

## The Environment

- 3.27** The Borough of Oadby and Wigston plays an important role in linking residents of the Leicester Principal Urban Area to the countryside due to its position on the south of the urban conurbation. There are good links to the open countryside via the Brocks Hill Country Park, the Green Wedge between Oadby and Wigston and the Green Wedge adjacent to the north east of Oadby, as well as parks and open spaces, the River Sence, and the Grand Union Canal.
- 3.28** There are other areas which contribute to the Borough's Green Infrastructure such as Fludes Lane, Oadby Grange Country Park, Leicester Racecourse and Oadby and Glengorse Golf Courses. Furthermore, the Limedelves and part of the Grand Union Canal between Kilby and Foxton are classified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and, in part, a Regionally Important Geological Site.
- 3.29** There are a number of allotments throughout the Borough which play an important role in contributing to the value of the environment and in promoting healthy lifestyles. However, probably due to the urban nature of the Borough, there is a considerable demand for additional allotment plots arising from local residents, which cannot currently be met.
- 3.30** In total, there are 9 Conservation Areas which are seen to be influential in preserving the townscape of the Borough. There are a reasonable number of parks and open spaces in the Borough, but often the potential exists to improve their quality, particularly in relation to equipped play and sports facilities.
- 3.31** The nature of the built and rural landscapes of the Borough is valued by local residents making the Borough of Oadby and Wigston an attractive and desirable place in which to live and work. This is seen to be a key strength and, therefore, the protection and enhancement of this character is essential through the delivery of the spatial priorities in Leicestershire County Council's and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Sustainable Community Strategies and the Local Development Framework.

## Delivering spatial Sustainable Community Strategy priorities through Local Development Framework

- 3.32 Priority: Increased resident satisfaction with the built environment and improved green infrastructure** – The Core Strategy will ensure a strong relationship between the built environment and the green infrastructure that lies within and between settlements. High quality design of all new developments will further ensure that the environment is not impacted upon. It is important that the allotments in the Borough are protected.
- 3.33 Priority: Our contribution to climate change is reduced and less waste is produced** – The Core Strategy will assist in reducing carbon dioxide emissions through policies to enhance the energy efficiency of buildings in new developments, providing better infrastructure, reducing the use of the private car and promoting more sustainable waste management.





## Housing

- 3.34** In 2001, 92.87 per cent of the Borough's total dwelling stock consisted of houses or bungalows with only 7.13 per cent consisting of flats, maisonettes and apartments. In terms of specific housing types, the single largest component is semi-detached dwellings with a 48.5 per cent share.
- 3.35** The average household size in Oadby and Wigston was 2.55 people in 2001 which is above the national average of 2.41 people. It is also slightly above the average household size for Leicestershire. The Borough has a relatively small share of one person households, below the British and Leicestershire average.
- 3.36** Overall the housing quality within the Borough is very good, with the majority of tenure being owner occupied. Of the total housing stock, 85 per cent of tenure is owner occupied, which is far above the regional and national averages of 72 per cent and 69 per cent respectively.
- 3.37** The Strategic Housing Market Assessment projects the housing situation and requirements in the Borough. The tables below illustrate that there will be a need for smaller or medium sized dwellings by 2016.

LA household type	Unconcealed married couple	Unconcealed cohabiting couple	Unconcealed lone parent	Other multi-person household	One person
OWBC	47%	10%	6%	4%	32%

**Figure 2: Proportions of projected household types in 2016**

Source: DCLG 2004 based household projections, December 2007 from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, December 2008

2016	Single person households without children (some 1 bed, mainly 2 bedrooms for older singles)	Couples (of all ages) without children (mainly 2 bedrooms)	Families with children (some 2, mainly 3, some 4 bedrooms)	Other household types without children (larger 3 bed and properties for sharers, multi-person – flats possible)
OWBC	26%	30%	41%	3%

**Figure 3: Estimate of percentages of household types requiring market housing 2016**

Source: Census table KS20 CLG 2004 based household projections from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, December 2008

- 3.38** The second table illustrates housing type requirements in the coming years. In the Borough, there will be a need for housing to meet the requirements of families from culturally diverse backgrounds who often require larger houses. There is also a growing need for smaller dwellings or apartments to accommodate single person households or couples, housing for young people and accommodation for older people such as extra care housing.



- 3.39** The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment has (2007/08) identified that the Borough has a significant shortfall in affordable housing provision. Based upon the need to provide 90 dwellings per year as required by the Regional Spatial Strategy, the study identified that the Borough had a shortfall of 214 affordable dwellings per year which equates to 238%. Although the Core Strategy plan period is until 2026 and the study only covered the period to 2016, there will still be a significant shortfall in the provision of affordable dwellings which will be difficult for the Council to address. However, it will be a priority to deliver a realistic element of affordable housing within a mixture of tenures on viable sites.
- 3.40** Housing also has an important role to play in regeneration of town and district centres by increasing the footfall within the centres, improving access for people to use local services and facilities and ensuring that there is activity in these locations at quieter times and during the evening.
- 3.41** Housing in Oadby and Wigston also plays an important role in accommodating people who work in Leicester City or the wider County. Reasons for this include the Borough's proximity to the wide range of employment opportunities that exist in Leicester and due to the good reputation of schools in the Borough.
- 3.42** It is important that life chances for vulnerable people and places are improved and that the Borough remains a desirable place in which to live for generations to come.

