

Scoping Report

Sustainability Appraisal of the
Local Development Framework

for
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

June 2005



Scoping Report

Sustainability Appraisal of the
Local Development Framework

for
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

June 2005

Reference: Oadby and Wigston Borough Council –Scoping Report – June 2005					
Issue		Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	
V1	03/06/05				
V2	27/06/05				
V3	-				
V4	-	SUSANNAH PARKIN	EMMA LEACROFT	STEVE MUSTOW	
V5	-	Environmental Scientist	Senior Environmental Scientist	Technical Director	
<i>File Ref: F:\Consumer Services\Planning\Local Development Framework\Sustainability Appraisal\Web version\FINAL Oadby and Wigston SA Scoping Report2.doc</i>					
<i>White Young Green Environmental Limited, Arndale Court, Headingley, Leeds. LS6 2UJ. Telephone: 0113 278 7111 Facsimile: 0113 275 0623 E-Mail: enviro.leeds@wyg.com</i>					

OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK****SCOPING REPORT****JUNE 2005****CONTENTS**

	<u>Page No</u>
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
2.0 BACKGROUND	3
2.1 Study Area	3
2.2 Oadby and Wigston Borough Local Development Framework	3
2.3 Local Development Framework Programme	4
3.0 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL PROCESS	5
3.1 Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal	5
3.2 Sustainability Appraisal Guidance	5
3.3 Sustainability Appraisal Process	5
3.4 Objectives of Sustainability Appraisal	6
3.5 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology	6
3.6 Scoping Methodology	7
4.0 LINKS TO RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES	13
4.1 Introduction	13
4.2 Analysis	14
5.0 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE	18
5.1 Introduction	18
5.2 Economy and Employment	18
5.3 Population and Quality of Life	19
5.4 Tourism and Recreation	20
5.5 Traffic and Transport	21
5.6 Geological Environment	22
5.7 Water Environment	23
5.8 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation	25
5.9 Landscape and Visual Amenity	27
5.10 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	28
5.11 Noise	29
5.12 Air and Climate	30
5.13 Summary of Key Sustainability Issues	30
6.0 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OBJECTIVES	35
6.1 Need for Objectives	35
6.2 Integrated Regional Framework	35
6.3 Oadby and Wigston Borough Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	36
6.4 Testing the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	38
7.0 NEXT STEPS	39

TABLES

Table 3.1	Scoping Report Tasks
Table 5.1	River Water Quality (Environment Agency)
Table 5.2	Key Sustainability Issues
Table 6.1	Sustainability Appraisal Objectives for the Oadby and Wigston LDF
Table 7.1	Next Steps in the Sustainability Appraisal of the LDF

FIGURES

Figure 1	-	District Boundaries
Figure 2	-	Agricultural Land Classification
Figure 3	-	Urban Areas
Figure 4	-	Infrastructure
Figure 5	-	River Water Quality- Chemical
Figure 6	-	River Water Quality- Biological
Figure 7	-	Groundwater Vulnerability
Figure 8	-	Floodplain
Figure 9	-	Nature Conservation and Landscape
Figure 10	-	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology
Figure 11	-	Recreation

APPENDICES

Appendix A	-	Report Conditions
Appendix B	-	Consultation Questionnaire and Summary of Responses
Appendix C	-	Summary of Outcomes of the Consultation Forum
Appendix D	-	Plans and Programmes Review Proformas
Appendix E	-	Baseline Data Spreadsheet
Appendix F	-	Derivation of Objectives
Appendix G	-	Objectives, Targets and Indicators
Appendix H	-	Compatibility Matrix

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 **Introduction**

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (OWBC) is the Local Planning Authority for the borough of Oadby and Wigston in South Leicestershire. OWBC 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 2016) and replace the current Oadby and Wigston Borough Local Plan. The LDF will comprise various documents including a Core Strategy and topic/area specific Development Plan Documents.

Sustainability Appraisal 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 Sustainability Appraisal of their LDF process. This is to compel Local Planning Authorities to work towards achieving sustainable development thus enabling residents to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising quality of life for future generations. Sustainability Appraisal addresses social and economic issues but also takes into consideration environmental issues.

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 (strategic) environmental assessment. Local Planning Authorities are required to carry out an environmental assessment of their LDF under these regulations.

