

OWBC Local Plan - Pre-Submission Representations on SA/SEA/HRA

Table 1 OWBC Local Plan - Pre-Submission Representations on SA/SEA/HRA and LUC Responses

Consultee	Representation relating to	Comment	Action
Leicestershire County Council Ms S Wiggins	Sustainability Appraisal - Biodiversity	The Sustainability Assessment shows that a decline in biodiversity is expected as a result of the local plan. This seems to be accepted as just what's going to happen.	<p>The cumulative effects of the Local Plan expected in relation to each of the SA objectives against which it has been appraised are presented from paragraph 4.104 and in table form through Table 4.10. The sustainability effects of the Local Plan policies and sites allocated for development through the Local Plan have been appraised in relation to biodiversity through SA objective 8. The specific cumulative effects of the Local Plan with regards to this SA objective are presented from paragraph 4.140.</p> <p>While it is accepted that the delivery of development in the Borough, much of which is at greenfield sites including some areas which are located in close proximity to designated biodiversity sites, would have negative impacts on biodiversity the SA cumulative effects section (paragraph 4.104 onwards, and table 4.10) highlights that the Local Plan also contains policy text which would help to mitigate adverse impacts. The cumulative effects section takes into consideration the appraisal of individual sites allocated and policies in the Local Plan. The SA makes reference to Policy 37 which supports proposals that proactively seek a net gain in biodiversity and requires replacement work to be undertaken to enhance or recreate habitats when loss of the original habitat is unavoidable. It also refers to Policies 42 and 43 which provide protection for the countryside and the designated Green Wedges in the Borough, and to Policy 8 which supports the protection, management and enhancement of green infrastructure in Oadby and Wigston. Given that many of the sites which</p>

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			<p>have been allocated contain brownfield land which would thereby help to limit further loss of greenfield land locally the minor negative cumulative effect identified for the Local Plan is expected to be combined with a minor positive effect in relation to this SA objective. The overall mixed effect expected for the development set out and the policies guiding the development in the Local Plan in relation to SA objective 8 have been identified in paragraph 4.145 of the SA Report.</p> <p>The supporting HRA report has identified that the Local Plan would not have likely significant effects on any European sites within 25km of the Borough.</p>
<p>Pegasus Group Mr D Huchinson, on behalf of Mrs B A Walker</p>	<p>Sustainability Appraisal - Housing Allocations</p>	<p>Objections are made to Chapter 7 on the basis that the Sustainability Appraisal has not demonstrated that the proposals in the plan are the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives as required by the NPPG.</p> <p>The objector's primary position as outlined in the representations relating to Policy 2 is that the OAN is not robust and that the housing requirement should be increased for this and other reasons. This will mean that additional sites will need to be allocated for housing and the objector considers that this should include Land at Oadby Grange.</p>	<p>The OAN forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan which is outside of the scope of SA.</p> <p>The Land at Oadby Grange has not been appraised as a reasonable alternative through the SA given that the site was not submitted for any built development through the various Call for Sites exercises throughout the Local Plan process. The site was included in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in 2013, but was subsequently removed as discussions have been ongoing with the land owner regarding various recreational options for the site which would mean the site would not be deliverable for housing. These discussions are ongoing and the site has not been promoted or considered for any alternative use.</p> <p>The SA process has involved the identification and appraisal of reasonable alternatives for both site and policy options. In relation to the reasonable alternative sites the appraisal of those considered is presented in Appendix 5. Appendix 6 presents a summary of the Council's reasoning for allocating or discounting sites as communicated to LUC</p>

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			<p>during preparation of the SA.</p> <p>In relation to the emergence of those reasonable alternative site options considered, the previous iteration of the SA Report (Preferred Options) considered sites identified within the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, sites illustrated within the town centre masterplans and Local Development Orders, and sites submitted through the Call for Sites process that have had recent developer interest. Once the SA Report for the Preferred Options Local Plan was published alongside that version of the Local Plan further sites were promoted. Once the Council had identified the reasonable alternative site options for the Local Plan they were subject to SA by LUC. The findings were presented to the Council officers preparing the Local Plan in an internal summary note in August 2016, so that the SA findings could inform decision making about which site options to take forward in the Local Plan. LUC also assessed the additional site options that came through the Preferred Options consultation and similarly passed the appraisal results onto the Council officers preparing the Plan, prior to finalisation of the Pre-Submission version of the Plan.</p> <p>In relation to the reasonable alternatives considered for the policy options in the Local Plan initially high level options for the policies to be included in the Local Plan were identified by the Council and from this reasonable alternative policy options were subject to SA by LUC during summer 2016. Findings were presented to the Council officers preparing the Plan in an internal summary note in August 2016, so that the SA findings could inform decision making about which policy options to take forward in the Preferred Options document. The SA matrices for the reasonable alternative policy options were presented in the Preferred Options SA Report (November 2016) and these</p>

