

NEW LOCAL PLAN – ISSUES AND
OPTIONS

REGULATION 18
CONSULTATION



Oadby and Wigston
Borough Council
Leicestershire

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1. Introduction

Over the coming years, the Borough of Oadby and Wigston will need to undergo change and transformation. The Borough not only needs to provide for its ever-expanding local communities, but also needs to allow for business growth, change and adaptation. In order to manage this change and transformation effectively, the Council must produce a new Local Plan.

A Local Plan is one of, if not, the most important document that a local planning authority produces. It is the sole document that guides all forms of development for many future years within the Borough area.

It is a document that is required by national government and must be kept up to date. If a local authority does not keep its Local Plan up to date, it is at risk of un-sustainable and un-planned development that its communities cannot have a say on.

It is therefore, essential that local planning authorities ensure that its Local Plan is up to date, robust and has been produced with significant community involvement.

What is this document and why are we asking for your help?

- 1.1 The current Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan was adopted in April 2019. The current Local Plan sets out the policies that the Council uses to manage growth and change as well as determine Planning applications. The Local Plan helps direct new development to the right places. New development includes, but is not limited to; new housing; new and existing employment land; new community facilities and services; new retail; and, new leisure and tourism development.
- 1.2 A Local Plan is not a static document, it is a fluid document that needs to change with the times, therefore is a document that needs reviewing and updating on a regular basis. The Council has already begun work on the new Local Plan. This Issues and Options (Key Challenges) exercise is the second stage that the Council must carry out as part of the new Local Plan. The consultation will help the Council understand your views on the different issues affecting development in the Borough and how you think these should be tackled now and in the future.
- 1.3 The initial consultation exercise for the new Local Plan was the Call for Sites consultation that took place between Midday Friday 25th September 2020 and Midday Friday 20th November 2020. The sites submitted through this first stage of consultation are being consulted upon alongside this Issues and Options document.
- 1.4 Similar to the current Local Plan, the Council is seeking to ensure that there is a balanced strategy that encourages sustainable development and growth across the Borough area, whilst helping to tackle climate change and protecting those areas that most need it.
- 1.5 The starting point for this Issues and Options (Key Challenges) consultation document is to look at, what are the most apparent issues and key challenges that the Borough will face cover the coming years. The document will propose a number of potential options to tackle these apparent issues and challenges, and will ask the local communities and local businesses for their views and comments.



What are we asking of you?

- 1.6 This consultation document will set out what the Council considers that the key challenges are for the Borough area and will then offer a set of potential options that can be chosen to help address these challenges.
- 1.7 As part of this, this Council needs you to say which of the potential options you prefer, as well as any challenges that you consider have been missed. You can also suggest your own alternative potential options which will achieve the objectives and tackle the challenges that are mentioned. It is important that where indicated you try and give some explanation for your choices, as the more feedback and detail the Council receives, the more informed the Council's decisions can be.
- 1.8 You will need to carefully read the sections below to help you understand how to answer the consultation questions posed. You do not have to answer all of the questions, but it would help the Council gain a better understanding of the overall picture if you could answer as many as you feel able to.
- 1.9 The Council is proud of its Borough and the communities that reside and work within it, and really wants to make a positive difference to people's lives. The Council would like to thank in advance all of the people and organisations that take the time to respond to this consultation.

The current Local Plan

- 1.10 The Council's current Local Plan was adopted on the 16th April 2019 and currently sets out the Council's most up to date planning policy position. In addition to the Local Plan, the Council has adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD), that supplement the policies contained within the Local Plan. Supplementary Planning Documents include;
 - Public Realm Strategy SPD 2021
 - Identified Employment Land SPD 2020
 - Residential Development SPD 2019
 - Conservation Areas SPD 2019
 - Developer Contributions SPD 2019
- 1.11 Further, the Council has an up to date Local Development Scheme, an up to date Statement of Community Involvement and an up to date Annual Monitoring Report.

Timetable for new Local Plan production

- 1.12 In the production of any Local Plan, local authorities have to follow nationally set legislation in relation to consultation milestones. Legislation prescribes, not only when a local authority should be consulting on a Local Plan, but also the minimum requirements on how it consults. How the Council will consult is also set out within the Council's latest Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.13 A summary of the timetable for the Council's new Local Plan is set out below, however is set out in more detail in the Council's latest Local Development Scheme, which is available on the Council's website – https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/local_development_scheme.

Timetable (key stages)	
Initial Call for sites	September 2020 to November 2020
Regulation 18 (Issues and Options)	August to September 2021
Regulation 18 (Preferred Options)	May to June 2022
Pre-Submission Consultation	May to June 2023
Submission to the Planning Inspectorate	June 2023
Examination Hearing Sessions	August / September 2023
Receipt of Inspectors Report	September / October 2023
Adoption	December 2023



2. Relationship to other plans, guidance and policies

National planning policy and guidance

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), *'sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced'*. Further, *'planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan², unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions'*.
- 2.2 The NPPF, suggests that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Further, it goes onto suggest that local authorities Plan's should be succinct, up-to-date and should provide a positive vision for the future of an area.
- 2.3 Specific to Local Plan's, the NPPF states that Plans should:
- 'a) be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;*
 - b) be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;*
 - c) be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;*
 - d) contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;*
 - e) be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and*
 - f) serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant)'*.
- 2.4 The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which is a web-based resource that sets out the Government's planning guidance on a number of topics. The NPPG adds, further guidance and information to the policies set out within the NPPF. The NPPG is updated regularly and will be used to help provide further detail within the Local Plan.

Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan

- 2.5 The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) was jointly prepared and published by the eight local authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire, Leicestershire County Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership. The SGP sets out a longer term strategy and aspirations for delivering growth and development in Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) up to the year 2050. It is a non-statutory strategic plan that provides a framework to guide individual Local Plans.
- 2.6 The SGP focuses on four key matters: delivering new housing, supporting the economy, identifying essential infrastructure, and protecting the environment and built heritage.



The Borough of Oadby and Wigston Corporate Plan

2.7 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out the Vision, Objectives and Values for the Council, for the period 2019 to 2024.

2.8 The Corporate Plan, sets out three main Objectives for the Council. These are:

Corporate Objective One – *'Building, Protecting and Empowering communities – Be proud of your Borough as a place to live'*.

This objective seeks to ensure that the local communities have suitable housing and accommodation to meet their needs. It also seeks to build and protect local communities, by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as address any health inequalities that are apparent. Further, the objective seeks to empower local communities through positive engagement, and greater responsibility for where they live, work and play.

Corporate Objective Two – *'Growing the Borough economically – Realise the aspirations of the Borough, benefiting those who live and work here'*.

This objective sets the aim for the Borough – *'to be the best it can be economically'*. The objective seeks to work with as many businesses as possible within the Borough to help them develop and grow. In addition, the objective seeks to attract new businesses and provide better employment opportunities for local communities. Further, the objective seeks the Council to be more commercial regarding income generation so that frontline services are protected.

Corporate Objective Three – *'Providing excellent services – Delivering those services needed to the highest standard whilst providing value for money'*.

This objective seeks to *'put the customer first'* and provide services that are of the highest standards. In addition, the objective suggests that the Council will utilise smart technology to ensure that local communities have access to improved services that are safe, needed and effective.



3. Promoting sustainable development and combating climate change

- 3.1 The drive to provide (and ensure delivery of) sustainable development has been one of the golden threads running through national planning policy and guidance for a number of years, ever since the introduction of the first National Planning Policy Framework in 2012.
- 3.2 The most up to date National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), states the following; -
- '7. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection.*
- 8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*
- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.'*
- 3.3 In 'The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019', the government committed to becoming a net zero emitter of greenhouse gases by 2050.
- 3.4 In order for the government to realise its commitment of becoming a net zero emitter, carbon emissions must be minimised. In order to do this, each local authority area within the United Kingdom needs to help.
- 3.5 The new Local Plan has a critical part to play in helping the government, not only, meet its targets in lowering greenhouse gas emissions, but also in providing sustainable development at a local level for its communities. Therefore, much like the NPPF, the Council wishes to ensure that one of the golden threads running through the entire new Local Plan is the want to achieve sustainable development and combat climate change.



- 3.6 It is important to note, that when you are thinking about and commenting on the key challenges and options set out in this document, you should keep in mind how the options help with achieving the ambitions and requirements set out above.



4. The key challenges and potential options

- 4.1 The following topic areas (see separate Topic documents) will outline what the Council considers to be the key issues and challenges that the Borough area is likely to face over the coming years. In addition, a number of potential options for tackling the issues and challenges highlighted are also set out. Further, a number of questions are posed to you also.
- 4.2 The Council would reiterate, that the issues, challenges, potential options and questions posed, are by no means a definitive list; they are very much an initial highlighting of the Council's considerations and if you consider that there are things or topics that have been missed, please do feedback to the Council.
- 4.3 National planning and guidance is very clear, in that Local Authority areas should have both strategic and non-strategic planning policies. It goes on to state that Local Plans should be explicit in which policies are strategic and which are not.
- 4.4 In terms of non-strategic policies, the NPPF suggests that these policies should be used to set out more detail on specific topic areas, for example, design principles, conserving local heritage and ensuring there is plenty of open space areas for community use. They are in essence more localised development management policies.
- 4.5 The following (Topic documents) key challenges and potential options are set out in clear and distinct topic areas, as well as whether the Council considers the issue or challenge to be of a strategic nature or a non-strategic nature.
- 4.6 Each challenge or issue topic area is set out in a consistent manner, and follows the format–
- What the government says – gives a summary of what national government says about the topic area, for example national policy contained within the NPPF and guidance principles set out within the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
 - What the Council says – gives a summary of the Council's thoughts on the topic area.
 - Potential options – sets out a number of potential options for tackling the issues or challenges that have been highlighted.
 - Questions – poses questions to the reader that are pertinent to the potential options posed.



5. Next steps

- 5.1 The new Local Plan Issues and Options document will be on public consultation for an 8 week period. During this period, the Council will be seeking feedback from as many local residents, businesses and other interested parties as possible.
- 5.2 Once the consultation period has ended, the Council will collate all of the comments and feedback submitted, and take account of it all in the next stage of Plan making, which is Preferred Options stage.
- 5.3 The Council would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to read through the Issues and Options document and submitted comments and feedback. Each comment and each bit of feedback that is sent into the Council will help shape the future of the Borough area.