OWBC are undertaking a combined Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of their LDF process. For ease, the combined approach is simply referred to as Sustainability Appraisal throughout this Scoping Report. In undertaking the first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal OWBC has formed a partnership with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Blaby District Council. This joint approach has enabled the councils to share knowledge and resources, for example, in undertaking a joint consultation forum.

White Young Green Environmental (WYGE) has been commissioned by the three councils to undertake the first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal process. The first stage in the Sustainability Appraisal is the scoping stage; the results of the scoping stage for OWBC are presented in this Scoping Report. Separate Scoping Reports have been produced for Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Blaby District Council.

The purpose of this Scoping Report is to present the findings of the scoping stage for OWBC in a manner that can be used for consultation. This report has the following format:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Chapter 1 | Introduction |
| Chapter 2 | Background
Details the background to LDF being prepared by OWBC. |
| Chapter 3 | Sustainability Appraisal Process
Provides an overview of the Sustainability Appraisal methodology adopted by WYGE, including details of the consultation process undertaken. |
| Chapter 3 | Links to Relevant Plans and Programmes
Provides analysis of the relationship of the LDF to other plans and programmes at the national to local level. |
| Chapter 4 | Social, Economic and Environmental Baseline
Describes baseline conditions for various social, economic and environmental parameters and identifies key sustainability issues that must be considered during the preparation of the LDF and in the Sustainability Appraisal process. |

Chapter 5 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

Provides details of the Sustainability Appraisal objectives against which the LDF will be assessed.

Chapter 6 Next Steps

Details the further stages of work to be carried out as part of the Sustainability Appraisal process.

Report conditions are set out in Appendix A.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Study Area

Oadby and Wigston borough is located in Leicestershire immediately to the south of the Leicester City Council administrative area. 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 16% of the population being of mixed or ethnic origin.

2.2 Oadby and Wigston Borough Local Development Framework

2.2.1 Local Development Frameworks

Fundamental changes to the planning system have been introduced through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which requires Local Planning Authorities to adopt a Local Development Framework (LDF) in place of their existing Local Plan. The LDF will replace the current Oadby and Wigston Borough Local Plan (adopted 1999) as the plan setting out policies and proposals for the development of the district up to 2016. In the transitional period certain policies in the Local Plan will retain development plan status and be saved for three years or until those policies are superseded by the adoption of LDF documents. The applicable policies are listed in the Local Development Scheme.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12 sets out the new LDF process. It requires 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 built. It will go beyond traditional land use planning by integrating policies for the development of land with policies that influence the nature of places and how they function.

2.2.2 Local Development Framework Objectives

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) being prepared for the East Midlands by the East Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) will also form part of the statutory development plan for OWBC. It is anticipated that the objectives of the Oadby and Wigston LDF to be adopted in 2007 will be derived from the regional core objectives of the RSS. The regional core objectives are:

- To address social exclusion, through the regeneration of disadvantaged areas and reducing regional inequalities in the distribution of employment, housing, health and other community facilities.
- To protect and where possible enhance the quality of the environment in urban and rural areas so as to make them safe and attractive places to live and work.
- To improve the health of the region's residents, for example through improved air quality, the availability of good quality well designed housing and access to leisure and recreation facilities.
- To promote and improve economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness.
- To improve accessibility to jobs, homes and services across the region by developing integrated transport, ensuring the improvement of opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of high quality public transport.

- To achieve effective protection of the environment by avoiding significant harm and securing adequate mitigation where appropriate, and to promote the conservation, enhancement, sensitive use and management of the region's natural and cultural assets.
- To bring about a step change increase in the level of the region's biodiversity, by managing and developing habitats to secure gains wherever possible, and ensuring no net loss of priority habitats and species.
- To promote the prudent use of resources, in particular through patterns of development and transport that make efficient and effective use of existing infrastructure, optimise waste minimisation, reduce overall energy use and maximise the role of renewable energy generation.
- To take action to reduce the scale and impact of future climate change, in particular the risk of damage to life and property from flooding, especially through the location and design of new development.
- To promote good design in development so as to achieve high environmental standards and optimum social benefits.