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			<p>are included in Appendix 7 of the Pre-Submission SA Report. Appendix 8 of the full SA Report presents an audit trail explaining the reasons for the Council's decision making about which policy options to take forward in the Local Plan.</p> <p>As such it is demonstrated how reasonable alternative options for both sites to be allocated and policies included in the Local Plan have been considered through the SA Report process. As such the SA Report meets the requirements of the PPG and SEA Directive.</p>
	Sustainability Appraisal - Land at Oadby Grange	<p>The Land at Oadby Grange has not been properly assessed and this represents an opportunity to deliver housing on a site well related to the Principal Urban Area and which is contained by mature landscape features and the topography of the area. The site is in an accessible location and is not located within a Green Wedge or affected by any designations. It also lies within Flood Zone 1 (the zone with least probability of flooding).</p> <p>The objector has prepared a Site Delivery Statement which highlights why the site is suitable for an allocation of between 270 and 320 dwellings. To avoid duplication, the merits of the site are not repeated in full here, but the document should be read in combination with these objections.</p>	<p>The reasons why the Land at Oadby Grange has not been appraised as a reasonable alternative in the SA Report have been set out above.</p> <p>Furthermore given the high level nature of the SA and a requirement for a consistency between the appraisal of sites in line with the SA Assumptions it is not considered appropriate that details presented in the Site Delivery Statement should influence the outcome of the SA. This level of detail is not available for consideration for each site and therefore the information included should not influence the findings of any appraisal undertaken.</p>
		<p>The Sustainability Appraisal that supports the Pre Submission Plan does not assess the land at Oadby Grange.</p> <p>It does assess the land beyond the Oadby Grange site to the east (site ref. OWBC23) which is detached from the urban area and thus clearly less suitable. Whilst that site was discounted, it acts as a crude proxy for how the Oadby Grange site might have been assessed. When that site is</p>	<p>The reasons why the Land at Oadby Grange has not been appraised as a reasonable alternative in the SA Report have been set out above.</p> <p>While site OWBC23 (which the objector has used as a proxy to compare the Land at Oadby Grange to sites which have been included for allocation) performs favourably in comparison to the noted allocated sites for some of the SA objectives the allocation of specific sites is outside of the</p>

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		<p>compared with some of the larger allocations (including OWBC 24, 28 and 44) it can be seen that on balance even that land outperformed some of the allocated sites.</p> <p>The Oadby Grange site would have similar locational characteristics, but being located immediately adjacent to the PUA, it would represent a more logical and appropriate location for development.</p>	<p>scope of the SA Report. Appendix 6 presents a summary of the Council's reasoning for allocating or discounting sites as communicated to LUC during preparation of the SA. The SA Report does not present a ranking of sites for allocation but merely forms part of the evidence base for the selection of sites. Issues beyond the findings of the SA Report have been taken into consideration as part of this decision making process and have thereby influenced which sites have been allocated.</p>
		<p>As explained in the more general objection in relation to Chapter 7, the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has not demonstrated that the proposals in the plan are the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives, as the LPA has failed to consider Land at Oadby Grange as an option for residential development.</p>	<p>The reasons why the Land at Oadby Grange has not been appraised as a reasonable alternative in the SA Report have been set out above. The previous sections have also demonstrated how the Council has made use of the SA findings to inform the selection of site options and policy options for inclusion in the Local Plan.</p>
		<p>Land at Stoughton Grange is allocated for amongst other things, 300 dwellings through Policy 18.</p> <p>The site is currently located within a defined Green Wedge. Paragraph 10.6.5 of the draft plan explains the importance of the Green Wedges and states: -</p> <p>“With the Borough being relatively compact and urban in nature, Green Wedges are extremely important; they play major roles in shaping the character of the environment and help stimulate leisure and tourism whilst improving residents and visitors quality of life.”</p> <p>However, the draft Local Plan at paragraph 7.2.3 indicates that the Green Wedge Review was undertaken due to the need to accommodate additional growth. It explains that the entire proposed growth area at Stoughton Grange is within land which has historically been identified as part of a Green Wedge.</p>	<p>The findings of the SA report which the objector has highlighted in relation to the Land at Stoughton Grange allocation are not in question. Details relating to the reasons for not including the Land at Oadby Grange as a reasonable alternative for appraisal within the SA Report have been explained above. It has also previously been explained that even if the site was included for appraisal and was found to perform more favourably than other alternative sites considered this appraisal would form only part of the evidence base which would influence the decision making about which sites to allocate.</p>

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		<p>Objection is raised on the grounds that it is not necessary or appropriate to release this land from the Green Wedge when better suited sites outside of the designated area are available. The proposed allocation would cause development to encroach into the Green Wedge and which will consolidate development in this area, reducing the separation of built up areas, further distancing residents of Leicester and other urban areas from the countryside and eroding the important “Green Lung” that the Green Wedge Review refers to at p.37. This runs counter to the objectives of the Green Wedge designation.</p> <p>Given the harm to the Green Wedge, the LPA should have considered all options outside of the designated area before allocating this site. The Land at Oadby Grange offers the opportunity to provide a similar number of dwellings on a site outside the Green Wedge and it should therefore be considered sequentially preferable in this regard.</p> <p>The Sustainability Appraisal also highlights at paragraph 4.66 that development at Stoughton Grange would be provided in a location “with poorer levels of access to existing facilities.” The site proforma in the appendices to the SA also notes that the site is not within walking distance of any primary schools, secondary schools or colleges (OWBC24). The Site Deliverability Statement that has been prepared for Oadby Grange does not identify any such constraints for that site meaning that it is also sequentially preferable in accessibility terms.</p> <p>Heritage is also a potential constraint for Land at Stoughton Grange with development having the potential to affect the settings of designated heritage assets (see Local Plan para 7.2.5). No such constraints affect Oadby Grange and as such these potential impacts can be</p>	

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		<p>avoided.</p> <p>The Pre Submission Plan and the supporting Sustainability Appraisal has not considered the option of allocating Land at Oadby Grange for housing and has therefore not demonstrated that the proposals in the plan are the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives.</p>	
		<p>As set out in other representations on behalf of Mrs B A Walker in relation to Policy 2, the objector's primary position is that the OAN is not robust and that the housing requirement should be increased for this and other reasons. This will mean that additional sites will need to be allocated for housing and the objector considers that this should include Land at Oadby Grange.</p> <p>Even if those objections are not accepted, it is considered that the site is still more suitable than some of the allocated sites including the Land at Cottage Farm Direction for Growth Area (Policy 21). As explained in the more general objections in relation to Chapter 7, the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has not demonstrated that the proposals in the plan are the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives, as the LPA has failed to consider Land at Oadby Grange as an option for residential development.</p>	<p>Details relating to the reasons for not including the Land at Oadby Grange as a reasonable alternative for appraisal within the SA Report have been explained above. It has also been explained how the reasonable alternatives considered have emerged through the Local Plan process and how the findings of the SA Report have been taken into consideration. Appendix 6 presents a summary of the Council's reasoning for allocating or discounting sites as communicated to LUC during preparation of the SA. The OAN forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan; the SA process assesses the Local Plan policies and proposals.</p>
		<p>The Land at Cottage Farm is allocated for a further 250 dwellings (phase 2) through Policy 21, in addition to the 150 dwellings that have already been granted (phase 1).</p> <p>Whilst the draft allocation site located just beyond the defined Green Wedge in this area, the site still comprises open land which separates Oadby and Wigston. The Green Wedge Review (2017) highlights concerns about the southern end of the wedge noting that this is important as it "reduces the likelihood of "wrap" round development</p>	<p>The findings of the SA Report in relation to the Land at Cottage Farm which the objector has highlighted are not in question. The SA appraisal of site OWBC44 has recognised that the associated uses which will be provided alongside the residential development at this location may include open space meaning a minor positive effect is also expected on SA objective 9 (landscape) in combination with the significant negative also identified effect due to incursion into the countryside and loss of greenfield land.</p>

