



# Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

## Submission Core Strategy

## Sustainability Appraisal Report

## October 2009

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## Document Control

Project: Sustainability Appraisal of the Oadby and Wigston Submission Core Strategy  
Client: Oadby and Wigston Borough Council  
Job Number: E6915-207  
File Origin: S:\PROJECT FILES\PROJECTS\_E06000\E006915-207 Oadby & Wigston Core Strategy  
Submission\Reports\October 2009 update\Final OWBC Core Strategy SA Report October 2009.doc

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Issue	Date	Status
1	22/05/09	Draft
2	04/06/09	Final
3	30/09/09	Oct 2009 Update- Draft
4	02/10/09	Oct 2009 Update- Final



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## 1.0 Non Technical Summary

### 1.1 Introduction

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is the Local Planning Authority for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston in South Leicestershire. The Council is in the process of preparing a Local Development Framework for the Borough. The Local Development Framework will set out guidelines for the development of the Borough and replace the current Oadby and Wigston Local Plan.

The Core Strategy is one of the first documents to be produced as part of the Local Development Framework. This will set out the principal elements of the planning framework for Oadby and Wigston Borough. It will comprise a spatial vision, objectives and core policies for the future development of the Borough.

WYG has been commissioned by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council to undertake a combined Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of their Core Strategy. For ease the combined approach is simply referred to as Sustainability Appraisal throughout this summary.

### 1.2 Development of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework

In June 2005 a Sustainability Appraisal framework was developed by WYG. The development of the Sustainability Appraisal framework resulted in the production of a Scoping Report which details the outcome of the following activities:

- Consultation using a questionnaire and consultation forum.
- Review of other relevant plans and programmes.
- Collection of social, economic and environmental baseline data.
- Identification of the current social, economic and environmental situation in the Borough.
- Identification of key sustainability issues.
- Development of Sustainability Appraisal objectives.



This Sustainability Appraisal framework is designed to be used to appraise all the Development Plan Documents which make up the Oadby and Wigston Local Development Framework including the Core Strategy.

### **1.3 Development and Appraisal of Options**

In July 2005, the Council developed a series of options for the Core Strategy and these were presented within an Issues and Options Paper. Following this, the Council produced a Preferred Options Report for the Core Strategy in April 2006 which included a number of potential policies.

In June 2007, as a result of consultation responses and advice from the Government Office of the East Midlands, the Council prepared a Supplemental Issues and Options Paper which considered choices and broad locations of growth.

In November 2008, following a period of consultation on the Supplemental Issues and Options Paper, the Council prepared a Further Consultation Paper, replacing the Preferred Options Report produced in April 2006. The Further Consultation Paper set out the Council's preferred approach to future development in the Borough and included a number of strategic objectives and potential policies for the Core Strategy.

At each stage in development of the Core Strategy WYG appraised the potential options and policies using the Sustainability Appraisal framework. The likely social, economic and environmental effects of each potential option / policy were determined. During this process, recommendations were suggested to improve their sustainability.

### **1.4 Submission Core Strategy Appraisal**

Following consultation on the Further Consultation Paper in November 2008, the Council has prepared the Submission Core Strategy, which includes refined strategic objectives and policies. These objectives and policies have been appraised by WYG, again using the Sustainability Appraisal framework which was used to appraise the options.

The Sustainability Appraisal has identified a number of social, economic and environmental effects which may occur as a result of the implementation of the Core Strategy.

The potential benefits of implementing the Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy include:





- Concentration of development in the most sustainable locations (i.e. urban areas), which will ensure good access to services, facilities and public transport, as well as encouraging the regeneration of centres.
- Provision of housing to meet the needs of the local community, including significant levels of affordable and specialist housing.
- Provision of employment development with associated job creation and economic growth.
- Maintenance of existing services and provision of new services to support the existing population and accommodate growth.
- Encouragement of sustainable design and construction of new developments.
- Encouragement of the use of renewable energy.
- Protection and enhancement of the countryside, green space and other environmental and historic resources.

The potential adverse effects of implementing the Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy include:

- Effects on landscape and biodiversity.
- Loss of greenfield land to development.
- Generation of construction and demolition waste.
- Risk of pollution during construction of developments and once operational.
- Air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from increases in traffic.
- Increased energy and water consumption.

Recommendations have been made as part of the Sustainability Appraisal process. Many of these have been addressed within the policies of the Submission Core Strategy. Other recommendations may be implemented at later stages, for example within future documents within the Local Development Framework or as individual development proposals go through the planning process.





## 1.5 Monitoring

Targets and indicators have been developed to monitor the effects of the Core Strategy. These will enable Oadby and Wigston Council to determine whether the Core Strategy performs as it is expected to do, and whether any additional effects arise which were not identified within the Sustainability Appraisal. This will also provide useful information to improve plans in the future.



## 2.0 Introduction

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is the Local Planning Authority for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston in South Leicestershire. The Council is in the process of preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. The LDF will set out guidelines for the development of the Borough (up to 2026) and replace the current Oadby and Wigston Local Plan. The LDF will comprise various documents including Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The first DPD to be produced as part of the LDF is the Core Strategy.

Under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) it is a requirement that plans (setting a framework for future development consent and likely to have significant environmental effects) are subject to environmental assessment. Local Planning Authorities are required to carry out an environmental assessment of their DPDs under these regulations.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process through which the sustainability of a plan under preparation is assessed. The Planning and Compulsory Act (2004) requires Local Planning Authorities to carry out a SA of their DPDs. SA addresses social and economic issues but also takes into consideration environmental issues.

WYG has been commissioned by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council to undertake a combined SA and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of their Core Strategy. For ease the combined approach is simply referred to as SA throughout this report.

The SA process undertaken has resulted in the production of this SA Report. The purpose of this SA Report is to present the findings of the SA process in a manner that can be used for stakeholder and public consultation. This report has the following format:

- Section 1: Non Technical Summary: offers a non technical overview of the SA process and its findings.
- Section 2: Introduction.
- Section 3: Background to the Plan: details the background to the Core Strategy being prepared by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.



- Section 4: Sustainability Appraisal Process: provides an overview of the SA process undertaken including details of the consultation process and the SA objectives used to appraise the Core Strategy.
- Section 5: Baseline and Key Issues: describes baseline conditions in relation to a series of social, economic and environmental parameters and outlines key sustainability issues that have been considered during the SA process.
- Section 6: Testing the Plan Objectives: details the compatibility test between the Core Strategy objectives and the SA objectives.
- Section 7: Development and Appraisal of Options: outlines the options development and appraisal process and how social, economic and environmental effects were considered in developing the Submission Core Strategy.
- Section 8: Likely Effects of the Core Strategy: predicts the likely social, economic and environmental effects of the Core Strategy and details recommendations to reduce adverse effects and maximise beneficial effects.
- Section 9: Implementation and Monitoring: provides details on how the Core Strategy will be implemented and proposals for monitoring its implementation.

Report conditions are set out in Appendix A.



## 3.0 Background to the Plan

### 3.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough

Oadby and Wigston Borough is located in Leicestershire to the south of the Leicester City Council administrative area. It falls within the East Midlands Government Region. It is crossed by the A6 and A50 roads providing access into Leicester city centre. Figure 1 shows the location of the Borough in relation to adjacent council administrations.

Oadby and Wigston Borough covers an area of 2,300 hectares. The main settlements are Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. The urban area occupies about 60% of the Borough with countryside to the south. Oadby and Wigston Borough has a population of approximately 56,100 with 18.2% of the population being of mixed or ethnic origin.

### 3.2 East Midlands Regional Plan

The East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (also known as the Regional Plan) was published in March 2009. It forms part of the statutory development plan for Oadby and Wigston Borough.

The Regional Plan provides a broad development strategy for the East Midlands up to 2026. It identifies the scale and distribution of provision for new housing and priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, energy, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. It also provides the longer term planning framework for the Regional Economic Strategy.

### 3.3 Oadby and Wigston LDF

Fundamental changes to the planning system were introduced through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which requires Local Planning Authorities to adopt a LDF in place of their existing Local Plan. The LDF replaces the current Oadby and Wigston Local Plan (adopted 1999) as the plan setting out policies and proposals for the development of the district up to 2026. In the transitional period certain policies in the Local Plan retain development plan status and are saved until they are superseded by the adoption of LDF documents. The applicable policies are listed in the Local Development Scheme.

The revised Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12) issued in June 2008 sets out updated Government guidance regarding the new LDF process. PPS12 details the needs for Local Planning Authorities to adopt a spatial planning approach. The LDF will not be restricted solely to land use issues, such as identifying where



new houses, employment, retail and leisure facilities should be located, but will go beyond traditional land use planning by integrating policies for development with policies that influence the nature of places and how they function. The new PPS12 also emphasises the need for LDFs to be aligned not only with national and regional plans but also with the shared local priorities set out in Sustainable Community Strategies.

The proposals and policies set out in the Oadby and Wigston LDF will set out a planning framework embraced by the entire community which will result in a sustainable Borough. It will assist Oadby and Wigston Borough in achieving excellence in the quality of its natural and built environment.

The Oadby and Wigston LDF will comprise a number of DPDs which will have statutory status. The proposals and policies set out in them will guide planning decisions. It will also comprise a number of SPDs which are non-statutory documents prepared to support the delivery of major development sites or complex policy areas. SPDs will be taken into account as a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council has produced a Local Development Scheme (LDS) for its LDF process. This establishes a programme for delivering the LDF up to 2010. The first LDF documents to be adopted will include:

- Core Strategy DPD
- Oadby Town Centre Area Action Plan DPD
- Wigston Town Centre Area Action Plan DPD
- Allocations DPD
- Development Control DPD
- Residential Areas SPD
- Conservation Areas SPD
- Planning for Renewable Energy Technology and Energy Efficiency SPD
- Guidelines for New Development SPD

Other DPDs and SPDs may be prepared at a later date. A revised LDS is to be adopted in 2009.



The LDF for Oadby and Wigston Borough also includes a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how the public will participate in the preparation of the LDF documents.

### **3.4 Core Strategy**

#### **3.4.1 Background**

The Core Strategy is the foremost DPD within the LDF. The Core Strategy will set the vision, spatial objectives and planning strategy of the Borough up to 2026. It will provide the basic principles and policies that will steer build development and the use of land, establish the overall general scale and location of development, and the council's approach to the key issues facing the Borough.

The Core Strategy has been developed and consulted on over the past four years through a series of Issues and Options, Preferred Options and Further Consultation Papers. The options process is described in more detail in Section 7.

The Submission Core Strategy includes a section outlining the policy context and presents a spatial portrait of Oadby and Wigston Borough, providing a broad picture of the economic, environmental and social issues it faces. It then sets out a vision for the Borough in 2026 and spatial objectives which focus on the key issues that need to be addressed to achieve the vision. To assist the delivery of the objectives, seventeen policies are provided in the chapters which follow, under the headings 'spatial strategy', 'natural environment' and 'infrastructure and the build environment'. The final section of the Core Strategy sets out a monitoring and implementation framework.

#### **3.4.2 Core Strategy Spatial Objectives**

The Core Strategy sets out fourteen spatial objectives for the Core Strategy which set the context for the policies. The spatial objectives are detailed in Table 1 overleaf.



**Table 1 Core Strategy Spatial Objectives**

<p><b>Spatial Objective 1: Regeneration of Town and District Centres</b></p> <p>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.</p>
<p><b>Spatial Objective 2: Wigston Town Centre</b></p> <p>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.</p>
<p><b>Spatial Objective 3: Oadby Town Centre</b></p> <p>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.</p>
<p><b>Spatial Objective 4: South Wigston District Centre</b></p> <p>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 prospering households in South Wigston.</p>
<p><b>Spatial Objective 5: Improved Employment Opportunities</b></p> <p>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.</p>
<p><b>Spatial Objective 6: Growth of the Principal Urban Area</b></p> <p>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</p>



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 the proposed Pennbury tram line to Wigston, if necessary.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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 that are available throughout the Borough.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**3.4.3 Core Strategy Policies**

The Core Strategy details seventeen policies, as follows. More detail concerning each policy is provided in Section 8.

