

5.0 **SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE**

5.1 **Introduction**

This chapter provides a broad overview of the social, economic and environmental features of Oadby and Wigston borough and the defined study area. The defined study area includes the Oadby and Wigston borough and parts of adjacent authorities which have environmental and socio-economic links with the Oadby and Wigston borough. The location of Oadby and Wigston in relation to adjacent council administrations is shown in Figure 1.

The following social, economic and environmental parameters have been considered:

- Economy and Employment.
- Population and Quality of Life.
- Tourism and Recreation.
- Traffic and Transport.
- Geological Environment.
- Water Environment.
- Biodiversity and Nature Conservation.
- Landscape and Visual Amenity.
- Cultural Heritage and Archaeology.
- Noise.
- Air and Climate.

Key sustainability issues have been identified at the end of each section.

5.2 **Economy and Employment**

5.2.1 **Introduction**

This section sets out the existing situation in Oadby and Wigston borough with respect to the local economy and employment. The socio-economic baseline has been established with reference to:

- National Statistics website (www.statistics.gov.uk)
- NOMIS - Official Labour Statistics (www.nomisweb.co.uk)
- Government Office for the East Midlands (www.goem.gov.uk)
- Oadby and Wigston Corporate Plan

Key baseline economic and employment data is provided in Appendix E.

5.2.2 **Local Economy and Employment**

Baseline data suggests that Oadby and Wigston borough is slightly behind other boroughs in Leicestershire in terms of its Economic Activity Rate. The Economic Activity Rate is also lower than the national average. The local economy is largely dependant on traditional manufacturing jobs with less opportunities being available for employment in the high-technology industries and other new sectors. The Oadby and Wigston Corporate Plan identifies the need to diversify the economy away from traditional manufacturing industries.

Unemployment is highlighted as a priority in Oadby and Wigston. Although the claimant rate is lower than the national average the actual unemployment rate for all those over 16 is currently above the national average. This means that a number of people in the borough are unemployed but are classified as economically inactive or unable to claim Jobseekers Allowance for various reasons.

Oadby and Wigston borough is largely urban in nature and therefore only a small percentage of the population work in agriculture. Agricultural land classifications for the rural areas of the borough are shown in Figure 2.

5.2.3 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issue relating to economy and employment is:

- **High unemployment rate for all those over 16.**

5.3 Population and Quality of Life

5.3.1 Introduction

This section sets out the existing situation in Oadby and Wigston borough with regards to population, housing provision, health, education and crime. The baseline has been established with reference to:

- National Statistics website (www.statistics.gov.uk)
- NOMIS - Official Labour Statistics (www.nomisweb.co.uk)
- Audit Commission Best Value Indicators (www.audit-commission.gov.uk)
- Government Office for the East Midlands (www.goem.gov.uk)
- South Leicestershire Primary Care Trust (SLPCT) Annual Report 2004-2005
- Oadby and Wigston Crime Reduction Partnership Strategy 2002-2005

Key population and quality of life data is provided in Appendix E.

5.3.2 Local Community and Population

Population growth is high in Oadby and Wigston compared to the national rate. However it is similar to the average for Leicestershire. Most of the population of Oadby and Wigston live in the towns of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. The extent of the urban areas is shown in Figure 3.

16% of the population of Oadby and Wigston borough are from ethnic minorities and the majority of these people have a South Asian origin.

While Oadby and Wigston borough overall ranks low on the national Indices of Deprivation there are some pockets of deprivation in the borough. The SLPCT Annual Report states that three wards in Wigston fall into the lowest 40% of wards most deprived in England. These are South Wigston, Wigston Fields and Wigston St Wolstan. South Wigston falls into the lowest 20% for its living environment.

5.3.3 Housing

None of the council owned housing in Oadby and Wigston has been classified as non decent.

5.3.4 Health

Health in Oadby and Wigston borough is good compared with the rest of England. In the 2001 census 7.4% of the population considered their health to be Not Good compared to 9.03% for England as a whole. In addition life expectancy is higher than the national average for both males and females.

South Leicestershire Primary Care Trust (SLPCT) is responsible for the primary health care in Oadby and Wigston borough. The SLPCT Annual Report highlights the main health related issues in South Leicestershire. Smoking is the greatest single cause of preventable death and illness in South Leicestershire. Other key areas for improvement include: a reduction in coronary heart disease and diabetes; increasing physical activity, healthy eating and preventing obesity;

reducing teenage pregnancy; improving sexual health; reducing excess winter deaths in older people; improving access to services; and improved child protection.

Another important issue is inequalities in health which are often linked to levels of deprivation. Three wards in Wigston are highlighted in the SLPCT Annual Report as being of high deprivation as detailed previously. In addition there are some health problems which affect people of ethnic minorities disproportionately, for example, there is a 40% higher death rate from heart disease in the South Asian community.

5.3.5 Education

Leicestershire County Council is the Local Education Authority for Oadby and Wigston borough. Attainment at GCSE level and at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 of the National Curriculum in Leicestershire is well above the national average.