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		<p>that would essentially join the two settlements.”[page 25].</p> <p>It is notable that the LPA even proposes to extend the Green Wedge designation immediately to the west of the proposed allocation, no doubt recognizing that development in this location will reduce the degree of separation that the plan seeks to maintain (in combination with the Wigston Area for Growth – Policy 20). Whilst it should be repeated that the site is not part of the designated area it will still to some degree diminish an important green lung between the urban areas and connection to the wider countryside as described in the Green Wedge Review at page 25 (2017).</p> <p>Regardless of the impact of the degree of separation for the two main towns, development in this location would represent a new incursion into open land, which would be poorly related to the pattern of built development in the area contrary to the emerging Policy 44 (Landscape and Character). It would read as an outlier which is surrounded by open land on three of its four sides. The Sustainability Appraisal proforma for this site (OWBC44 at Appendix page 356) considers the need to protect and enhance the character and quality of the landscape and states that “development of residential properties at this location has the potential to negatively impact upon the landscape and a significant negative effect is expected on this SA objective.”</p> <p>The Land at Oadby Grange would by comparison be a far more sympathetic and logical rounding off for the built-up area and the initial Landscape and Visual Analysis set out in the Site Deliverability Statement which is submitted alongside these representations indicates that the site is capable of accommodating development without causing significant harm to the landscape or visual amenities of the</p>	<p>The findings of the SA Report for Policy 21 should also be considered in relation to any development at the site given that this text would guide the development. The SA of this policy in Appendix 9 highlights that the Council proposes to extend the Green Wedge to bound the south west of the growth area to ensure that there is no future coalescence of the settlements of Wigston and Oadby. This proposal would help to mitigate effects of coalescence and associated adverse impacts on the landscape, for example, it requires that development within the Direction for Growth area would not have “<i>detrimental impact on the surrounding Green Wedge and Countryside</i>”.</p> <p>The reasons for not including the Land at Oadby Grange as a reasonable alternative for appraisal within the SA Report have been explained above. It has also been noted that the SA Report forms part of the decision making process for the consideration of options for policies and sites to take forward in the Local Plan.</p>

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		<p>area.</p> <p>The Pre Submission Plan and the supporting Sustainability Appraisal has not considered the option of allocating Land at Oadby Grange for housing and has therefore not demonstrated that the proposals in the plan are the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives.</p>	
<p>Landmark Planning</p> <p>Ms H Wallis, on behalf of Davidson Homes and Jelson Homes</p>	<p>Sustainability Appraisal - Land North of Newton Lane, Wigston</p>	<p>Land to the north of Newton Lane, including the Seven Oaks Farm site has been considered as part of the sustainability appraisal and whilst not allocated, it scored comparably to sites that have been allocated, e.g. the Cottage Farm extension on the A6 at Oadby. The sustainability credentials of the Seven Oaks Farm location were broadly outlined in the representations made to the Preferred Options consultation in December 2016.</p>	<p>Site OWBC43 has been appraised in relation to the potential to provide residential development as part of the SA to include the land north of Newton Lane, combined with Seven Oaks Farm, Wigston. A comparison of the appraisal findings in line with the SA Assumptions (which is presented in Appendix 4 and was produced to maintain a consistent approach to the appraisal process) are shown in Table 5.1. The SA Assumptions are in keeping with the SEA Regulations and have been consulted upon at previous iterations of the SA Report. They reflect the key sustainability issues which have been identified for Oadby and Wigston in Table 3.1 of the SA Report. The methodology used for the SA Report has been set out in Chapter 2.</p> <p>Appendix 6 presents a summary of the Council's reasoning for allocating or discounting sites as communicated to LUC during preparation of the SA. Table A6.2 has been informed by input from the Council and takes into consideration factors beyond the findings of the SA Report.</p>
<p>Gladman Development</p> <p>Mr P Bamford</p>	<p>Sustainability Appraisal - General</p>	<p>Under Section 19 of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, policies set out in Local Plans must be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA). Incorporating the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, SA is a systematic process that should be undertaken at each stage of the Plan's preparation, assessing the effects of the Local Plan's</p>	<p>The SA Report has been undertaken as a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In line with the PPG the document has been prepared as a joint SA/SEA process. It is therefore required to address the requirements of the SEA Regulations (Art. 5 and Annex I) which are detailed in Table 1.1 of the SA Report. The table shows where the</p>

