

Introduction

This representation is Kodiak Land's comments on the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan Pre-submission Consultation. Kodiak has an interest in a site within Wigston and these representations are broadly site specific responding to the emerging allocation and other relevant policies. It follows our representations to the Preferred Options Consultation in December 2016.

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment and ask to be kept informed as the Plan progresses.

Policy 20- Wigston Direction for Growth Area

Kodiak supports the allocation of further land for an additional 600 dwellings at the Wigston Direction for Growth area for "phase 2" development. Kodiak considers the Direction for Growth Area to be the most sustainable location in the district for new development, as a result of its proximity to the town centre and public transport links into Leicester City. Kodiak also recognises the need to provide infrastructure to serve the extension to the town. This infrastructure will also supplement the existing services and facilities in the surrounding area and encourage more sustainable travel patterns for those residing in proximity to the growth area.

Kodiak does not object to the provision of additional infrastructure being secured on site or through off-site contributions, providing that such contributions are proportionate to the scale of the development on each site and otherwise meet the tests outlined in the CIL regulations. Kodiak also supports the requirement for 20% of the development on site to be affordable.

At present, the policy does not explain why a maximum of 600 dwellings is identified on the site; Kodiak would suggest that the submission version of the plan should contain an analysis of the capacity of the growth area and ensure sufficient flexibility is built in. Kodiak supports the assertion at 7.4.17 of the supporting text that subject to appropriate testing, further development could occur on other land within the growth area should evidence suggest a need to do so in the future. However, we consider that in line with our suggestion to allocate additional dwellings in this plan, over and above the housing requirement to provide additional flexibility, the Council should allocate additional land beyond the growth area boundary, at the west of Welford Road, notably to the north of the land promoted by Kodiak through this representation. This land would effectively be surrounded by development once the allocations in this plan are built out, and it would cease to contain the attributes of 'open' countryside and be unable to perform its functions. The land has also previously been allocated for a potential Park and Ride site so the Council have previously recognised its limitations as open countryside instead preferring it as a site for potential development. Allocation of additional land to the west of Welford Road would complete the logical extension of Wigston in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Direction for Growth area.

Land west of Welford Road, Wigston

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Kodiak is promoting a site at Land West of Welford Road, Wigston for circa 43 dwellings (see location plan below).



- 1.1.2 Kodiak fully support the Council's decision to include the Land west of Welford Road site as a residential allocation within the Wigston Direction for Growth Area in the submission version of the Local Plan.

1.2 Context

- 1.2.1 The 2.01ha site is located to the south of Wigston, and comprises a single agricultural field with boundaries formed of hedgerows and mature trees. There are a number of trees intersecting the centre of the site in a line from east to west. Welford Road runs along the site's eastern boundary. To the north of the site there is a single residential dwelling with associated outbuildings; to the west there is a small agricultural field beyond which lies a residential estate. To the south west the site is bounded by land belonging to Thythorn Field Primary School, and to the south east lies another agricultural field. Beyond Welford Road to the east is agricultural land which is designated in the existing Core Strategy as the 'Wigston Direction for Growth' area; the site immediately abutting Welford Road to the north east of the promotion site is currently subject to an extant planning application for a residential development of 53 dwellings.

- 1.2.2 The site lies adjacent to Wigston which is a sustainable settlement with a wide range of services and facilities. Within 2km of the site there is a primary school, shopping parade, church, convenience store, youth club, petrol station, supermarket, pub and a GP surgery. All of these facilities are easily accessible from the development site via safe walking routes along footpaths adjoining well-lit highways or by the use of frequent public transport services.
- 1.2.3 The Direction for Growth area is also expected to provide a range of new services and facilities which will be within close proximity to the promotion site. The submission draft plan identifies that the Sustainable Urban Extension will provide at least 2.5ha of employment land, a new link road, a new primary school, a local centre including various retail uses, a new community hall and outdoor sports and open space provision.
- 1.2.4 The site lies within 500m of a busy bus route with frequent services into Wigston and Leicester City Centre, which provide for a full range of higher order services. Service 48/48A runs up to every 15 minutes, 7 days a week between South Wigston and Leicester, with a journey time to the City Centre of 28 minutes. Onward rail connections to destinations across the country are available from Leicester.
- 1.2.5 Wigston is capable of hosting additional residential growth which will help to sustain and enhance the existing services and facilities in the town. The Council has identified that the main direction of growth for the settlement and the wider district, taking into account constraints and the Council's intention to direct growth to areas adjoining the Leicester Principal Urban Area, is to the south and east of Wigston. Development of the promotion site would complement this ambition and Kodiak contends that the site west of Welford Road would be a suitable and sustainable site for allocation in the Local Plan.

1.3 The Application

- 1.3.1 Kodiak submitted an outline planning application for up to 43 residential units on the promotion site on 8th November 2017. The application was validated by the Council on 13th November 2017, and is currently pending determination.
- 1.3.2 The documents submitted with the application demonstrate that the site can be developed in a way which maximises development on the site while respecting the site's constraints. A copy of the Development Framework Plan and Constraints & Opportunities Plan are provided below:

1.3.3 An Indicative Masterplan showing how a well designed development could be delivered is below:



1.3.4 The Development Framework Plan indicates that alongside the residential dwellings, a significant area of public open space can be provided which will provide recreational opportunities for residents of the new development, the wider direction for growth area, and existing residents of the town. The plan also indicates a potential pedestrian link through the site to Thythorn Field Primary School to the south west, which would also be a considerable benefit to the wider community.

1.3.5 The suite of reports submitted alongside the application demonstrate that there are no technical reasons why the site cannot accommodate development of the scale proposed.

1.4 Housing Trajectory

1.4.1 The trajectory at Figure 1 of the submission Plan indicates that new allocations in the Wigston Direction for Growth area will begin to deliver in 2021/22. Kodiak consider that subject to permission being granted for the current application on the site at Welford Road, construction could commence within 18 months of outline permission being granted taking account of the time required to market and sell the site and for Reserved Matters applications to be submitted and conditions discharged. The site itself could be fully built out within around 2 – 3 years of permission being granted. As such, it is clear that allocation of this site will provide a significant boost to the Council's five year housing land supply.

1.5 Conclusion

- 1.5.1 Kodiak can confirm that the site is available, offers a suitable location for development now and is achievable with a realistic prospect that the housing will be delivered within five years. We therefore fully support the emerging allocation within the Local Plan.