- Policy 1: Spatial Strategy for Development in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston
- Policy 2: Development in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston
- Policy 3: Regeneration Schemes
- Policy 4: Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- Policy 5: Green Infrastructure



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- Policy 6: Green Wedges
- Policy 7: The Countryside
- Policy 8: Climate Change and Renewable Energy
- Policy 9: Flood Risk and the Water Environment
- Policy 10: Community Infrastructure
- Policy 11: Affordable Housing
- Policy 12: Housing Needs of the Community
- Policy 13: Provision of Gypsy and Traveller Sites
- Policy 14: Design and Sustainable Construction
- Policy 15: Landscape and Character
- Policy 16: Community Facilities and Places of Worship
- Policy 17: Open Space and Facilities for Leisure, Recreation and Tourism





## 4.0 Sustainability Appraisal Process

### 4.1 Legislative Requirements

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), as amended by the Planning Act (2008), Local Authorities must subject their DPDs to SA. Part 2, Section 19, Paragraph (5) of the amended Act states:

*'The local planning authority must also carry out an appraisal of the sustainability of the proposals in each development plan document and prepare a report of the findings of the appraisal.'*

SEA is a requirement of EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, more commonly known as the SEA Directive. As stated in Article 1, the objective of the SEA Directive is:

*'To provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans...with a view to promoting sustainable development...'*

The SEA Directive was brought into effect in the UK on the 21st July 2004 through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations. The Regulations require that Local Authorities undertake SEA of their LDF documents.

Although the statutory requirements for carrying out SA and SEA are distinct it is possible to satisfy both through a single, but integrated process. Such a joint approach is advocated by Communities and Local Government (CLG) (formerly known as the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)).

### 4.2 Integrated Approach to Appraisal

SEA is a means of evaluating the environmental acceptability of planning documents in a formalised and systematic manner. The process works to identify the key environmental issues associated with a study area and determining how adoption of a planning document will influence them. SEA occupies a central position in the hierarchy of land use planning, sitting between high level Government planning policy and environmental assessment at project level. The SEA process considers similar issues to project level environmental assessment. However, planning documents often cover much larger areas than individual development proposals and contain less quantifiable detail than is available at project level. SEA therefore



examines the environment in much broader terms and sets environmental objectives for a study area against which strategic level proposals can be appraised.

SA differs from SEA in that it expands the focus of the assessment process to encompass social and economic issues. ODPM guidance (2005) describes the purpose of SA as being:

*'...to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of revisions of Regional Spatial Strategies and for new or revised Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.'*

The integrated SA process adopted by WYG identifies the key social, economic and environmental issues associated with Oadby and Wigston Borough and how adoption of the Core Strategy will influence them. It will ensure that significant adverse effects are either avoided or mitigated. However, it should be noted that whilst SA will inform the decision making process, the Core Strategy may not always reflect the options considered to be most sustainable.

The SA will also identify monitoring requirements to ensure the Core Strategy remains sustainable throughout its implementation. Monitoring will help to identify any unforeseen impacts and inform subsequent revisions or the replacement of the Core Strategy.

### **4.3 Sustainability Appraisal Guidance**

The SA process undertaken by WYG has been developed in accordance with the following national and European guidance:

- Department of Health (2007) Draft Guidance on Health in Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- English Nature, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Countryside Agency and Environment Agency (2004) SEA and Biodiversity: Guidance for Practitioners.
- Environment Agency (2004) Strategic Environmental Assessment of External Plans and Programmes.
- Environment Agency (2007) Strategic Environmental Assessment and Climate Change Guidance Note.



- European Community (2001) SEA and Integration of the Environment into Strategic Decision Making.
- ODPM (2005) Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks: Guidance for Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities.
- ODPM (2005) A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.
- RSPB (2007) Strategic Environmental Assessment – Learning From Practice.

#### 4.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Compliance

This SA Report incorporates the requirements for an Environmental Report as set out in the SEA Directive (Annex I). Table 2 summarises the requirements of the SEA Directive, identifies how the requirements have been met and where these are located in the SA Report.

**Table 2 SEA Directive Compliance**

Requirement of SEA Directive	Where covered in the SA of the Core Strategy
a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan... ...and its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Section 3 of this SA Report. SA Scoping Report (WYG, 2005) Section 3 of this SA Report.
b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	SA Scoping Report (WYG, 2005) Section 5 of this SA Report
c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	SA Scoping Report (WYG, 2005) Section 5 of this SA Report.
d) The environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	SA Scoping Report (WYG, 2005) Section 5 of this SA Report
e) Any existing environmental protection objectives which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation	SA Scoping Report (WYG, 2005) Section 7 of this SA Report. Submission Core Strategy (June 2009) Draft Core Strategy (November 2008)



Requirement of SEA Directive	Where covered in the SA of the Core Strategy
f) The likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors	Section 8 and Appendix E of this SA Report.
g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme	Section 8 and Appendix E of this SA Report.
h) An outline for the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with...  ...and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information.	Section 7 of this SA Report. Submission Core Strategy (June 2009) Draft Core Strategy (November 2008)  Section 8 of this SA Report.
i) A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10 of the SEA Directive	Section 9 and Appendix F of this SA Report.
j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	Section 1 of this SA Report.

## 4.5 Sustainability Appraisal Stages

The SA process adopted by WYG for the Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy has been developed following current guidance produced by the ODPM (2005). It involves the following steps:

- Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope
  - Consulting on the scope of the SA through distribution of a questionnaire and a consultation forum.
  - Identifying other plans and programmes of relevance to the Core Strategy.
  - Collating baseline data and identifying gaps in the current baseline.
  - Identifying baseline conditions and key sustainability issues on the basis of the baseline data collated.
  - Developing SA objectives.
  - Consulting on the scope of the SA through publication of a Scoping Report.



- Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects
  - Testing the Core Strategy objectives against the SA objectives.
  - Developing and appraising the Core Strategy options.
  - Predicting and evaluating the likely effects of the Core Strategy.
  - Developing recommendations to mitigate any adverse effects and to maximise beneficial effects.
  - Developing recommendations for future monitoring requirements or indicators.
  
- Stage C: Preparing the SA Report
  
- Stage D: Consulting on the Core Strategy and the SA Report
  - Public participation on the Core Strategy and the SA Report.
  - Appraising any significant changes to the Core Strategy.
  - Providing information on how the SA and consultation responses were taken into account in preparing the Core Strategy.
  
- Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the Core Strategy
  - Monitoring significant effects of the Core Strategy once adopted.
  - Responding to any adverse effects arising from the Core Strategy following adoption.

## **4.6 Stage A: Scoping Stage**

### **4.6.1 Links with Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report**

Stage A of the SA (scoping stage) has already been undertaken for the overall Oadby and Wigston LDF (including the Core Strategy) and a SA Scoping Report was produced in June 2005. The SA Scoping Report details the outcomes of the scoping stage including the development of the SA framework to be used in appraising all DPDs and SPDs produced under the Oadby and Wigston LDF.

### **4.6.2 Links to Relevant Plans and Programmes**

During the scoping stage a number of existing plans were identified and reviewed in order to determine any links with the Oadby and Wigston LDF process. Plans to be reviewed were identified by WYG through discussions with Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and through the consultation process described in



Section 3.6. The SA Scoping Report provides further details of the review process including a list of the plans and programmes reviewed.

It is a requirement of the SEA Directive that an analysis of the LDF's '...relationship with other relevant plans and programmes...' (annex 1a of the SEA Directive) and of '...the environmental protection objectives...which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation...' (annex 1e of the SEA Directive) is undertaken.

Key aims and objectives (including environmental and sustainability objectives) of each plan were identified and then the implications of the plan for the Oadby and Wigston LDF identified. In addition to determining links with the Oadby and Wigston LDF the review process provided baseline information. It also helped to identify key sustainability issues and informed the development of the SA objectives.

The review of plans and programmes is provided in the SA Scoping Report.

#### **4.6.3 Baseline and Key Issues**

During the scoping stage baseline data were collated and reviewed in order to establish the baseline conditions and to help identify key sustainability issues. The baseline conditions provide the basis against which significant effects of the LDF can be predicted and assessed. Detailed baseline data were presented in the SA Scoping Report. Section 5 of this SA Report includes a summary of the baseline and key sustainability issues in Oadby and Wigston Borough, which has been updated to reflect the current situation. It also incorporates any changes following comments raised during consultation on the SA Scoping Report.

#### **4.6.4 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives**

At the end of the scoping stage SA objectives were developed. These SA objectives provide a basis against which to appraise all the DPDs and SPDs which will make up the Oadby and Wigston LDF including the Core Strategy.

The SA objectives integrate social, economic and environmental considerations. The Oadby and Wigston LDF should aim to fulfil the SA objectives as this will allow it to be consistent with environmental regulations and high level sustainable development policies. However there may be some objectives on which the Oadby and Wigston LDF will have a limited impact or which are in conflict with one another.





The East Midlands Integrated Regional Framework (IRF) produced by the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) sets out how sustainable development should be achieved in the East Midlands. It sets out 18 objectives covering social, economic and environmental issues. The IRF objectives were used as a starting point for the development of Oadby and Wigston Borough specific objectives. Consultees were asked for feedback on the relevance of the IRF objectives to the Oadby and Wigston LDF and for suggestions as to any further objectives which should be included. The resulting comments and the review of plans and programmes were used to inform the development of Oadby and Wigston Borough specific objectives. Further information on the derivation of the objectives is presented in the SA Scoping Report.

The SA objectives used to appraise the Core Strategy are listed in Table 3. These objectives have been slightly amended following consultee comments on the SA Scoping Report.

**Table 3 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives**

<b>Sustainability Appraisal Objectives for Oadby &amp; Wigston Borough Core Strategy</b>	
1	To ensure the provision of decent and affordable housing that meets local needs and links into the provision of services.
2	To improve health and reduce health inequalities by promoting healthy lifestyles, protecting health and providing access to health services.
3	To provide better opportunities for people to access and understand local heritage and to participate in cultural and leisure activities.
4	To improve community safety, reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.
5	To promote and support the empowerment of local communities in creating and implementing solutions that meet their needs focusing particularly on young, elderly and deprived people.
6	To promote racial harmony and create cohesive communities.
7	To protect and enhance the natural environment (species and habitats) whilst contributing to the achievement of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets.
8	To preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of archaeological sites, historic buildings, conservation sites, historic parks and other cultural assets.
9	To protect and enhance the landscape and green spaces in the Borough and to provide opportunities for public access to the countryside.



<b>Sustainability Appraisal Objectives for Oadby &amp; Wigston Borough Core Strategy</b>	
10	To manage prudently water resources, improve water quality, protect the floodplain and protect against flood risk.
11	To improve air quality particularly through reducing transport related pollutants.
12	To manage prudently mineral resources and avoid / reduce the pollution of land.
13	To minimise energy use and develop renewable energy resources.
14	To reduce greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate the rate of climate change.
15	To involve people, through changes to lifestyle and at work, in preventing and minimising adverse local, regional and global environmental impacts.
16	To improve access to education and training for children, young people, adult learners, the unemployed, the disabled and the deprived.
17	To develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation whilst providing access to appropriate employment opportunities for the local population.
18	To optimise the use of previously developed land, buildings and existing infrastructure.
19	To promote and ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction.
20	To minimise waste and to increase the re-use, recycling and composting of waste materials.
21	To improve access to services for those without a car, disabled people, elderly people, ethnic minorities and deprived people by providing for everyday needs in each settlement.
22	To encourage and develop the use of public transport, cycling and walking.

#### **4.7 Stage B: Developing and Refining Options and Assessing Effects**

Stage B of the SA process involves broad appraisal of the strategic options and then appraisal in more detail of the effects of the Preferred Options when these have been selected. The ODPM (2005) guidance



recognises that elements of Stage B may need to be carried out more than once in the DPD development. Stage B of the SA of the Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy has been undertaken through a number of sub-stages; which are as follows.

In July 2005, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council developed a series of options for the Core Strategy, within an Issues and Options Paper. Following this, the Council produced a Preferred Options Report for the Core Strategy in April 2006 which included a number of potential policies.

In June 2007, as a result of consultation responses and advice from GOEM, the Council prepared a Supplemental Issues and Options Paper which considered choices and broad locations of growth.

Following a period of consultation on the Supplemental Issues and Options Paper the Council prepared a Further Consultation Paper (November 2008) replacing the Preferred Options Report produced in April 2006. The Further Consultation Paper set out the Council's preferred approach to future development in the Borough and included a number of strategic objectives and potential policies for the Core Strategy.

At each stage in development of the Core Strategy, WYG appraised the potential options / policies contained using the SA framework. The likely social, economic and environmental effects of each potential option were determined. During this process, recommendations were suggested to improve their sustainability.

#### **4.8 Stage C: Production of SA Report**

The SA Report produced in November 2008, which accompanied the Core Strategy Further Consultation Paper represented Stage C of the SA process for the Core Strategy.