### Delivering spatial Sustainable Community Strategy priorities through the Local Development Framework

- 3.43 Priority: The housing needs of the people of Oadby and Wigston are met including an increase in the provision of affordable housing** – Over the plan period to 2026, the Core Strategy will deliver the level of identified housing need as set out in the East Midlands Regional Plan in the most appropriate locations. The Core Strategy will ensure an appropriate mix of housing types and tenure to meet the local needs of the Borough's residents. In particular, the level of affordable housing in the Borough is currently below the national average and therefore, this issue will be tackled through the delivery of additional affordable housing stock up until 2026 and beyond.
- 3.44 Priority: New developments are built to higher design, security and environmental standards and are better supported by services and infrastructure** – Through the delivery of additional homes, the Core Strategy will ensure that development in the future will bring about environmental benefits through energy efficient design. By creating links between the Local Development Framework and the delivery of necessary infrastructure to support additional growth, local services and facilities may be incorporated in mixed-use developments.

### The Economy and Facilities

- 3.45** The 2001 Census had the population for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston at 55,795. Of this figure, 40,522 people were registered as between the age of 16-74 years of age and, therefore, eligible to work, although, 2,663 of these were classified as full-time students and schoolchildren.





- 3.46** According to June 2009 data, 1108 people living in the Borough were registered as unemployed which is approximately 3.2 per cent of the working population (2001 Census) compared to the national average of 4.1 per cent.
- 3.47** However, the Borough's economy is underpinned by a strong local business culture. Moreover, the high proportion of skilled residents results in lower levels of unemployment and lower claimant rates than within the City and County generally. Nevertheless, the Borough's weak knowledge economy suggests that a greater proportion of its highly skilled residents might be employed outside Oadby and Wigston, with implications regarding the sustainability of the local economy. The high qualification levels among school leavers reflects issues with the relationship between local skill levels and the relatively low value local employment opportunities.
- 3.48** These issues are, of course, a consequence of the Borough's proximity to Leicester City and it is more difficult to retain some types of skills given the range of jobs and salaries available in the City or other larger settlements such as Market Harborough, Northampton or Nottingham.
- 3.49** It is clear that the Borough has room for improvement in its Identified Employment Areas. Much of the accommodation lacks the quality and flexibility required by modern industry and, additionally, the environment, general layout and accessibility is poor. The issue that the Council is facing is that whilst there is relatively low turnover, there is a lack of interest in those units which become available compared to other employment areas throughout the Leicester Principal Urban Area. This is largely due to the quality of units and the employment areas having poorer accessibility to the larger trunk roads such as the M1 and M69 compared to other districts in the region. As a result of this, there is growing interest for the use of employment land, including the Identified Employment Areas for non-employment uses. Despite this additional pressure for alternative uses on employment land there is still a significant level of need for employment land arising in the Borough, particularly from existing businesses wishing to expand and for smaller business units to support start-ups. There is limited demand for land in the Borough for storage and distribution type employment uses.
- 3.50** One significant undeveloped parcel of land is the Wigston Railway Triangle. It remains undeveloped due to the difficulties and costs associated with providing access over the railway into the site. Furthermore, Wigston Triangle is also a designated Local Wildlife Site. Originally, only the south-eastern side had been designated but this has now been extended to the entire Triangle.
- 3.51** However, the Borough has considerable strengths to build upon and opportunities to promote growth. Potential development sites could feasibly come forward through the Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plans for Wigston and Oadby, which in turn should further support our highly skilled workforce and lead to a strengthening of relations with Further and Higher Education Institutes.
- 3.52** One of the major employers and catalysts for inward investment in the Borough is the University of Leicester. The University continues to expand the facilities at its Oadby campus which has the potential to contribute to the local economy by increasing the use of facilities and services in Oadby town centre. Given the right range of accommodation, the Borough could be an attractive location for small scale business development associated with the University and its graduates.





- 3.53** It is anticipated that the relocation of South Leicestershire College from Wigston to South Wigston will have a significant impact on the local economy in this district centre.
- 3.54** The Core Strategy will strive to ensure that the circumstances necessary to support a prosperous, innovative and dynamic economy will exist over the plan period and beyond.

### Delivering spatial Sustainable Community Strategy priorities through Local the Development Framework

- 3.55 Priority: A prosperous and dynamic economy driven by the need to retain a highly-skilled and motivated workforce which in turn will improve the image for business growth and tourism** – Through creating attractive land allocations for business investment and by encouraging more business start-ups, the Core Strategy will ensure that the new businesses attracted to this Borough are from the key sectors that can increasingly source employees from the local area. It is important that the relationship the local authority has with local employers is strengthened and that the retention of graduates for the local labour market is encouraged.
- 3.56** Tourism in the area will continue to play an important role in the local economy by strengthening key assets in the Borough such as the centres of Wigston, Oadby, South Wigston and Kilby Bridge as well as large areas of green space including Brocks Hill Visitors Centre and Country Park, Oadby Golf Course, Leicester Racecourse, Glengorse Golf Course and Oadby Grange Country Park.

