



# *Borough of Oadby & Wigston*

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*Directorate of Community Services*

## Planning Services Annual Monitoring Report 2008/2009

### Employment Land Availability



June 2009

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## CONTACTS

Forward Plans Team

Tel. 0116 257 2645  
[forwardplans@oadby-wigston.gov.uk](mailto:forwardplans@oadby-wigston.gov.uk)

# 1 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is producing a Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. Local Development Frameworks, together with Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS), comprise the new planning policy system for England, to replace Regional Planning Guidance, Structure Plans, Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Local Development Framework is made up of a number of documents, as proposed in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), comprising the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and a range of Local Development Documents (LDDs), i.e. Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). These are set out in the schedule below.

<b>Statement of Community Involvement</b>	<b>Development Plan Documents</b>	<b>Local Development Documents</b>	
		<b>Supplementary Planning Documents</b>	<b>Area Action Plans</b>
	Core Strategy	Residential Areas	Oadby Town Centre Masterplan
	Allocations	Renewable Energy Technology and Energy Efficiency	Wigston Town Centre Masterplan
	Development Control	Guidelines for new development	
	Proposals Map	Supplementary Planning Document	
		Conservation Areas	
		Sustainability Appraisal	

*Note; As per the Planning Act 2008, from 6 April 2009 the Statement of Community Involvement is no longer specified as a development plan document in the local development scheme.*

All documents that form part of the Local Development Framework, together with those elements of the former planning policy system prior to them being superseded, need to be monitored to show the progress being made in achieving the programme for their preparation which is contained in the Local Development Scheme and to assess how effective individual Local Development Documents are in achieving their objectives. For this purpose Annual Monitoring Reports will be published. The

outcome of this monitoring work will in turn feed into any subsequent review of the various policy documents.

Monitoring work is not only important to assess the performance of policy at the local level but also needs to be undertaken in a manner which enables it to be integrated with and contribute to work undertaken at other levels of governance for example national or regional levels. It therefore needs to be undertaken in a unified manner and on a consistent basis in terms of the information collected and the manner in which it is stored. This allows information to flow between levels and to clearly show the position for the wider area and its component parts. Such arrangements are being developed.

This Employment Land Availability Study is part of the annual monitoring exercise. Primarily it is intended to assess the supply of employment land within the Borough, against the objectives, policies and proposals of:

- The East Midlands Regional Plan (March 2009)
- The adopted Local Plan (1999);
- Those emerging elements of the LDF, with an employment development dimension; and
- The PACEC Report: The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study (October 2008)

In order to simplify the process, a threshold has been set so that only employment land developments for 'B' Class uses of 0.1 hectares and above are monitored, subsequently referred to as qualifying sites. Notwithstanding this, Appendix B provides details of employment related planning permissions between 2007 and 2009, irrespective of their size up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. Previous Employment Land Availability reports monitored from 1996 which is in line with the Plan period of the Structure Plan. The Structure Plan has now been superseded by the East Midlands Regional Plan 2006 – 2026 (March 2009). However, this Employment Land Availability study is in line with the PACEC Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study (October 2008), which requires Local Planning Authorities to monitor from 2007 to 2026. This document was prepared jointly by all of the Local Planning Authorities in Leicestershire and Leicester City Council.

## Employment Land Availability Study 2008/2009

The need to meet these requirements for the development of employment land in the Borough, gives added importance to the need to closely monitor the supply of such land.

## 2 REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT LAND

### 2.1 AMOUNT OF LAND TO BE PROVIDED

Employment land is defined as comprising 'B' Class uses i.e. Classes B1a, b, c, (offices and light industrial), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage, warehousing and distribution), as defined in the Town and Country Planning Use Classes (Amendment) Order 2005. It does not include uses such as retail and restaurants.

The East Midlands Regional Plan, adopted March 2009, is not prescriptive regarding the amount of employment land that should be provided for in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston over the plan period until 2026. It states that "Local authorities, the East Midlands Development Agency and sub-regional strategic partnerships should work together in housing market area groupings to undertake and keep up to date employment land reviews to inform the land allocation of a range of sites at sustainable locations". Therefore, the Borough Council will be guided by the PACEC Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study (October 2008).

This study provides a supply and demand gap analysis to each authority within the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area based upon 'B' class employment uses. The report indicates that Oadby and Wigston currently has no office supply identified but there may potentially be floor space created through town centre redevelopments. It states that if the Wigston Railway Triangle (3.1 hectares) is excluded from demand, there is a shortfall of land for renewal of existing industrial and warehousing sites in Oadby and Wigston in the period 2007-2026.