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		<p>proposals on sustainable development when judged against reasonable alternatives.</p> <p>The Council need to ensure that the results of the SA process clearly justify its policy choices. In meeting the development needs of the area, it should be clear from the results of the assessment why some policy options have been progressed, and others have been rejected. Undertaking a comparative and equal assessment of each reasonable alternative, the Council's decision making and scoring should be robust, justified and transparent.</p> <p>Gladman remind the Council that there have now been a number of instances where the failure to undertake a satisfactory SA has resulted in Plans failing the test of legal compliance at Examination or being subjected to legal challenge.</p>	<p>requirements of these regulations have been met in the SA Report.</p> <p>Chapter 6 of the SA Report has presented the findings in relation to the reasonable alternative Policy Options for the Local Plan. The findings have been reached in line with the methodology for the SA which is presented in Chapter 2 of the SA Report and was applied in a consistent and transparent manner throughout the process. The detailed matrices showing the justifications for each of the scores given in relation to the SA objectives against which each policy option has been considered are presented in Appendix 7. The Council's reasons for selecting or rejecting policy options are presented in Appendix 8. The detailed SA matrices for the policies taken forward in the Pre-Submission version of the Local Plan are presented in Appendix 9 while a summary of the likely sustainability effects of the these policies are presented in Chapter 4. As such it has been demonstrated that the SA Report meets the requirements of the Regulations and SEA Directive.</p>
<p>GVA Mr M Drew, on behalf of Jelson Homes Ltd</p>	<p>Sustainability Appraisal - Land North of Newton Lane, Wigston (OWBC43)</p>	<p>Chapter 6 of our representations explain that Policies 2, 18, 20 and 21 are not justified because they do not propose the most appropriate strategy when read alongside the Sustainability Appraisal that forms part of the evidence base for the Plan. The Appraisal shows that the land being promoted by Jelson in conjunction with Davidsons is a more sustainable option than the proposed allocations at Stoughton Grange and Wigston Direction for Growth Phase 2, and is at least equally, if not more, sustainable than the Cottage Farm Phase 2 site. To further emphasise that point, we have explained our own reasons why there is significant merit in allocating Site OWBC 43, in recognition of its location adjacent to the existing urban</p>	<p>The SA has tested two overall strategy options of focusing development in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston, land within the Leicester Principal Urban Area and land identified within Direction for Growth or having a lesser focus on the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston, and/or land within the Leicester Principal Urban Area and the detailed findings are presented in Appendix 7.</p> <p>These findings were originally provided to the Council officers preparing the Local Plan in the form of an internal summary document in summer 2016, so that the findings could be taken into account during the preparation of the Preferred Options document. Taking these findings into consideration the Council decided to proceed with a policy</p>

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		<p>area, and which is sustainable and suitable for housing. We have therefore concluded that the Council must revisit its spatial strategy in the light of the findings of its evidence base.</p>	<p>(Policy 2) of concentrating development within the Borough's key centres and the Leicester Principal Urban Area with the Direction for Growth Areas also to contribute a level of agreed development. The Council's reasons for proceeding with this policy option are set out Table A7.1 of Appendix 8 of the full SA Report.</p> <p>Policy 18, 20 and 21 are in line with overall strategy given that they lie within Direction for Growth Areas. The PPG states that "<i>the Local Plan should aim to meet the objectively assessed development and infrastructure needs of the area</i>". The Council is seeking to meet its Objectively Assessed Need in full within the Borough and it is recognised that the City of Leicester has declared an unmet need and will need help from other HMA partners to deliver its unmet need up to 2031. Policies 18, 20 and 21 set out development at Stoughton Grange Direction for Growth area and Oadby Cemetery Allocation; Wigston Direction for Growth Area; and Cottage Farm Direction for Growth area respectively. As such, the large contribution these sites can make to local housing need has been reflected in the SA.</p> <p>The site appraisals for OWBC24, OWBC28, OWBC36 and OWBC37 (all Stoughton Grange Direction for Growth area) OWBC17a (Amended Further Wigston Direction for Growth area) and OWBC44 (Cottage Farm Direction for Growth area) have been taken into consideration when assessing these policies given that areas they will effect correspond with the sites in question. These site appraisals were undertaken using a policy off approach. However, the policies also contain requirement for mitigation specific to the sensitivities at each location as well as allowing for further associated development (such as education and recreation provisions) meaning that further sustainability benefits have been identified.</p>

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		<p>The Council has commissioned a Sustainability Appraisal, which has been prepared by Land Use Consultants to support the Pre-Submission version of the Plan. The Appraisal carries out assessments of both those sites which are proposed for allocation in the Plan, and those which have been submitted earlier in the planmaking process but which the Council has decided not to propose for allocation (and which includes the land which Jelson is promoting in conjunction with Davidsons).</p> <p>Chapter 5, supported by Appendix 5, of the Appraisal sets out the scoring against prescribed sustainability objectives for all residential development options which have been submitted through the plan-making process, including those sites which have been allocated. The land promoted by Jelson and Davidsons (Site OWBC 43) scores very positively in relation to housing (objective 1), health (objective 2), community facilities (objective 3), education (objective 16), employment opportunities (objective 17) and public transport (objective 22). In our view, this reflects that there are a number of factors which point to a conclusion that the site occupies a sustainable location for residential development.</p> <p>The Appraisal also concludes that the site is likely to have a significant negative effect on the historic environment, biodiversity and landscape. The more detailed assessment of the site in Appendix 5 states that the negative effect is likely to arise from two areas of archaeological potential within the site. However, the Appraisal notes that “the negative effect is uncertain given that it may be possible to mitigate negative impacts on areas which are likely to contain buried archaeology”. We agree with this view, and so it follows that it is feasible that the impacts could be reduced from the ‘significant negative’ set out in the</p>	<p>Comment noted – it is agreed that as per the appraisal matrix set out in Appendix 5 the site has performed strongly against SA1 (housing – significant positive); SA2 (health – significant positive/minor negative); SA3 (community facilities – significant positive); SA16 (education – significant positive); SA17 (employment – minor positive) and SA22 (public transport) in line with the SA Assumptions set out in Table A4.1 of Appendix 4 of the full SA Report.</p> <p>In relation to those significant negative effects highlighted in this section of the objector’s response (SA7 – historic environment; SA 8 – biodiversity and geodiversity; and SA9 – landscape) these effects have also been recorded in line with the SA Assumptions. These assumptions are in keeping with the SEA Regulations and have been consulted upon at previous iterations of the SA Report. They reflect the key sustainability issues which have been identified for Oadby and Wigston in Table 3.1 of the full SA Report. The methodology used for the SA Report has been set out in Chapter 2. This presents the stages of consultation involved in the previous iterations of the SA Report. This approach has been taken to ensure consistency between the SA findings in relation to sites and policies which have been subject to appraisal. A “policy off” approach has been taken in relation the appraisal of sites and it is not considered appropriate to consider any proposed design which might be incorporated at the site and might lessen any negative effect otherwise expected. Further studies undertaken by the site promoter have also not been considered at this stage. This information is not available for all sites meaning such an approach to the appraisal of sites would result in inconsistencies. When considering cumulative effects of the plan, the policies which would help to mitigate adverse effects were identified as set out</p>