### Accessibility and Services

- 3.57** The Borough is crossed by three radial highways that serve the City of Leicester, the A6, the A50 and the B5366, while the B582 serves as an orbital route linking the three town centres within the Borough. Since the completion of the Southern District Distributor Road, the A563 has created a link across the northern fringes of the Borough and provides access to the M1 and M69 motorways. Access to the A14 in Northamptonshire is also strengthened by the A6 which passes through Oadby. The Borough's roads do suffer from congestion, particularly at peak times.
- 3.58** Public transport within the Borough is in some locations relatively poor with a limited bus service operating between South Wigston, Wigston and Oadby and between some residential areas, Parklands Leisure Centre, Brocks Hill Visitor Centre and Country Park, the Borough's town and district centres and Leicester city centre. Generally however, public transport services to Leicester from the town and district centres are relatively frequent, although would benefit from improvements to service quality and interchange facilities.
- 3.59** The Borough has access to the Leicester to Birmingham railway line via South Wigston Station, with the line separating Wigston and South Wigston. This mode of transport provides a regular service to Leicester and onward to Nottingham and the north, as well as Nuneaton and Birmingham to the south west. Passengers can change at Leicester to access the Midland Mainline to London.
- 3.60** Due to significant challenges that face Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council Highway Authorities, there is pressure for continued development of transport systems to alleviate current infrastructure issues, principally congestion and accessibility. The Eastern District Distributor Road was originally a proposed transport allocation between Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council to complete the City's outer ring road between the M1 and M69 motorways and





the A47. The Eastern District Distributor Road would help to relieve congestion on the A6 between Oadby and Leicester. However, the proposal has not come to fruition despite the route being safeguarded in a number of previous plans. It is now even less likely to come forward as the Eastern District Distributor Road, as proposed, because some of the route has been affected by development outside of the Borough of Oadby and Wigston.

- 3.61** In order to strengthen the key services to support existing and additional growth the Borough Council will continue to work with the transport providers through the Local Strategic Partnership.
- 3.62** A key concern in the Borough is to ensure that an excellent standard of accessibility of public services and infrastructure around existing and new development is achieved. By striving to ensure more effective and efficient accessibility to services through the delivery of a structured and informed Local Infrastructure Plan, this will ensure that over the plan period the Borough of Oadby and Wigston becomes a more attractive, safer and healthier place in which to live.

### **Delivering spatial Sustainable Community Strategy priorities through the Local Development Framework**

- 3.63 Priority: Growth of road congestion is reduced** – The Core Strategy will help to strengthen public transport services and linkages throughout the Borough to provide greater ease in accessing local services as well as those further a field in Leicester and beyond. Through the delivery of new developments, the Council will promote service integration so that accessibility can be achieved via more sustainable methods such as walking or cycling. This will reduce congestion and have a positive impact upon air quality in the Borough as well as improving physical health, well-being and community cohesion through enhanced access to local services.
- 3.64 Priority: Access to facilities and services is enhanced across the Borough and County as a whole** – The Core Strategy will help to improve accessibility to employment, education, housing, sporting facilities, leisure, recreation and culture, health and social care, community facilities and food shopping, specifically for vulnerable individuals / groups / communities for whom access is a particular challenge. The Local Infrastructure Partnership will produce, and co-ordinate the implementation of, a delivery schedule for the infrastructure necessary to support the Borough's growth over the plan period.

### **Kilby Bridge**

- 3.65** The hamlet of Kilby Bridge is located to the south of the Borough, within a 20 minute walk of Wigston town centre and is a part of the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area. The settlement is separated by the A5199 and is situated on the north bank of the Grand Union Canal. The River Sense is also nearby. The hamlet consists of a number of residential properties, small scale commercial car sales and a popular public house. Located slightly out of the main Kilby Bridge settlement, but still within its boundary, there is a small canal side moorings yard and a canal vessel maintenance yard.



- 3.66** Kilby Bridge is a unique settlement in the Borough and due to its character and setting, it is considered to be a very attractive and valuable asset. To the east of the main village, there is a Site of Special Scientific Interest of which part is a Regionally Important Geological site.
- 3.67** The key objectives in respect of Kilby Bridge are to preserve its unique character, to ensure that green infrastructure links to Wigston are maintained, to protect Kilby Bridge itself from pressures for development and to maintain accessibility to effective and efficient services for its residents. The links to Leicester and further a field via public transport will also need to be strengthened, particularly in relation to additional growth in the Borough.
- 3.68** There is some potential to improve the role that Kilby Bridge plays in relation to the Borough as a whole in terms of protecting and enhancing its Green Infrastructure assets but also by providing access for local people to the countryside. The River Soar and Grand Union Canal Strategy (2009) identifies that Kilby Bridge acts as a local mini-destination or visitor hub and has the potential for redevelopment to provide a range of facilities, which could cater for a wide range of visitors. The Strategy also states that Kilby Bridge has the potential to become a key 'honey pot' site. Subject to further feasibility studies, including an assessment of operational requirements and market demand, the Strategy identifies the potential for the sensitive development of the canal yard to provide a greater mixture of uses, with a focus on leisure and tourism, potentially including a marina opportunity.