#### **4.9 Stage D: Consulting On the Draft DPD and the SA Report**

The Draft Core Strategy Further Consultation Paper and the accompanying SA Report were issued for public consultation over an eight week period from 28th November 2008 to 23rd January 2009. Following this, the Submission Core Strategy was produced, which includes refined objectives and policies. It was therefore decided that it was appropriate to undertake additional SA work to reflect the changes between the Further Consultation Paper and the Submission Core Strategy. This SA Report details the findings of the SA of the Submission Core Strategy (Stage D2 (i) of the SA process).



## 4.10 Consultation

### 4.10.1 Consultation Questionnaire

The following statutory and non-statutory consultees were contacted during March 2005, as part of the initial round of consultation for the overall Oadby and Wigston LDF SA, in conjunction with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Blaby District Council:

- Environment Agency
- English Nature
- Countryside Agency
- English Heritage
- University of Leicester
- South Leicestershire Primary Care Trust
- Leicestershire Constabulary
- Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- British Waterways
- Leicestershire Economic Partnership
- Government Office for the East Midlands
- Sport England East Midlands Region
- East Midlands Regional Assembly
- Transport 2000
- East Midlands Development Agency
- DEFRA Rural Development Service

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- Forestry Commission
- Highways Agency
- Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust
- East Midlands Community Renewables Initiative
- Severn Trent Water
- National Farmers Union
- Leicestershire County Council
- RSPB Central England
- National Playing Fields Association
- Arriva Midlands
- Network Rail
- Leicestershire Development Agency
- Leicestershire Rural Transport Partnership
- First Buses
- Leicestershire Rural Partnership
- Brocks Hill Environment Centre
- Oadby Civic Society
- Wigston Civic Society

Consultees were issued with a letter outlining the background to the Oadby and Wigston LDF and asked to complete a consultation questionnaire. The purpose of the consultation questionnaire was to:

- Determine what interest consultees had in the Oadby and Wigston area.



- Identify social, economic and environmental issues that may need to be considered during the SA process.
- Identify baseline information which consultees held in relation to the Oadby and Wigston area.
- Identify any development studies or strategies produced by consultees that needed to be reviewed as part of the SA process.

This consultation also provided an opportunity to get feedback and suggestions from consultees on the objectives to be used in the SA process. Details of questionnaire consultation responses are provided in the SA Scoping Report.

#### **4.10.2 Consultation Forum**

Consultees who expressed an interest (on the questionnaire) in being involved in further rounds of consultation were invited to attend a consultation forum. The consultation forum was hosted jointly by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, Blaby District Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. It was held in Oadby on the 22 April 2005 at the Brocks Hill Environment Centre.

The following consultees attended:

- Environment Agency
- Highways Agency
- University of Leicester
- Transport 2000
- Leicestershire Constabulary
- Leicestershire County Council: Planning
- Leicestershire County Council: Education
- Leicestershire County Council: Historic and Natural Environment
- Blaby District Council: Housing



- Blaby District Council: Community Development
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council: Environment
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council: Environmental Health
- Hinckley and Bosworth Council: Energy Conservation
- Hinckley and Bosworth Council: Housing
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council: Environmental Health
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council: Community Development
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council: Development Control

The consultation forum consisted of two sessions: a series of presentations on the SA process in the morning session; and two workshops to discuss the SA objectives in the afternoon session.

The first workshop was split into three groups: environmental; social; and economic. Each group discussed the objectives most relevant to their group topic. For each objective the participants were asked to consider the following questions:

- What are the key issues that should form the appraisal criteria in relation to each objective?
- Can the LDF deliver in relation to the key issues?
- Are the issues environmental, social or economic issues?
- Do key issues differ between localities?
- What should the priority issues be?

The second workshop was split into groups according to the District or Borough participants represented. The purpose of this workshop was to identify local issues of concern. For each objective the participants were asked to consider the following questions:

- How many targets should be considered in relation to each objective?



- What targets should be adopted in relation to each objective?
- Can the LDF help to meet these targets?
- Do the targets reflect the local situation?
- What are the priority targets for each local area?
- How can we measure the targets developed?
- Are data available to measure the targets?

Details of the outcomes of the consultation forum are provided in the SA Scoping Report.

#### **4.10.3 Scoping Report Consultation**

A SA Scoping Report for the overall Oadby and Wigston LDF (including the Core Strategy) was produced in June 2005. This report documented the findings of the first stage of the SA process referred to in the ODPM guidance as Stage A. The SA Scoping Report was sent out to the statutory consultees (i.e. Environment Agency, Countryside Agency, English Heritage and English Nature) and other consultees who expressed an interest (on the initial questionnaire) in being involved in further rounds of consultation. The SA Scoping Report was also published on the Oadby and Wigston Borough Council website ([www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk](http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk)). Responses to the SA Scoping Report and how they have been taken into account within the SA process are available on request from the Council.

#### **4.10.4 Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Consultation**

At each stage of the Core Strategy development, consultation was undertaken regarding the SA. This involved:

- Issue of the SA of the Initial Issues and Options to statutory consultees in March 2006;
- Issue of the Preferred Options SA Report to statutory and other consultees in April 2006;
- Issue of the SA of the Supplemental Issues and Options Paper to statutory and other consultees in June 2007; and,



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- Issue of the Further Consultation Paper SA Report to statutory and other consultees in November 2008.

Responses to the most recent round of consultation (i.e. Further Consultation Paper in November 2008) are provided in Appendix B.



## 5.0 Baseline and Key Issues

### 5.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires the ‘...current state of the environment...’ (annex 1b of the SEA Directive) and the ‘...environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected...’ (annex 1c of the SEA Directive) to be identified. This chapter provides a broad overview of the social, economic and environmental features of Oadby and Wigston Borough and the defined study area. The defined study area includes Oadby and Wigston Borough and parts of adjacent authorities which have environmental and socio-economic links with the Oadby and Wigston Borough. The extent of the defined study area is shown in Figure 1.

The baseline data were first presented in the Scoping Report (2005). This has now been updated to reflect the current situation (2009) and to take into account consultation responses.

The following social, economic and environmental parameters have been considered:

- Economy and Employment.
- Population and Quality of Life.
- Tourism and Recreation.
- Traffic and Transport.
- Geology and Land.
- Waste Management.
- Water Environment.
- Biodiversity and Nature Conservation.
- Landscape and Visual Amenity.
- Cultural Heritage and Archaeology.
- Noise.



- Air Quality.
- Climate Change.

Key issues have been identified at the end of each section.

## **5.2 Socio-Economic Baseline**

### **5.2.1 Introduction**

This section outlines the socio-economic situation in Oadby and Wigston Borough. The baseline has been established with reference to:

- State of Oadby and Wigston Report (2008)
- National Statistics website ([www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk))
- NOMIS - Official Labour Statistics ([www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk))
- Government Office for the East Midlands ([www.goem.gov.uk](http://www.goem.gov.uk))
- Oadby and Wigston Corporate Plan
- Oadby and Wigston Faith Community Profile and Places of Worship Needs Assessment 2008
- Audit Commission Best Value Indicators ([www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk))
- South Leicestershire Primary Care Trust (SLPCT) Annual Report 2004-2005
- Oadby and Wigston Crime Reduction Partnership Strategy 2002-2005
- Oadby and Wigston Sports and Leisure Strategy 2002-2007
- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999
- Oadby and Wigston Open Space, Sport & Recreation Facilities Study 2009
- Oadby and Wigston Local Agenda 21 Strategy
- Oadby and Wigston Sustainable Community Strategy



- Leicestershire Local Transport Plan (2006-2011)
- Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan
- Leicestershire County Council Website ([www.leics.gov.uk](http://www.leics.gov.uk))
- EcoSchools website ([www.eco-schools.org.uk](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk))
- Annual Monitoring Report 2008-2009 ([www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk](http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk))

### **5.2.2 Economy and Employment**

The State of Oadby and Wigston Report (2008) identifies that the Borough has a small economy relative to rest of the country, scoring 28.66 on its economic scale 'score' (when Great Britain = 100) measured by a combination of its share of national Gross Value Added (GVA) and employment. Productivity (measured by a combination of average weekly earnings and GVA per head) in Oadby and Wigston Borough is also below the average for Leicestershire, the East Midlands and Great Britain. Oadby and Wigston experienced a very low rate of economic growth between 1998 and 2006, ranking 394 out of 408 areas in Great Britain on its overall economic change score.

The local economy is largely dependant on traditional manufacturing jobs with less opportunities being available for employment in the high-technology industries and other new sectors. The Oadby and Wigston Corporate Plan identifies the need to diversify the economy away from traditional manufacturing industries. Oadby and Wigston Borough is largely urban in nature and therefore only a small percentage of the population work in agriculture.

The employment rate in Oadby and Wigston stood at 80 per cent in April-June 2007 (The State of Oadby and Wigston Report, 2008) above the national and regional averages and well over the EU Lisbon Strategy target of 70 per cent. Oadby and Wigston also has below-average unemployment figures, relative to national levels.

### **5.2.3 Population and Quality of Life**

Population growth is high in Oadby and Wigston Borough compared to the national rate. However, it is similar to the average for Leicestershire. Most of the population of Oadby and Wigston Borough live in the settlements of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. According to the State of Oadby and Wigston Report



(2008) 17.5% of the population of Oadby and Wigston Borough are from ethnic minorities (non-white), compared to

11.3 per cent in England as a whole, and the majority of these people are of Asian or British Asian origin. The percentage of ethnic minorities is well above the Leicestershire County average of 7.3% and the East Midlands figure of 8.7% (Oadby & Wigston Community Profile, 2005).

In the 2001 census 64.8% of people in the Borough identified themselves as Christian, and the largest non-Christian religious groups were Hindu (6.0%), Sikh (4.2%) and Muslim (2.8%). In July 2008, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council commissioned a Faith Community Profile and Places of Worship Needs Assessment, which identified that Census figures are thought to be very out of date and under-represent numbers of people within some faith communities (notably Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus) by a significant amount.

Communities and Local Government produce the Indices of Deprivation to identify areas of social and economic deprivation in England. The Index of Multiple Deprivation incorporates various measures of deprivation including income, employment, health, education, barriers to housing, living environment and crime. The Indices are produced at local authority and Super Output Area levels. The lower the rank / percentile the more deprived the area is.

Oadby and Wigston Borough is ranked as 293 out of 354 local authorities nationally in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007, (Rank of Average Score). This indicates that the Borough as a whole is significantly less deprived in comparison to the majority of other Districts / Boroughs in England. However, there are some pockets of deprivation in the Borough. The Index of Deprivation is based on the small area geography known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). LSOAs have between 1000 and 3000 people living in them with an average population of 1500 people. In most cases, these are smaller than wards, thus allowing the identification of small pockets of deprivation. The LSOAs with the highest levels of deprivation are mainly concentrated in the south west of the Borough (i.e. around Wigston and South Wigston).

None of the council owned housing in Oadby and Wigston Borough has been classified as non decent.

Health in Oadby and Wigston Borough is good compared with the rest of England. In 2006/07, 6.9% of the population considered their health to be Not Good compared to 8.8% for England as a whole. In addition life expectancy is higher than the national average for both males and females.



The South Leicestershire Primary Care Trust (SLPCT) is responsible for the primary health care in Oadby and Wigston Borough. The SLPCT Annual Report highlights the main health related issues in South Leicestershire. Smoking is the greatest single cause of preventable death and illness in South Leicestershire. Other key areas for improvement include: a reduction in coronary heart disease and diabetes; increasing physical activity, healthy eating and preventing obesity; reducing teenage pregnancy; improving sexual health; reducing excess winter deaths in older people; improving access to services; and improved child protection.

Another important issue is inequalities in health which are often linked to levels of deprivation. In addition there are some health problems which affect people of ethnic minorities disproportionately, for example, there is a 40% higher death rate from heart disease in the South Asian community.

Leicestershire County Council is the Local Education Authority for Oadby and Wigston Borough. Attainment at GCSE level and at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum in Leicestershire is well above the national average. There are 2 (out of 23) schools in Oadby and Wigston Borough that have achieved the EcoSchools award run by the Foundation for Environmental Education. The aim of this scheme is to provide recognition for schools that actively encourage children to take responsibility for the future of their own environment.

The State of Oadby and Wigston Report (2008) identifies that the skills and qualifications profile of the Borough is relatively strong and the share of residents with 'high skills' (NVQ4 or above) is very high relative to regional and national levels.