5.3.6 Crime

Baseline data shows that the level of crimes in Oadby and Wigston borough is low compared to the national averages. The Oadby and Wigston Crime Reduction Partnership Strategy identifies priorities for the borough based on crime trends and consultation evidence. Youth issues were identified as a priority due to high levels of anti-social behaviour in youths and a lack of facilities for young people. The other priority identified was Road Safety due to concerns over speeding vehicles and poor driver behaviour in general.

5.3.7 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issues relating to population and quality of life are:

- **Pockets of deprivation in some wards;**
- **The need to tackle health inequalities;**
- **The need to improve facilities for young people; and**
- **The need to tackle road safety issues.**

5.4 Tourism and Recreation

5.4.1 Introduction

This section looks at the existing situation with regards to tourism and recreation. This includes leisure resources for residents, day visitors and tourists. The baseline has been established with reference to:

- Oadby and Wigston Sports and Leisure Strategy 2002-2007
- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999
- Oadby and Wigston Preliminary Assessment of the Open Spaces and Recreational Facilities 2003

Figure 11 provides a geographical overview of recreation assets in Oadby and Wigston borough.

5.4.2 Tourism

The urban areas of Oadby and Wigston borough have a limited ability to attract overnight tourists. However the countryside areas do have potential to attract day visitors to take advantage of the recreational assets. Recreation facilities of particular importance in terms of tourism include Brocks Hill County Park and Environment Centre, the Botanic Gardens, Parkland Leisure Centre, Leicester racecourse and the Framework Knitters Cottages.

5.4.3 Recreation

Oadby and Wigston borough has a wide resource of leisure and recreation activities to serve the local community. These include two swimming pools, parks, allotments, playing fields and informal open space. Other recreation facilities include Brocks Hill County Park, the Botanic Gardens, Parkland Leisure Centre and Leicester racecourse.

Open space and playing fields provide informal and formal recreation for all ages. The National Playing Fields Association guidance suggests that a minimum of 2.4 hectares of outdoor play space should be available per 1000 people in all settlements. The recent assessment of Open Spaces and Recreational Facilities identified that overall the borough has an adequate provision of open space and recreational facilities. However, the assessment did identify a large under provision in equipped children's play space which needs to be addressed.

Access to the countryside is also important as it plays a major role in outdoor recreation activities. Oadby and Wigston borough has a number of footpaths and bridleways which extend from the urban areas to the Grand Union Canal and outlying villages.

The Grand Union Canal (Figure 11) provides a significant recreational resource. It provides opportunities for walking, cycling, fishing and the tow path forms the longest stretch of Public Right of Way in the borough.

5.4.4 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issue relating to tourism and recreation is:

- **The need to address the shortfall in equipped children's play space.**

5.5 Traffic and Transport

5.5.1 Introduction

This section sets out the baseline relating to transport in Oadby and Wigston borough including the road network and public transport. The existing environment has been established with reference to:

- Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan
- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999
- Oadby and Wigston Local Agenda 21 Strategy
- Leicestershire Walking and Cycling Strategy

Key baseline data for traffic and transport is provided in Appendix E whilst Figure 3 shows the transport network.

5.5.2 Road Network

Oadby and Wigston borough is crossed by the A6 trunk road which runs from London to Leicester and the A5199 road from Northampton to Leicester. The B582 is an orbital route which links Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. In addition the A563 Southern District Distributor Road, to the north of the borough, enables access to the M1 and M69 motorways.

5.5.3 Private Car Use

Car ownership in Oadby and Wigston is relatively high compared to the averages for England and the East Midlands. However it is below average for Leicestershire. The proportion of people driving to work shows a similar pattern. OWBC have identified that there is considerable potential for changing the mode of transport used in the urban areas where public transport / walking are viable alternatives to private car use.

5.5.4 Public Transport

The main form of public transport in Oadby and Wigston borough is the bus. There are a number of bus routes which connect the three towns with Leicester city centre. There is a railway station at South Wigston on the Birmingham to Leicester line which allows a five minute journey to Leicester Station and also connects to Nottingham and Coventry city centres. However, this service is very infrequent with trains to Leicester running every two hours during the daytime. The Midland Mainline from Sheffield to London runs through the borough but the nearest station on this line is Leicester Station.

The Oadby and Wigston Local Agenda 21 Strategy highlights the need to improve access to public transport, in particular for people with disabilities, parents, people of social and cultural minority groups and for people on a lower income. An issue raised in the consultation questionnaire responses was that there is an absence of evening and Sunday bus services between Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston.

5.5.5 Walking and Cycling

There are three main cycle routes in Oadby and Wigston borough as shown on Figure 11. The first is a dedicated cycle route along Manor Road which connects Leicester University with the student halls of residence in Oadby. The second is a cycle track along the line of the A6 road which is still being developed. There is also a cycle route in Wigston, connecting the town centre with the Knighton Park cycle track, eventually leading into Leicester city centre. The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan states an intention to improve cycle routes in the borough and identifies potential routes for this.