2.2.3 Local Development Framework Documents

The LDF will comprise of a number of Development Plan Documents (DPD) which will have statutory status. The proposals and policies set out in them will guide planning decisions. It could also comprise Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) that are non-statutory and can be 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.

The Core Strategy DPD will set out strategic objectives and a spatial vision for Oadby and Wigston borough. A key diagram accompanying the Core Strategy DPD will identify areas requiring protection (such as Conservation Areas) and illustrate where particular land uses / development proposals should be located. All other DPDs must conform to the Core Strategy document.

2.3 Local Development Framework Programme

OWBC has produced a Local Development Scheme (LDS) for their LDF process. This establishes a programme for delivering the LDF over a three year period. The first LDF documents will be adopted in 2007 and will include:

- Core Strategy DPD
- Key Diagram to accompany the Core Strategy DPD
- Housing and Employment Allocations DPD
- Development Control DPD
- Residential Areas SPD
- Planning for Renewable Energy Technology and Energy Efficiency SPD
- Guidelines for New Development SPD

The LDS focuses on the documents that will be prepared over the next three years but also gives an indication of the documents that OWBC intend to produce in the future. It is proposed that Area Action Plans (AAP) for Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston town centres will be prepared after 2007 and adopted at a later date. The AAPs will reflect the important role that the three centres play in the borough. They will focus in particular on environmental improvements, regeneration of the town centres and managing their spatial development to foster their vitality and viability whilst retaining their individual characteristics.

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

3.0 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL PROCESS

3.1 Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal

Sustainability Appraisal 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 Sustainability Appraisal of their LDF process.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a requirement of the EU Directive 2001/42 on the Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment more commonly known as the SEA Directive. The objective of the SEA Directive as stated in Article 1 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 United Kingdom (UK) on 21 July 2004 through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations. Local Planning Authorities are required to carry out an environmental assessment of their LDF under these regulations.

Sustainability Appraisal addresses social and economic issues but also takes into consideration environmental issues. Although the statutory requirements for carrying out Sustainability Appraisal and SEA are distinct it is possible to satisfy both through a single but integrated Sustainability Appraisal process. Such a joint approach is advocated in ODPM guidance. For ease the combined SEA and Sustainability Appraisal process is simply referred to as Sustainability Appraisal throughout this Scoping Report.

3.2 Sustainability Appraisal Guidance

The Sustainability Appraisal process undertaken by WYGE has been developed in accordance with the following national and European guidance:

- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- ODPM (2005) Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks: Interim Advice Note on Frequently Asked Questions.
- ODPM (2004) Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks: Consultation Draft.
- ODPM (2003) The SEA Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities.
- English Nature, RSPB, Countryside Agency and Environment Agency (2004) SEA and Biodiversity: Guidance for Practitioners.
- EC (2001) SEA and Integration of the Environment into Strategic Decision Making.
- Environment Agency (2004) Environmental Assessment (SEA) of External Plans and Programmes.

3.3 Sustainability Appraisal Process

SEA is a means of evaluating the environmental acceptability of a plan in a formalised and systematic manner by identifying key environmental issues associated with the study area and how adoption of the plan 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 but differs in that the existing environment is examined in broad terms and strategic options are evaluated against environmental objectives. This is because the site

specific information needed to complete a project level environmental assessment and quantify environmental effects is not available at the strategic stage.

Sustainability Appraisal differs from SEA in that it expands the focus of the assessment process to encompass social and economic issues. Sustainability Appraisal is described by the ODPM (2004) guidance as:

“An iterative process that identifies and reports on the likely significant effects of the plan and the extent to which implementation of the plan will achieve the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainable development can be defined.”

The combined Sustainability Appraisal process will identify key social, economic and environmental issues associated with Oadby and Wigston borough and how adoption of the LDF will influence them. It will ensure that significant effects arising from the Oadby and Wigston LDF are either avoided or mitigated. The process will also identify requirements (or indicators) for monitoring the implementation of the LDF following its adoption. Monitoring will identify any unforeseen impacts and inform the next revision or replacement.

The Sustainability Appraisal process must be fully integrated into the LDF process. This Scoping Report has been prepared at an early stage in the preparation of the LDF in order to form a basis for discussions with consultees.

