

SITE DELIVERABILITY STATEMENT

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT | OADBY GRANGE, OADBY
MRS B.A. WALKER

PREPARED BY PEGASUS GROUP



PLANNING



DESIGN



ENVIRONMENT



ECONOMICS

P17-2266_28



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NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS DESIGNED TO BE VIEWED AS A4 DOUBLE SIDED



FIGURE 1.1:
SITE LOCATION PLAN

1 | INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan - Presubmission Consultation Document (Emerging Local Plan) has been published for consultation purposes up until 18th December 2017. It follows a similar approach to that of the Core Strategy, with a focus being on Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston.
- 1.2 The Emerging Local Plan identifies a housing requirement of 2,960 dwellings that are to be delivered during the plan period 2011-2031. This equates to 148 dwellings per annum (dpa). However, this figure of 148 dpa is not robust and is unlikely to address the housing needs of the Borough or help to address the anticipated unmet needs arising from Leicester City.
- 1.3 The unmet needs of Leicester City are likely to be most sustainably met within the authorities which neighbour the City, which includes Oadby & Wigston. Indeed, the vast majority of out-commuting from Oadby and Wigston goes to Leicester and accordingly, this provides one of the most sustainable locations to address the unmet needs of Leicester. In order to achieve this it will be necessary to identify additional land for residential development within the borough

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.4 This report has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Mrs B.A. Walker, the landowner, and relates to Land at Oadby Grange, Oadby, Leicestershire ("the Site"). It is considered that the site should be allocated for housing. It is a site which is suitable, available and deliverable but it has been omitted from the Emerging Local Plan. This report provides further information about the site that should be read alongside the objections that have been made on behalf of Mrs Walker.
- 1.5 The Site is identified on the plan [opposite] and is outlined in red. It comprises a series of agricultural fields which are currently used for grazing and which abut existing residential development on two sides (to the south and west).
- 1.6 The Site has the potential to provide a logical extension to the urban area, rounding off the settlement edge and providing for a development of up to 320 homes. It could deliver a range of housing including affordable housing in a sustainable and accessible location.
- 1.7 The following sections will review the site and its context including relevant planning history. It will then go on to consider the planning policy framework before turning to the site's opportunities and constraints. Having undertaken that assessment the report will then outline the masterplan concept which demonstrates how the site could be developed for residential use.

2 | SITE CONTEXT

WIDER AREA

2.1 The site is located on the eastern edge of Oadby. Oadby is located approximately 8km south east of Leicester City Centre. It is one of two main towns in the Borough and it forms part of the much wider Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA). Oadby is made up of 5no. wards and has a population of 23,849 people according to the 2011 Census.





THE SITE

- 2.2 The site itself extends to approximately 22.5ha and comprises a series of agricultural fields that abut existing residential development on two sides (to the south and west). The site is also well contained by existing trees and hedgerows which define the northern and eastern boundaries and form part of the Oadby Grange Country Park. There are hedgerows and groups of trees within the site that are concentrated along the edges of the fields.
- 2.3 To the south of the site is a large drainage basin constructed as part of the recent residential development on adjoining land.
- 2.4 There are public rights of way which run along the perimeter of the eastern boundary of the site as well as running east/west through the site.
- 2.5 Access to the site is likely to be from the south western boundary onto Florence Wragg Way to link the development to the built up area.

FIGURE 2.2:
AERIAL PLAN OF SITE LOCATION

HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS & CONSTRAINTS

2.6 With regard to heritage designations, there are no Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Conservation Areas within, or in close proximity to the site. Figure 2.3 shows that the nearest Listed Building is the Grade II Oadby Grange which is approximately 550m away.