The Leicestershire Walking and Cycling Strategy and Leicestershire Local Transport Plan set out plans to increase the proportion of travel undertaken by foot and bicycle. Proposals include an integrated network of cycle routes, pedestrian priority and clear zones, improved pedestrian and cycle facilities, interchanges with the public transport system and a road safety plan to address the issues of road safety which affect pedestrians and cyclists.

5.5.6 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issues relating to traffic and transport are:

- **The need to reduce private car use;**
- **Poor bus services between Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston in the evenings and on Sundays;**
- **The need to improve access to public transport; and**
- **The need to increase the proportion of journeys made by foot and bicycle.**

5.6 Geological Environment

5.6.1 Introduction

This section looks at the existing geological environment in Oadby and Wigston borough including soils, sites of geological importance and contaminated land. Baseline information was obtained from:

- English Nature (www.english-nature.org.uk)
- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999
- Oadby and Wigston Contaminated Land Strategy

5.6.2 Geology and Soils

The geology of much of the western half of Leicestershire is dominated by the red mudstones of the Triassic aged Mercia Mudstone Group. The outcrop of these rocks gives rise to a moderately

undulating landscape characterised by mixed pasture and arable agricultural that has developed on the neutral clay soils.

One site in Oadby and Wigston borough has been identified as a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS) as it is considered important for geological interest and therefore worthy of protection. This site is at Kilby Bridge Pit, a former limestone quarry which is flooded at the bottom, as shown in Figure 9.

5.6.3 Derelict Land

There is 36ha of derelict land in Oadby and Wigston borough with sites being of varying size. Some of these derelict sites are of important biodiversity value. This biodiversity value should be considered in any plans to redevelop these sites.

5.6.4 Land Contamination

There are a number of contaminated and unstable sites in Oadby and Wigston borough. Oadby and Wigston Local Plan identifies a site in South Wigston which is known to be generating methane to a significant extent (Figure 4).

5.6.5 Waste

Baseline data indicates that Oadby and Wigston borough has a relatively high recycling rate compared with the regional and national figures. However it still has a fair way to go to meet its targets as set out under the Best Value framework

The Leicestershire Waste Management Strategy has been produced to enable local authorities in the county to work together to achieve common goals. It provides a framework under which new collection, treatment and disposal infrastructure can be developed. Future aims include: new and enhanced kerbside collections for recyclable materials including the collection of green waste; increased separation of waste particularly green waste for composting; new treatment and processing capacity for waste collected; and an education and awareness campaign.

5.6.6 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issues related to the geological environment are:

- **The need to protect key sites of geological interest;**
- **The need to reduce the amount of waste produced; and**
- **The need to increase the proportion of waste that is recycled.**

5.7 Water Environment

5.7.1 Introduction

This section sets out the existing situation with regards to surface and groundwater resources in the Oadby and Wigston area. The water baseline has been established with reference to:

- Environment Agency website (www.environment-agency.gov.uk)
- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999

Key baseline water data is provided in Appendix E. Figure 5 provides details of chemical water quality and Figure 6 details of biological water quality. Figure 7 shows groundwater vulnerability and Figure 8 the floodplain.

5.7.2 Water QualitySurface Water

The River Sense is the main river in Oadby and Wigston borough. It flows from east to west through the centre of the borough. The Grand Union Canal is located slightly north of the River Sense and generally follows a similar path. Table 5.1 shows the river quality classifications for stretches of the main rivers and their tributaries in and around Oadby and Wigston. All stretches are currently meeting their River Quality Targets.

Table 5.1 River Water Quality (Environment Agency)

River	Stretch	GQA Chemical Grade	GQA Biological Grade	River Quality Target	Compliance 1999 to 2001
Sense	Burton Beck to Wain Brook Newton Harcourt	C Fairly Good (2002)	C Fairly Good (2000)	3	Compliant
	Wain Brook Newton Harcourt to Wigston STW	B Good (2002)	B Good (2000)	3	Compliant
	Wigston STW outfall to ford at Blaby	C Fairly Good (2002)	C Fairly Good (2000)	4	Compliant
Countesthorpe Beck	Peatling Parva to Countesthorpe STW	B Good (2002)	B Good (2000)	2	Compliant
	Countesthorpe STW to confluence with River Sense	C Fairly Good (2002)	C Fairly Good (2002)	3	Compliant
Grand Union Canal	Footbridge at Belgrave to Hitchcocks Weir	E 'Poor' (2002)	C Fairly Good (2000)	n/a	n/a
Wash Brook	Oadby STW outfall to culvert exit A50	D Fair (2002)	D Fair (2002)	n/a	n/a
Evington Brook	Old Stoughton STW to confluence with Willow Beck	C Fairly Good (2002)	D Fair (2002)	n/a	n/a

Groundwater

Groundwater vulnerability is shown in Figure 7. This shows that there are no major aquifers in the borough. There are some areas which are underlain by a minor aquifer. Although not producing large quantities of water for abstraction minor aquifers are important for local supplies and in supplying base flow to rivers. In most areas the minor aquifer is classified as being of high vulnerability with small sections of intermediate vulnerability.

