Core Strategy Statement of Further Representations

Matter 1
Matter 1 – Context and General Approach

Key Issues and Questions:

1. Does the Core Strategy satisfy the legal requirements, in particular:

   • Has it been prepared in accordance with the Local Development Scheme?

     1.1 Yes, the Core Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the various milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme, albeit that some of the milestones may have been missed due to unavoidable delays (such as that caused by the Eco-Town proposal). Where delays have arisen, the Council has provided ‘live’ updates of progress on its website and discussed and sought approval of Government Office for the East Midlands.

   • Has it been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement and the Regulations?

     1.2 Yes, the Core Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement and the Regulations. With regard to Appropriate Assessment, Natural England has confirmed that a full Appropriate Assessment is not required.

   • Has it been subject to sustainability appraisal?

     1.3 Yes, the Core Strategy has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and the appropriate reports produced and consulted upon at the relevant stages.

   • Overall, has it emerged from an open and transparent process that demonstrates how and why its elements were selected, in consultation with the public and other stakeholders?
1.4 Yes, a number of stages of consultation have been undertaken in line with the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement and the Regulations. These are detailed in full in the Regulation 30 (d) and Regulation 30 (e) Statements. The Borough Council has a comprehensive consultee database or individuals and organisations that are notified at all consultation stages. In particular, the Core Strategy has emerged as a result of a consultation upon various issues and options and preferred options. A supplemental issues and options consultation was carried out on broad locations for growth which ultimately informed the identification of the Direction for Growth.

- Has it had regard for national policy, and does it conform generally to the East Midlands Regional Plan (RSS)? Has the Regional Planning Body confirmed its conformity?

1.5 Yes, the Core Strategy has regard for national policy as demonstrated in supporting text and answers to other Matters, and conforms generally to the East Midlands Regional Plan. The Regional Planning Body has confirmed that the Core Strategy is in conformity with the East Midlands Regional Plan as per Regulation 29.

- Has it had regard for the Sustainable Community Strategy?

1.6 Yes, the Core Strategy has regard for the Sustainable Community Strategy. This relationship is explained in Chapter 3 (as redrafted in line with the Inspector’s note). Both the Core Strategy and the Oadby and Wigston Sustainable Community Strategy share the same Vision. A Local Infrastructure Partnership is a sub group of the Local Strategic Partnership and has been involved in the preparation of a Local Infrastructure Plan which forms part of the Core Strategy evidence base.

- Is the relationship to the Local Plan, in particular the saved policies which are to be superseded, adequately explained?
1.7 Yes, paragraph 1.2 of the Core Strategy sets out its relationship with the Local Plan. Appendix 3 identifies the saved policies in the Local Plan that the Core Strategy will replace.
2. Does the Core Strategy address the first 2 elements listed in paragraph 4.1, PPS12 satisfactorily ie. (1) an overall vision; (2) strategic objectives?

- Does the Spatial Portrait satisfactorily describe the principal physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the Borough?

2.1 Chapter 3 has been redrafted upon the advice of the Inspector in order that the Core Strategy does satisfactorily describe the principal physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the Borough. The Inspector is currently consulting everyone who responded to the Regulation 27 consultation on this redraft.

- Is it clear how the issues listed in paragraph 3.2 and the Sustainable Community Strategy’s (SCS) priorities described in this chapter relate to the Spatial Portrait? Precisely what are the challenges for the Core Strategy to address?

2.2 Chapter 3 has been redrafted upon the advice of the Inspector in order that the Core Strategy does clearly explain how the issues relate to the Spatial Portrait and identifies the key challenges for the Core Strategy to address.

- Do the Vision and Spatial Objectives always follow logically from the Spatial Portrait, issues and SCS priorities? For example, paragraphs 3.22-3.26 describe the centres of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston, making no reference to any degeneration or inadequacies which would justify Spatial Objectives 1-4?

2.3 Chapter 3 has been redrafted upon the advice of the Inspector in order that the Vision and Spatial Objectives do follow logically from the Spatial Portrait, issues and Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. The Spatial Portrait now refers to the inadequacies of the centres of Wigston, Oadby and South Wigston and sets out why regeneration activities in the centres is necessary. This provides sufficient context for Spatial Objectives 1-4.
• Is paragraph 4.4 with its reference to Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plans sufficiently clear that these are ‘emerging’ planning policy documents which should follow from the Core Strategy?

2.4 Paragraph 1.4 of the Core Strategy contains a cross reference to the Local Development Scheme in order to establish the status of the various Local Development Framework Documents and their relationship to the Core Strategy. However, the ‘Oadby and Wigston Town Centre Masterplans Area Action Plan’ was omitted from the bullet point list under Development Plan Documents and this should be amended in the adopted version of the Core Strategy.

2.5 Publication of the Town Centre Masterplans Area Action Plan should follow on from the Core Strategy (which is the principal Development Plan Document as stated in paragraph 3.1 of Planning Policy Statement 12). Paragraph 4.4 could usefully be amended in the adopted version of the Core Strategy by inserting the word ‘emerging’ before Town Centre Masterplans Area Action Plan’.
3. **Should the Key Diagram be placed earlier in the document to assist the reader who is unfamiliar with the geography of the Borough?**

3.1 The Key Diagram has been embedded within Policy 1 of the Core Strategy because this deals with the overarching spatial vision and development opportunities for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston, which the Key Diagram graphically illustrates. Therefore it is not considered necessary to adjust the location of the Key Diagram itself within the Core Strategy. However, a location map of the Borough could usefully be included alongside paragraph 1.1 of the adopted version of the Core Strategy. A suggested location map is contained in Appendix 1.
Appendix 1: Location Map