### Eco Town Considerations

- 3.69** The Planning Policy Statement on Eco Towns published in July 2009 states that 'Eco-towns should have the functional characteristics of a new settlement; that is to be of sufficient size and have the necessary services to establish their own character and identity and so have the critical mass necessary to be capable of self containment whilst delivering much higher standards of sustainability'. An Eco Town should 'make provision for a minimum of 5,000 homes'.
- 3.70** Pennbury Eco Town was proposed jointly by the Co-operative Group and English Partnerships (now the Homes and Communities Agency) to the east and south-east of the Borough. Although largely in Harborough District it was likely that significant development would have fallen within the Borough.





**3.71** However, Pennbury Eco Town was not identified in the list of Eco Town locations in the Planning Policy Statement. The Locational Decision Statement published alongside the Planning Policy Statement stated that ' this location has not demonstrated the potential to meet the sustainability and deliverability requirements for successful development as an Eco Town at this time'.

**3.72** Despite this outcome of the Government's Eco Town Programme, Appendix 4 takes into account the impact of a Eco Town for the following reasons:

- Pennbury Eco Town had a major influence over the spatial context within which the Borough of Oadby and Wigston lies throughout the preparation of this Core Strategy. For example, through the preparation of a masterplan and publicity by the promoters, technical work commissioned by the Borough Council and other local authorities, public consultation carried out by the Borough Council and the amount of public opinion including a local campaign group.
- A masterplan now exists for the Pennbury Eco Town and the partial review of the East Midlands Regional Plan considers as an option the possibility of a new settlement within the East Midlands. Therefore, given that the Core Strategy covers the period up to 2026, it is relevant to have regard to the possibility of needing to give further consideration to an Eco Town in the vicinity of Oadby in the future because of the significant spatial impact that an Eco Town would have upon the Borough of Oadby and Wigston and the surrounding area.
- The Planning Policy Statement on Eco Towns states that Eco Towns are one of a range of options local planning authorities should consider when determining how to meet their current or emerging housing requirements set out in the Regional Plan.





## Chapter 4: The Borough of Oadby and Wigston in 2026 – the Vision and our Spatial Objectives

- 4.1 The Vision and Spatial Objectives form the heart of the Core Strategy. They set the context under which the planning policy framework for Oadby and Wigston will operate, both within the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and other Local Development Documents within the Local Development Framework.

### The Vision for Oadby and Wigston

- 4.2 The Vision for Oadby and Wigston has been agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership for the Borough with the involvement of the local community. The Local Strategic Partnership consists of representatives from the broad range of service providers that operate within the Borough, including Local Authority, Education, Health, Police and Fire Service.
- 4.3 The **Vision** is contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy for Oadby and Wigston and is also set out below:

**People aspire to live in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston because it is a safe, clean and attractive place, with a prosperous economy, vibrant town centres and healthy empowered communities.**

### The Vision - A Spatial Perspective

- 4.4 The Core Strategy develops key themes of the Vision to provide a spatial perspective. It provides an interpretation of how the Borough might look in 2026, given the influence that the Local Development Framework will have on delivering the Vision. This interpretation is based on the outcomes of a range of public consultation that has been undertaken, including consultation on the priorities of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, priorities of the Local Strategic Partnership and various planning policy documents such as Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plans.
- 4.5 It is the role of the Local Development Framework, in particular the Core Strategy, to ensure that the spatial planning policy framework is in place to ensure that the Vision can be delivered:

### *Vibrant town centres.....*

- 4.6 In 2026, Wigston and Oadby town centres are the heart of the Borough offering a range of quality shopping, employment, civic and leisure opportunities. The district centre of South Wigston contains a similar range of services, albeit on a smaller scale, and there is a strong network of local centres, all contributing to the overall sustainable mix of facilities throughout the Borough, reducing the need for local people to travel.





**4.7** Local residents are proud of the centres of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston. They are clean and have a high standard of public realm and vernacular architecture. The network of public squares and open spaces are always busy. Each centre has its own special character with direct links to the green infrastructure network throughout the Borough.

#### ***A prosperous economy.....***

**4.8** In 2026, new employment opportunities exist in Wigston and Oadby town centres, particularly in office accommodation. There are some new employment units in the urban areas of South Wigston and Wigston, in particular offering accommodation for small businesses with good public transport links across the Borough and reasonable access to the main highway network. This is allowing businesses on some of the older, poor quality industrial estates to relocate.

