

PLANNING
BRIEF

LAND OFF SAFFRON ROAD,
SOUTH WIGSTON

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

Adopted February 2002

Draft Planning Brief – Ministry of Defence Land off Saffron Road

Site

This planning brief relates to the land off Saffron Road, South Wigston and the

The Need for a Planning Brief

This Brief has been prepared for consultation because the site is:

- currently being vacated by the Ministry of Defence Property Section and is subject to development interest
- is defined by its low density and open plan layout which should be retained
- contains a substantial number of open spaces which contribute to its character
- contains on its road frontage an area of significant landscape importance

The Brief is intended to outline:

- areas which should be specifically retained within the site and the means by which this will be achieved
- areas where development is appropriate
- the form of development which is appropriate, and specific issues that need to be taken into account in the overall design

The development associated within the brief may allow further public access through the site and provide additional usable play space

The main objectives of the Planning Brief

The Council's objectives are to:

- explain how its Local Plan Policies will be applied to this sensitive site
- aim to preserve the main aspects of interest within the site
- provide for the preservation of existing features of landscape and environmental interest
- ensure that any new development is appropriate to the surrounding area in terms of scale, design and quality
- secure appropriate highway safeguards within the scheme and surrounding network to ensure a safe and accessible environment
- provide and retain existing usable open space

Planning Brief for land off Saffron Road, South Wigston

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The site has been used by the Ministry of Defence and other government departments for a number of years. Due to re-structuring the land and buildings are now being vacated and sold off. This Planning Brief is intended to establish the Council's planning guidelines for the site.
- 1.2 The overall intention of the Brief is to identify the main elements/aspects/features within the site which should be retained and enhanced. Identify areas within the site which could be satisfactorily developed without unduly effecting the area. The Brief sets out the design framework considered appropriate.
- 1.3 This document is published as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan. Applications submitted should be set within the framework of the policies and proposals of the Local Plan and have regard to the contents of this Brief. Although the Council's intention is that the area should be developed as near as practicable in accordance with the Brief, its status is advisory not mandatory.

2.0 The Site

Location

- 2.1 The site is located on the north western side of South Wigston town centre. It is situated on the western side of Saffron Road.
- 2.2 The boundaries of the site are defined by Saffron Road to the east, Tigers Road to the south, Glen Parva Young Offenders Institution to the west and Eyres Monsell Recreation Ground to the north. There are two distinctive parts of the site, the northern section and the southern section.

General Character

- 2.3 The northern section of the site is occupied by a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties. Access to the site is via the unadopted roads of Namur Road and Crete Avenue. These properties are grouped along the tree lined roads and offer open frontages to each property. This open character is further developed through the open green edges and the various open spaces within the site which contribute to the character of the area.
- 2.4 The Sergeants Mess building is located on the eastern side of the site. It is a brick built institution style building varying in height from single storey to two storey elements. Access to the site is via Ladysmith road. The frontage onto Saffron Road is defined by a tree lined boundary which has been removed in part.
- 2.5 Along the frontage of Saffron Road are the two particularly distinctive cottages. These are architecturally and historically of local interest and have been identified in the local list of buildings of importance.
- 2.6 The southern part of the area is via access via Tigers Road and relates to the buildings on its northern edge. Formerly barracks buildings, these are currently occupied by office/business uses.

Ecological Interest

- 2.7 The site contains a significant number of trees which contribute both individually, and as groupings, to the visual attractiveness and ecological diversity of the area. By virtue of this a number of Tree Preservation Orders have been confirmed in this area to protect these features.
- 2.8 In addition on the north western side of the site an ancient hedgerow, forms the boundary between Young Offenders Centre and the site. This is both an ecological asset and a historical legacy having being identified in surveys since the 1830's.

3.0 Planning Framework

- 3.1 The relevant development plans for the are the Leicestershire Structure Plan 1991-2006 and the adopted Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1991-2006.
- 3.2 The land subject of this planning brief is subject to the following locational policy guidance.