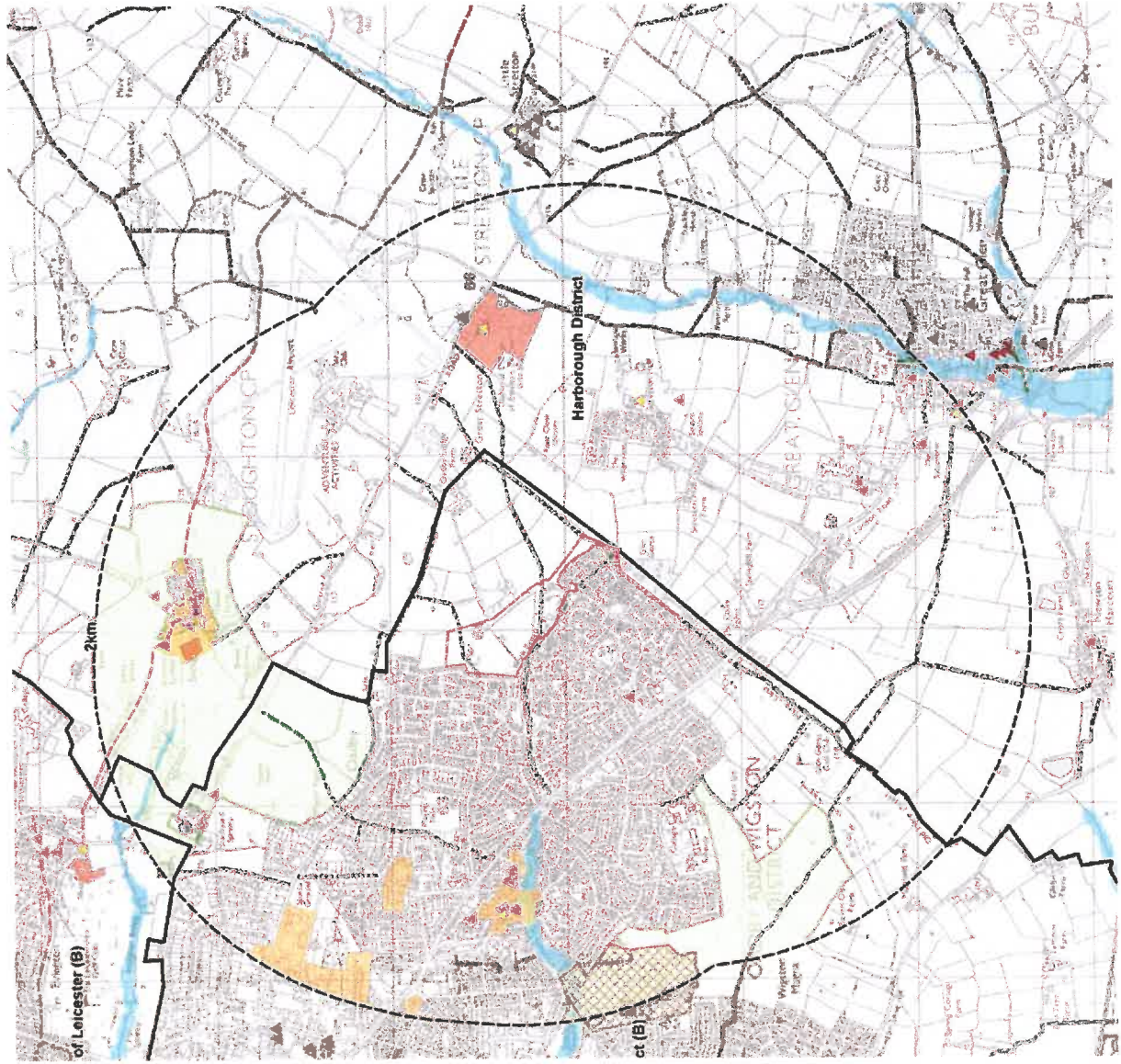


FIGURE 2.3:
LOCATION OF LISTED
BUILDINGS

FLOOD RISK

2.7 There is a brook that runs through the western part of the site but the Environment Agency's flood zone mapping confirms that the site still lies within Flood Zone 1 (lowest probability of flooding).



LANDSCAPE & ECOLOGY

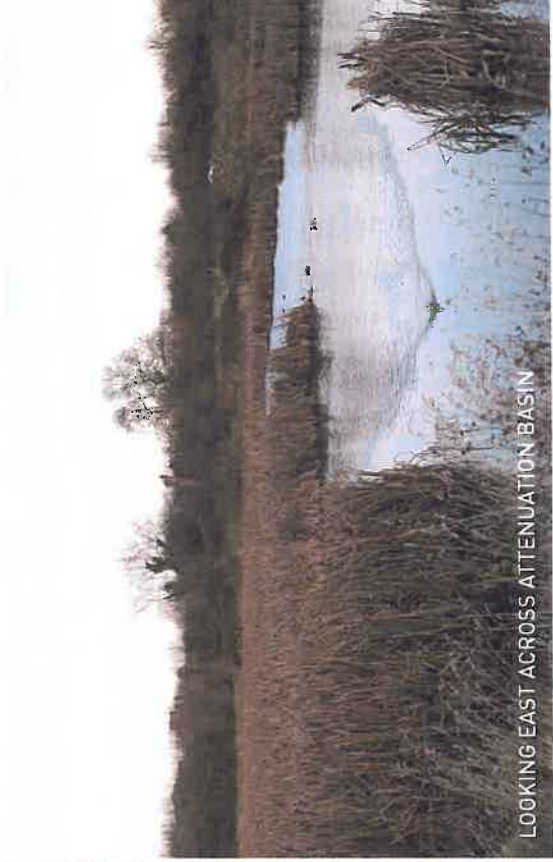
2.8 The site is not located within the Green Belt and nor is it located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In fact, there are no statutory landscape or ecological designations affecting the site.

