



Strategic Planning & Research Unit

For and on behalf of  
**Bowbridge Land**

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Local Plan  
Response to Inspectors Questions - Matter 10

Prepared by

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## Contents

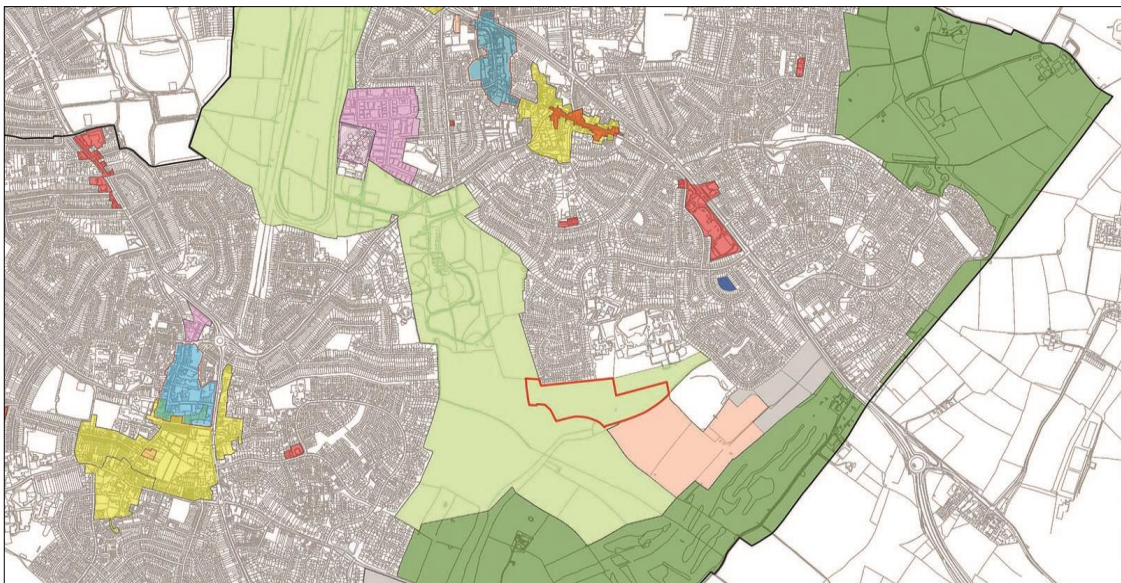
## Page

0.0	Executive Summary .....	4
	Matter 10: Green Wedges .....	5
	a) Issue: Whether the retention and designation of Green Space in the LP is justified? ...	5

**0.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 0.1 This response is made on behalf of Bowbridge Land who have an interest in the land to the north of the Cottage Farm Direction for Growth Area allocated in Policy 21 as highlighted in the plan below. It is our view that this represents a logical extension to both the settlement and the allocation in Policy 21. If appraised on a consistent basis through the SA, it would emerge as a preferable site to the Policy 18 allocation as it scores are better than sites within Policy 18 and at least equivalent to that of the Policy 21 allocation.
- 0.2 Notwithstanding the SA assessment, it is considered that this omission site should not be included in a green wedge as there is no reasoned justification for such designation – particularly in comparison to the adjoining allocated land and moreover that green wedge policy now serves no reasoned justification in the context of the needs of this plan. Accordingly the omission site should be allocated in addition to the proposed allocations.
- 0.3 It is further considered that the submitted plan is a constraints led plan but has not demonstrated that additional sites cannot come forward to allow for the plan to accommodate either a higher dwelling requirement within the truncated plan period or a higher dwelling requirement over a longer plan period. There are clearly sites available which could be brought forward as they would not conflict with paragraph 14 of the Framework.

**Figure 1: Identification of Omission Site OBBC26**



## MATTER 10: GREEN WEDGES

- a) **Issue: Whether the retention and designation of Green Space in the LP is justified?**
- i. ***Q1. Is the retention and designation of Green Wedges in the LP supported by a robust evidence base? (See Green Wedge review) Within the Council's submission evidence base it has not been possible to identify a document which draws together the methodology used to select sites for allocation within the Plan. From the evidence, we understand that sites were submitted to the Council and assessed through the SHLAA, then appraised through the Sustainability Appraisal.***
- 1.1 There is no consistent approach to the definition of green wedges and demonstrably it has been and is necessary to identify land within the previously designated areas in order to meet the land supply requirements.
- 1.2 Arising from the absence of any clear or logical approach to the definition and therefore the application of green wedge policy – other than that the designations may have been handed down from previous plans not necessarily evidence based - it is unclear why the Council has allocated site OWBC26 as an additional 'slip' of Green Wedge. The purpose of the Green Wedge designations, taken from the Green Wedge Review, 2017, Evidence base under pinning the Local Plan for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston, states that:
- "Green wedge designations, in short, are strategic areas of undeveloped land between the urban areas that prevent the merging of settlements, provide 'green' access into the Countryside from the urban areas, and are locations for open space and recreational facilities".*
- 1.3 Omission site OWBC26 lies in between existing housing and site OWBC44 which has been allocated for residential and associated use. The use of Site OWBC26 as Green Wedge does not meet the aims of the Green Wedge designations, as it would act as a separation of housing within the same settlement. It has been stated within the reasons for allocating site OWBC44 that the site could provide some open space, therefore the need for site OWBC26 to be open space is unjustified.
- 1.4 This simply demonstrates that there is no logical or evidential approach to the identification of green wedge boundaries. Therefore, we do not consider the methodology used by the Council is adequately robust, it is not justified and therefore unsound.
- 1.5 Having regard to the lack of justification either for green wedge policy or its practical application, we consider that corrections are required to the Sustainability Appraisal assessment given that the scores awarded to some sites have used mitigation measures taken from site specific masterplans to reduce significant negative effects. The same approach should be used for all sites (mitigation should not be built into the appraisal), and each site is required to be assessed on its own merits. Appendix A of Matter 6 shows a comparison of scores between allocated sites OWBC24/OWBC28 (Policy 18) which have mitigation measures, and omission site OWBC26 which has not. Appendix B of Matter 6 shows a comparison of scores between allocated site OWBC44

and omission site OWBC26. There may be other instances of this in the appraisal of other sites.

**ii. Q2. Are the restrictions on certain types of development in Green Wedges justified and consistent with national policy?**

1.6 No Comment.

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