Baseline data show that the level of crimes in Oadby and Wigston Borough is low compared to the national averages. The Oadby and Wigston Crime Reduction Partnership Strategy identifies priorities for the Borough based on crime trends and consultation evidence. Youth issues were identified as a priority due to high levels of anti-social behaviour in youths and a lack of facilities for young people. The other priority identified was road safety due to concerns over speeding vehicles and poor driver behaviour in general.

#### **5.2.4 Tourism and Recreation**

The urban areas of Oadby and Wigston Borough have a limited ability to attract overnight tourists. However the countryside areas do have potential to attract day visitors to take advantage of the recreational assets. Recreation facilities of particular importance in terms of tourism include Brocks Hill County Park and Environment Centre, the Botanic Gardens, Parkland Leisure Centre, Leicester Racecourse and the Framework Knitters Cottages.



Oadby and Wigston Borough has a wide resource of leisure and recreation activities to serve the local community. These include two swimming pools, parks, allotments, playing fields and informal open space. Other recreation facilities include Brocks Hill County Park, the Botanic Gardens, Parklands Leisure Centre and Leicester racecourse.

Open space and playing fields within the Borough provide informal and formal recreation for all ages. The Open Space, Sport & Recreation Facilities Study (2009) identified a particular need for additional provision of parks and recreation grounds, children and young people's play space and informal open space. In addition, it identified differences in access to open space and recreation in different areas within the Borough.

Access to the countryside is also important as it plays a major role in outdoor recreation activities. Oadby and Wigston Borough has a number of footpaths and bridleways which extend from the urban areas to the Grand Union Canal and outlying villages. The Grand Union Canal provides a significant recreational resource. It provides opportunities for walking, cycling, fishing and the tow path forms the longest stretch of Public Right of Way in the Borough.

### **5.2.5 Traffic and Transport**

Oadby and Wigston Borough is crossed by the A6 which runs from London to Leicester and the A5199 road from Northampton to Leicester. The B582 is an orbital route which links Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. In addition the A563 Southern District Distributor Road, to the north of the Borough, enables access to the M1 and M69 motorways.

Car ownership in Oadby and Wigston Borough is relatively high compared to the averages for England and the East Midlands, but is below average for Leicestershire. The proportion of people driving to work shows a similar pattern. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council have identified that there is considerable potential for changing the mode of transport used in the urban areas where public transport / walking are viable alternatives to private car use.

The main form of public transport in Oadby and Wigston Borough is the bus. There are a number of bus routes which connect the three settlements with Leicester city centre. There is a railway station at South Wigston on the Birmingham to Leicester line which allows a five minute journey to Leicester Station and also connects to Nottingham and Coventry city centres. However, this service is very infrequent with trains to Leicester running every two hours during the daytime. The Midland Mainline from Sheffield to London runs through the Borough but the nearest station on this line is Leicester Station.



The Oadby and Wigston Local Agenda 21 Strategy highlights the need to improve access to public transport, in particular for people with disabilities, parents, people of social and cultural minority groups and for people on a lower income. An issue raised in the consultation questionnaire responses was that there is an absence of evening and Sunday bus services between Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston.

There are three main cycle routes in Oadby and Wigston Borough; a dedicated cycle route along Manor Road connecting Leicester University with the student halls of residence in Oadby; a cycle track along the line of the A6 road (this is still being developed) and a cycle route in Wigston, connecting the town centre with the Knighton Park cycle track, eventually leading into Leicester city centre.

The Leicestershire Local Transport Plan sets out plans to increase the proportion of travel undertaken by foot and bicycle. Proposals include an integrated network of cycle routes, pedestrian priority and clear zones, improved pedestrian and cycle facilities, interchanges with the public transport system and a road safety plan to address the issues of road safety which affect pedestrians and cyclists. The Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan also sets out plans to encourage of walking, cycling and public transport and where appropriate bring about a reduction in travel overall.

### **5.2.6 Key Socio-Economic Sustainability Issues**

The key sustainability issues relating to the socio-economic situation in Oadby and Wigston Borough are:

- High unemployment rate for all those over 16;
- Pockets of deprivation in some areas;
- The need to tackle health inequalities;
- The need to improve facilities for young people; and
- The need to tackle road safety issues.
- The need to address the shortfall in equipped children's play space.
- The need to reduce private car use;
- Poor bus services between Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston in the evenings and on Sundays;
- The need to improve access to public transport;





- The need to increase the proportion of journeys made by foot and bicycle;
- Congestion on major routes at peak times; and
- Tourism related traffic and transport issues.

## 5.3 Environmental Baseline

### 5.3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the environmental situation in Oadby and Wigston Borough. The baseline has been established with reference to:

- Natural England ([www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk))
- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999
- Oadby and Wigston Contaminated Land Strategy
- Environment Agency website ([www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk))
- Oadby and Wigston Biodiversity Action Plan
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan
- Oadby and Wigston Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Biodiversity Audit
- Oadby and Wigston Landscape Character Assessment
- Oadby and Wigston Green Wedge Management Plan
- English Heritage ([www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk))
- Conservation Area Appraisals
- Sites and Monuments Record held by Leicestershire County Council
- Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan
- Oadby and Wigston Air Quality Strategy



- Oadby and Wigston Air Quality Stage 4 Review and Assessment
- Oadby and Wigston Borough website ([www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk](http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk))
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Blaby District Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (2007)
- Renewable Energy Opportunities for Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, Melton, North West Leicestershire, Oadby and Wigston and Rutland (2008)

### 5.3.2 Geology and Land

The geology of much of the western half of Leicestershire is dominated by the red mudstones of the Triassic aged Mercia Mudstone Group. The outcrop of these rocks gives rise to a moderately undulating landscape characterised by mixed pasture and arable agricultural that has developed on the neutral clay soils.

One site in Oadby and Wigston Borough has been identified as a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS) as it is considered important for geological interest and therefore worthy of protection. This site is at Kilby Bridge Pit, a former limestone quarry which is flooded at the bottom.

There is 36ha of derelict land in Oadby and Wigston Borough with sites being of varying size. Some of these derelict sites are of important biodiversity value. This biodiversity value should be considered in any plans to redevelop these sites.

There are a number of contaminated and unstable sites in Oadby and Wigston Borough. Oadby and Wigston Local Plan identifies a site in South Wigston which is known to be generating methane to a significant extent.

### 5.3.3 Waste Management

Baseline data indicate that Oadby and Wigston Borough achieved a recycling rate of 43% in 2007/08 which is relatively high compared with the regional and national figures. This exceeded the waste recycling Best Value Performance Indicator target of 30%.

The Leicestershire Waste Management Strategy has been produced to enable local authorities in the county to work together to achieve common goals. It provides a framework under which new collection, treatment



and disposal infrastructure can be developed. Future aims include: new and enhanced kerbside collections for recyclable materials including the collection of green waste; increased separation of waste particularly green waste for composting; new treatment and processing capacity for waste collected; and an education and awareness campaign.

#### **5.3.4 Water Environment**

The River Sence is the main river in Oadby and Wigston Borough. It flows from east to west through the south of the Borough. The Grand Union Canal is located slightly north of the River Sence and generally follows a similar path. All stretches of Environment Agency Main Rivers in the Borough are currently meeting their River Quality Targets.

There are no major aquifers in the Borough. There are some areas which are underlain by a minor aquifer. Although not producing large quantities of water for abstraction minor aquifers are important for local supplies and in supplying base flow to rivers. In most areas the minor aquifer is classified as being of high vulnerability with small sections of intermediate vulnerability.

According to the Environment Agency website there are no Groundwater Source Protection Zones in Oadby and Wigston Borough.

Severn Trent Water provides water supplies in the Borough. The Water Resources Strategy for the East Midlands indicates that in some areas of the Borough there are no additional surface water resources available for extraction in summer.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) covering Oadby and Wigston Borough was undertaken in November 2007. This indicates areas at risk of flooding in the Borough. There are two main areas at risk of flooding in the Borough; these are situated around Wash Brook to the south of Oadby, and the River Sence to the southeast of South Wigston. The brooks which feed into the River Sence are liable to flooding after severe rainfall. The floodplain (washlands) along the River Sence were identified in the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan which also highlights the need to protect it from development.

The SFRA identifies the need for surface water control measures to be used to reduce downstream flood risk, particularly in the upper reaches of river catchments, for example along the upper reaches of Wash Brook in the Borough.



Climate change is one of the greatest global environmental threats. There is potential that climate change will have significant impacts upon Oadby and Wigston Borough (as with the rest of the globe) particularly through changes to weather patterns and a potential increase in flood risk.

### **5.3.5 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation**

There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Oadby and Wigston Borough; the Kilby Foxton canal (part of the Grand Union Canal) which is split into 15 units. All but one of the units of this SSSI is in an unfavourable declining condition, due to the lack of long term management plan to allow a planned dredging programme as well as a large number of boats passing through which are causing damage. The condition of the SSSI is continuing to decline and thus protection and restoration of this site is a key issue.

There is also one Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in the Borough; Lucas Marsh. In addition to the SSSI and the LNR a number of Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC) have been designated by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifies local and national priority species and habitats. It also sets targets for their conservation and outlines mechanisms for achieving these. The Oadby and Wigston BAP identifies the contribution which Oadby and Wigston Borough can make to the achievement of the Leicestershire BAP objectives. It argues that, as the countryside in Oadby and Wigston Borough is relatively small, and largely made up of intensive agriculture, the remaining wildlife habitats are of particular importance. It identifies the following broad habitat types in the Borough:

- Urban habitats;
- Farmland habitats;
- Woodland and scrub habitats; and
- Wetland habitats.

A Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Biodiversity Audit was carried out for the Borough in 2005. This identified the following main habitats and species within the Borough:

Habitats:

- Veteran trees;



- Trees of special interest (potential bat roosts);
- Hedgerows
- Woodland
- Ponds
- Wildlife Sites
- SSSIs
- Nature Reserves
- Gardens
- Grand Union Canal
- River Sense
- Washbrook

Species:

- Otters
- Water voles
- Farmland birds
- Bats
- Great crested newts
- Marbles white butterfly
- Brown hares

### 5.3.6 Landscape and Visual Amenity

The landscape of Oadby and Wigston Borough is diverse and includes the townscapes of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and the countryside areas on the rural-urban fringe. The urban fringe is generally well-integrated into the rural landscape and hedgerows, trees and subtle changes in the landform help to limit views of the town from the countryside.

The Oadby and Wigston Landscape Character Assessment (OWLCA) describes the Borough as "...a transition zone between the more distinct plateau and steep sided valley landscapes to the north and east, and the more open, rolling landscapes to the south and west." The landscape is also influenced by the River Sence valley to the south and the valley of the Upper Soar to the west. The townscape of Oadby is predominantly suburban residential and the OWLCA states that overall it does not have a high level of local distinctiveness. Wigston is also predominantly residential but has areas distinguished by employment and educational use. The southern part of Wigston town centre retains its historical character and is one of the



highest quality urban areas in the Borough. South Wigston is a relatively young settlement, characterised by a mix of uses, and its urban character is considered unremarkable.

English Heritage (2005) reported that nearly half of all parkland in the East Midlands recorded in 1918 had been lost by 1995 as a result of agricultural development, conversion to golf courses and other changes. Oadby and Wigston Borough is one of the areas that suffered the heaviest losses (96%).

The towns and villages of Oadby and Wigston Borough also have historic landscapes which should be preserved. Leicestershire County Council will be undertaking a Historic Landscape Characterisation of the county. This study will complement existing Landscape Character Assessments by considering landscape components that are “natural” but nevertheless the product of centuries of human action, such as, hedgerows, woodland, ponds and modified watercourses.

The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan identifies an Area of Local Landscape Value, around the River Sence, to the south west of the Borough. It also identifies an area of Historic Landscape at Stoughton Farm Park.

The Green Wedges within Oadby and Wigston Borough create a significant area of open space in the Borough and prevent the settlements of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston from coalescing. They are important not only in terms of landscape but also for recreation and nature conservation. There are two Green Wedges in the Borough: the Thurnby, Leicester and Oadby Green Wedge; and the Oadby and Wigston Green Wedge.

The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan also identifies other significant areas of open space within the urban area which should be protected. The Countryside Agency (which has now merged with English Nature to form Natural England) has highlighted the importance of establishing a Green Infrastructure: a network of multi-functional greenspace that will contribute to a high quality natural and built environment.