FIGURE 2.4:
FLOOD MAPS (SOURCE: ENVIRONMENT AGENCY)

SITE PHOTOGRAPHY



VIEW LOOKING WEST ALONG PROW C42



LOOKING EAST ACROSS ATTENUATION BASIN



VIEW NORTH EAST FROM PROW Z5 OFF WINDRUSH DRIVE



VIEW LOOKING EAST FROM PROW



VIEW LOOKING NORTH ACROSS SITE FIELDS FROM THE SOUTHERN END OF THE SITE



LOOKING NORTH ALONG THE BACK OF HOUSING ON WINDRUSH DRIVE



LOOKING EAST FROM THE GATE IN THE INTERNAL FIELD BOUNDARY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SITE



FIGURE 3.1:
EXTRACT FROM SECTION 106 AGREEMENT (17.5.2001)

3 | PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 In 2001 planning permission was granted for a residential development of 147 dwellings in accordance with Proposal 8 of the adopted Local Plan 1999 which allocated 6.25ha site for residential development on adjoining land.
- 3.2 The site allocation included a requirement to provide 25% of the site as a Country Park as a landscaped linear open space at the countryside edge.
- 3.3 The Section 106 agreement for the planning permission identified the Country Park land which surrounds the site to which this report relates. This plan is shown at Figure 3.1.
- 3.4 Whilst the Section 106 agreement identified the land to be provided as Country Park (shown hatched on Figure 3.1) The adopted Local Plan Policy identified the wider site (including the "retained land") as a Recreation Proposal R7 despite the fact that it was in private ownership, was not accessible to the public, and was never intended to be part of the Country Park.
- 3.5 The Local Planning Authority has previously explored the option of purchasing the "retained" land but chose not to do so.
- 3.6 Whilst the adopted Local Plan (1999) and the Core Strategy (2010) identified the site as a proposed recreation space it can be seen that this is not carried through into the Emerging Local Plan. Instead the land is now shown simply as countryside. This is outlined in more detail in the following section.

4 | PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

4.1 The NPPF outlines national guidance and the Government's policies on the many different aspects of planning. Central to the NPPF is the principle of sustainable development and at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

4.2 Paragraph 6 explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that the policies in paragraphs 18 to 219 of the NPPF taken as a whole will constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

4.3 Paragraph 7 identifies the three dimensions to sustainable development which include economic, social and environmental roles

4.4 Paragraph 14 outlines that Local Planning Authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. It continues to state that Local Plans should meet the need with sufficient flexibility to adapt to change unless the adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Social

- Provision of Open Market Housing
- Provision of Affordable Housing

Economic

- Expenditure on construction/local investment
- Creation of construction jobs
- Providing homes for economically active people
- Financial contributions towards off site infrastructure

Environmental

- The proposals could assist with the future management and maintenance of the Country Park
- Public open space/Green Infrastructure
- Improved landscaping within the site. Enhancements to biodiversity

4.5 Paragraph 17 identifies twelve core land use planning principles that should underpin both plan making and decision taking.

4.6 Guidance in relation to housing is provided at Paragraphs 47 to 55. The Government's clear and over-arching requirement is to "boost significantly" the supply of housing to meet identified needs and to promote growth.

4.7 The development of this site would secure important benefits that would respond to all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental). The benefits of this site are outlined opposite;

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.8 The Development Plan that is applicable to the site comprises:-

- Saved Policies of the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999 (reissued 2007, 2009 and 2013) and
- Oadby and Wigston Core Strategy 2010;

Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 1999 (re-issued 2007, 2009 and 2013)

4.9 The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan was originally adopted in 1999. Whilst many of the policies have been superseded by the Core Strategy, there are a number of "saved policies" which remain part of the Development Plan for the area.

4.10 From the Proposals Map, it can be seen that the site is located adjacent but outside of the built-up area of Oadby. It is defined as open countryside in planning terms. It is also identified as an area of proposed recreation space (to which Policy Proposal R7 applies).

OADBY AND WIGSTON CORE STRATEGY 2010

4.11 The Core Strategy was adopted in September 2010 and is intended to cover the plan period from 2006 to 2026.

4.12 The strategic growth for the Borough was set out in Core Strategy Policy 1 which identified a housing requirement of 1,800 dwellings over the period from 2006 to 2026. The Core Strategy focused development in the centres of Oadby (80 dwellings), Wigston (170 dwellings) and South Wigston (150 dwellings) and achieve redevelopment of previously developed land.

4.13 Additionally, allocations were made for approximately 200no. dwellings on suitable land outside of Oadby and Wigston Town Centre Masterplan areas and outside of the South Wigston Masterplan area, but within the Leicester Principal Urban Area. Finally, the Core Strategy also sought to provide a Direction for Growth for approximately 450no. dwellings adjoining the Leicester Principal Urban Area to the south east of Wigston.