**4.9** The provision of a range of housing and educational opportunities throughout the Borough has provided employers with a skilled workforce and has been particularly successful in retaining the skills of local people in the Borough. Fast, frequent and affordable public transport between the Borough and Leicester City Centre ensures that local residents enjoy the benefits of living so close to one of the United Kingdom's major cities.

#### ***Healthy empowered communities.....***

**4.10** Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston are all prosperous and healthy communities in their own right. Residents have fair and equal access to services, feel a part of the local community and have excellent opportunities to support one another, participate and socialise. They enjoy living in the Borough because they have been involved in the process of change over the last 15 years or so. Residents have good access to a network of high quality cultural, educational and health facilities in the Borough itself and benefit from having direct access to specialist facilities in Leicester.

**4.11** There is a diverse mix of housing types available and the emphasis on establishing more affordable homes throughout the Borough means that everyone has a secure home in which to live.

#### ***Safe, clean and attractive.....***

**4.12** In 2026, all new development in the Borough is of the highest standards of design, particularly in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and on new sites within and adjoining the urban area. Investment in the Borough's Green Infrastructure has enhanced biodiversity and created a stronger understanding within local people about their role in the conservation of habitats and species and the links with the urban environment. The quality of Conservation Areas and other heritage assets has benefited from careful and positive management.

**4.13** People feel safe on the streets and in their homes because design has been a key component in keeping anti social behaviour to an absolute minimum. All new development has integrated measures to conserve energy, achieve sustainable energy generation, minimise waste and to ensure the sustainable management of any waste that is produced.



- 4.14** Local residents will benefit from increased opportunities to access the open countryside, the River Soar and the Grand Union Canal, particularly in the vicinity of Crow Mills in South Wigston and Kilby Bridge in Wigston. There will continue to be a good range of leisure and recreational facilities including leisure centres, allotments, golf courses, a racecourse and playing fields.

### The Spatial Objectives

- 4.15** In order to ensure that the Vision and Strategy can be effectively delivered, the Core Strategy sets out a number of Spatial Objectives. The Spatial Objectives focus on the key issues that need to be addressed to achieve the Vision. They consist of a 'headline' and some detail as to why each objective is a key issue locally.
- 4.16** The Spatial Objectives play a key role in linking policies together to ensure that the Vision is delivered in the most sustainable, joined up and coherent manner. Therefore, the Spatial Objectives are presented under the key themes of the Vision.

### *Vibrant town centres.....*

#### **4.17 Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of Town and District Centres**

Town Centre Masterplans and associated policies and land allocations will deliver regeneration, investment and growth in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. These will be the focus for new development, particularly retail, local services, community facilities, housing and employment.

#### **4.18 Spatial Objective 2: Wigston Town Centre**

Reinforce the role of Wigston Town Centre as the Borough's main town, in particular in terms of encouraging greater national retailer representation and civic function, whilst continuing to support the important role of small independent retailers which create a unique mix within the town.

#### **4.19 Spatial Objective 3: Oadby Town Centre**

Establish Oadby as a small Town Centre catering for smaller independent and specialist shops, cafes and restaurants to reflect its location close to the affluent Oadby Grange ward and Leicester University's Oadby Campus which provides residential accommodation for almost 2000 students situated in a student village.

#### **4.20 Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston District Centre**

Continue regeneration initiatives in South Wigston District Centre following the opening of a major supermarket and the significant investment in South Leicestershire College. Continue improvements to Blaby Road Park taking advantage of its location close to the Grand Union Canal. Facilitate the establishment of new housing and employment related development to attract and retain young professionals and prosperous households in South Wigston.





## ***A prosperous economy.....***

### **4.21 Spatial Objective 5: Improved Employment Opportunities**

Existing employment areas will be protected for employment uses to ensure local employment opportunities for the Borough's residents. New employment land will be provided in the Town Centres, in South Wigston and in the Direction for Growth at Wigston to provide opportunities for fresh employment areas and accommodation to meet the needs of local businesses wishing to grow and those wishing to establish new businesses in the Borough. There will be better access to the road network. The new employment areas will provide opportunities to consider relaxing the need to protect the existing employment areas for employment uses beyond 2026 and to investigate their use for alternative types of development more appropriate to the local area.

## ***Healthy empowered communities.....***

### **4.22 Spatial Objective 6: Growth of the Principal Urban Area**

Establish one Direction for Growth adjacent to the Principal Urban Area in Wigston to meet the Borough's housing allocation whilst focusing investment in Wigston to support the regeneration of Wigston Town Centre. A mix of uses will provide local services and affordable housing and a range of housing types to cater for the Borough's needs. Small business starter units will provide new employment opportunities for the Borough's residents. High quality public transport will provide fast and frequent links to Wigston and Leicester City Centre, with the potential to link into a tram line to Wigston, if necessary.

### **4.23 Spatial Objective 7: A Balanced Housing Market**

Ensure adequate affordable housing and a sustainable blend of choices to meet local need and the requirements of the East Midlands Regional Plan. The focus of new housing will be in Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston Town Centres to facilitate their regeneration. There will be one Direction for Growth to Wigston to support its function as the Borough's main town in terms of national retailer representation and civic function.