Land off Tigers Road, South Wigston

- 3.2.1 The land currently occupied by the former Barracks Buildings is subject to Employment Proposal 1 which reflects the intention of the Council to retain and protect Employment land within the Borough.

EMPLOYMENT PROPOSAL 1: [OLP]

Within those identified employment areas indicated on the Proposals Map, development, redevelopment or changes of use for employment purposes will be permitted.

Proposals to change the use of land or buildings from B1, B2 or B8 to any use outside Class B1 will not be permitted unless:

- (1) the new use is complimentary or ancillary to an existing or proposed employment use; or
- (2) the land and buildings are unfit for employment purposes; and
- (3) an alternative comparable site for employment is made available within the local plan built up area.

Sergeants Mess and Associated Land

- 3.2.2 The treed frontage onto Saffron Road is protected under Landscape Proposal 9 of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan which states that "Development will not be permitted within or adjoining
- a) other significant urban open spaces - landscape frontages listed in appendix 3,
- which would adversely or diminish the present open character of those areas of significant urban open space shown on the proposals map or the contribution which they make to the quality of the townscape.
- 3.3 Other policies applicable to this site are included in Appendix 1 of this Brief.

4.0 Protection of Character of the Area

4.1 The structural elements of the northern area are:

- the housing and their grounds
- the formal open space areas within the site
- informal open space areas within the site
- boundary treatments, particularly on the Saffron Road frontage
- trees and hedgerows within the site
- other buildings

Housing

4.1.2 The existing housing area is locally distinctive in character. This is created by the built frontages which are free from sheds and other structure and the immediate road frontages which are free from fences and other forms of enclosure.

4.1.3 It is considered that this open character is of particular importance in retaining the overall feel of the area. Residential properties enjoy permitted development rights to allow them to be altered in ways that could do damage to an area. It is considered that the transfer of the individual houses from Ministry of Defence ownership into single private houses could lead to this to occur on an incremental basis thereby contribute to the erosion of the established character of this area. To prevent this from occurring it is proposed to remove certain permitted development rights which will require a planning application for this development.

4.1.4 It is considered appropriate in this instance to remove permitted development rights in this area in relation to:

1. The erection of walls, railing and fences (Class A of Part 2 of Schedule to Article 3)
2. The erection of porch, extension and provision within the curtilage of a hard surface, driveway or parking space. (Class D of Part 1, Class B of Part 2 to Schedule 1 to Article 3)

Proposal

4.1.5 For the Authority to make an Article 4 direction removing permitted development rights for the aforementioned forms of development.

4.2 Formal Open Space

4.2.1 The formal open space areas for the site is situated at the western of Namur Road (see Plan No. 1). This comprises of a play equipment area and a small formal laid out football pitch.

4.2.2 It is considered that the provision of a childrens formal play area is of particular importance within this area. With regards to the play/kick-about area there are other smaller informal open space areas within the development brief.

- 4.2.3 Recreational Proposal 3 indicates that the loss of formal recreational facilities will not be permitted unless replacement facilities are provided in an appropriate location or that the redevelopment of part of the site results in the retention and improvement on the remaining balance.

Conclusion

- 4.2.4 It is therefore considered appropriate to seek the retention of the play area in its existing position or in an alternative position within the site. If not feasible to locate the play area within the site the finance could be made to seek improvements to other play areas within appropriately convenient locations.

4.3 Informal Open Space

- 4.3.1 The two main informal open spaces within the site are situated off Hindoostan Avenue and Crete Avenue respectively (Plan 1). The area off Hindoostan Avenue B1 is a particularly well treed area including Cedars, White Poplars, Limes and Oaks all of a mature nature. The area off Crete Avenue B2 has a significant number of trees concentrated on eastern side (including Chestnut, Lime trees, whilst the western side, although more open, is occupied by a mature Blue Atlas Cedar, two Beech, Horse Chestnuts and a Wild Cherry).