Natural England has set an aspirational target for Local Planning Authorities of at least one hectares of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 population. In addition Natural England recommends that:

- No person should live more than 300m from an area of natural greenspace of at least 2 hectares;
- There should be at least one 20 hectare site of accessible natural greenspace within 2km of all homes;
- There should be at least one 100 hectare site within 5km of all homes; and



- There should be at least one 500 hectare site within 10km of all homes.

### **5.3.7 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology**

There are a number of archaeological sites of interest in the Borough which form an important part of its heritage. 85 of these are listed on the Sites and Monuments Record held by Leicestershire County Council. There is potential for archaeological sites and areas of cultural heritage to exist that are currently unknown and so are not specifically designated.

There are currently no Scheduled Monuments in the Borough although this situation is currently being reviewed.

There are 38 Listed Buildings in the Borough which have special architectural or historic value. Many of these are located within Conservation Areas. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council has designated nine Conservation Areas in the Borough, as follows:

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

The purpose of these is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of areas with heritage interest. Conservation Area Appraisals have been produced and adopted for all nine Conservation Areas designated by the Council. The Grand Union Canal Conservation Area, designated by Leicestershire County Council also falls partially within the Borough.



According to the Heritage at Risk Register 2008, no monuments/buildings are currently at risk in the Oadby and Wigston Borough.

### **5.3.8 Noise**

Background noise levels vary considerably within the Borough. However, high background noise levels are principally associated with road corridors. The Central Leicestershire Local Transport plan highlights noise as a significant issue around busy, main roads. Noise levels to the south of the Borough are generally lower than in the north due to its rural nature.

### **5.3.9 Air Quality**

The most recent Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment (2006) identified that there are no likely exceedences of the air quality objectives for carbon monoxide, benzene, 1, 3-butadiene, lead, sulphur dioxide and PM10.

Previous air quality review and assessments resulted in the declaration of four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in Oadby and Wigston Borough. These were all declared in 2001 due to predicted exceedences (due to road traffic) in the levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) against the National Air Quality Strategy Objectives. The locations of the AQMAs were as follows:

- Saffron Road, Wigston
- Moat Street to Bull Head Street, Wigston
- Aylestone Land, Wigston
- A6 Leicester / Harborough Road, Oadby

As a result of the latest monitoring data and the applying of calculations of pollutant levels at building facades (rather than kerb-side concentrations), Oadby and Wigston Borough Council have identified that the objective figure of 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> for NO<sub>2</sub> was met in all four AQMAs for the years 2003, 2004 and 2005, and is likely to be met in subsequent years. As a result, all four AQMAs have been revoked. However, it is still important to ensure that good air quality in the Borough is maintained.





### 5.3.10 Climate Change

Climate change is one of the greatest global environmental threats. It is likely that it will have significant impacts upon Oadby and Wigston Borough (as with the rest of the globe) particularly through increased rainfall intensity resulting in an increase in the number and severity of flood events.

According to a Renewable Energy Study (2008) commissioned by the Leicester and Rutland area to quantify the potential for renewable energy in the Leicestershire and Rutland area, Oadby and Wigston Borough has a very limited potential for renewable energy development, because of its relatively small area and its high population density.

The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan highlights the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through improved energy efficiency and conservation. The Brocks Hill Environment Centre, owned by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, is an example of a fully sustainable building. It is designed to be energy efficient and generates its own electricity through photovoltaic panels and a wind turbine.

### 5.3.11 Key Environmental Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issues relating to the environmental situation in Oadby and Wigston Borough are:

- Future flooding risk associated with climate change;
- The need to improve the condition of the Kilby Foxton Canal SSSI;
- The need to protect key sites of geological interest;
- The need to reduce the amount of waste produced;
- No additional surface waters available for abstraction in summer;
- The need to protect and enhance both statutory and non statutory sites designated for nature conservation;
- The need to protect habitats and species listed in the Biodiversity Action Plans;
- The need to create new habitats;
- The need to protect and enhance the area of Green Wedges;



- The need to protect other areas of urban open space;
- The need to preserve and enhance sites of archaeological and cultural heritage interest and their settings;
- Noise pollution associated with the road corridors in the Borough;
- The need to maintain good air quality in the Borough;
- The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Potential climate change related impacts upon Oadby and Wigston Borough.

## 5.4 Summary of Key Issues

The SEA Directive requires an analysis of ‘...any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan...’ (annex 1d of the SEA Directive). Key sustainability issues that affect the Core Strategy were identified through an analysis of the baseline conditions and through the review of plans and programmes. These key issues identified in the previous sections are summarised in Table 4 below.

**Table 4 Key Sustainability Issues**

Sustainability Issue	Econ-omic	Social	Environ-mental	Likely evolution without the Core Strategy	Implications for the Core Strategy	Potential influence of Core Strategy
High unemployment rate for all those over 16.	✓	✓		May increase given current economic downturn.	The Core Strategy needs to consider the provision of employment sites and access to those sites.	Moderate
Pockets of deprivation in some areas.	✓	✓	✓	May increase given current economic downturn.	The Core Strategy should seek to address issues which contribute to social deprivation such as lack of access to jobs, facilities and services and poor quality of the built environment. Regeneration of deprived areas could help to tackle this issue.	Minor



Sustainability Issue	Econ-omic	Social	Environ-mental	Likely evolution without the Core Strategy	Implications for the Core Strategy	Potential influence of Core Strategy
The need to tackle health inequalities.	✓	✓	✓	May increase given current economic downturn.	Health inequalities in the Borough are related to deprivation. The Core Strategy should seek to address issues which contribute to social deprivation such as lack of access to jobs, facilities and services and poor quality of the built environment. Regeneration of deprived areas could help to tackle this issue.	Minor
The need to improve facilities for young people.		✓		Likely to remain an issue.	The Core Strategy should ensure that future developments do not compromise existing youth facilities. Encourage the development of more youth facilities particularly in areas where anti social behaviour is an issue.	Minor
The need to tackle road safety.		✓		Likely to remain an issue given growth in traffic.	Future development could increase the number of cars on the roads and lead to further road safety issues. The Core Strategy should consider the location of development so as to avoid an increase in car use.	Minor
The need to address the shortfall in equipped children's play space.		✓	✓	Likely to remain an issue.	Future developments could impact upon existing children's play spaces. The Core Strategy should ensure that these are protected. It should also encourage the development of new children's play space in locations where there is a shortfall.	Major



Sustainability Issue	Economic	Social	Environmental	Likely evolution without the Core Strategy	Implications for the Core Strategy	Potential influence of Core Strategy
The need to reduce private car use.		✓	✓	Likely to become more of an issue given growth in traffic and growing concerns over climate change.	Future developments could lead to further increases in car use as they attract more people. The Core Strategy needs to carefully consider the location of developments and access to them, in particular, access by footpaths and cycle ways. The Core Strategy could also encourage new developments to provide facilities for cyclists such as bicycle storage and showers.	Moderate
Poor bus services between Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston at the evenings and on Sundays.		✓	✓	Likely to remain an issue.	Future developments need to be accessible by public transport to reduce private car use. The Core Strategy should ensure that all developments are accessible by public transport.	Minor
The need to improve access to public transport.		✓	✓	Likely to remain an issue.	Future developments need to be accessible by public transport to reduce private car use. The Core Strategy should ensure that all developments are accessible by public transport.	Moderate
The need to increase the proportion of journeys made by foot and bicycle.		✓	✓	Likely to become more of an issue given growth in traffic and growing concerns over climate change.	Future developments need to be accessible by foot and bicycle. The Core Strategy needs to carefully consider the location of developments access to them. The Core Strategy could also encourage new developments to provide facilities for cyclists such as bicycle storage and showers.	Moderate
Congestion on major routes at peak times.		✓	✓	Likely to become more of an issue given growth in traffic.	The Core Strategy should ensure developments are easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.	Moderate



Sustainability Issue	Econ-omic	Social	Environ-mental	Likely evolution without the Core Strategy	Implications for the Core Strategy	Potential influence of Core Strategy
Tourism related traffic and transport issues.		✓	✓	Likely to become more of an issue given growth in traffic.	The Core Strategy should consider the impact of tourism on traffic levels and congestion and ensure good accessibility to tourism developments via walking, cycling and public transport.	Moderate
Future flooding risk associated with climate change	✓	✓	✓	Likely to become more of an issue given growing concerns over climate change.	Future development in the floodplain and increased surface water run-off could increase flood risk to properties. The Core Strategy should restrict development in the floodplain and ensure the sustainable management of surface water run-off from development sites.	Moderate
The need to improve the condition of the Kilby Foxton Canal SSSI.			✓	The condition of this SSSI is currently declining and situation may worsen if no management plan is prepared.	New development could impact upon the condition of the SSSI (e.g. through increased recreation pressures / disturbance). The Core Strategy should afford special protection to the SSSI and ensure that no developments will contribute to its further decline.	Moderate
The need to protect key sites of geological interest.			✓	Likely to remain an issue.	New developments could impact upon key geological sites. The Core Strategy should afford protection to these sites.	Major
The need to reduce the amount of waste produced	✓	✓	✓	Likely to remain an issue as space in landfill sites declines.	The Core Strategy should encourage sustainable waste management for new developments and the reuse of construction material.	Moderate



Sustainability Issue	Econ-omic	Social	Environ-mental	Likely evolution without the Core Strategy	Implications for the Core Strategy	Potential influence of Core Strategy
The need to increase the proportion of waste that is recycled.	✓	✓	✓	While the proportion of household waste recycled is increasing, this is likely to remain an issue as space in landfill sites declines.	The Core Strategy should encourage sustainable waste management for new developments and the reuse of construction material.	Moderate
No additional surface waters available for abstraction in summer		✓	✓	Likely to remain an issue.	The Core Strategy should encourage water efficiency in new developments.	Minor
The need to protect and enhance additional non statutory sites designated for nature conservation.			✓	Likely to remain an issue: without protection from the Core Strategy ad hoc development could adversely affect non statutory sites.	New developments could impact upon nature conservation sites. The Core Strategy should afford protection to identified nature conservation sites both statutory and non-statutory. The Core Strategy should afford protection to habitats that have developed on brownfield sites and the species supported by them. It should ensure that for biodiversity features lost to development (where loss is completely unavoidable) the area of compensatory habitat provided is greater than the amount that has been lost.	Major
The need to protect habitats and species listed in the Biodiversity Action Plans.			✓	Likely to remain an issue: without protection from the Core Strategy ad hoc development could adversely affect habitats and species.	New developments could impact upon priority species and habitats. The Core Strategy should incorporate measures to protect and enhance the natural environment to ensure that priority species and habitats are protected and encourage developers to provide space to enhance these where possible.	Moderate



Sustainability Issue	Econ-omic	Social	Environ-mental	Likely evolution without the Core Strategy	Implications for the Core Strategy	Potential influence of Core Strategy
The need to create new habitats.			✓	Likely to remain an issue.	The Core Strategy should consider provision of land for creation of new habitats. It should also encourage the provision of new habitats within new developments.	Moderate
The need to protect and enhance the Green Wedge area.		✓	✓	Likely to remain an issue: without protection from the Core Strategy ad hoc development could adversely affect Green Wedges.	New developments could impact upon the landscape quality of the Green Wedge area. The Core Strategy should protect this area from such developments and also consider expanding the designated area.	Major
The need to protect other areas of urban open space.		✓	✓	Likely to remain an issue: without protection from the Core Strategy ad hoc development could adversely affect urban open space.	New development could impact upon the area of urban open space in the Borough. The Core Strategy should protect these areas from unsuitable development. It should also promote the provision of Green Infrastructure as part of new development.	Major
The need to preserve and enhance sites of archaeological and cultural heritage interest and their settings.		✓	✓	Likely to remain an issue: without protection from the Core Strategy ad hoc development could adversely affect archaeological / heritage sites.	New development could impact upon archaeological and cultural heritage resources. The Core Strategy should afford protection to all designated archaeological / cultural heritage sites. It should also require new developments to undertake an archaeological / cultural heritage assessment and implement appropriate mitigation where necessary. It should ensure Historic Landscape Character Assessments are undertaken prior to development and that only development which will fit in with local settings is allowed.	Major



Sustainability Issue	Econ-omic	Social	Environ-mental	Likely evolution without the Core Strategy	Implications for the Core Strategy	Potential influence of Core Strategy
Noise pollution associated with the road corridors in the Borough.		✓	✓	Likely to become more of an issue given growth in traffic.	The Core Strategy should consider the location of development in relation to road corridors.	Minor
The need to maintain good air quality in the Borough.		✓	✓	Air quality is improving; however this may remain an issue given growth in traffic.	Future development could increase the number of cars on the roads and thus have implications for air quality. The Core Strategy should plan for more sustainable patterns of development in order to reduce the need for people to travel.	Moderate
The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.		✓	✓	Likely to become more of an issue given growing concerns over climate change.	The Core Strategy should plan for more sustainable patterns of development in order to reduce the need for people to travel. The Core Strategy should also encourage renewable energy developments where appropriate.	Minor
Potential climate change related impacts upon Oadby and Wigston.	✓	✓	✓	Likely to become more of an issue given growing concerns over climate change.	The Core Strategy needs to take into consideration the likely impacts of future climate change, such as, an increase in the risk of flooding when planning future developments.	Minor





## 6.0 Testing the Plan Objectives

In order to determine whether the objectives of the Core Strategy are in accordance with sustainability principles it is necessary to test their compatibility with the SA objectives.