### **4.24 Spatial Objective 8: Sustainable Design and Infrastructure**

Contribute to regional, national and global initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; reduce flood risk; minimise waste; achieve sustainable waste management; and, develop renewable energy resources. Promote and implement sustainable high quality designs that reduce damaging emissions in our environment and are in keeping with the character of our Borough. Given the built up nature of the Borough mixed use schemes and medium to high density land use will be encouraged on suitable sites. This will make the best use of land to accommodate a wide range of uses and infrastructure to support the local community and its economy.

### **4.25 Spatial Objective 9: An Accessible Borough**

Enhance mobility to Leicester and within the Borough, particularly east-west links between South Wigston and Oadby via Wigston. Promote the use and development of 'Smarter Choices' and sustainable transport (including travel planning, working from home, public transport, cycling and walking). Ensure good access to facilities by delivering a highway network and transport system that is accessible, efficient and affordable to the entire community, as well as encouraging the reduction of private car use.



#### 4.26 Spatial Objective 10: Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

Identify opportunities to provide new allotments in the Borough in order to tackle the existing deficit and to support healthy lifestyle projects, such as the Green Gym and managing open spaces such as Fludes Lane. Encourage walking and cycling and provide access to community health services. Facilitate the development of improved, high quality leisure and recreation facilities throughout the Borough.

#### *Safe, clean and attractive.....*

#### 4.27 Spatial Objective 11: Empowering a Safe Community

Work with the Local Strategic Partnerships to build a safe and cohesive Borough. Incorporate principles that reduce crime and improve community safety in all new development. Empower the community by establishing high quality public buildings and open spaces close to where people live; by delivering public and voluntary sector initiatives to promote social inclusion; and by promoting community cohesion through participation, interaction and understanding.

#### 4.28 Spatial Objective 12: Enhancing Green Infrastructure

Due to the predominantly urban nature of the Borough to ensure that new development includes proposals to enhance the landscape and biodiversity, for example, through planting trees and hedgerows, create water-bodies and other natural habitats. Development should be respectful of the natural environment, landscape and townscape character and contribute towards Biodiversity Action Plan and Nature Conservation Strategy targets of protecting, creating, managing and enhancing important habitats.

#### 4.29 Spatial Objective 13: Green Wedges and The Countryside

Improve access for local people to our natural environment and key Green Infrastructure assets to enhance the value of their leisure time. Protect and enhance the Green Wedges by limiting development to appropriate uses, as well as safeguarding our open spaces for sport and other forms of recreation. Encourage small scale development in the countryside that provides for employment, leisure and residential development essential to the needs of the rural economy.

#### 4.30 Spatial Objective 14: Enhancing Local Heritage

Encourage the enhancement and preservation of historically significant buildings, archaeological sites, conservation areas, parks and other cultural assets providing opportunities for people to access and understand our local heritage. Produce a Regeneration Scheme for Kilby Bridge to enhance access to and understanding of the Grand Union Canal and its environs whilst protecting the hamlet's heritage and biodiversity interest.







## Chapter 5: Achieving Sustainable Development – Our Spatial Strategy

### Core Strategy Policy 1

#### Spatial Strategy for Development in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston

In order to deliver the regeneration of the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and their associated communities and to achieve the objectives of the Leicester Principal Urban Area the Borough Council will:

- Allocate land for the development of a minimum of 1,800 new dwellings (90 dwellings per annum) between 2006 and 2026 as set out in the Regional Plan for the East Midlands
- Identify land for the development of 5,800 square metres of office floor space to be provided in the centres of Wigston and Oadby and 1.3 hectares of industrial and warehousing land between 2008 and 2026. Freehold land and premises should account for at least 25% of the total requirement
- Focus development in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. Achieve the development and redevelopment of suitable previously developed land and buildings and the implementation of the proposals within the Wigston and Oadby Town Centre Masterplan areas and within the South Wigston Masterplan area through:
  - the adoption of the Wigston and Oadby Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plan Development Plan Document(s)
  - the adoption of the Allocations Development Plan Document (in the case of South Wigston);
  - the preparation of development briefs;
  - working in partnership with other bodies; and,
  - assembling sites where necessary, including the use of compulsory purchase powers in appropriate circumstances
- Encourage housing development on suitable land outside of Oadby and Wigston Town Centre Masterplan areas and outside of the South Wigston Masterplan area but within the Leicester Principal Urban Area. Suitable sites will be identified in the Allocations Development Plan Document
- Make provision for one Direction for Growth adjoining the Leicester Principal Urban Area on land to the south east of Wigston in the Allocations Development Plan Document. This will reinforce the role of Wigston as the Borough's main town. The Direction for Growth will include a proportion of new B1 and/or B2 employment land which will eventually replace the equivalent amount of poor quality employment land located within existing Identified Employment Areas in the Borough. A mix of uses will provide local services, affordable housing and a range of housing types to cater for the Borough's needs. High quality public transport links should be in place to provide fast and frequent links to Wigston Town Centre and Leicester City Centre