- 4.3.2 The areas are viewed as being of particular amenity interest and should be maintained and managed. Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect or diminish the present open character of these areas:

The Borough Council will seek to adopt these areas of land, subject to agreement with the owners of land, subject to agreement with the owners of the site. Where this does not occur a management and maintenance plan will need to be prepared outlining works both immediate and long term.

- 4.3.3 In addition to the larger amenity spaces within the site, the smaller area comprising the corner of Ladysmith and Hindoostan should be maintained and managed, either through adoption by the Council or through other formal mechanisms.

There are also significant highway verges containing mature trees fronting onto the main roads throughout the site. These should be maintained and managed in a responsible manner.

- 4.3.4 The review of the maintenance provisions of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan will be assessing the various open space designations through the Borough and as part of the review a re-assessment will be made relating to the land subject of this Brief.

4.4 Boundary Treatment

- 4.4.1 The tree frontage onto Saffron Road is designated in the Local Plan as a significant landscape frontage. It produces a valuable element both visually and as a nature conservation feature within the built up area. It is considered particularly important that these landscape features should be preserved and wherever possible enhanced.

- 4.4.2 In terms of additional actions to ensure that this aim is achieved it is proposed that:-

- the Local Authority seek clarification over the ownership of the treed area to ensure the appropriate management of the area

- in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Sergeants and Officers Mess seek to reinstatement of the treed frontage where it has been removed. This aspect is further developed in section 5.2.
- the individual property owners informed of the implications of the policies applicable to the frontage.

4.4.3 Difficulties are being experienced by property owners on the north western edge of the site from people accessing a break in the concrete wall/post wire fence adjoining the site and the Young Offenders Institution. The Local Authority will seek to remedy this matter in conjunction with the immediately affected residents and the Prison Service Authority.

4.5 Trees and Hedges

4.5.1 The visual appearance and character of an area is defined by the relationship between the various built and natural forms and how they inter react. In this area, the form and character area is influenced particularly by the green spaces and landscape feature within the site.

4.5.2 To ensure that this character is retained the area is subject to various tree preservation orders, a landscape frontage designation and the various proposals as set out earlier in the text.

4.5.3 The western boundary of the residential part of the site is defined by a hedgerow. From records received this would appear to be on a line defined on maps since the 1830's. Aside from a historical context the hedgerow and adjoining landscaping providing an ecologically important habitat resource between the open spaces within the site and the park to the north.

4.5.4 The hedgerow on the north-west boundary is sited next to a grassed area formerly identified as amenity land by the Ministry of Defence. Individual properties on Aisne Road and Namur Road have been given parts of the former grassed amenity area up to the boundary with the hedgeline. Current evidence indicates that the hedgerow is owned by the Home Office along the Western edge of the site from the Northern boundary with the City to the end of Crete Avenue. Subject to precise definition of ownership and the exact position of the boundary between the grassed area and the hedgerow, a planning application would be required for the grassed land to be brought and enclosed within the individual properties within this part of the site. Subject to these conditions the Borough Council would not be adverse to permitting the incorporation of the grassed area within the curtilage of the individual properties. If definition of ownership indicates the exact position of the boundary to be part way into the hedgeline, the Council would consult with the County Council Environmental Resources Centre for guidance prior to any permission being given in order to ensure best protection of the hedgerow. Retention and maintenance of the hedgerow would be applied as conditions to any subsequent permission.

4.6 Southern Area

4.6.1 The main element of the southern area are:

- the three older Victorian buildings fronting onto Tigers Road
- the housing on the southern part of Crete Avenue, Moore's Close and Saffron Road

- trees and open space within the site

4.7 Buildings

4.7.1 These buildings incorporate the TAVRA building including the modern extension and the Department of Science and Education Building and are considered to have sufficient group value as to be identified on the Schedule of Significant Local Buildings and subject to Conservation Proposal 22 of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan.