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		<p>Appraisal.</p> <p>Again the significant negative score for biodiversity arises, it appears, from a candidate Local Wildlife Site being located within the site. However, the Appraisal also notes that a scheme could be designed to mitigate any impacts on habitats. We agree, and conclude that there is potential for the impacts on this objective to be less than the significant negative identified by the Council's consultants.</p> <p>Finally, the significant negative score in relation to landscape as a consequence of the site comprising greenfield land. Again, the Council's consultants note that specific impacts will be known once a scheme for the site has been prepared. Whilst we agree, we do refer back to the Golby and Luck Landscape Framework Plan, which shows potential for comprehensive new landscaping, and the enhancement of existing features, in order to soften the edge of the development and respect its sensitive relationship with the countryside to the east. Therefore, while development on the site will have an impact on the landscape, we conclude that this could be mitigated, such that the score ascribed to the site by the Council's consultants could be reduced as a consequence.</p>	<p>in Chapter 4 of the SA Report.</p>
		<p>It is worth also noting how Site OWBC 43 scores against those sites which have been proposed for allocation in the Plan. When compared to Cottage Farm Direction for Growth (OWBC 44), we note that Jelson's site is likely to have a significant positive effect in relation to community facilities (objective 3) whereas Cottage Farm is expected to have only a minor positive effect. In relation to landscaping, OWBC 43 is said to have a significant negative impact (although as we have said above, with reference to the Golby and Luck plan this could be reduced), whereas Cottage Farm is said to have a mix of</p>	<p>Comment noted – Site OWBC43 has been considered for allocation for residential use only as set out in Table A6.2 in Appendix 6 of the full SA Report. Sites OWBC44 and OWBC17a have been considered for residential uses and associated uses. Full details of the land use these sites have been considered for are presented in Table A6.1 in Appendix 6 of the SA Report.</p> <p>The appraisal of sites considered for allocation in the Local Plan has been undertaken in line with the SA Assumptions as has been set out above and at Table 3.1 of the full SA Report. For site OWBC44 (Land at Cottage Farm, south of</p>

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		<p>significant negative and minor positive impacts. The detailed analysis in Appendix 5 of the Appraisal states that the 'minor positive' impact of the Cottage Farm site will arise from the provision of open space on the site. Given that Golby and Luck have shown open space and landscaping on the Landscape Framework Plan for OWBC 43, we conclude that both sites should at least score equally in relation to this objective, rather than Cottage Farm scoring better than Jelson's site.</p> <p>That being so, we note that the two sites score equally in all other regards. In our view, this means that OWBC 43 scores, at least, equally, if not better than OWBC 44 overall.</p> <p>In relation to the Wigston Direction for Growth Phase 2 site (OWBC 17a), we note that this scores worse in relation to health than OWBC 43. OWBC 17a is projected to have a mix of minor positive and negative impacts on health, whereas OWBC 43 is projected to have significant positive and only minor negative impacts. Furthermore, whilst both sites are projected to have significant positive impacts on community facilities, there is a question mark attributed to Site OWBC 17a, which indicated uncertainty about the potential for those impacts to be delivered.</p> <p>Otherwise, the two sites score equally. Consequently, we conclude, based on the Sustainability Appraisal, that OWBC 43 scores better than OWBC 17a.</p>	<p>the A6) the site has been considered by the Council to supply new open space onsite meaning that a minor positive effect has been identified for SA9 (landscape) in combination with a significant negative effect. Site OWBC43 has only been appraised as to include an allocation of residential housing in the Local Plan meaning that a similar minor positive effect has not been identified.</p> <p>In relation to the issue the objector raised with regards to SA3 (community facilities) and site OWBC17a the uncertain significant positive effect which has been identified for OWBC17a has been recorded given that the Council has indicated that community facilities would be provided onsite as part of the allocation (please see Table A6.1 in Appendix 6). It is recognised that site OWBC43 performs favourably in relation to SA3 as it located in close proximity to a number of existing community facilities. The remaining issues which the objector raises are not queried and it is recognised that site OWBC43 performs more favourably in relation to a number of the SA objectives against which it has been appraised in comparison with some sites which the Council has decided to take forward for allocation.</p> <p>While the above favourable performance of the site in comparison to some SA objectives is noted the allocation of specific sites is outside of the scope of the SA. Appendix 6 presents a summary of the Council's reasoning for allocating or discounting sites as communicated to LUC during preparation of the SA. Issues beyond the findings of the SA Report have been taken into consideration as part of this decision making process.</p>
		<p>Finally, we compare the score of OWBC 43 to the Stoughton Grange Direction for Growth site (OWBC 24 and OWBC 28). OWBC 43 scores better than OWBC 24 in the</p>	<p>It is not disputed that the site OWBC43 performs favourably in comparison to some sites which have been put forward to be allocated in the Local Plan in relation to</p>