5.7.3 Water Resources

Severn Trent Water provides water supplies in the borough. The Water Resources Strategy for the East Midlands indicates that in some areas of the borough there are no additional surface water resources available for extraction in summer.

5.7.4 Flood Risk

Floodplains are shown in Figure 8. The brooks which feed into the River Sense are liable to flooding after severe rainfall. The floodplain (washlands) along the River Sense (Figure 9) has been identified in the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan which also highlights the need to protect it from development.

Climate change is one of the greatest global environmental threats. There is potential that climate change will have significant impacts upon Oadby and Wigston particularly through changes to weather patterns and a potential increase in flood risk.

5.7.5 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issue relating to the water environment is:

- **No additional surface waters available for abstraction in summer.**
- **Future flooding risk associated with climate change.**

5.8 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

5.8.1 Introduction

This section looks at the existing environment with regards to designated wildlife sites, habitats and species in Oadby and Wigston borough. The ecological baseline has been established with reference to:

- English Nature (www.english-nature.org.uk)
- Oadby and Wigston Biodiversity Action Plan
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan
- Oadby and Wigston Biodiversity Action Plan

Key baseline biodiversity data is provided in Appendix E and Figure 9.

5.8.2 Designated Sites

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in England supporting many characteristic rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features. They are protected under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended. There is one SSSI in Oadby and Wigston; the Kilby Foxton canal (part of the Grand Union Canal) which is split into 28 units. The location of this SSSI is shown in Figure 9. All but one of the units of this SSSI is in an unfavourable condition. The condition of the SSSI is continuing to decline and thus protection and restoration of this site is a key issue.

Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally and which also give people special opportunities to study and learn about them or simply enjoy and have contact with nature. There is one Local Nature Reserve in the borough; Lucas Marsh.

In addition to the SSSI and the LNR several Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC) have been designated by OWBC. The location of these SINC is shown in Figure 9.

5.8.3 Protected Species

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifies local and national priority species. It also sets targets for their conservation and outlines mechanisms for achieving these. Species Action Plans have been produced for the following:

- Barn Owl
- Bats *
- Black Hairstreak Butterfly
- Black Poplar *
- Dormouse
- Nightingale
- Otter *
- Purple Small-reed
- Redstart
- Sand Martin
- Violet Helleborine
- Water Vole *
- White-clawed Crayfish *
- Wood Vetch

The Oadby and Wigston BAP contains more specific Species Action Plans for those species most under threat in the borough. These are identified with a * in the list above.

5.8.4 Key Habitats

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland BAP identifies local and national priority habitats. It also sets targets for their conservation and outlines mechanisms for achieving these. Habitat Action Plans have been produced for the following:

- Broadleaved woodland
- Calcareous grassland
- Eutrophic standing water
- Fast-flowing streams
- Field margins
- Floodplain wetland
- Heath-grassland
- Hedgerows
- Lowland wood-pasture and parkland
- Mature trees
- Mesotrophic lakes
- Neutral grassland
- Reedbed
- Roadside verges
- Rocks and built structures
- Sphagnum ponds
- Springs and flushes
- Wet woodland

The Oadby and Wigston BAP identifies the contribution which Oadby and Wigston borough can make to the achievement of the Leicestershire BAP objectives. It argues that as the countryside in Oadby and Wigston borough is relatively small, and largely made up of intensive agriculture, the remaining wildlife habitats are of particular importance. It identifies the following broad habitat types in the borough:

- Urban habitats;
- Farmland habitats;

- Woodland and scrub habitats; and
- Wetland habitats.

5.8.5 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issues relating to biodiversity and nature conservation are:

- **The need to improve the condition of the Kilby Foxton Canal SSSI;**
- **The need to protect and enhance both statutory and non statutory sites designated for nature conservation;**
- **The need to protect habitats and species listed in the Biodiversity Action Plans; and**
- **The need to create new habitats.**

5.9 Landscape and Visual Amenity

5.9.1 Introduction

This section examines the existing landscape character and visual resources of Oadby and Wigston borough. The landscape baseline has been established with reference to:

- The Countryside Agency website (www.countryside.gov.uk)
- Oadby and Wigston Landscape Character Assessment
- Oadby and Wigston Green Wedge Management Strategy
- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999

Key baseline landscape data is provided in Figures 9 and 11.

5.9.2 Landscape Character

Oadby and Wigston borough is within the Leicestershire Vales Landscape Character Area as defined by the Countryside Agency. The key characteristics of this landscape are:

- Gently undulating clay vales and ridges with low hedges and variable densities of hedgerow trees
- The distinctive valley of the River Soar
- The dominating large urban area of Leicester
- Frequent small towns and large villages often characterised by red brick buildings
- Frequent imposing spired churches

The landscape of Oadby and Wigston borough is diverse and includes the townscapes of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston and the countryside areas (Figure 11) on the rural-urban fringe. The urban fringe is generally well-integrated into the rural landscape and hedgerows, trees and subtle changes in the landform help to limit views of the town from the countryside.