<b>Table 1: PACEC Report Supply and Demand Gap Analysis 2007-2026</b>			
	Offices, sq.m.	Industrial, ha	Warehousing, ha
Demand	11,522	4.5	4.4
Supply	0	4.4	0.0
Gap	-11,522	-0.1	-4.4
Effective supply	0	1.3	0.0
<b>Effective gap</b>	<b>-11,522</b>	<b>-3.2</b>	<b>-4.4</b>

Provision for employment development is required to meet the needs of existing and prospective employers, but in a manner which is sustainable. This not only includes the location of development in terms of its proximity to means of communication, linkages with suppliers/distributors and other associated activities, as well as the accessibility for employees etc, but also the scale and type of development which can be provided.

As a result of the National Core Output Indicator requirements, the structure of this and future Employment Land Availability reports will need to be revised to monitor net additional floorspace including extensions and changes of use made to existing floorspace. All previous Employment Land Availability reports are focussed on the Structure Plan requirements of site area (hectares), new builds and have a threshold site size of 0.1 hectares and above. Whilst the report can continue to monitor employment area development as historically monitored for comparison purposes and Structure Plan requirements, additional information will be required for this and future Employment Land Availability reports on:

- all completed employment floorspace by type in each year (B1a, b, c, B2 and B8); and
- all completions in these Use Classes with no thresholds applied.

## **2.2 NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The principles of sustainability are now being pursued nationally, while in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston a variety of organisations, including this Borough Council and the community generally, are actively engaged in ensuring a more sustainable future.

The need for sustainable employment provision is acknowledged in a wide range of planning policy guidance. These include statements of national planning policy, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's) and more recently Planning Policy Statements (PPS's), regional and sub regional policy most notably the East Midlands Regional Plan (March 2009) and to some extent at a local level in the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan. Emerging planning policy will need to take this guidance into account.

## **2.2 a) Focussing Development within Urban Areas and on Previously Developed Land (PDL)**

Central to national guidance and emphasised through the East Midlands Regional Plan (March 2009), is the need to focus development within urban areas, utilising where possible Previously Developed Land (PDL). In addition, new development should make the best use of resources, maximise accessibility between home, place of work and services/facilities, reduce the need to travel and facilitate the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car.

Furthermore, through the sequential approach, policy guidelines ensure that the first preference for development within the Borough is on Previously Developed Land (PDL) within the urban area. If no such land is available or suitable, the next preference is other land within the urban area followed by land adjoining the urban area, particularly if Previously Developed Land. The application of the sequential approach is explicitly applied to new office development, with a strong preference for such development to be located in central areas.

The location of employment development in the Borough and the proportion on Previously Developed Land needs to be monitored annually and cumulatively.

## **2.2 b) The Use of Existing Employment Land**

Employment land and buildings can often be used for other purposes and the potential of surplus land and buildings for housing development is widely recognised, in particular as a source of Previously Developed Land. However, it is important that land and buildings which are required to meet employment needs and the requirements of the local economy are safeguarded. Furthermore, there would be little sense in utilising such a resource for other purposes if as a consequence it becomes necessary for it to be replaced by Greenfield development.

The loss of employment land to other development has not been specifically assessed to date, but will be addressed in future years.

## **2.2 c) Density of Development**

It is important to make the most efficient and sustainable use of resources and the density of employment development can help contribute to the better use of land and construction materials. However, while there is an assessment of the amount of built floor space (square metres per hectare), it is not always an appropriate measure of

employment provision. Some account needs to be taken of changes in the intensity of development on existing employment land. The amount of employment provided could be a more suitable indicator (in terms of jobs provided per ha) but the need to take some account of variations taking place in existing developments may be required, although data availability and protection issues may arise.

From this years report and onwards, monitoring will enable the assessment, annually and cumulatively, of the efficiency with which employment land is developed, including by use class category.

### **2.2 d) Type of Employment Development**

It is important to recognise the broad spectrum of employment related development, as well as the needs of a diverse and changing economy and make appropriate provision accordingly. While 'B' Class uses provide a substantial amount of employment, the contribution which has and will continue to be made by other sectors is of major importance and is likely to become even greater.

### **2.2 e) Design of Employment Development**

The aesthetic qualities of employment development and its functionality, particularly the accessibility provided through the relationship between its various components and the surrounding area including its impact on the local environment, are central to the successful provision of new development. In addition the need for development to be designed to incorporate resource saving principles and technology, as well as sustainable drainage, is of fundamental importance to its sustainability. Energy efficiency in planning for development is addressed in Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) produced by the Authority, including the submission of statements of 'Energy Efficiency' for major developments.