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		<p>following areas: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community facilities; • education; and • access. <p>OWBC 43 scores better than OWBC 28 in the following areas: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health; • community facilities; • education; • employment opportunities; • access; and • public transport. <p>In a number of cases, the differences are significant. For example, OWBC 43 is projected to have significant positive impacts on community facilities, whereas OWBC 24 is projected to have only a combination of minor positive and minor negative impacts, and OWBC 28 is projected to have a combination of minor positive and significant negative impacts. Similarly, OWBC 43 is forecast to have significant positive impacts on education, but OWBC 24 and OWBC 28 are forecast to have only minor negative impacts. Furthermore, OWBC 43 is projected to have minor positive impacts on employment opportunities and negligible impacts on access. OWBC 28 is projected to have significant negative impacts on both.</p>	<p>some of the SA Objectives. However, as highlighted above the high level of strategic appraisal of sites in the SA Report forms only part of the evidence base which the Council have considered when deciding which sites to take forward. The SA report does not provide a ranking of sites but merely illustrates the likely effects of allocating sites for a given development so that they might be compared. Appendix 6 (Tables A6.1 and A6.2) presents a summary of the Council's reasoning for allocating or discounting sites as communicated to LUC during preparation of the SA.</p>
		<p>The only areas in which OWBC 24 and 28 score better than OWBC 43 are: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment opportunities (OWBC 24 only); 	<p>As highlighted in the sections above the decision to take certain sites forward for allocation is beyond the scope of the SA process and takes other factors into consideration. The appraisal process in SA Report has been taken in line</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • landscape • water quality (OWBC 28 only); and • redevelopment of brownfield land (OWBC 28 only). <p>Moreover, the only objective in which Stoughton Grange comprehensively scores better than OWBC 43 is the redevelopment of brownfield land, as a consequence of OWBC 28 being previously developed.</p> <p>In all other areas beyond those mentioned above, the sites score equally. We therefore conclude that the OWBC 43 scores better overall than OWBC 24 and OWBC 28.</p> <p>In summary, therefore, from our reading of the Sustainability Appraisal, Site OWBC 43 scores better than two of the proposed Direction for Growth allocations, and scores either equally or better with the third proposed allocation. That is before taking account of our points earlier in this Section explaining why certain scores attributed to OWBC could be improved; if they were then the outcome would be that the land promoted by Jelson would score even better than the proposed Direction for Growth allocations.</p>	<p>with the SA Assumptions set out at Table A4.1 of Appendix 4 of the full SA Report. The appraisal has not taken further detail of the potential design which might be achieved at promoted sites into consideration and has been based only on information the Council has been able to supply in relation to the type of development which is to be provided (please see the tables in Appendix 6 for details).</p>
		<p>With these conclusions in mind, we note that Appendix 6 of the Sustainability Appraisal sets out the Council's reasons for allocating, or not allocating, the options it was presented with. In relation to OWBC 43, the Council states that "the site is not located within the current extent of the Leicester Principal Urban Area and has only one likely access onto Newton Lane. The site is located within the countryside and development of such would not comprise sustainable development".</p> <p>This conclusion is expressed despite the outcome of the Sustainability Appraisal. Furthermore, and as we have</p>	<p>Appendix 6 presents a summary of the Council's reasoning for allocating or discounting sites as communicated to LUC during preparation of the SA. The Sustainability Appraisal undertaken for the Local Plan is one of its many important pieces of evidence base. When assessing the sites for allocation within the Local Plan, the Council considers many aspects, including, but not limited to, the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <p>The three Direction for Growth Areas are considered by the Council to have the least negative impact on the Borough's highway and transport infrastructure. They are also</p>

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		<p>explained elsewhere in this Report, the site could also be accessed via Denbydale, which we expect could serve at least part of the site. The Council's conclusion on this point is therefore incorrect.</p> <p>Most significant, though, is the Council's assertion that the location of the site in the countryside means development would not be sustainable as a matter of principle. This is an unreasonable conclusion to reach given that:</p> <p>a) the other proposed Direction for Growth sites are located in the countryside; and</p> <p>b) the Sustainability Appraisal has demonstrated that Jelson's land is more sustainable than the three proposed Direction for Growth allocations.</p> <p>The reasons given by the Council in Appendix 6 of the Sustainability Appraisal for allocating certain sites are equally as unclear. In relation to Stoughton Grange, the Council's reason is given as, "Site is located in the Green Wedge and is to be released through the Local Plan. The Green Wedge boundary has been amended through the Local Plan process... Both OWBC 24 and OWBC 28 form the same site in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The total number of residential units proposed is 300."</p> <p>In our view, none of that provides justification for the allocation of the site. It is simply a description of the site. This also reaffirms our conclusion in Section 5 that the Council has provided no justification for its proposed Green Wedge releases.</p>	<p>considered the most appropriate locations in relation to existing urban development form, the Leicester PUA and access on to the main arterial transport routes (A roads and B roads).</p> <p>In relation to the Council's comment that site OWBC43 lies within the countryside; the findings in the SA Report Appendix 5 correspond with this. The justification text for SA2 (health), SA8 (biodiversity and geodiversity) and SA9 (landscape) and the associated scores recorded for these SA objectives reflect this. The scores recorded are in line with the SA Assumptions.</p>
		<p>A similar issue arises in relation to the Cottage Farm Direction for Growth site (OWBC 44). The Council's reasoning for allocation is given as:</p> <p>"Site is located adjacent to the existing Green Wedge. The</p>	<p>Commentary on the Council's decision making process and how this is reported in the SA Report is set out above.</p> <p>LUC has supplied the Council with SA input as the Local Plan has emerged and this input has helped the Council to</p>