The Oadby and Wigston Landscape Character Assessment (OWLCA) describes the borough as “...a transition zone between the more distinct plateau and steep sided valley landscapes to the north and east, and the more open, rolling landscapes to the south and west.” The landscape is also influenced by the River Sense valley to the south and the valley of the Upper Soar to the west. The townscape of Oadby is predominantly suburban residential and the OWLCA states that overall it does not have a high level of local distinctiveness. Wigston is also predominantly residential but has areas distinguished by employment and educational use. The southern part of Wigston town centre retains its historical character and is one of the highest quality urban areas in the borough. South Wigston is a relatively young settlement, characterised by a mix of uses, and its urban character is considered unremarkable.

5.9.3 Designated Landscape Sites

The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan identifies an Area of Local Landscape Value, around the River Sense, to the south west of the borough. It also identifies an area of Historic Landscape at Stoughton Farm Park. The location of these landscape areas is shown in Figure 9.

The Green Wedges of Oadby and Wigston create a significant area of open space in the borough and prevent the settlements of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston from coalescing. They are important not only in terms of landscape but also for recreation and nature conservation. The location of the Green Wedges is shown in Figure 11. There are two Green Wedges in the borough: the Thurnby, Leicester and Oadby Green Wedge; and the Oadby and Wigston Green Wedge. The Thurnby, Leicester and Oadby Green Wedge consists mainly of high quality farmland (Figure 2) and is considered to be of high visual quality.

The Oadby and Wigston Green Wedge consists of three local landscape areas. One of these is located to the north of the borough. This is relatively flat and dominated by the Oadby golf course (Figure 11) and the Leicester racecourse. The other two are located to the south of the borough. They are predominantly agricultural and characterised by rising ground leading to prominent ridgelines. The Brocks Hill Country Park (Figure 11) forms an important part of the Oadby and Wigston Green Wedge area.

The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan also identifies other significant areas of open space within the urban area which should be protected. These are shown in Figure 11 and include:

- University of Leicester Botanic Gardens, Oadby
- Manor House Orchard, Wigston
- Manchester Gardens, Wigston
- Chicken Walk, Oadby
- North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Cottages, Oadby
- Oadby Grange Farmhouse, Oadby

5.9.4 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issues relating to landscape are:

- **The need to protect and enhance the area of Green Wedges; and**
- **The need to protect other areas of urban open space.**

5.10 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

5.10.1 Introduction

Cultural heritage encompasses archaeological features, historic buildings, historic landscape features and geological attributes. Cultural heritage features comprise upstanding structures and remains as well as earthworks, buried remains, artefact scatters or elements of soft heritage features that have appeared in arts or literature. The archaeological and cultural heritage baseline has been established with reference to:

- Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999
- English Heritage (www.english-heritage.org.uk)
- Sites and Monuments Record held by Leicestershire County Council

Key baseline archaeological and cultural heritage data is provided in Figure 10.

5.10.2 Archaeological Sites

There are a number of archaeological sites of interest in the borough which form an important part of its heritage. 85 of these are listed on the Sites and Monuments Record held by

Leicestershire County Council. Areas of Archaeological Potential are shown in Figure 10. There is potential for archaeological sites and areas of cultural heritage to exist that are currently unknown and so are not specifically designated.

There are currently no Scheduled Monuments in the borough although this situation is currently being reviewed.

5.10.3 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

There are 40 listed buildings in the borough which have special architectural or historic value. Many of these listed buildings are located within Conservation Areas as shown in Figure 10. There are 12 Conservation Areas in the borough. The purpose of these is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of areas with heritage interest. The Conservation Areas are:

- Oadby Hill Top
- Oadby Meadowcourt
- Oadby North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters' Cottages
- Oadby London Road and St Peters
- Wigston Spa Lane
- Wigston The Lanes
- Wigston All Saints
- Wigston Midland Cottages
- Wigston Bassett Ward South
- Oadby Court
- South Wigston

The twelfth Conservation Area has been designated by Leicestershire County Council and covers the length of the Grand Union Canal (Figure 11).

5.10.4 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issue relating to archaeology and cultural heritage is:

- **The need to preserve sites of archaeological and cultural heritage interest.**

5.11 Noise

5.11.1 Introduction

This section sets out the baseline for the noise climate in Oadby and Wigston borough. The noise baseline has been established through:

- Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan

5.11.2 Noise Pollution

Background noise levels vary considerably within the borough. However, high background noise levels are principally associated with road corridors. The Central Leicestershire Local Transport plan highlights noise as a significant issue around busy, main roads. Noise levels to the south of the borough are generally lower than in the north due to its rural nature.

5.11.3 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issue relating to noise is:

- **Noise pollution associated with the road corridors in the borough.**

5.12 Air and Climate

5.12.1 Introduction

This section sets out the existing situation in the Oadby and Wigston area with regards to air quality and climate including climate change issues. The air and climate baseline has been established with reference to:

- Oadby and Wigston Air Quality Strategy
- Oadby and Wigston Air Quality Stage 4 Review and Assessment

5.12.2 Air Quality

There are four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in Oadby and Wigston borough. These have all been declared due to predicted exceedences in the levels of NO₂ against the National Air Quality Strategy Objectives. The locations of the AQMAs are as follows:

- Saffron Road, Wigston
- Moat Street to Bull Head Street, Wigston
- Aylestone Land, Wigston
- A6 Leicester / Harborough Road, Oadby

The predicted exceedences for NO₂ are related to road traffic in all four AQMAs.