Notwithstanding the importance of design, it is not considered appropriate to monitor all aspects. However, the amount forming part of mixed use developments, served by alternative means of transport to the use of the private car, incorporating energy saving and renewable energy technology, as well as design principles and utilising sustainable drainage systems could in the future be usefully monitored, annually and cumulatively.

## 3 EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY

A composite picture of employment land supply is provided by Appendix A, providing a summary of the elements of supply referred to in the remainder of this report.

### 3.1 AMOUNT OF EMPLOYMENT LAND

A substantial amount of employment land development totalling 8.48 hectares has been allocated for in the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan (1999) as follows:

- Proposal Em5 - The Railway Triangle South Wigston for Class B1 uses - 3.14 ha
- Proposal Em6 - Land off Magna Road South Wigston for Class B1 uses – 0.55 ha
- Proposal Em7 - Land off Chartwell Drive South Wigston for Class B1 uses – 3.99 ha
- Proposal Em8 - Land off Tigers Road South Wigston for Class B1 uses – 0.80 ha

In addition to these new sites the Plan makes provision in Proposal Em11 for the redevelopment of employment uses off Station Street, South Wigston for Class B1 uses.

#### 3.1 a) Amount of Development Completed

Between April 1 2008 and March 31 2009 two developments were completed in the Borough. Table 2 shows this latest figure in the context of completions for previous years of the PACEC Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study (October 2008) period. It can be seen already that the annual rate of completions has varied considerably, with no consistency of land coming forward for development, but with an average of 0.48 hectares per year. Table 3 offers the breakdown for completions in terms of floorspace within each Use Class and Table 4 indicates that just one completion this year has been on Previously Developed Land.

**Table 2: Employment Completions 2007 – 2009 at 31 March 2009 greater than 0. ha**

	07/08	08/09	07/09	Av.
<b>Completions (Ha.)</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>0.48</b>

Note: Figures do not take account of losses of employment land/building

**Table 3: Employment Completions (sq.m) by Use Class between April 1 2008 and March 31 2009**

	B1a	B1b	B1c	B2	B8
<b>Land off Tigers Road, South Wigston (Em8)</b>		-	1728	-	-
<b>07/00410/FUL</b>	<b>198</b>				

**Table 4: Employment Completions on Previously Developed Land (sq.m) by Use Class between April 1 2008 and March 31 2009**

	B1a	B1b	B1c	B2	B8
<b>07/00410/FUL</b>	<b>198</b>				

### 3.1 b) Amount of Development Committed

As at 31 March 2009, land under construction, land with the benefit of planning permission but not yet started and outstanding allocations from the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan are capable of accommodating nearly 3.69 hectares on employment development (lapsed planning permissions are deleted as commitments.)

Tables 5-7 provide a more detailed breakdown of the commitments on qualifying sites for Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston on a site by site basis.

Local Plan allocations account for 3.69 hectares of land committed.

**Table 5: Employment Land Commitments at 31 March 2009 greater than 0.1 hectares**

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Under Construction</b>	<b>Outstanding Planning Permissions</b>	<b>Outstanding Allocations</b>
<b>Oadby</b>	0	0	0
<b>Wigston</b>	0	0	0
<b>South Wigston</b>	0	0	3.69
• Railway Triangle Em5	0	0	3.14
• Land off Magna Rd. Em6	0	0	0.55
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3.69</b>

### 3.1 c) Employment Land Requirements and Supply

In assessing the extent to which the PACEC Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study (October 2008) requirement is being met, land developed since, under construction and with the benefit of planning permission but not yet commenced, together with outstanding allocations contained in the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan, needs to be set against the requirement.

Table 6 gives a breakdown of the current employment land supply within Oadby and Wigston Borough.

<b>Table 6: Employment Land Requirement and Supply at 31 March 2009 greater than 0.1 ha</b>	
	<b>Hectares</b>
<b>Requirement 01/04/2007 - 31/03/2026</b>	
<b>a. PACEC Report Allocation (Excluding B1a)</b>	<b>8.9</b>
<b>Supply at 31/03/2009</b>	
<b>Completions 07 – 09</b>	
b. Net Completions 07 – 08	0.16
c. Completions 08/09	0.80
<b>d. Net Completions 07 – 09</b>	<b>0.96</b>
<b>Commitments</b>	
e. Under Construction	-
f. Outstanding Permissions: Detailed	-
g. Outstanding Permissions: Outline	-
h. Proposed Allocations	3.69
<b>i. Net Commitments as at 31/03/08</b>	<b>3.69</b>
<b>m. Net Completions + Net Commitments (d. + i.)</b>	<b>4.65</b>
<b>Net Requirement 01/04/07 – 31/03/26</b>	
<b>n. Residual to be provided (a. – d.)</b>	<b>7.94</b>
<b>o. Residual to be provided annually (over 17 years)</b>	<b>0.47</b>
<b>p. Residual to be provided, less commitments (a. – m.)</b>	<b>4.25</b>