4.7.2 In addition to this local criteria, it is suggested that the former Barracks Building immediately at the junction of Tigers Road and Saffron Road be put forward for consideration for inclusion on the National List of Buildings of Special Historic or Architectural Interest.

4.8 Housing

4.8.1 Cottage on Saffron road is identified on the Schedule of Significant Local Buildings and is subject to Conservation Proposal 22 of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan.

4.8.2 The existing housing fronting onto Crete Avenue and in Moore's Close is of two storey character, constructed in brick and tile. the open plan and consistent built character of the northern section is not followed through in this part of the estate. It is therefore not considered necessary to remove permitted development rights in this area as set out in paragraph 4.1.4 of this Brief.

4.9 Trees and Open Space

4.9.1 The southern part of the site contains a number of mature trees. many are situated in private gardens on Saffron Road, Crete Avenue and Moore's Close and due to their amenity value are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

5.0 Development Guidelines

5.1 Whilst the residential area to the north has significant aspects and features to be protected there are a number of limited opportunity for further development within the site. These include:

- Sergeants and Officers Mess
- Part of, or all of the Play Ground Area off Namur Road.

In allowing development there is a requirement for guidelines to be established to ensure that the buildings are appropriate to its setting and do not unduly affect the character of the area.

5.2 Sergeants and Officers Mess

5.2.1 The Sergeants and Officers Mess building is sited immediately adjacent to Saffron Road. It comprises of ha of land and nominally a triangular shaped site with the north-western and south western edges bounded by existing residential property.

5.2.2 The building is constructed of brick and grey roof panels and is a mix of single and two storey elements. it is functional and institutional in appearance and has been disused since . The existing access to the site is via Ladysmith Road.

5.2.3 The Saffron Road frontage of the site is part of Significant Open Urban Space – Landscape Frontage and subject to Landscape Proposal 9 of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan. Comprised of continuous well treed screen in this area. In 2000 a number of these mature trees were removed creating a visual gap in this landscape frontage. These gaps remain visible today.

Guidelines

5.2.4 It is not considered necessary to retain the existing building in their existing form although it is proposed that the most appropriate use is for residential purposes.

5.2.5 the tree lines frontage along Saffron Road should be reinstated with mature native species trees to form the continuous feature previous in place. There will be the requirement thereafter to ensure responsible management and maintenance of these areas.

5.2.6 Vehicular access will be off Ladysmith Road only.

5.2.7 Any form of development will be required to incorporate:

- the existing trees and proposed replacement trees in the layout, particularly in relation to the Landscape Frontage
- respect the amenities of the adjoining occupiers of properties taking into account residential standards of the Authority
- reflect the scale, form, openings and materials used on the adjoining properties on Namur Road and Hindoostan Avenue.

5.3 Playground Area off Namur Road

5.3.1 The Play Area is sited to the west of the site immediately off Namur Road. it comprises 4hs of land currently occupied by a small kickabout area and formal childrens play area bounded by an ancient hedgeline including mature trees.

5.3.2 Unlike the majority of the open space areas within the site, the area is relatively open and level. There are number of protected trees around the western edge of the site and particularly at the road access point on Namur Road.

Guidelines

5.3.3 As indicated in 4.2.3 development which results in the loss of formal recreational facilities will only be permitted under certain defined circumstances.

In this case it is considered possible to consider the following options:

- i) the redevelopment of the kickabout area with further investment in an enhanced formal play area retained in existing position or in a revised position in this playground area
- ii) the redevelopment of the whole of the site with replacement facilities provided elsewhere within the site
- iii) the redevelopment of the whole of the site with the finance put towards facilities off site but that will serve the surrounding community.

- 5.3.4 Paragraph 3.10 of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan indicates that it may not be possible in all new developments to retain every tree. In this case to gain access to the site it will be necessary to remove three Lime tree, currently protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Whilst regrettable, it is considered that replacement mature trees of a native species should be planted elsewhere within the site.

The trees on the western boundary should be retained and any new development must have regard to them in terms of siting, design and orientation. Retention and maintenance of the hedgerow would be applied as conditions to any subsequent permission.