3.4 Objectives of Sustainability Appraisal

The key objective in undertaking Sustainability Appraisal is to ensure that any significant effects arising from adoption of the LDF are identified and are (at least in principle) acceptable to OWBC and other stakeholders. Undertaking Sustainability Appraisal allows for the social, economic and environmental acceptability of the strategic options to be determined and thus taken into account in the decision making process. However it should be noted that whilst Sustainability Appraisal will inform the decision making process the LDF may not always recommend the strategic option that is considered most sustainable.

3.5 Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

The Sustainability Appraisal process adopted by WYGE for the Oadby and Wigston LDF has been developed following current guidance produced by the ODPM. The Sustainability Appraisal process involves the following steps split according to the ODPM (2004) guidance stages:

STAGE A Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

- Consulting on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal.
- Identifying other plans and programmes of relevance to the LDF process.
- 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 Sustainability Appraisal objectives.
- Testing the LDF objectives against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives.

STAGE B Developing and refining options

- Appraising the strategic options emerging from the LDF Issues and Options.
- Consulting on the Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging options.

STAGE C Appraising the effects of the plan

- Predicting and assessing the significant effects of the LDF Preferred Options.
- Developing mitigation for any adverse effects and to maximise beneficial effects
- Developing recommendations for future monitoring requirements or indicators.
- Producing a Sustainability Report setting out the results of the Sustainability Appraisal process.

STAGE D Consulting on the LDF and Sustainability Report

- Consulting on the Sustainability Report alongside the LDF documents.
- Appraising any significant changes to the LDF documents.
- Providing information on how the Sustainability Appraisal and consultation responses were taken into account in preparing the LDF documents.

STAGE E Monitoring implementation of the plan

- Monitoring significant effects of the LDF once adopted.
- Responding to any adverse effects arising from the LDF following adoption.

These stages are likely to change slightly following the recently published ODPM (2005) Interim Advice Note. This states that *“Stages B and C of the Sustainability Appraisal process are to be amended to correspond more closely with the plan making process under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.”*

3.6 Scoping Methodology**3.6.1 Scoping Report Tasks**

This Scoping Report documents the findings of the first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal process referred to in the ODPM (2004) guidance as Stage A. Table 3.1 summarises the tasks which were carried out in producing this Scoping Report.

Testing of the Sustainability Appraisal objectives against the Oadby and Wigston LDF objectives has not been undertaken. This is because the Oadby and Wigston LDF objectives have yet to be developed. Instead the Sustainability Appraisal objectives have been tested against the regional core objectives set out in Section 2.2.2.

Table 3.1 Scoping Report Tasks

Task	Purpose	Report Section
Consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees on the scope	To identify baseline data and plans or programmes held by consultees. For consultees to assist in identifying key sustainability issues. For consultees to contribute to the development of objectives.	Appendices B and C
Identification of other plans and programmes of relevance to the LDF	To document the aims and objectives of other plans and programmes. To identify constraints and opportunities for the LDF to take into account.	Section 4.0 Appendix D
Collect baseline information	To provide a baseline against which the assessment of significant effects can be undertaken. To provide a baseline for future monitoring purposes. To assist in identifying key sustainability issues.	Section 5.0 Appendix E
Identify key sustainability issues	To ensure that the Sustainability Appraisal is focused on issues of concern in Oadby and Wigston.	Section 5.0
Development of Sustainability Appraisal objectives, targets and indicators	To provide a means by which the sustainability of the LDF can be assessed. Targets and indicators provide a framework for future monitoring purposes.	Section 6.0 Appendices F and G
Compatibility test	To identify any conflicts between the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and the regional core objectives.	Section 6.0 Appendix H

3.6.2 Consultation

Consultation Questionnaire

The following statutory and non-statutory consultees were contacted during March 2005 as part of the initial round of consultation:

- 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
- 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
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
- 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. A copy of the letter and questionnaire is included in Appendix B. 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 Sustainability Appraisal 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 Sustainability Appraisal process.

This consultation also provided an opportunity to get feedback and suggestions from consultees on the objectives to be used in the Sustainability Appraisal process.

Details of consultation responses to the questionnaire are provided in Appendix B.

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 OWBC, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Blaby District 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
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council: Environmental Health
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council: Community Development
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council: Development Control
- 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

The consultation forum consisted of two sessions: a series of presentations on the Sustainability Appraisal process in the morning session; and two workshops to discuss the Sustainability Appraisal 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 / 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?
- Is data available to measure the targets?