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		<p>Green Wedge is to be extended and part of the proposal site will be located within the extended Green Wedge boundary. The Green Wedge boundary has been amended through the Local Plan process...".</p> <p>Again, nothing in that statement seeks to explain or justify the decision to allocate the site instead of a more sustainable option presented by Jelson's land at OWBC 43.</p> <p>Accordingly, for all of these reasons, we conclude that the Plan is unsound because it fails to have regard to the Sustainability Appraisal which forms part of its evidence base and which concludes that Site OWBC 43 is more sustainable than the proposed Direction for Growth allocations. Furthermore, the Plan is unsound because the Council has failed to justify its proposed allocations with regard to the conclusions reached by its evidence base.</p> <p>In order to remedy this error, we conclude that the Council should propose the allocation of Site OWBC 43 for residential development, in recognition of its sustainable location, as demonstrated in the Council's evidence base.</p>	<p>formulate its approach to which sites should be taken forward for allocation. The previous iteration of the SA Report (Preferred Options) considered sites identified within the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, sites illustrated within the town centre masterplans and Local Development Orders, and sites submitted through the Call for Sites process that have had recent developer interest. Once the SA Report for the Preferred Options Local Plan was published alongside that version of the Local Plan further sites were promoted. Once the Council had identified the reasonable alternative site options for the Local Plan they were subject to SA by LUC. The findings were presented to the Council officers preparing the Local Plan in an internal summary note in August 2016, so that the SA findings could inform decision making about which site options to take forward in the Local Plan. LUC also assessed the additional site options that came through the Preferred Options consultation and similarly passed the appraisal results onto the Council officers preparing the Plan, prior to finalisation of the Pre-Submission version of the Plan.</p> <p>As such it is demonstrated how the SA process has informed the production of the Local Plan as part of its overall evidence base.</p>
		<p>We conclude that Policies 2, 18, 20 and 21 are not justified, because they do not represent the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives, as demonstrated by the conclusions reached in the Council's Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <p>We have already concluded elsewhere that the Council needs to revisit its spatial strategy and evidence base in relation to Green Wedges. On the basis of the above, we</p>	<p>Policy 2: Spatial Strategy for Development within the Borough, Policy 18: Stoughton Grange Direction for Growth area and Oadby Cemetery Allocation; Policy 20: Wigston Direction for Growth area and Policy 21: Cottage Farm Direction for Growth area have been considered as part of the appraisal of policies in the SA Report at Appendix 9 of the full SA Report. The appraisal of these policies have considered not only the area of land to be developed but also the policy text which sets out to mitigate adverse sustainability effects which might otherwise result through</p>

Consultee	Representation relating to	Comment	Action
		<p>also conclude that the Council should review its spatial strategy, and in particular its proposed allocations, in the light of the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal, and ensure that it is setting out a strategy that reflects the conclusions of its evidence base. To this end, we suggest that Site OWBC 43 is proposed for allocation in recognition of its sustainable location for new residential development.</p>	<p>development at each given location.</p> <p>As such while the likely sustainability effects identified through the relevant site appraisals (Stoughton Grange Direction for Growth area - OWBC24 and OWBC28; Amended Further Wigston Direction For Growth area - OWBC17a; and Cottage Farm Direction for Growth area – OWBC44) should be considered it is also important to give weight to the sustainability effects identified through the separate appraisal of Policies 18, 20 and 21. SA effects identified for these policies as well as for the overall Spatial Strategy for Development within the Borough (Policy 2) presented in summary at Table 4.2 and Table 4.5 demonstrate the sustainability merits of allocating these areas particularly in terms of meeting the requirements for development in the Borough over the plan period.</p> <p>Commentary on the Council's decision making process and how this is reported in the SA Report is set out above.</p>
Saffron Trees Action Group (STAG)	Sustainability Appraisal - Non-Technical Summary	<p>Our view remains strongly that the changes to the wording used by LUC at SA 8 severely undermines the protection of green assets. As we argued in response to the previous draft, by opting for “biodiversity and geodiversity” the potential for protection is seriously weakened, because the bar is set way higher on designated sites – whereas the majority of natural green space throughout the Borough is non-designated, not least because of the limits of the Biodiversity Audits and the Green Infrastructure Plan. We are still of the view that the previous wording should be re-instated: “To protect and enhance the natural landscape and green spaces and provide opportunities for public access to the countryside”. That wording is entirely consistent with the NPPF strategic priority re protecting the environment. We don't view justification of the changed wording of SA8 in terms of ease of monitoring as sound.</p>	<p>As has been clarified following consultation representations received at the Preferred Options SA stage the Council received specific advice concerning the changes to the SA Objectives in the SA Framework and their associated SA Assumptions prior to the commencement of that consultation period and are in agreement with LUC that the changes were necessary.</p> <p>In order to make the SA Objectives more robust, focused and compliant with the SEA Regulations, LUC advised the Council to amend SA2 and SA8 and a further SA Objective (SA9) was added. This allowed for a SA Framework which is more precisely focussed on the individual SEA topics thereby allowing the effects of the new Local Plan to be identified, pulled out and appropriately considered. Previously, SA8 would have considered both SEA topics (a) biodiversity and (l) landscape together meaning that effects</p>

Consultee	Representation relating to	Comment	Action
			<p>on these topics would be more difficult to distinguish from each other.</p> <p>The Council and LUC are confident that the changes and the updated approach to the SA framework allow for a more rigorous assessment of the Local Plan's impact on biodiversity (SA8), access to the countryside (SA2) and impact upon the landscape (SA9).</p> <p>The SA framework is presented in Table 2.2 in the full SA Report (Table 2 in the SA Report: Non-Technical Summary). In regard to this comment (particularly with regard to the issue of impact on the countryside and green space and related impacts on access and biodiversity) the SA framework should be considered in combination with the SA Assumptions in Table A4.1 of Appendix 4 of the full SA Report. The SA Assumptions have not been included in the Non-Technical Summary given the summary nature of this document. The SA Assumptions demonstrate how access to the countryside has been considered as part of the appraisal for SA2, as well as how development within the countryside or a green space which has the potential to adversely impact upon biodiversity has been considered as part of the appraisal of SA8. SA8 does not focus solely on designated sites given that the assumption includes the consideration for 'development site options within the countryside or a green space (which) could have a minor negative effect on biodiversity'. Ultimately none of the key content of the 'old' version of SA8 has been deleted, it has just been re-ordered to better reflect the SEA Regulations and the individual SEA topics.</p> <p>The individual SA objectives are part of the larger SA framework and are considered together to appraise a site or policy option. All sites and policies considered have been appraised against each of the SA Objectives.</p>