5.12.3 Climate Change

Climate change is one of the greatest global environmental threats. It is likely that it will have significant impacts upon Oadby and Wigston borough particularly through increased rainfall intensity resulting in an increase in the number and severity of flood events.

The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan highlights the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through improved energy efficiency and conservation. The Brocks Hill Environment Centre, owned by OWBC, is an example of a fully sustainable building. It is designed to be energy efficient and generates its own electricity through photovoltaic panels and a wind turbine.

5.12.4 Key Sustainability Issues

The key sustainability issues relating to air and climate are:

- **The need to improve air quality in the AQMAs;**
- **The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and**
- **Potential climate change related impacts upon Oadby and Wigston.**

5.13 Summary of Key Sustainability Issues

The SEA Directive requires an analysis of “...any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan...” (annex 1d of the SEA Directive). Key sustainability issues that affect the Oadby and Wigston LDF were identified through an analysis of the baseline conditions and through the review of plans and programmes. These key issues identified in the previous sections are summarised in Table 5.2. Table 5.2 also shows whether the issue is a social, economic, environmental or cross cutting issue. It identifies the implications for the LDF and the potential degree of influence that the LDF will have on the issue.

Table 5.2 Key Sustainability Issues

Sustainability Issue	Eco	Soc	Env	Implications for the LDF	Potential influence of the LDF
High unemployment rate for all those over 16.	✓	✓		LDF needs to consider the provision of employment sites and access to those sites.	Moderate
Pockets of deprivation in some wards.	✓	✓	✓	LDF should seek to address issues which contribute to social deprivation such as lack of access to jobs, facilities and services and poor quality of the built environment. Regeneration of deprived areas could help to tackle this issue.	Minor
The need to tackle health inequalities.	✓	✓	✓	Health inequalities in the borough are related to deprivation. The LDF should seek to address issues which contribute to social deprivation such as lack of access to jobs, facilities and services and poor quality of the built environment. Regeneration of deprived areas could help to tackle this issue.	Minor
The need to improve facilities for young people.		✓		LDF should ensure that future developments do not compromise existing youth facilities. Encourage the development of more youth facilities particularly in areas where anti social behaviour is an issue.	Minor
The need to tackle road safety.		✓		Future development could increase the number of cars on the roads and lead to further road safety issues. The LDF should consider the location of development so as to avoid an increase in car use.	Minor
The need to address the shortfall in equipped children's play space.		✓	✓	Future developments could impact upon existing children's play spaces. The LDF should ensure that these are protected. It should also encourage the development of new children's play space in locations where there is a shortfall.	Major

Sustainability Issue	Eco	Soc	Env	Implications for the LDF	Potential influence of the LDF
The need to reduce private car use.		✓	✓	Future developments could lead to further increases in car use as they attract more people. The LDF needs to carefully consider the location of developments and access to them, in particular, access by footpaths and cycle ways. The LDF could also develop policies to encourage new developments to provide facilities for cyclists such as bicycle storage and showers.	Moderate
Poor bus services between Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston at the evenings and on Sundays.		✓	✓	Future developments need to be accessible by public transport to reduce private car use. The LDF should ensure that all developments are accessible by public transport.	Minor
The need to improve access to public transport.		✓	✓	Future developments need to be accessible by public transport to reduce private car use. The LDF should ensure that all developments are accessible by public transport.	Moderate
The need to increase the proportion of journeys made by foot and bicycle.		✓	✓	Future developments need to be accessible by foot and bicycle. The LDF needs to carefully consider the location of developments access to them. The LDF could also encourage new developments to provide facilities for cyclists such as bicycle storage and showers.	Moderate
The need to protect key sites of geological interest.			✓	New developments could impact upon key geological sites. The LDF should afford protection to these sites.	Major
The need to reduce the amount of waste produced	✓	✓	✓	The LDF should encourage sustainable waste management for new developments and the reuse of construction material.	Moderate
The need to increase the proportion of waste that is recycled.	✓	✓	✓	The LDF should encourage sustainable waste management for new developments and the reuse of construction material.	Moderate
No additional surface waters available for abstraction in summer		✓	✓	The LDF should encourage water efficiency in new developments.	Minor