Details of the outcomes of the consultation forum are provided in Appendix C. These outcomes were used in the identification of key sustainability issues and in the development of objectives, targets and indicators.

3.6.3 Links to Relevant Plans and Programmes

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 WYGE through discussions with OWBC and through feedback from the initial round of consultation and the consultation forum. Section 4.0 provides further details of the review process including a list of the plans and programmes reviewed.

For each plan the review process identified the:

- Key aims and objectives (including sustainability objectives) of each plan.
- Implications of the plan for the Oadby and Wigston LDF - opportunities and conflicts.
- How the objectives of each plan could be addressed by the Oadby and Wigston LDF.
- Implications of the plan for the Sustainability Appraisal process.

For each plan a proforma was produced. The completed proformas are provided in Appendix D.

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 Sustainability Appraisal objectives.

3.6.4 Baseline Data

Baseline data has been collated and reviewed in order to establish the baseline conditions and to help identify key sustainability issues. Baseline data has been collated in two formats:

- Spatial format data collated in GIS format with the assistance of OWBC and Leicestershire County Council. The Spatial data is presented in Figures 1 to 9 of this Scoping Report.
- Statistical format data collated from various different sources. Statistical data is presented in Appendix E in an EXCEL database format.

The baseline data was reviewed to establish:

- The current situation and if trends suggest that it is improving or getting worse.
- The current situation in relation to established thresholds or targets.
- If any particularly sensitive or important elements of the receiving environment are likely to be affected including people or habitats.
- If the current problems are reversible or irreversible, temporary or permanent, and the practicality of improving the current situation.
- If there have been any significant cumulative or synergistic effects over time and if there may be such effects in the future.

Section 5.0 provides a summary of the baseline conditions based on the spatial and statistical data collated. The baseline conditions provide the basis against which significant effects of the LDF can be predicted and assessed. For the purposes of the Sustainability Appraisal the baseline conditions are assumed to be the *status quo* for Oadby and Wigston borough. Implementation of the strategic options will result in either an improvement to or a deterioration of this baseline. If the LDF is not implemented (do nothing situation) then it must be assumed that there will be no change to the current baseline conditions. In reality this would not occur as natural and social processes would continue to operate.

3.6.5 Data Gaps and Problems

It is a requirement of the SEA Directive that any difficulties encountered in compiling baseline data are recorded. It is important that any data gaps are identified as new data (or data in a different format to that currently available) may need to be collated for LDF monitoring purposes.

Specific areas where data gaps and problems were noted are as follows:

- Limited borough level data available for school age education because this is measured on a county wide basis by Leicestershire County Council. The lack of local level data means that the baseline situation may not fully reflect the local situation. Unless local level data can be sourced from Leicestershire County Council (which may be possible) future monitoring of the LDF will need to take into account that data is only available at a county level.
- Limited borough level data in relation to some economic parameters including Gross Value Added per head and business survival rates. The lack of local level data means the baseline situation may not fully reflect the local situation. Future monitoring will need to be based on indicators for which local economic data is currently available.
- Limited borough level data in relation to social poverty issues. For example, households that experience fuel poverty and children in low income households. The lack of local level data means the baseline situation may not fully reflect the local situation. Future monitoring will need to be based on indicators for which local social poverty data is currently available.
- No borough level data available on traffic levels. This is because data collection is based on boundaries set out in the Local Transport Plan which do not correspond with Local Planning Authority boundaries. The lack of local level data means that the baseline situation has been determined at a county level and may not fully reflect the local situation. Unless local level

data can be sourced future monitoring of the LDF will need to take into account that this data is only available at a county level.