During Stage A (scoping stage) the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy core objectives were tested against the SA objectives in order to determine whether they were in accordance with sustainability principles. The compatibility matrix presented in the SA Scoping Report identified areas where conflict may arise.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council used this compatibility matrix as a guide in the development of their Core Strategy objectives. Draft Core Strategy objectives were presented within the Preferred Options Report (2006). These were tested against the SA objectives and the results presented within the Preferred Options Sustainability Report (WYG, 2006). Slightly revised objectives were presented within the Further Consultation Paper and an updated compatibility matrix provided within the Further Consultation SA Report (WYG, 2008).

The Core Strategy objectives were further refined following the 2008 consultation period and therefore the compatibility test has been repeated to reflect this. The results of this process are illustrated in the Objectives Compatibility Matrix in Appendix C, which shows whether the objectives are compatible / incompatible, together with a brief commentary. This is illustrated through the use of symbols in the matrix as shown in Table 5 below.

**Table 5 Objectives Compatibility Matrix Key**

Key	
✓✓	Highly compatible
✓	Potentially compatible
✗✗	Highly incompatible
✗	Potentially incompatible
~	Neutral



## 7.0 Development and Appraisal of Options





### 7.1 Introduction

Stage B of the SA process involves broad appraisal of the strategic options and then appraisal in more detail of the effects of the Preferred Options when these have been selected. ODPM recognise that elements of Stage B may need to be carried out more than once in the DPD development. Stage B of the SA of the Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy has been undertaken through a number of sub-stages as options were refined.

At each stage in development of the Core Strategy, WYG appraised the potential options using the SA objectives and taking into account the baseline and key issues identified during Stage A. The likely social, economic and environmental effects of each potential option were determined.

For each option it was determined whether there would be a move towards or away from achievement of each SA objective. This was presented in a matrix format using symbols as shown in Table 6 below.

**Table 6 Options Appraisal Matrix Key**

	Option moving towards achievement of Sustainability Appraisal objective
	Unknown: depends on how option will be implemented
	Option moving away from achievement of Sustainability Appraisal objective
	Neutral: no relationship with Sustainability Appraisal objective

In each matrix, commentary was provided to explain the reasoning behind the appraisal. In addition, where appropriate, changes to the options or measures were recommended to reduce potential adverse effects and maximise beneficial effects.

### 7.2 Initial Issues and Options Paper

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council published an Issues and Options Paper for the Core Strategy in July 2005. The Issues and Options Paper set out the key issues affecting land use and potential options for



development in the Borough. The purpose of the Issues and Options Paper was to encourage stakeholders to become involved in the LDF process by answering a series of questions set out in the report.

The potential options for development identified by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council within the Issues and Options Paper were appraised using the SA framework developed in Stage A. The SA of the Issues and Options was presented in the form of appraisal matrices. These appraisal matrices are available on request from the Council.

### **7.3 Preferred Options 2006**

Following consultation on the Issues and Options Paper, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council produced a Preferred Options Report for the Core Strategy in April 2006 which included a number of potential policies. The potential policies within the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report were appraised using the SA framework developed in Stage A. The outcome of the Preferred Options Appraisal was presented in the Sustainability Report produced by WYG, dated April 2006. This report is available on request from the Council. The Council went out to consultation on the Preferred Options Report and accompanying Sustainability Report between April and June 2006.

### **7.4 Choices and Broad Locations for Development Growth**

In June 2007, as a result of consultation responses and advice from GOEM, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council prepared a Supplemental Issues and Options Paper which considered options relating to choices and broad locations of growth, as detailed below. The Appraisal Matrices associated with this stage are presented in Appendix D.

#### **7.4.1 Appropriate Locations for Development Growth**

The Supplemental Issues and Options Paper identified five possible options for the appropriate location of new development in the Borough. The following location options were appraised using the SA framework:

- New free-standing settlement – this option requires the allocation of a single large and distinct greenfield site to accommodate all of the proposed housing and employment growth expected to be required in the Borough during the lifespan of the development plan document. A new settlement would be located away from the existing urban area.



- Redevelopment of brownfield sites and one large sustainable urban extension (SUE) – this option follows a strategy of urban concentration (i.e. develop in the existing built up area) as advocated at national and regional level, plus allocation of one large SUE to accommodate any future development that cannot be accommodated on suitable and viable previously developed land.
- Redevelopment of brownfield sites and several small sustainable urban extensions – this option again follows a strategy of urban concentration but rather than a single large SUE it advocates that several small SUEs be allocated across the Borough’s three main settlements, adjacent to the urban area, to accommodate any future development that cannot be accommodated on suitable and viable previously developed land in the urban area.
- Brownfield sites only - this option relies solely on the redevelopment of previously developed land and buildings. No greenfield sites would be allocated.
- SUE sites only - this option would require the allocation of a number of greenfield, urban fringe sites of varying sizes to accommodate future development needs of the Borough up to 2021 and beyond. No brownfield sites would be allocated and there would be limited guidance regarding the reuse of brownfield sites for alternative uses should they become vacant.

#### **7.4.2 Broad Locations for Development Growth**

In addition to the options proposed for the appropriate location of new development, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council considered five possible locations for SUEs to accommodate growth. The following broad ‘areas of search’ were appraised using the SA framework:

- Area A - adjacent to the urban area south of South Wigston
- Area B – adjacent to the urban area south east of Wigston
- Area C – adjacent to the urban area south of Oadby
- Area D – adjacent to the urban area south east of Oadby
- Area E – adjacent to the urban area north east of Oadby



## 7.5 Draft Core Strategy Further Consultation Paper

The Draft Core Strategy Further Consultation Paper was published in November 2008, which included revised and new potential policies for the Core Strategy. A detailed SA was undertaken of the Draft Core Strategy as set out in this document and the SA Report (November, 2008) detailed the outcomes of the SA.

## 7.6 Outcomes of the Options Development and Appraisal

SA of the Core Strategy options identified a number of potential effects, both beneficial and adverse. The appraisal matrices / tables produced at each stage were used by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy.

A summary of the findings of the SA of the options for growth and the options taken forward is provided in Table 7 below. More detailed explanation of the reasons why certain options were chosen and other options discounted is provided within the Draft Core Strategy Further Consultation Paper (November 2008) and the Submission Core Strategy (June 2009).

**Table 7 Outcomes of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Options for Growth**

Findings of SA	Option Taken Forward in Submission Core Strategy
<b>Appropriate Locations for Development Growth</b>	
<p>The SA identified that redevelopment of brownfield sites would have the greatest number of sustainability benefits in that it would enable remediation of land, avoid the loss of green spaces and potential impacts upon the landscape and enable good access to services within the urban area.</p> <p>Development of a new single freestanding settlement would result in significant loss of greenfield land and may lead to increased traffic and air quality problems. However it may also provide an opportunity for provision of comprehensive new services / facilities.</p> <p>Development of SUE sites would also result in loss of greenfield sites and potentially impact upon the natural environment however would be better linked with services and facilities within the existing urban area than a freestanding settlement, thus minimising the traffic impact and benefiting those without a car.</p>	<p>The option taken forward in the Submission Core Strategy is the redevelopment of brownfield sites and one Direction for Growth (smaller than a SUE). This was chosen because it enabled the most to be made of the potential for redevelopment and revitalisation of the centres, while still enabling the Borough to accommodate the growth required by the Regional Plan. Due to the physically small size and high density of the Borough, it would be difficult to accommodate such growth without some allocation of development outside the current urban areas.</p> <p>The approach of allocating a larger urban fringe site was chosen instead of allocating several small sites, as it will provide a more balanced and sustainable community that will have access to all community infrastructure requirements. This would be less likely if numerous sporadic urban fringe developments were allocated.</p>



Findings of SA	Option Taken Forward in Submission Core Strategy
<b>Broad Locations for Development Growth</b>	
<p>The SA identified a number of effects associated with development of Areas A to E. While the SA identified various environmental constraints associated with certain areas, overall there were not considered to be any one area which was particularly less sensitive to development than the others.</p>	<p>The option taken forward in the Submission Core Strategy for the Direction of Growth is Area B - south east of Wigston.</p> <p>This was chosen because it links well with Wigston, which has been identified as the Borough's main town, with the greatest potential for growth and better capacity for services and facilities to accommodate growth.</p> <p>The location to the south east of Wigston also has potential to accommodate growth without having significant impacts on the wider highway network.</p> <p>In addition, the location to the south east of Wigston will be within walking distance of Kilby Bridge and the Grand Union Canal, which will enable links between the new development and this major green infrastructure asset and help to direct funding towards its enhancement.</p>



## 8.0 Likely Effects of the Core Strategy

### 8.1 Introduction

The SA of the Core Strategy has been undertaken in relation to the SA framework developed during Stage A (scoping) of the SA process. The social, economic and environmental effects of implementing the Core Strategy have been predicted taking into account the baseline situation and key sustainability issues identified during Stage A, which were determined using information from a wide range of sources, including data / information from plans, programmes and policies, as well as consultation with key organisations and consultees.

The predicted effects of the Core Strategy are detailed in the Appraisal Tables in Appendix E. An Appraisal Table has been produced for each policy, detailing the social, economic and environmental effects of that particular policy. Measures to mitigate adverse effects and to enhance beneficial effects have been recommended where possible.

For the purposes of the SA the baseline conditions are assumed to be the status quo for the study area. Implementation of the Core Strategy will result in either an improvement to or deterioration in this baseline. If the Core Strategy is not implemented then it must be assumed that there will be no change to the current baseline conditions. However, in reality this would not occur as natural and social processes would continue to operate.

It should be noted that this SA has been based upon the information provided in the Submission Core Strategy (Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, October 2009). Therefore, if there are any fundamental changes to the Core Strategy, the potential significant effects may also change. In this event, the Core Strategy will need to be reassessed to determine significant effects.

The methodology for assessing significant effects is detailed in the following section.

### 8.2 Appraisal Methodology

#### 8.2.1 Prediction of Effects

The social, economic and environmental effects of the Core Strategy have been predicted in relation to each of the SA objectives developed at Stage A.



The predicted effects have been qualified within the Appraisal Tables in terms of their nature, duration, magnitude and geographical scale.

Effects may be of the following nature:

- Adverse or beneficial.
- Direct or indirect.

Effects may be of the following duration:

- Temporary or permanent.
- Short or long term.

Effects may be of the following geographical scale:

- Immediate.
- Local.
- District.
- Regional.
- National.
- International.

Effects have also been qualified in terms of their likelihood and the magnitude of changes in the baseline conditions. The magnitude of effects has been determined based upon the changes to the baseline conditions that are predicted to arise from the Core Strategy taking into account the likelihood and scale of the change.

Table 8 details the methodology for determining the magnitude of effects.







**Table 8 Determining Magnitude of Effects**

Magnitude of Effect	Description
Major	Effect resulting in a considerable change in baseline conditions with undesirable / desirable consequences on the receiving environment
Minor	Effect resulting in a discernible change in baseline conditions with undesirable / desirable consequences that can be tolerated
No effect	No discernible change in baseline conditions

**8.2.2 Assessment of Effects**

Following the prediction of effects, as detailed above, an assessment of the significance of these effects has been undertaken. The factors described above (magnitude, geographical scale, duration and nature) have been considered in order to determine significance. As advised in the ODPM SA Guidance (2005) significance has been determined based on the individual merits of each case, as effects which are significant in one situation may not necessarily be significant in another.

Where effects have been identified to be potentially beneficial or potentially adverse this means that there is a degree of uncertainty associated with the effects. This may be because the effects will depend upon implementation of the option or there may be limited information available at the strategic level to confirm their significance.

