require the provision of some 90 homes a year in Oadby and Wigston Borough over the period 2006-2026- a total of 1,800 additional homes.



Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy

- 3.2 The submission version of the Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy sets out the Council's preferred approach to meeting these future growth requirements. After taking account of completions and existing commitments, land for an additional 1,036 homes needs to be identified. Supporting evidence, including the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Town Centre Masterplans, has identified the potential to deliver some 584 dwellings on primarily brownfield land within the existing urban area. There is therefore a need to release greenfield land to provide for the remaining balance of some 452 homes.
- 3.3 The strategy identifies a direction for growth to the south east of Wigston as the most sustainable option. The identification of this direction for growth has taken account of public consultation and the available evidence. The proposal is wholly consistent with the Core Strategy's vision and spatial objectives. It will play an important role in helping to support and strengthen the role of Wigston as the Borough's main town.
- 3.4 This report provides further evidence of the suitability of the location to accommodate growth and the deliverability of the proposals as a central component of the spatial strategy for the Borough.

4 Growth South East of Wigston - The Leicester PUA Context



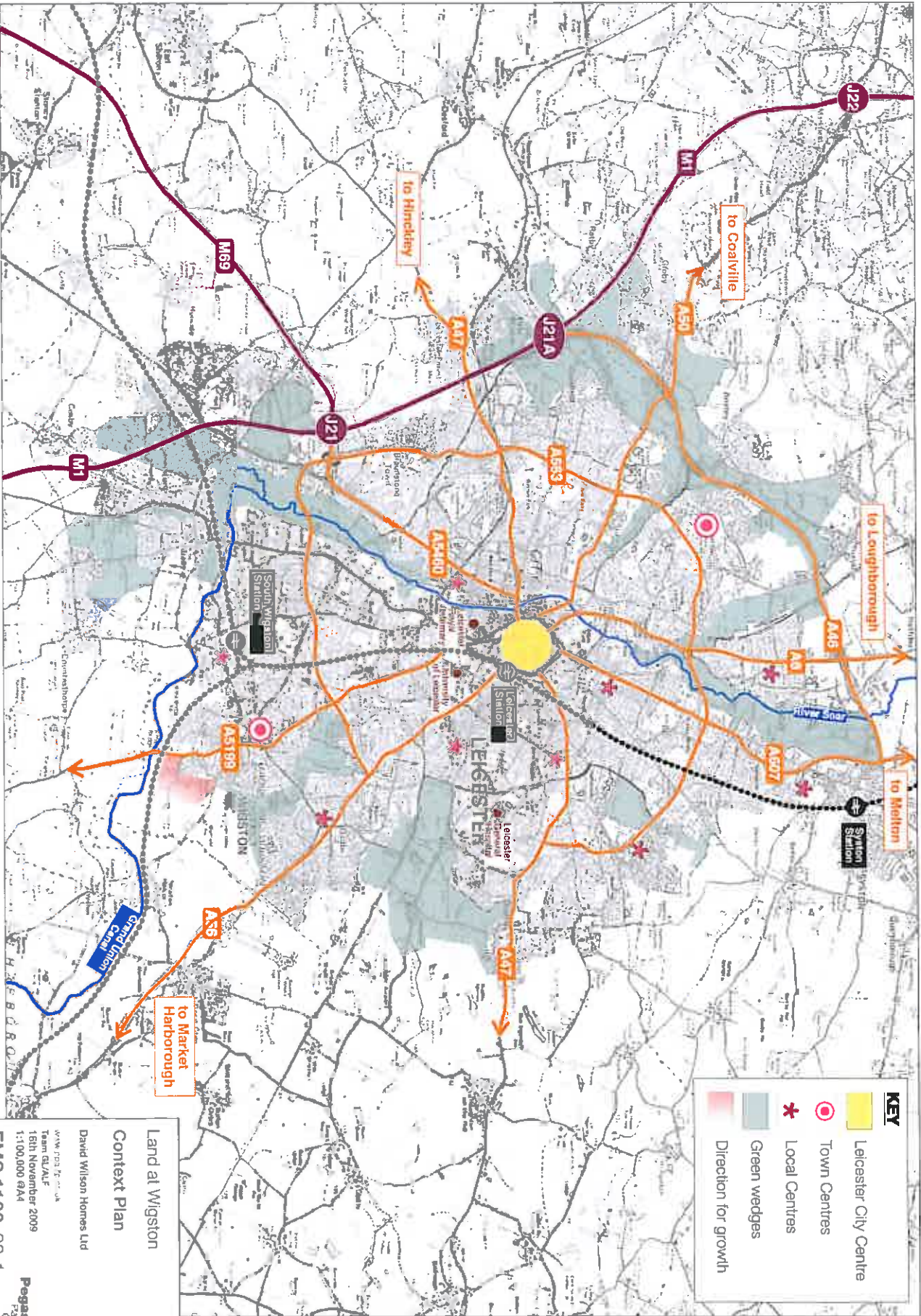


4.0 Growth South East of Wigston - The Leicester PUA Context

Transport Network

- 4.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough makes up some 14% of the population of the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA). Before considering the more local sustainability credentials of the proposed direction for growth, it is useful to consider the location in the context of the wider PUA.
- 4.2 The PUA authorities have prepared a background document outlining the key spatial components of the PUA and this forms part of the background evidence for the Core Strategy. On the basis of this assessment and consideration of other supporting evidence, key elements of the spatial context for growth to the south east of the Leicester PUA are as follows:

- 4.3 The transport network for the PUA is made up of a number of radial routes linking the outer suburbs to Leicester City Centre. An inner and an outer ring road provide links between these radial routes. The A46 provides a western bypass for the city linking from the M1 to Syston to the north west. Railway services are provided by the Midland Mainline linking Leicester with London and other lines providing links to Birmingham and Peterborough.
- 4.4 The radial routes function as public transport corridors. Bus frequencies along these transport corridors are variable. Highest frequencies are to the east and south-east. Wigston has one of the highest frequency of services operating south from the city centre along the A5199 with 12 services an hour.



KEY

- Leicester City Centre
- Town Centres
- Local Centres
- Green wedges
- Direction for growth

Land at Wigston
Context Plan