- No borough or county level data available on carbon emissions. This indicator appears to only be measured at a regional and national level. Unless local level data can be sourced future monitoring of the LDF will need to take into account that this data may not be available.
- Limited borough and county level data on biodiversity and nature conservation. For example, species increasing and declining in numbers. The lack of local level data means the baseline situation may not fully reflect the local situation. Future monitoring will need to be based on indicators for which biodiversity data is currently available; it should be noted that OWBC are currently in the process of developing biodiversity indicators.
- Limited data at all levels in relation to access to recreation and tourism. This represents a gap in the baseline situation. Unless local level data can be sourced future monitoring of the LDF will need to take into account that this data may not be available.
- Not all spatial data is available in GIS format. For example areas of contaminated land or Air Quality Management Areas are not mapped. This means that not all spatial data has been presented in this form. In addition (unless existing features are digitised in GIS format) future monitoring may not be able to make use of GIS.
- Lack of up to date GIS data, for example, Environment Agency water quality data. This means that there are some inconsistencies between the spatial data and the most up to date statistical data. If future monitoring is to make use of GIS it will be necessary to ensure that the data utilised is the most up to date.

4.0 **LINKS TO RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES**

4.1 **Introduction**

It is a requirement of the SEA Directive that an analysis of the LDF “...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.

The following plans and programmes relevant to the LDF were reviewed:

National Level

- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (including reviews and updates)
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms
- Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres
- Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 9: Nature and Conservation
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 Planning and the Historic Environment
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology & Planning
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 21: Tourism
- UK Sustainable Development Strategy

Regional Level

- Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands
- Regional Economic Strategy
- East Midlands Integrated Regional Strategy
- Sustainable Energy in the East Midlands
- English Heritage in the East Midlands, 2003-5
- A Water Resources Strategy for the East Midlands
- The East Midlands Biodiversity Strategy

County Level

- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Structure Plan
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan
- Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan
- Leicestershire Walking and Cycling Strategy
- Leicestershire Rural Strategy
- Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Regeneration Strategy
- Leicestershire Community Strategy
- Landscape and Woodland Strategy for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
- Leicestershire Minerals Local Plan
- Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Waste Local Plan
- Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy
- Leicestershire Cultural Strategy
- Leicestershire Community Strategy
- ENABLE Environment Strategy & Action Plan

Local Level

- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan
- Oadby and Wigston Local Agenda 21 Strategy

- Oadby and Wigston Community Strategy
- Oadby and Wigston Air Quality Review and Assessment
- Oadby and Wigston Corporate Plan
- Oadby and Wigston Contaminated Land Strategy
- Oadby and Wigston Leisure / Sports / Recreation Strategy
- South Wigston Regeneration Master Plan
- Oadby and Wigston Crime and Disorder Strategy
- Oadby and Wigston Green Wedge Management Strategy
- Oadby and Wigston Biodiversity Action Plan

The national level plans reviewed (see above) are only a selection of the national planning guidance available. The plans and programmes reviewed were selected on the basis that they were of particular relevance to the Oadby and Wigston LDF or because their topic area was not covered by any of the lower (regional, county or borough) level plans and programmes. For example Planning Policy Statement 22 on Renewable Energy is of relevance to the LDF but it was not reviewed as this topic is covered at a regional level by the Sustainable Energy in the East Midlands plan. It may be necessary to review national planning guidance at a later date when preparing specific DPDs and SPDs.

4.2 **Analysis**

The detailed proformas for each plan are provided in Appendix D. Key points arising from this review are that the Oadby and Wigston LDF should:

Housing

- Ensure sufficient land is available, in appropriate locations, to meet the housing needs of Oadby and Wigston (existing and future) residents. In particular there is a need for affordable housing in the borough.
- Ensure that adequate accessible education, health facilities, shopping facilities, leisure facilities, open space and other services are provided to meet the needs of new developments.
- Ensure that the needs of residents are placed before ease of traffic movement in designing the layout of residential areas.

Access and Transport

- Encourage development in areas which are accessible by public transport to minimise the impact on current levels of traffic congestion.
- Ensure that existing and new jobs, education, health facilities, shopping facilities, leisure facilities, open space and other local services are accessible by public transport, on foot or by bicycle from residential areas.
- Ensure the protection and improvement of public footpaths and cycle ways.
- Influence the provision of services in new developments to encourage walking and cycling to be the preferred transport choices.
- Encourage mixed use developments whereby linkages can be created between different uses and therefore provide opportunities to reduce the need to travel.
- Stipulate the production of transport plans for new developments of an appropriate scale.

Buildings & the Built Environment

- Promote high quality sustainable design in new developments including the incorporation of energy and water efficiency measures and waste minimisation.
- Encourage crime reduction through design.
- Promote the provision of adequate open space within new developments.