The Appraisal Tables show how significant adverse effects represent a move away from a SA objective and significant beneficial effects represent a move towards a SA objective. Table 9 provides a key to the significance of effects as shown within the Appraisal Tables.



**Table 9 Significance of Effects**

Significance of Effects	
Direct Effects	Indirect Effects
Major beneficial	Major beneficial
Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
Potentially beneficial	Potentially beneficial
Potentially adverse	Potentially adverse
Minor adverse	Minor adverse
Major adverse	Major adverse
Potentially beneficial or adverse	
No significant effect	

### 8.2.3 Limitations

As advised in the ODPM SA Guidance (2005) any uncertainties and / or limitations encountered in the SA have been documented, which are summarised as follows. Future SA and monitoring of LDF documents should take into account these limitations / uncertainties.

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to provide an overarching framework for the spatial development of the Borough. At this level limited information is available on the specific locations and / or types of development. Where necessary a worst case scenario has therefore been assumed (e.g. that development resulting from the Core Strategy could potentially have an adverse effect upon biodiversity).

It should be noted that the SA has been based on a combination of quantitative information from a number of sources (e.g. National Statistics and Nomis) and qualitative assessment using considered judgement. Given the strategic nature of the plan the robustness of the SA is not considered to be compromised by the use of a qualitative approach. Detailed quantitative information relating to the effects of the plan is likely to only be available at a later stage (e.g. once planning applications are submitted).



### 8.3 Likely Effects of the Core Strategy

This section gives an overview of the likely beneficial and adverse effects associated with the Core Strategy. Full details of the likely effects of the Core Strategy are presented in the Appraisal Tables in Appendix E.

#### 8.3.1 Overall Effects

Some of the Core Strategy's policies will encourage development in the Borough (particularly policies 1, 2, 16 and 17) which could potentially have a number of adverse effects upon some of the SA objectives, particularly those relating to environmental resources. Other policies focus on protecting certain aspects of the environment (e.g. policies 5, 6, 7, 15) and may therefore help to mitigate some of these adverse effects as well as to enhance beneficial effects. More detail is provided in Section 8.3.2.

The Core Strategy will allocate a significant proportion of land for new development. Large scale construction work associated with development in the Borough is likely to result in a number of temporary minor adverse effects upon the environment. For example the use of natural resources; the generation of construction waste for disposal; the generation of dust and emissions to air; and the risk of pollution incidents. Energy and water consumption and the amount of domestic / commercial waste for disposal are also likely to increase once the developments are operational.

New developments (due to construction works and following occupation) may also have permanent adverse effects upon biodiversity resources, cultural heritage and archaeological resources and their settings, geological resources and the landscape value of the chosen site. New development may also have an impact upon the character and distinctiveness of towns and villages in the Borough if not sensitively designed. In addition, development may have adverse effects upon soil quality, in particular development that occurs on greenfield land in countryside areas.

Once occupied new developments may attract more people (residents / employees / visitors) to the Borough which could lead to an increase in car use; this may result in increased levels of traffic congestion, noise, vibration, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore it is essential that efficient forms of public transport and walking and cycling routes are provided. Attracting new people to the area may also place additional demand on transport infrastructure, education facilities, health facilities, utilities infrastructure and leisure / recreational opportunities in the Borough.



### 8.3.2 Effects of Individual Policies

#### Policy 1: Spatial Strategy for Development in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston

This policy sets out the overall approach to development. It sets out proposals for the allocation of land for development of 1,800 new dwellings and significant employment development as well as the location of this development. It focuses development within the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and within Leicester Principal Urban Area. It also sets out proposals to allocate land for one Direction for Growth on greenfield land to the south east of Wigston to accommodate mixed use development, including housing, employment and supporting services. These allocations will contribute significantly towards the provision of housing and employment opportunities to meet the needs of the Borough.

As discussed in section 8.3.1, large scale development does have a number of potential adverse effects upon the environment. However, focusing and prioritising development in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and the urban areas will help to minimise development of green, undeveloped land and ensure most new development has good access to services and facilities, reducing the need to travel and thereby helping to minimise car use and associated emissions. In order for these benefits to be maximised it is important to ensure the provision of a frequent, efficient and high quality public transport system in the Borough and encourage walking and cycling through the creation of well-lit footpaths and cycleways. This approach will also encourage the re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings.

Development of the proposed Direction for Growth may have particular effects upon the natural environment and landscape, given its location on the urban fringe. In particular, the potential for effects upon the nearby Kilby Foxton Canal SSSI will need to be considered in the development of the proposals for this site. However, other policies within the Core Strategy are considered to provide suitable protection and enhancement measures to minimise potential adverse effects (see Section 8.4 for more details).

Large scale housing development may put pressure on local services and facilities (e.g. health care, education). Therefore there is a need to ensure that either capacity of existing services are able to meet increased demand generated by new development or new services are provided to meet this demand. This is recognised within this policy and its supporting text, and Policies 3 and 10 will also help to ensure this is taken into consideration. It has been identified that Wigston has better capacity within existing infrastructure to accommodate the Direction for Growth and that new services are also proposed to be provided to support the population. It is recommended that provision of local services is addressed in greater detail in subsequent DPDs, Masterplans and / or development briefs.



Policy 2: Development in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston

This policy will encourage mixed use development in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and seek to maintain local facilities within local centres. This will help to ensure good access to services and facilities across the Borough and reduce the need for people to travel. Mixed use developments in the centres will also enable the provision of housing and jobs in accessible locations. Such developments may have some minor adverse effects upon the environment (as detailed in Section 8.3.1), for example, development in Oadby or South Wigston may have an impact upon flood risk given the location of the floodplain. Development may also affect historic assets within or near to the centres, including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. It is therefore important that new mixed use developments are sensitively designed to protect and enhance all historic assets.

Policy 3: Regeneration Schemes

This policy requires Masterplans / Development Briefs /and or other appropriate plans or strategies to be produced for regeneration schemes / areas of large scale changes and sets out what these documents should cover. While this policy does not encourage development, it is likely to have a number of beneficial effects associated with requiring Masterplans / Development Briefs/and or other appropriate plans or strategies to address certain issues, including community safety, sustainable construction and design and biodiversity.

Policy 4: Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

This policy addresses the location and design of new development and essential services to reduce the need to travel, enhance pedestrian and road safety and improve accessibility. This policy will therefore help to improve access both within and to new developments and to essential services. In addition, it is likely to help to encourage public transport use, cycling and walking as opposed to private car use. The policy also includes a requirement for travel plans for larger developments which will further help to reduce car use and encourage use of other modes of transport.

The policy also highlights the need to protect land identified for development / enhancement of transport infrastructure. The effects of this depend upon the type of transport infrastructure to be developed, the existing use of the land and alternative uses which may be proposed. However, should development of this land for transport infrastructure occur, it may help to improve the transport system, thus improving accessibility to jobs and services. Development of roads could encourage car use, whereas development of





public transport infrastructure may help to encourage a shift away from private car use. The policy has been modified to include a clarification that priorities will focus on 'green' travel modes.

Policy 5: Green Infrastructure

This policy outlines how a net gain in green infrastructure will be sought. In particular it states that the existing green infrastructure corridors will be safeguarded and enhanced and new green infrastructure created. It also identifies a need to protect and conserve species and sites of ecological and geological significance. This policy is likely to have a major beneficial effect upon the natural environment and will help to mitigate / reduce some of the potential adverse effects associated with development in the Borough.

Policy 6: Green Wedges

This policy sets out the objectives of the Green Wedges within the Borough and identifies the types of development that would be considered appropriate in areas designated as Green Wedges. Provision of Green Wedges will have a number of beneficial effects, both in relation to protection of the natural environment and landscape, and enabling the continued use of the Green Wedges by local people for recreational purposes.

Acceptable uses within the Green Wedges footpaths, bridleways, cycleways, outdoor leisure, recreation and sporting facilities, all of which if developed have the potential to encourage walking, cycling and other forms of exercise, promoting healthy lifestyles and improved wellbeing. In addition, development of transport infrastructure may be acceptable where there is no alternative route available and mitigation measures are implemented to minimise adverse impacts on amenity. Development of transport infrastructure has potential for adverse effects, for example upon the natural landscape and upon habitats and species present in the Green Wedges.

Policy 7: The Countryside

This policy aims to protect the countryside and outlines the criteria that will be applied to any development that is considered to be acceptable in the countryside. While the policy does allow some development in the countryside, it aims to ensure that environmental and historic resources are not adversely affected by this. As well as ensuring protection of the environment, this policy will also help to ensure the needs of the local community are met through allowing certain types of development, such as provision of affordable housing, essential services and employment.





Policy 8: Climate Change and Renewable Energy

This policy sets out a number of requirements for new developments to demonstrate their sustainability credentials, including energy efficiency, resource use, renewable energy and mitigation of climate change. The policy also includes a requirement for new residential development to achieve energy efficiency standards as set out within the Code for Sustainable Homes beyond current building regulations. The policy therefore has potentially beneficial effects in terms of energy conservation, climate change, air quality, water resources, health (through reducing fuel poverty) and improving the quality of new development.

The policy sets out indicative renewable energy targets for the Borough. In addition, the policy encourages all development to incorporate on-site renewable energy generation, which will help to develop renewable energy technologies and tackle climate change. Depending upon the type, scale and location of renewable energy sources, there is potential for some adverse effects upon landscape, biodiversity and historic resources such as Conservation Areas. However, the policy seeks to minimise effects of renewable energy systems upon the environment and ensure that they meet high standards of sustainable construction.

The policy also encourages the achievement of the BREEAM 'Very Good' standard for non – residential development. This may also lead to more sustainable buildings within the Borough.

Policy 9: Flood Risk and the Water Environment

This policy outlines how flood risk and protection of the water environment will be taken into consideration in proposals for new development. This policy will have a beneficial effect upon the water environment in the Borough, and also potentially upon the biodiversity and landscape value associated with this. In addition, this policy will help to ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction through ensuring new developments have adequate measures to prevent negative effects of flooding and damage to water quality and encouraging the use of sustainable drainage systems.

Policy 10: Community Infrastructure

This policy sets out a requirement for developer contributions to secure provision of community infrastructure to support new developments and compensate for the impact of new development on existing community interest. Depending upon what types of contributions are sought this policy has the potential to have beneficial effects upon a wide range of both social and environmental objectives, including objectives relating to housing, health, education, waste management, air quality, climate change and the historic environment.





Policy 11: Affordable Housing

This policy sets out a requirement for the provision of affordable housing as part of new developments. It sets a minimum threshold for sites of 10 dwellings or more, of 30% affordable housing in Oadby, 20% in Wigston and 10% in South Wigston, in line with the current viability assessment. This will have a major beneficial effect upon provision of housing in the Borough to meet local needs. In addition, provision of new build affordable housing (which will meet current Building Regulations) may contribute towards reducing health inequalities associated with existing poor quality housing stock (e.g. reducing fuel poverty).

The supporting text of the policy requires that affordable housing be developed to the same standards as private market housing, i.e. a 'tenure blindness' approach. This may help to promote social cohesion.

Policy 12: Housing Needs of the Community

This policy requires new housing development to include a range of types, sizes and tenures, with dwellings designed to be adaptable, and supports housing proposals that meet the identified needs of specific groups. This will contribute significantly towards ensuring housing needs in the Borough are met, and will also help to reduce health inequalities by helping to ensure that all groups of people have access to decent housing.

The policy requires that such housing has access to a range of essential services and public transport routes, which will help to ensure access to services for people with specific needs and may also encourage use of sustainable modes of transport, with environmental benefits.

The policy also requires that proposals to meet specific local housing needs are integrated into the existing wider community, which together with the provision of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, may help to create mixed and cohesive communities and potentially help to reduce the fear of crime.

Policy 13: Provision of Gypsy and Traveller Sites

This policy identifies the need for designation of one Gypsy and Traveller pitch in the Borough. Provision of a Gypsy and Traveller pitch will help to ensure living accommodation for those in the travelling community and also help to reduce health problems associated with the travelling community being unable to find appropriate sites to live. Provision of a Gypsy and Traveller pitch may have some localised adverse effects upon the environment. The policy also sets out criteria which will ensure Gypsy and Traveller sites have good access to facilities and services.

Policy 14: Design and Sustainable Construction





This policy will help to encourage high quality design and sustainable construction principles in all new developments in the Borough and as such is likely to have beneficial effects relating to a number of the SA objectives. This policy may also help to reduce some of the potential adverse effects associated with development in the Borough (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions, impacts on the natural and built environment).