If completions are deducted from the PACEC Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study (October 2008) allocation then a further 7.94 hectares needs to be developed over the period to 2026. This figure is reduced to 4.25 hectares if outstanding commitments are deducted i.e. the balance of the allocations in the Local Plan. It is therefore apparent that employment land development to date is falling below that which it is necessary to achieve the PACEC Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study (October

2008) requirement. Furthermore, the balance of outstanding commitments only accounts for a small proportion of the amount yet to be achieved. This is compounded further by constraints on the development of these commitments.

These comprise:

- Difficulties in accessing The Railway Triangle site (Em5) and the ecological value of the site, which is designated as a 'Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)'
- Contaminated ground conditions on the Land off Magna Road site (Em6) and the ecological value of the site, which is designated as a 'Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)'

While constraints on the development of the Magna Road site are not of overriding significance, it only accounts for 14.9% of the outstanding commitments. Development of the significantly larger Railway Triangle site (Em5) may well be prevented by the constraints referred to above.

While these shortfalls are a matter of concern it should be remembered that:

- Account is only taken of 'B' Class Uses and that substantial volumes of employment have and will continue to be provided by other sectors, for example, retailing and leisure.
- Some employment, albeit modest, has and will be provided by development beneath the qualifying size threshold.
- Unemployment in the Borough has been and is currently low, although partly as a consequence of outward commuting.

Nevertheless, as a consequence of these shortfalls, it will be necessary to increase the amount of land available for employment development in the coming years, if requirements are to be met. It is expected that this will be addressed in the preparation of the Local Development Framework for the Borough and in particular the Core Strategy and Allocations Development Plan Document.

## **3.2 THE SUSTAINABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT LAND PROVISION**

### **3.2 a) Focussing Development within Urban Areas and on Previously Developed Land**

With regard to the sequential approach to the location of development, this has been interpreted through the identification of four categories of location, in descending order of preference, with Previously Developed Land being preferred in each category, as follows:

- A) In/adjoining Town Centres
- B) Elsewhere within Urban Area
- C) Adjoining the Urban Area
- D) Other Locations

Table 7 shows that employment land completions on qualifying sites since 2007/08 have taken place on land within the urban areas of the Borough. All outstanding commitments on qualifying sites; comprising of identified and proposed employment areas in the Local Plan, are also shown to be on sites within the urban areas. None are located within the first priority location in the sequential approach, for instance, in and adjoining town centres. With regard to the proportion of development taking place, or committed on Previously Developed Land, Table 7 shows that all employment land completions since 2007/08, totalling just 0.96 ha, have taken place on such land within the Borough. However, outstanding commitments, which total 3.69 hectares, are all shown to be on Greenfield sites.

<b>Table 7: Location of Completions and Commitments greater than 0.1 hectares</b>			
<b>Completions (ha)</b>			
Priority Locations (A) – (D)	<b>07/08</b>	<b>08/09</b>	<b>07-09</b>
A) In/adjoining Centres of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston			
B) Elsewhere within the Principal Urban Area	0.16	0.80	0.96
• On PDL	0.16	0.80	0.96
C) Outside of the Principal Urban Area			
D) Other Locations			
% of completions on PDL	100	100	100
<b>Commitments (ha) @ 31/03/08</b>	<b>Commitments (ha) @ 31/03/09</b>		
Priority Locations (A) – (D)			
A) In/adjoining Centres of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston			
B) Elsewhere within the Principal Urban Area	3.69		
• On PDL	0		
C) Outside of the Principal Urban Area			
D) Other Locations			
% of commitments on PDL	0		

On balance, employment land completions and outstanding commitments are considered to be sustainable development opportunities, despite the Greenfield status of the latter, which should be considered in the context of the constraints referred to earlier.