- **Prioritise development within the Leicester Principal Urban Area to support the regeneration of the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and their associated communities. To achieve this, development of the Direction for Growth will be programmed not to start before 2017**
- **Ensure high quality sustainable design and layout that makes the most economical use of land and respects the local context and community safety. Within the Leicester Principal Urban Area, new development will make good use of previously developed land and buildings. Housing development on sites of 0.3 hectares and above should, where viable and appropriate, achieve a minimum density of 40 dwellings per hectare**
- **Work in partnership with other agencies and organisations to identify and coordinate the provision and funding of infrastructure and facilities (including Green Infrastructure) required to meet the needs of planned development and to safeguard and enhance key existing biodiversity, environmental, social, cultural and economic assets**
- **Seek opportunities to achieve the regeneration of the Identified Employment Areas in the Borough. The main focus will be on providing land for smaller employment uses and for existing employment uses to expand within the Borough where this is the most sustainable approach. Until such time that replacement employment land has been delivered, Identified Employment Areas will be retained for employment use. Where it is recognised to be the sustainable approach, existing employment land and premises outside of Identified Employment Areas will be retained for employment uses**

*This Policy will assist in the delivery of all of the Spatial Objectives*

- 5.1** The Spatial Strategy for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston derives from the Vision and Spatial Objectives. It is, therefore, underpinned by the Spatial Portrait of the Borough and the Vision and Priorities of the Oadby and Wigston Local Strategic Partnership and Leicestershire Together which are set out in their respective Sustainable Community Strategies.
- 5.2** The Spatial Strategy also takes account of the policy context relating to the Borough as set out in Chapter 2, in particular that provided by the Regional Plan for the East Midlands. One of the main policy drivers that have shaped the Spatial Strategy is the fact that the built up part of the Borough is wholly located within the Leicester Principal Urban Area. The Spatial Strategy reflects the key role that the Borough of Oadby and Wigston plays in shaping the Leicester Principal Urban Area, both in supporting the regeneration of Leicester and in the spatial relationship that exists between the Leicester Principal Urban Area and the main towns in Leicestershire. It is recognised that this relationship is of benefit to the whole of the Leicestershire Housing Market Area, including Oadby and Wigston, particularly in terms of supporting the local economy, strategic green infrastructure and shaping how people go about their daily lives.



- 5.3 All development should be consistent with the creation of balanced mixed communities and provide a safe and attractive environment in keeping with the surroundings.

### Housing Growth

- 5.4 The Spatial Strategy makes provision for a minimum of 1,800 new dwellings (90 dwellings per annum) between 2006 and 2026. This amount is set out in the East Midlands Regional Plan and the need for this amount was fully evidenced through the process of its preparation. Provision will be made for this level of growth within the various Development Plan Documents in the Local Development Framework.
- 5.5 Figure 4 shows the position with regard to the delivery of the total housing allocation for Oadby and Wigston. The table indicates the number of dwellings required to be delivered having taken account of completions and existing commitments. It shows where the remainder of the dwellings to be delivered will be provided in line with the Spatial Strategy for the Borough. Actual site allocations will be made in the Wigston and Oadby Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plan Development Plan Document(s) and in the Allocations Development Plan Document. Figure 5 illustrates these figures graphically as a housing trajectory (see also Appendix 1).

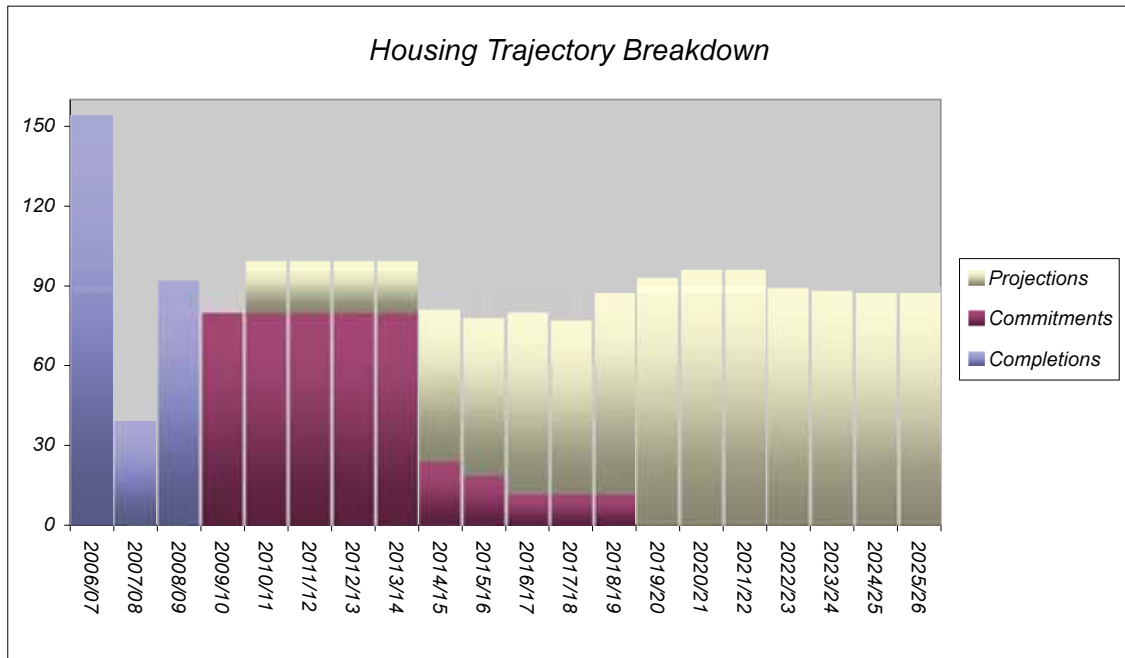
<b>East Midlands Regional Plan Housing Requirement: 2006-2026</b>	1,800
Housing Completions: 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2009	285
Existing Housing Commitments as at 31st March 2009	479
<b>Remaining Housing to be provided: 2008-2026</b>	1,036
Housing opportunities identified in the Wigston and Oadby Town Centre Masterplan areas and within the South Wigston Masterplan area	393
Housing opportunities identified within the Leicester Principal Urban Area outside of the Wigston and Oadby Town Centre Masterplan areas and outside of the South Wigston Masterplan area	191*
Direction for Growth adjoining the Leicester Principal Urban Area to the south east of Wigston	452