Consultee	Representation relating to	Comment	Action
		<p>The SA papers fail to take full account of the historic and environmental significance of Local Green Spaces. It looks as though the designation is being treated by LUC assessors as if it's still in Chapter 5, Healthy Communities. In the table on page 17 there is a green assessment against SA6 and SA7 (re healthy community) – but only a weak assessment against SA7, 8, and 9 re historic environment, biodiversity and geodiversity, and Landscape. These are key features of the designation and the community commitment to protecting them – so they should be given due significance in the SA assessments.</p>	<p>The Pre-Submission Local Plan includes Policy 45 to ensure the protection of Local Green Spaces in Chapter 10. The SA Report has reflected this including the corrected new policy number (45 – the policy number was previously 5.7 in the Preferred Options Local Plan). Please see Table 4 in the Non-Technical Summary and Table 4.10 in the full SA Report.</p> <p>The full SA Report shows that Policy 45 has been considered as sitting as part of Chapter 10 – Protected Places in the Local Plan. Please see Table 4.8 which shows a summary of the likely sustainability effects of the policies in this chapter as well as the preceding text from paragraph 4.86 which gives a summary of the likely sustainability effects of the policies in this chapter. Detailed justification in relation to each SA Objective against which Policy 45 has been appraised is presented in Appendix 9 of the full SA Report (page 955). This information has not been re-presented in SA Report: Non-Technical Summary given the summary nature of this document.</p>
		<p>Very few references to Local Green Spaces – (only at para 1.86). Local Green Spaces should be cited, for example, in para 1.6; and Policy 45 should be referenced as significant in the third, seventh, eighth, and ninth right hand boxes of Table 1 summarising Sustainability Issues on pp 6 and 7.</p>	<p>Policy 45 in the Local Plan sets out the Council's approach to the designation of Local Green Spaces and how/in what circumstances they should be protected. As such this policy and therefore the protection which Local Green Spaces are afforded in the Local Plan have been given the same level of consideration as other policies contained in the Local Plan. The SA Report: Non-Technical Summary presents only a summarised version of the likely sustainability effects of each policy and site contains in the Local Plan. In this regard the cumulative effects considering the policies in the plan and the allocated sites are presented from paragraph 1.47. The positive effects that Policy 45 and the protection of Local Green Spaces are</p>

Consultee	Representation relating to	Comment	Action
			<p>likely to have with regard to SA5 (social inclusion), SA6 (integrated communities) and SA9 (landscape) in paragraphs 1.63, 1.68 and 1.86 respectively have been highlighted given that these are the SA objectives against which Policy 45 is expected to have the most significant positive effects. The full appraisal of this policy and the justification for the sustainability effects recorded against each of the SA objectives is presented in Appendix 9 from page 952 of the full SA Report.</p> <p>Table 1 in the SA Report: Non-Technical Summary presents an overview of the key sustainability issues for the Borough. These issues have been highlighted following an establishment of the baseline conditions for the Borough as presented in Appendix 3 of the full SA Report. The right hand column reflects the likely evolution of each issue identified if the Local Plan was not put in place. The right hand column does not make reference to any policies in the emerging Local Plan as in this scenario the policies in this document have not been adopted. For example pressure for development on open space in Oadby and Wigston has been identified as a key sustainability issue which Local Green Spaces might play a role in preventing. Policy 45 is not reflected in the right hand column however given that the Local Plan would not be in place and instead existing policies in the Core Strategy would be depended upon to address this issue.</p>
		<p>P. 40 monitoring table – re SA8 – should include monitoring re conditions protecting hedgerows and requiring succession tree planting.</p>	<p>The SEA Regulations require that "<i>the responsible authority shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of each plan or programme</i>". As such it is considered appropriate for the Proposed Monitoring Framework presented in Table 10 in the SA Report: Non-Technical Summary and Table 7.1 of the full SA Report to focus on indicators for monitoring the potential significant sustainability effects of implementing the Local Plan. As</p>

Consultee	Representation relating to	Comment	Action
			<p>highlighted in paragraph 1.151 while no significant cumulative adverse effects have been identified through the SA Report a precautionary approach has been taken to monitor indicators where uncertainty has been recorded against the related SA objective.</p> <p>The proposed monitoring indicators are those which can be actively monitored; i.e. those for which data is forthcoming. Monitoring relating to the condition of protecting hedgerows and requirements to plant trees is considered to be overly onerous and potentially unmeasurable given that data to support this monitoring is unlikely to be available.</p>
<p>Natural England Mr S Mahoney</p>	<p>Sustainability Appraisal - General comment</p>	<p>We note and welcome the completion of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the pre-submission version of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan. Natural England concurs with the report's conclusion that the Local Plan includes a wide range of development management policies, aiming to protect and enhance the economic, social and environmental conditions of the Borough. These should go a long way towards mitigating the potential negative effects of the overall scale of development proposed. We welcome the commitment to give further consideration to potential mitigation measures as well as the approach to monitoring the likely significant effects of the plan following this pre-submission consultation.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
	<p>Habitat Regulations Assessment - General comment</p>	<p>Natural England welcomes the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan and considers that the scope of the report, its methodology and conclusions meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive and associated guidance. We note the conclusion that the potential for the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan to have likely significant effects on European sites in combination with the Local Plan for</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

Consultee	Representation relating to	Comment	Action
		<p>Rutland County cannot yet be ruled out, due to the early stage of the Rutland Local Plan and the lack of solid HRA conclusions. We welcome the commitment to revisit the issue during forthcoming stages of the HRA for the Rutland Local Plan. Any further iterations of the HRA for the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan should consider new evidence relating to the Rutland Local Plan as this becomes available.</p>	