### 3.3 FUTURE MONITORING

The need to expand employment land monitoring is pointed out earlier in this report. Time and resource constraints and the need to develop and agree a consistent and integrated basis for monitoring across the County and the Region has precluded such work being undertaken for 2008/09, although it is intended to address the issue in subsequent years. This could result in monitoring addressing such issues as:

- Density of development
- Type of development
- Type and size of units provided and
- Design of development

With regard to design, the amount of development incorporating sustainable principles is likely be fundamental in the future, concentrating in particular on the amount of development:

- Forming part of mixed use developments
- Served by public transport
- Providing and linked to facilities for cyclists and pedestrians
- Incorporating energy saving and renewable energy technology, for example, solar gain, combined heat and power systems, photo-voltaic and wind power.
- Incorporating sustainable drainage, for example, permeable surfaces, balancing facilities, reed beds and water conservation and recycling techniques.

## APPENDIX A

Employment Land Starts 2007 – 2009 and Commitments at 31/03/09 greater than 0.1 hectares											
Site ref	Address	Ward	Completed		Committed				G/B	Location	CLPA
			(C)	Date	(A)	(O)	(D)	(U)			
<b>Oadby</b>											
<b>Total</b>											
<b>Wigston</b>											
<b>Total</b>											
<b>South Wigston</b>											
05/52 8/FUL	Tigers Close	S. Wigston	0.16	28.11.07					G	B	Y
Em5	The Railway Triangle	S. Wigston			3.14				G	B	Y
Em6	Land off Magna Rd.	S. Wigston			0.55				G	B	Y
Em8	Land off Tigers Rd	S. Wigston	0.80	31.03.09					G	B	Y
<b>Total</b>					<b>3.69</b>						
<b>Total</b>			<b>0.96</b>		<b>3.69</b>						

## APPENDIX B

### Employment Related Planning Permissions 2007 - 2009

Year	Ref	Address	Settlement	Description
<b>2007/2008</b>				
07/08	07/002/COU	58A Rosemead Drive	Oadby	Change of use from (B1) to (D1)
07/08	07/011/FUL	Parkland Primary School, St Thomas Rd	South Wigston	Change of use from (C3) to (B1)
07/08	07/260/FUL	55-57 London Road	Oadby	Erection of office building
07/08	07/123/FUL	Unit 4, Lyon Close	Wigston	Erection of side extension
07/08	07/410/FUL	19A Church Street	Oadby	Conversion of garages to (B1)
Year	Ref	Address	Settlement	Description
07/08	07/450/COU	7 Castleton Road	Wigston	Change of use from Retail (A1) to Office (B1)
07/08	07/464/FUL	185 Gloucester Crescent	South Wigston	Rear extension to industrial unit (B2) to form warehouse (B8)
07/08	07/523/FUL	Land off Tigers Close	South Wigston	Erection of 8 (B1) Industrial Units
07/08	07603/FUL	Land adjoining 53 London Road	Oadby	B1 with car parking
07/08	08/023/FUL	Aristocrat Plaster Mouldings, Mowsley End	Wigston	Two storey B1
07/08	08/097/COU	Natsons House, Cornwall Road	South Wigston	Change of use to self storage accommodation (B8)
<b>Total - 11</b>				
Year	Ref	Address	Settlement	Description
<b>2008/2009</b>				
08/09	08/93/FUL	185 Gloucester Crescent,	Wigston	Rear extension to industrial unit to form warehouse (B8).
08/09	08/014/FUL	31-35 London Road	Oadby	Demolition of existing garage workshop and erection of new offices (Rev B)
08/09	08/097/COU	Natsuns House, Cornwall Road	Wigston	Change of use to B8 Self Storage Units
08/09	08/00046/FUL	67 London Road	Oadby	COU from residential (C3) to office (B1)

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08/09	08/00408/FUL	3 Canal Street	Wigston	COU from (B8) Warehouse to (D1) Day Nursery with ext. and alteration
08/09	08/00222/COU	33A Central Avenue,	Wigston	COU to offices (B1)
08/09	08/00164/FUL	5 – 9 Chartwell Drive	Wigston	Erection of new unit at rear with new retaining wall, extensions to unit 5-9, alterations to unit 11 to include formation of additional unit and additional car parking spaces
08/09	08/00291/FUL	92 Pullman Road	Wigston	Part demolition and rebuilding of existing factory unit plus the demolition of outbuilding to provide servicing and parking area
08/09	08/00305/FUL	140 144 West Avenue	Wigston	Side extension to existing B8 warehouse and associated car parking
08/09	09/00022/FUL	Regent House, 1 Stoughton Road	Oadby	Demolition of existing shop (A2) and erection of 3 storey office building (B1) with additional parking.
<b>Total - 10</b>				
<b>Total 2007/2008 to 2008/09 - 21</b>				

Note: Approved applications are included irrespective of size