\*Source: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, August 2009, Table 1: Deliverable and Developable Sites within 5 years and Developable Sites within 5-10 years (excluding remaining Allocations)

### Figure 4: Oadby and Wigston Spatial Strategy – Approach to Housing Delivery

- 5.6 The figures contained in Figure 4 have not been included in the Spatial Strategy Policy in order that the Borough Council can apply the principles of the Plan Monitor Manage approach to delivering the Spatial Strategy.





**Figure 5: House Trajectory**

- 5.7** Although the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is likely to take into account many sites that would previously have come forward as windfalls, given the urban nature of the Borough and the location of the built up area entirely within the Leicester Principal Urban Area windfalls are still expected to come forward. For example, residential conversions and single dwellings in the curtilage of an existing dwelling.
- 5.8** Planning Applications involving proposals for windfalls should be considered in the context of Strategy Policy 1 which sets out the most sustainable approach to the location of residential development in the Borough. Consistent with paragraph 59 of Planning Policy Statement 3, a windfall allowance has not been taken into account within the Spatial Strategy’s approach to housing delivery. Any windfalls coming forward from 1st April 2009 will therefore be additional to the East Midlands Regional Plan Housing Requirement of 1800 between 2006-2026.
- 5.9** The Spatial Strategy provides sufficient flexibility to accommodate additional dwellings coming forward as windfalls. They will be taken into account through an annual review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and the Borough Council will continue to Plan Monitor Manage the housing supply during the plan period through the preparation of an Annual Monitoring Report.





## Employment Growth

- 5.10** A Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study was published in October 2008 with the involvement of all of the Leicestershire district councils, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership. Its aim was to pull together a number of other employment land studies (including an Oadby and Wigston Employment Land and Premises Assessment published in March 2006) and to establish a joint approach to employment land planning and delivery up to 2026.
- 5.11** The report concludes that being situated within the Leicester Principal Urban Area Oadby and Wigston forms part of the wider Leicester office, industrial and warehousing market. The supply demand gap analysis suggests an additional requirement for 11,500 square metres of offices and 9\* hectares for industrial and warehousing development.
- 5.12** The scope for meeting these requirements within the Borough is limited. The main opportunities are: for up to 5,800 square metres of offices as proposed within the Masterplans for Oadby (1,125 square metres) and Wigston (4,675 square metres) town centres; 1.3\* hectares of industrial and warehousing land (comprising 0.8 hectares at the Sports Field off Tigers Way completed in 2009 and 0.6 hectares at Land West off Magna Road, Magna Industrial Estate an outstanding allocation); and, through the more intensive use of the existing stock. The 3.1 hectare Wigston Railway Triangle site is constrained by the need for a railway bridge and cannot be considered as part of the available development land.
- 5.13** Based on the outcome of the Oadby and Wigston Employment Land and Premises Assessment published in March 2006, 25% of employment land and premises should be provided as freehold because there is currently a lack of freehold land and premises available in the Borough.
- 5.14** In the absence of additional suitable land in the Borough, the balance of 5,700 square metres of offices and 7.6\* hectares of industrial and warehousing land will be added to effective demand in the City of Leicester and the neighbouring districts of Blaby and Harborough. This demand is reflected within the proposed employment land allocations identified in the report for the New Business Quarter, Leicester and Sustainable Urban Extensions in Blaby and South Charnwood.
- 5.15** Therefore, the employment land requirement set out within the Spatial Strategy is consistent with the outcomes of this study.

\*figures do not sum due to rounding