- 5.3.5 Any form of development permitted in this location should reflect the scale, form, openings and materials used on the adjoining properties on Namur Road. Particular consideration should be made to ensure that the open plan layout of the frontage of the existing properties is incorporated within this small infill development.

5.4 General Development Principles

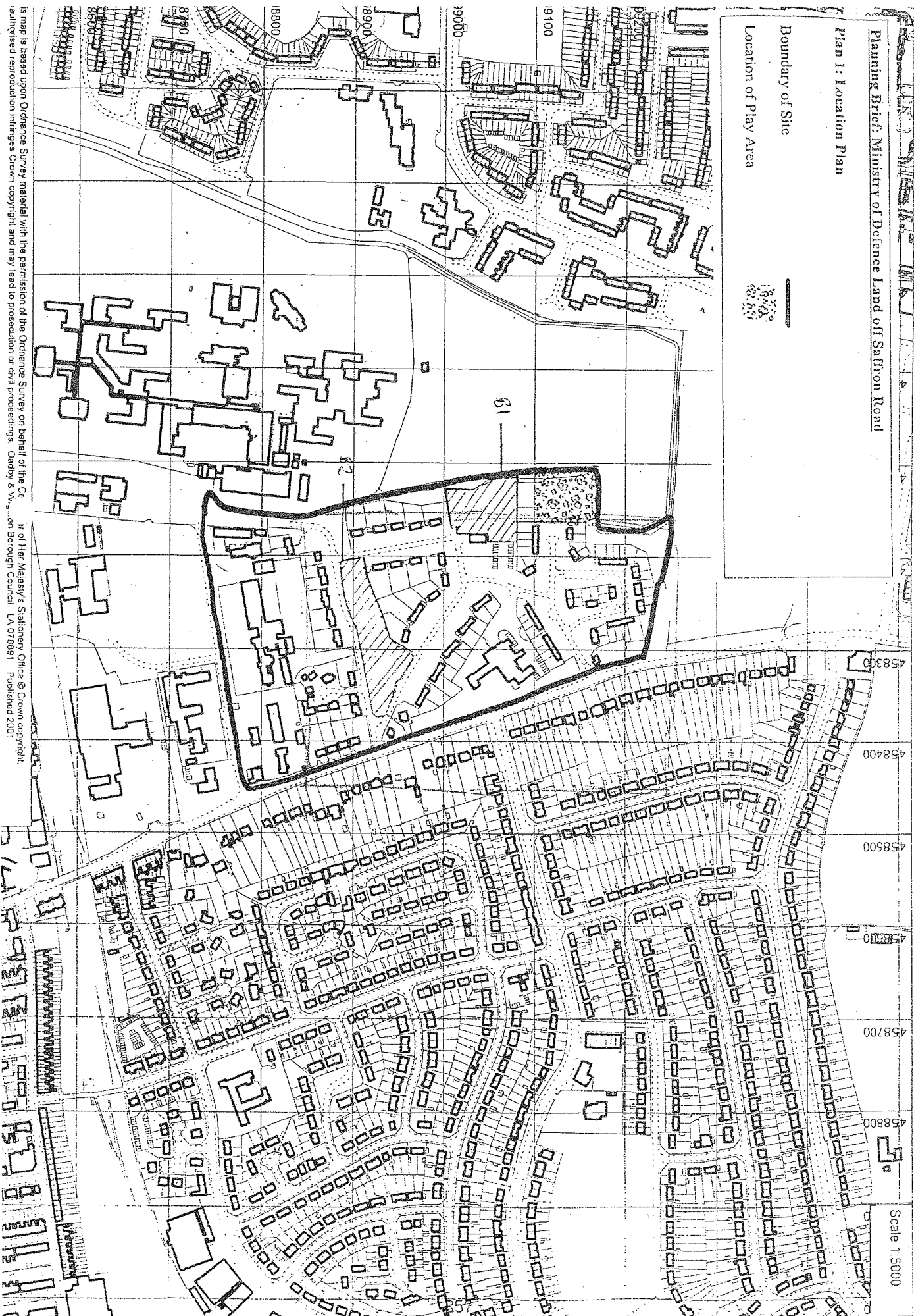
- 5.4.1 The existing road network within the site is not adopted by the Local Authority. If a proposed development and the associated road network is intended for adoption by the Local Authority either upon completion or in the future you are advised to contact the Assistant Director (Engineering and Leisure) for further details.