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Urban Centres

- 4.5 Based on available retail statistics the Leicester PUA Strategic Planning Context Report has refined the retail hierarchy identified in the Central Leicestershire Retail Study 2003. Outside the City Centre this shows Wigston and Beaumont Leys as Town Centres, with Oadby and South Wigston acting as lower order District Centres.

Education Facilities

- 4.6 The PUA has a wide range of education facilities available to residents, including the University of Leicester, Leicester DeMontfort University and primary and upper schools. The Proposed Direction for Growth is close to the new South Leicestershire College in South Wigston, due to open in 2010.

Green Infrastructure

- 4.7 Green infrastructure for the Leicester PUA is made up of the River Soar/ Grand Union Canal corridor which bisects the City from Thurmaston in the north to South Wigston in the south, and structurally important Green Wedges of open land providing "green lungs" penetrating the urban area. The Grand Union Canal extending from Kilby Bridge to South Wigston is also an important green link, connecting in to the River Soar green corridor.

- 4.8 The proposed direction for growth south east of Wigston would not result in the loss of Green Wedge areas and is well located to allow access to the Grand Union Canal corridor.



5 South-East Wigston A Sustainable Area For Growth





5.0 South-East Wigston A Sustainable Area for Growth

Access to Non-Car Modes

5.1 The sustainability of a location relates to the availability of key services and facilities and the opportunities for residents to access these services by non-car modes. PPS1 advises local planning authorities to seek to locate new development to provide improved access to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation. The following sections assess the sustainability of the location south-east of Wigston. The Facilities and Services Plan illustrates the services and facilities and available public transport services.

5.2 The Wigston Harcourt estate is served by Arriva Services 49 and 49B which provide a half hourly service to Leicester City Centre, with a 30 minute journey to the City Centre via the Leicester Royal Infirmary. There are peak hour bus lanes along sections of Welford Road to give priority to public transport along this route. Wigston Town Centre is one of the better served centres within the PUA in terms of public transport frequency. From Wigston Town Centre there is connection to buses linking to Cadby and South Wigston and also the No 40 Circle Line service which operates around the outer ring road. This good public transport accessibility is reflected in the 2001 Census Travel to work data. For the Wigston Meadowcourt Ward some 32% of residents working in the City Centre travelled to work by bus. South Wigston Station is 3.5 km to the west and provides rail connections to Leicester and Birmingham.

5.3 The Proposed Direction for Growth is within reasonable walking distance and easy cycling distance of Wigston Town Centre, located within 1.7 km to the north. There are connections to safe cycling routes from the Town Centre northwards towards central Leicester.