Economic Development

- Ensure that there is sufficient land available, in appropriate locations and well served by infrastructure, for economic development and employment.
- Encourage the establishment of new businesses and enterprises.
- Support the growth of new and existing businesses and enterprises particularly social enterprises and businesses related to environmental technologies.
- Identify deprived / disadvantaged / rundown areas and consider the economic regeneration of these.
- Support economic development in the voluntary sector.

Leisure, Recreation, Culture and Tourism

- Consider the need to provide land for accessible leisure, recreation and community facilities.
- Ensure that the provision of and access to community facilities or sports and leisure facilities is not compromised.
- Encourage the development of sustainable tourism opportunities within the borough in particular those that focus on the historic environment.
- Encourage investment in local transport links to the national transport infrastructure to increase accessibility to tourist attractions.
- Encourage improvements in the provision of social and recreational facilities for young people.
- Ensure adequate allowance is made for public access to green spaces.
- Ensure that the social benefits of cultural activity are promoted through developments.

Use of Resources

- Give priority to developments on previously developed land in urban areas over development of green field sites.
- Promote the efficient use of land through the reuse/conversion of previously developed buildings and/or land and encourage new uses in under used space.

Sustainability of Towns and Villages

- Support the retention of local facilities.
- Encourage development of a wide range of facilities that will keep town centres sustainable.
- Encourage inward investment in town centres and in doing so ensure the use of derelict and under used sites is maximised, particularly in South Wigston.
- Consider the need to provide new quarters of development in towns to meet the needs of high growth industry and its support services.

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

- Ensure that all sites of nature conservation value, both designated and non-designated sites, are fully considered in planning decisions.
- Encourage the protection and enhancement of designated and non-designated sites of nature conservation value.
- Consider designating new local wildlife sites.
- Identify threatened habitats / Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats and encourage the management and restoration of these.
- Promote tree/woodland planting as part of new developments.
- Protect Green Wedges from future developments that would reduce linkages or otherwise adversely affect the open area.
- Ensure that ecological, access and/or linkage improvements are included in any developments near to Green Wedges.

The Historic Environment

- Encourage sensitive, conservation-led regeneration and identify the opportunities which the historic fabric of an area can offer as a focus for regeneration.
- Identify important historic resources in Oadby and Wigston borough and ensure their preservation and enhancement.
- Preserve or appropriately record sites of known archaeological interest within the borough and encourage assessment to determine the archaeological interest of sites pre development.
- Encourage the suitable reuse of historic buildings which will contribute to economic prosperity in addition to preserving their historic value.
- Take into account the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme and the Market Towns Initiative.
- Ensure new developments fit into the historic environment so that historic buildings are woven into the fabric of the living and working community.

Landscape

- Ensure that new developments do not compromise (but where possible enhance) the character, diversity and local distinctiveness of Oadby and Wigston landscapes and towns.
- Review existing local landscape / townscape designations / characterisations.
- Take account of the historical dimension of the landscape as a whole rather than concentrating on selected areas.
- Protect and enhance the character and amenity value of rural and urban areas as a whole.

Air and Climate

- Aim to reduce emissions by encouraging patterns of development which reduce the need to travel by private car or reduce the impact of moving freight.
- Take climate change impacts into account in considering the location and design of development.
- Promote and encourage, rather than restrict the use of, renewable energy and consider providing land for Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plants, wind farms and biomass projects.

General Environmental Impact

- Do not permit development to result in environmental degradation or compromise the historic setting of an area.
- Ensure consideration is given to the impacts of developments on the environment including air, water, land, soil, noise, light pollution and waste management.

Contaminated Land

- Protect sensitive receptors from the risks presented from contaminated land through appropriate redevelopment.
- Encourage the voluntary remediation of contaminated sites.
- Consider remediation needs when prioritising sites for future development.

Water

- Prevent development that would exacerbate flood risk in areas at risk of flooding.
- Stipulate the use of sustainable drainage (SUDS) in new developments where possible.
- Do not allow development to cause significant harm to surface and groundwater quality and/or the availability of water resources.

Waste

- By working with the Waste Authority ensure that waste disposal sites are appropriately managed.
- Encourage the development of recycling / energy recovery sites.
- Encourage development of new accessible recycling sites.