Planning Brief: Ministry of Defence Land off Saffron Road

Plan 1: Location Plan

Boundary of Site

Location of Play Area



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Appendix 1: Local Plan Policies

LANDSCAPE PROPOSAL 1

Development will be permitted provided:

1. Existing landscape features, such as walls, hedges and trees, will be retained and additional well designed landscaping and open space that is well related in scale and location to the proposed development will be provided in the layout of larger developments;
2. The building design, scale, form and materials will contribute positively to the overall quality of the environment and be carefully related to existing and proposed development;
3. The layout, design and landscaping features will discourage crime;
4. It will not harm the amenities of occupiers of adjacent properties or cause a juxtaposition of incompatible uses; and
5. It will not prejudice the development of adjoining land.

LANDSCAPE PROPOSAL 9

Development will not be permitted within or adjoining:

- a) the University of Leicester Botanic Gardens, Oadby;
- b) the Manor House Orchard, Wigston;
- c) The Manchester Gardens, Wigston;
- d) Chicken Walk, Oadby;
- e) The North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Cottages, Oadby;
- f) Oadby Grange Farmhouse, Oadby; and
- g) Other significant urban open spaces – landscape frontages listed in Appendix 3,

Which would affect adversely or diminish the present open character of these areas of significant urban open space shown on the proposals map or the contribution which they make to the quality of the townscape.

CONSERVATION PROPOSAL 5:

Applications for development which could damage the ecological interest of a parish level site will not be permitted unless:

- 1) the disturbance to the site is minimised and its ecological value is conserved as far as possible; and
- 2) the biodiversity of the Local Plan area is maintained by the provision of similar replacement habitats

CONSERVATION PROPOSAL 22

Development which could have an impact on any of the significant local buildings listed in appendix 6 will only be permitted providing it will not have a significantly detrimental impact on the architectural or historic character or appearance of the building and its setting in terms of scale, massing, form, siting, design or materials of construction.

Additional Transport proposals 6,12,13,14,15,16, 17, 18, 19

HOUSING PROPOSAL 1:

Proposals for residential development shall:

- 1) have as high a density as possible having regard to the size of the dwellings, the site and the locality;and
- 2) provide adequate public and private open space.

Where the development is for more than 100 dwellings it shall also

- 3) contain a range and mix of dwelling types that will provide for all categories of households, but particularly smaller ones.

HOUSING PROPOSAL 12

Planning permission will not be approved for infill development unless:

- 1) the development proposed would not have an adverse impact on the character of the area;and
- 2) the design of the development would not have an adverse effect on the amenities of adjacent or nearby properties

EMPLOYMENT PROPOSAL 1

Within those identified employment areas indicated on the Proposals Map, development, redevelopment or changes of use for employment purposes will be permitted.

Proposals to change the use of land or buildings from B1, B2 or B8 to any use outside Class B1 will not be permitted unless:

- 1) the new use is complementary or ancillary to an existing or proposed employment use;or
- 2) the land and building are unfit for employment purposes;and
- 3) an alternative comparable site for employment is made available within the local plan built up area.

RECREATION PROPOSAL 3

Applications involving the loss of formal and informal recreational facilities will not be permitted unless:

- 1) replacement recreational facilities are provided in a location which will serve the same community and which are of an equivalent community benefit in terms of quality and accessibility; or
- 2) the redevelopment of a small part of the site will result in the retention and enhancement of the recreational facilities on the balance of the site.