Policy 15: Landscape and Character

This policy seeks to protect and enhance the distinctive landscape and historic character of the Borough. In addition to having a major beneficial effect in terms of the landscape and historic resources, it will also help to protect green spaces from development and avoid pollution of undeveloped land.

This policy will contribute significantly towards the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of archaeological sites, historic buildings, Conservation Areas and other cultural assets in the Borough. In addition, protection of the Grand Union Canal will have beneficial effects in terms of biodiversity and water resources. Protection of historic resources may limit the extent to which existing buildings and previously developed land may be used in new development. However, there may be opportunities for bringing buildings / sites back into use as part of enhancement schemes. Such schemes may also present opportunities for opening sites up to the public and thus improving people's access and understanding of local heritage.

Policy 16: Community Facilities and Places of Worship

This policy supports the provision of community facilities and places of worship, which is likely to contribute towards a number of social objectives such as health, education and access and to participation in cultural and leisure activities. The policy may encourage new development which could result in some adverse effects upon the environment (as detailed in Section 8.3.1), depending upon the location, scale and design of such developments. However, the policy sets out criteria for development of such facilities, including a need for buildings to positively reflect the character and appearance of their surroundings. In addition, the policy seeks to ensure that community facilities and places of worship are provided in accessible locations. This will help to improve access to such facilities for people in the Borough, and may also encourage a shift away from private car use.

Policy 17: Open Space and Facilities for Leisure, Recreation and Tourism



This policy sets out the requirements for provision of open space and built leisure facilities to meet the needs of local residents and will therefore have major beneficial effects in terms of access to leisure activities and health. The policy may result in development of additional leisure facilities in the Borough, which may result in some adverse effects upon the environment (as detailed in Section 8.3.1), depending upon the location, scale and design of such developments. The policy also identifies the need for enhancement and protection of Rights of Way, which as well as having health and leisure benefits may encourage walking and cycling across the Borough as an alternative to car use.

In addition, the policy seeks to encourage sustainable tourism growth and outlines proposals for restoration of the Grand Union Canal and tourism development around Kilby Bridge. This will have a beneficial effect upon the local economy and may create employment opportunities for those living in the Borough. In addition, the policy encourages the protection and enhancement of the Borough's industrial and architectural heritage and restoration of the Grand Union Canal, which would have a beneficial effect upon historic assets in the Borough.

However, new tourism developments may result in some adverse effects upon the environment, including the Kilby Foxton Canal SSSI. This site is currently in an unfavourable, declining condition due to the lack of long term management plan to allow a planned dredging programme as well as a large number of boats passing through which are causing damage. Increased visitors to Kilby Bridge and the canal could lead to further damage as a result of more boats on the canal. However, the policy does specifically state that tourism development must take into account biodiversity issues, including the SSSI. In addition, investment and regeneration of the canal may enable a long term management plan to be developed which could lead to improvements to the condition of the site. This should be taken forward in development proposals for the site.

Encouragement of tourism may result in increased visitors to the Borough and an associated increase in traffic, which may lead to increased emissions. It is important to ensure adequate provision of public transport and walking and cycling linkages to tourist developments in order to minimise the use of the private car by tourists.

### **8.3.3 Cumulative Effects of the Core Strategy Policies**

Table 10 overleaf provides a summary of the cumulative effects of implementing all of the Core Strategy policies, in relation to the SA objectives. In some columns there is more than one type of effect. This is



because in some cases different elements of the same policy may have different impacts upon the same SA objective.



**Table 10 Cumulative Effects of the Core Strategy Policies**

SA Objectives	Core Strategy Policies																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1	↑↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	↑
2	↑↓	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑↓	↔	↔	→	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑	↑
3	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑↓	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↑	↑↑
4	↑	↔	↑	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔
5	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔
6	↔	↑	↑	↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔
7	↓	↓	↑	↔	↑↑	↑↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↔	↔	↓	↑	↑	↓	↓↑
8	↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↑↓	↑	↓	↔	↑	↔	↔	↓	↑	↑↑	↑↓	↓↑
9	↓	↑	↑	↑↔	↑	↑↑↓	↑	↓	→	↑	↔	↑	↓	↑	↑↑	↑↓	↓↑
10	↓	↓↔	↑	↔	↑	↑↓	↑	↑	↑↑	↑	↔	↔	↓	↑	→	↓	↓
11	↓↔	↑↓	↑	↑↔	↔	↑↓	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↑	↓→
12	↑↓	↑	↑	↔	↑	↑↓	↑	↑	→	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	→	↔	↔
13	↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔
14	↔	↑	↑	↑↔	↔	↑↓	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↑	↓→
15	↑	↑	↑	↑↔	↑	↑	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↑	↑	↔	↑	↔
16	↑↓	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↑	↔	↔	↑	↔
17	↑↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑
18	↑↑	↑↑	↑	↑↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔
19	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑	↔	↔	↑	↑	↔	↑	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↑
20	↓	↓	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↔	↔	↓	↑	↔	↓	↓
21	↑	↑↑	↑	↑↑	↔	↑	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑	↑
22	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑	↑	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	↑	↑	↔	↑	↑



## 8.4 Recommendations

Throughout the SA process, measures have been identified in order to mitigate adverse effects and to maximise beneficial effects associated with the potential policies. Many of the recommendations made in earlier stages of the SA have already been incorporated into the Submission Core Strategy. Others may be implemented through subsequent DPDs / SPDs or during the development control phase of a project as appropriate.

Recommended measures can be incorporated at three stages:

- During preparation of the Core Strategy in order to design out or reduce adverse impacts, and to maximise beneficial impacts;
- During construction in order to minimise adverse impacts / maximise beneficial impacts arising during the construction process; and
- Following development in order to minimise impacts / maximise beneficial impacts arising during the post implementation phase.

The following hierarchy is used when determining mitigation measures for adverse impacts:

- Prevent impacts as far as possible through design or using preventative measures.
- Reduce impacts as far as possible by using preventative measures to minimise effects.
- Offset impacts to compensate for unavoidable effects that cannot be further reduced.

Detailed recommendations against each of the effects identified for the policies are presented in Appendix E. These are suggested recommendations only and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council will determine their implementation. Many of the measures recommended within the Appraisal Tables are already addressed either wholly or in part through other policies within the Core Strategy (identified within Appendix E). Therefore in order for the predicted adverse effects to be minimised and beneficial effects to be maximised (therefore maximising the sustainability of the Core Strategy) all of the policies must be enforced for all development proposals.



The following residual recommendations (i.e. not directly addressed within the Core Strategy) should be taken forward in subsequent DPDs / SPDs / Masterplans / development briefs, or during the development control process:

- Ensure development (particularly at the Direction for Growth and tourism development at Kilby Bridge) has no adverse effects upon the Kilby Foxton Canal SSSI. Encourage a long term management plan for the SSSI to be developed.
- Ensure provision of frequent, efficient and high quality public transport linkages and incorporate well lit footpaths, cycleways and cycle storage within new developments to ensure good accessibility to services for those without a car.
- Ensure new services, facilities and public transport links can be used easily by all members of the community (e.g. ensure they are suitable for use by the elderly/disabled).
- Ensure that public transport, walking and cycling linkages provide good accessibility to countryside areas.
- Ensure that all groups within local communities are consulted and given opportunities to input into the planning and design of new developments.
- Ensure any jobs provided as part of new developments meet the needs of the local population.
- Encourage liaison with the local police force in the design of new developments.
- Determine the ecological value of any proposed sites through the use of ecological surveys.
- The archaeological value of all development sites should be confirmed via archaeological surveys. Opportunities should be taken to sympathetically refurbish redundant buildings with historic value.
- Ensure sufficient wastewater treatment capacity (including the capacity of the sewerage infrastructure) and water distribution mains capacity is available for new developments.
- Encourage the use of water efficient design in new developments.
- Ensure contractors adopt best practice in respect of minimising dust and air pollution and ensure contractors are registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme.





- Ensure Environment Agency Pollution Prevention Guidelines are followed during construction / operation.
- Remediate contaminated land in accordance with PPS23 and CLR11 Model Procedures for the Management of Contaminated Land.
- Incorporate recycling facilities into new developments to encourage people to sort / recycle their waste.
- Encourage the provision of interpretation facilities to help residents understand local heritage.
- Opportunities to work with local communities on biodiversity related projects should be sought where possible.
- Consideration should be given to the creation of biodiversity as an educational resource (e.g. wildlife gardens in schools).
- A net gain approach should be applied when considering development proposals in Green Wedge (i.e. any land removed from wedge at one location should be included and enhanced in another).
- Encourage the incorporation of design features to improve health and well-being (e.g. high levels of daylighting, private outdoor space, sound insulation).
- Encourage the provision of education / information boards to accompany renewable energy technologies in buildings such as schools, offices, etc.
- Encourage the use of energy meters within homes, offices and other buildings to raise awareness of energy consumption further.
- Encourage developer contributions that:
  - Will help fund the provision of a frequent, efficient and high quality public transport system and improve the provision of cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways.
  - Directly help to contribute towards BAP targets and protect species and habitats (e.g. through the enhancement / creation of habitats).





- Directly help to protect and enhance the local landscape, green spaces and historic, cultural and archaeological features in the Borough and their settings (e.g. townscape and public realm improvements).
  - Directly help to manage water resources and protect local water quality (e.g. through the provision of new sustainable drainage systems and sewerage treatment works).
  - Will help fund provision of a wide range of waste minimisation and recycling facilities in the borough (e.g. on-street recycling facilities, composting schemes and waste awareness campaigns).
- Ensure that any community initiatives funded by developer contributions take into account the specific needs of the young, elderly and deprived members of the community and the need to promote racial harmony.

It is also important to note that mitigation measures themselves have environmental effects which should be considered in planning their implementation.





## 9.0 Implementation and Monitoring

### 9.1 Next Steps

The Submission Core Strategy will be published in order for representations (relating to issues of soundness) to be made. The Core Strategy will then be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination, accompanied by this SA Report. Any significant changes made to the Core Strategy during these stages will need to be subject to further SA prior to adoption.

The next steps of the SA and associated steps of the Core Strategy are detailed in Table 11.

**Table 11 Next Steps in the SA**

ODPM Stage		SA Steps	Links to the Core Strategy Process
Stage D Consulting on the Core Strategy and the SA Report	D2	Appraise any significant changes to the Core Strategy following publication and examination.	Undertaken in conjunction with finalisation of the Core Strategy for submission and following examination.
	D3	Produce an adoption statement to accompany the Core Strategy outlining how the findings of the SA have been taken into account and how sustainability considerations have been integrated into it.	Undertaken in conjunction with finalisation of the Core Strategy prior to adoption.
Stage E Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Core Strategy	E1 & E2	Undertake monitoring of significant effects arising from the Core Strategy and respond to adverse effects.	Undertaken after the Core Strategy has been adopted.

### 9.2 Proposals for Monitoring

Once adopted, implementation of the Core Strategy must be monitored to ensure that unforeseen adverse effects are identified and acted upon. Monitoring should:

- Take an objective and target led approach.
- Determine whether the SA process has accurately predicted effects.



- Determine whether the Core Strategy is contributing to achievement of the SA objectives.
- Determine whether mitigation measures are performing as desired.
- Identify adverse effects and determine whether remedial action is required.

Monitoring will also provide useful information to improve plans in the future. A list of suggested SA targets and indicators has been developed for monitoring the Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy and is presented in Appendix F. These were initially developed with reference to the SA objectives, key sustainability issues and review of plans and programmes. In addition, several new indicators have been included as a result of feedback from consultees.

The suggested targets and indicators are designed to be used as guidance only; Oadby and Wigston Borough Council will determine their implementation and it may be necessary to build upon / refine them. The Core Strategy Submission document also includes details of a monitoring framework, which specifically looks at achievement of the Core Strategy objectives. In some cases there are crossovers between the targets and indicators developed for the SA and those for the Core Strategy objectives. In developing monitoring further, it may be possible to utilise indicators being used elsewhere within the Council or at County level, such as in the monitoring of the Local Transport Plan or other documents under the LDF.

It is not necessary to monitor everything, or conduct monitoring indefinitely. It should be noted that although monitoring features of the baseline may indicate the effects of the Core Strategy, those features may also be open to effects beyond its influence. As such, indicators should be clearly linked to the SA process and in addition should enable the setting of targets that are within the scope of that which the Core Strategy can achieve. This may involve focussing upon the significant effects predicted during the SA process, as detailed in Appendix E.