Sustainability Issue	Eco	Soc	Env	Implications for the LDF	Potential influence of the LDF
Future flooding risk associated with climate change.	✓	✓	✓	Future development in the floodplain could increase flood risk to properties. The LDF should restrict development in the floodplain.	Moderate
The need to improve the condition of the Kilby Foxton Canal SSSI.			✓	New development could impact upon the SSSI. The LDF should afford special protection to the SSSI and ensure that no developments will contribute to its further decline.	Moderate
The need to protect and enhance additional non statutory sites designated for nature conservation.			✓	New developments could impact upon nature conservation sites. The LDF should afford protection to identified conservation sites.	Major
The need to protect habitats and species listed in the Biodiversity Action Plans.			✓	New developments could impact upon priority species and habitats. The LDF should ensure that priority species and habitats are protected and encourage developers to provide space to enhance these where possible.	Moderate
The need to create new habitats.			✓	The LDF should consider provision of land for creation of new habitats. It should also encourage the provision of new habitats within new developments.	Moderate
The need to protect and enhance the Green Wedge area.		✓	✓	New developments could impact upon the landscape quality of the Green Wedge area. The LDF should protect this area from such developments and also consider expanding the designated area.	Major
The need to protect other areas of urban open space.		✓	✓	New development could impact upon the area of urban open space in the borough. The LDF should protect these areas from unsuitable development.	Major

Sustainability Issue	Eco	Soc	Env	Implications for the LDF	Potential influence of the LDF
The need to preserve sites of archaeological and cultural heritage interest.		✓	✓	New development could impact upon archaeological and cultural heritage resources. The LDF should afford protection to all designated archaeological / cultural heritage sites. It should also require new developments to undertake an archaeological assessment and implement appropriate mitigation where necessary.	Major
Noise pollution associated with the road corridors in the borough.		✓	✓	The LDF should consider the location of development in relation to road corridors.	Minor
The need to improve air quality in the AQMAs.		✓	✓	Future development could increase the number of cars on the roads in AQMAs and thus have implications for air quality. The LDF should consider the location of development in relation to the AQMAs.	Moderate
The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.		✓	✓	The LDF should plan for more sustainable patterns of development in order to reduce the need for people to travel. The LDF should also encourage renewable energy developments where appropriate.	Minor
Potential climate change related impacts upon Oadby and Wigston.	✓	✓	✓	The LDF needs to take into consideration the likely increase in the risk of flooding when planning future developments.	Minor

6.0 **SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OBJECTIVES**

6.1 **Need for Objectives**

Objectives have been developed for the Sustainability Appraisal to provide a basis against which the Oadby and Wigston LDF can be assessed. An objective is a statement of what is intended. For every objective a target can be set specifying the desired direction of change. From these targets monitoring indicators are derived which can be used to measure the performance of the Oadby and Wigston LDF against the targets and objectives.

The Oadby and Wigston LDF must aim to fulfil the Sustainability Appraisal objectives as this will allow it to be consistent with environmental regulations and high level sustainable development policies. However the inclusion of a particular objective does not mean that the policies of the Oadby and Wigston LDF will meet it. Indeed a number of the objectives will conflict.

6.2 **Integrated Regional Framework**

The East Midlands Integrated Regional Framework (IRF) produced by GOEM sets out how sustainable development should be achieved in the East Midlands. It sets out 18 objectives covering social, economic and environmental issues. These objectives are:

- To ensure that the existing and future housing stock meets the housing needs of all communities in the region.
- To improve health and reduce health inequalities by promoting healthy lifestyles, protecting health and providing health services.
- To provide better opportunities for people to value and enjoy the region's heritage and participate in cultural and recreational activities.
- To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime.
- To promote and support the development and growth of social capital across the communities of the region.
- To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of the natural, cultural and built environmental and archaeological assets of the region.
- To enhance and conserve the environmental quality of the region by increasing the environmental infrastructure.
- To manage prudently the natural resources of the region including water, air quality, soil and minerals.
- To minimise energy usage and to develop the region's renewable energy resource, reducing dependency on non-renewable resources.
- To involve people, through changes to lifestyle and at work, in preventing and minimising adverse local, regional and global environmental impacts.
- To create high quality employment opportunities and to develop a culture of ongoing engagement and excellence in learning and skills, giving the region a competitive edge in how we acquire and exploit knowledge.
- To develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation, creating a climate within which entrepreneurs and world-class business can flourish.

- To provide the physical conditions for a modern economic structure, including infrastructure to support the use of new technologies.
- To ensure that the location of development makes efficient use of existing physical infrastructure and helps to reduce the need to travel.
- To promote and ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction, optimising the use of previously developed land and buildings.
- To minimise waste and to increase the re-use and recycling of waste materials.
- To improve accessibility to jobs and services by increasing the use of public transport, cycling and walking, and reducing traffic growth and congestion.

The IRF objectives were used as a starting point for the development of Oadby and Wigston specific objectives. Consultees were asked for feedback on the relevance of the IRF objectives to the Oadby and Wigston LDF and for suggestions as to any further objectives which should be included. The resulting comments from consultees and the review of plans and programmes (Section 4.0) were used to inform the development of Oadby and Wigston specific objectives. The derivation of the objectives (and how consultation responses have been taken into account) is shown in Appendix F.

6.3 Oadby and Wigston Borough Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

The proposed objectives to assess the social, economic and environmental acceptability of the Oadby and Wigston Borough LDF are listed in Table 6.1. The objectives integrate social, economic and environmental considerations.

Table 6.1 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives for the Oadby and Wigston LDF

Objective	Economic	Social	Environmental
To ensure the provision of decent and affordable housing that meets local needs and links into the provision of services.	✓	✓	
To improve health and reduce health inequalities by promoting healthy lifestyles, protecting health and providing access to health services.		✓	
To provide better opportunities for people to access and understand local heritage and to participate in cultural and leisure activities.		✓	✓
To improve community safety, reduce anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime.		✓	
To promote and support the empowerment of local communities in creating and implementing solutions that meet their needs focusing particularly on young, elderly and deprived people.		✓	
To promote racial harmony and create cohesive communities.		✓	

Objective	Economic	Social	Environmental
To protect and enhance the natural environment (species and habitats) whilst contributing to the achievement of BAP targets.			✓
To preserve and enhance the character and appearance of archaeological sites, historic buildings, conservation sites, historic parks and other cultural assets.		✓	✓
To protect and enhance green spaces in the borough and to provide opportunities for public access to the countryside.		✓	✓
To manage prudently water resources, improve water quality and protect the floodplain.		✓	✓
To improve air quality particularly through reducing transport related pollutants.		✓	✓
To manage prudently mineral resources and avoid / reduce pollution of land.	✓		✓
To minimise energy use and develop renewable energy resources.	✓		✓
To reduce greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate the rate of climate change.	✓	✓	✓
To involve people, through changes to lifestyle and at work, in preventing and minimising adverse local, regional and global environmental impacts.		✓	✓
To improve access to education and training for children, young people, adult learners, the unemployed, the disabled and the deprived.	✓	✓	
To develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation whilst providing access to appropriate employment opportunities for the local population.	✓	✓	
To optimise the use of previously developed land, buildings and existing infrastructure.	✓		✓
To promote and ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction.	✓		✓
To minimise waste and to increase the re-use, recycling and composting of waste materials.	✓		✓
To improve access to services for those without a car, disabled people, elderly people, ethnic minorities and deprived people by providing for everyday needs in each settlement.		✓	
To encourage and develop the use of public transport, cycling and walking.		✓	✓

Targets and indicators for monitoring the performance of the LDF against these Sustainability Appraisal objectives have been suggested by WYGE and are detailed Appendix G.

6.4 Testing the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

In order to determine whether the LDF objectives are in accordance with sustainability principles it is necessary to test the compatibility of the LDF objectives against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. At this point in time objectives for the Oadby and Wigston LDF have not been developed. Therefore the Sustainability Appraisal objectives have not been tested against the LDF objectives. Instead the Sustainability Appraisal objectives have been tested against the regional core objectives set out in Section 2.2.2 on which the Oadby and Wigston LDF will be based. The compatibility matrix in Appendix H identifies areas where conflict may arise.

Suggestions for making the Oadby and Wigston LDF objectives compatible with the Sustainability Appraisal objectives have been made in Appendix H. The Oadby and Wigston LDF objectives should be developed taking into account these suggestions. This will enable OWBC to ensure that its LDF objectives are in accordance with sustainability principles and provide a suitable framework for developing strategic options.

7.0 **NEXT STEPS**

This Scoping Report forms the first stage of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Oadby and Wigston LDF process. The next steps of the Sustainability Appraisal and associated steps of the Oadby and Wigston LDF development are detailed in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Next Steps in the Sustainability Appraisal of the LDF

ODPM Stage		Sustainability Appraisal Steps	Links to Oadby and Wigston LDF Process
Stage A	A6	Submit the Scoping Report to consultees for comment.	
Stage B Developing and Refining Options	B1	Initial appraisal of strategic options emerging from the Issues and Options Report.	The results of the process will feed into the development of the Preferred Options.
	B2	Consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging options.	The results of consultation will feed into the development of the Preferred Options.
Stage C Appraising the Effects of the Plan	C1 & C2	Predict and assess the significant effects of the LDF Preferred Options.	Undertaken after Preferred Options developed. The Preferred Options will then need to be revised in line with any findings.
	C3	Develop mitigation for any adverse effects and to maximise beneficial effects.	Undertaken after Preferred Options developed. The Preferred Options will then need to be revised in line with any findings.
	C4	Develop recommendations for monitoring and indicators. Draft indicators have been developed at scoping stage.	
	C5	Produce the Initial Sustainability Report	To be undertaken in conjunction with preparation of Preferred Options Report.
Stage D Consulting on the Plan and Sustainability Appraisal Report	D1	Submit the Initial Sustainability Report to consultees for comment.	Undertaken at the same time as formal consultation on the Preferred Options Report.
	D2	Appraise any significant changes to the LDF documents.	Undertaken in conjunction finalisation of the LDF documents.
	D3	Produce the final Sustainability Report.	Undertaken in conjunction finalisation of the LDF documents.
Stage E Monitoring Implementation of the Plan	E1 & E2	Undertake monitoring of significant effects arising from the LDF and respond to adverse effects.	Undertaken after LDF has been adopted.

FIGURES

APPENDIX A
REPORT CONDITIONS

APPENDIX B

**CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE
AND SUMMARY OF RESPONSES**

APPENDIX C
SUMMARY OF THE OUTCOME 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