4.14 From the Policies Map that forms part of the Core Strategy, the site continues to be located adjacent, but outside of the built-up area of Oadby. It is defined as open countryside in planning terms and the site is identified as an area proposed for recreation use (Policy 17).



FIGURE 4.1: EXTRACT FROM ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN PROPOSAL PLAN (1999)

EMERGING LOCAL PLAN

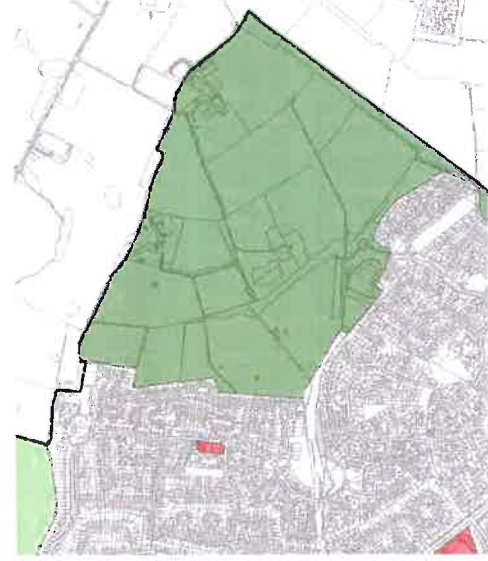


FIGURE 4.2:
EXTRACT FROM EMERGING LOCAL PLAN PROPOSAL
PLAN, SUBMISSION DRAFT (2017)

4.15 The Oadby and Wigston Local Plan Pre-Submission Consultation Document (2017) has been published for consultation purposes up until 18th December 2017. It follows a similar approach to that of the Core Strategy, with a focus being on the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston.

4.16 The Emerging Local Plan identifies a housing requirement of 2,960 dwellings that are to be delivered during the plan period 2011-2031. This equates to 148 dwellings per annum (dpa). However, this figure of 148 dpa is not robust and is unlikely to address the housing needs of the Borough or help to address the anticipated unmet needs arising from Leicester City.

4.17 The unmet needs of Leicester City are likely to be most sustainably met within the authorities which neighbour the City, which includes Oadby & Wigston. Indeed, the vast majority of out-commuting from Oadby and Wigston goes to Leicester and accordingly, this provides one of the most sustainable locations to address the unmet needs of Leicester. In order to achieve this it will be necessary to identify additional land for residential development within the borough.

4.18 With regard to the site itself, the policies map continues to show the site as being adjacent, but outside of the built up area. The only annotation is that the site falls within the 'Countryside' for which Emerging Policy 43 seeks to maintain the intrinsic qualities of the landscape. It is important to note that the Emerging Local Plan no longer identifies this land as proposed recreation space.

4.19 As explained in the formal objections, it is considered that the site is suitable for residential development and that it could assist in meeting the housing needs of the Housing Market Area (HMA) including the likely unmet needs arising from Leicester City, in a sustainable and accessible location.

STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHLAA)

4.20 The site was included in the 2013 SHLAA (with an indicative capacity of 365 dwellings) but it was discounted. However it is not clear why the site was discounted but the following negative comments are recorded:-

- The site is adjacent to two SINCs (Ecology designations)
- The site is considered to have high archaeological potential
- The site is subject to a s.106 which provides the land as open space

4.21 It is presumed that the final bullet point noted above is the principal reason for discounting the site. However as can be seen from plan shown at Figure 3.1 it is clear that it was only the periphery of the site which is to be delivered as a Country Park and not the central parts of the site. If this was the principal reason for discounting the site then it can be seen that it was ill founded.

4.22 No reference is made to the site in the 2017 SHLAA and the site profiles are not on the Council's website to help understand why the site was discounted.

5 | SITE ACCESSIBILITY

- 5.1 The site adjoins the urban area of Oadby and is located where future residents would be accessible to a range of local shops and facilities.
- 5.2 This is illustrated in Figure 5.1. It can be seen that the following key facilities would be within easy walking and cycling distances meaning that residents would not be reliant upon the use of the private car:-
- Primary School - within 400m
 - Secondary School - within 514m
 - Public House (The Grange Farm) - within 500m
 - Sainsburys & Petrol Station - 780m
 - Main shopping area - 1km+
- 5.3 The area is well served by public transport and this provides the opportunity for longer distance trips.
- 5.4 The nearest bus stops are within 50m and 300m when measured from the closest point to the site. The whole of Oadby including Oadby Grange is served by the 31/31a and 31E service to Leicester including Oadby ASDA and a number of schools. The service frequency is circa 20mins.

6 | CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

6.3 The Country Park has previously been raised as a constraint to the site but this would remain unaffected and would be retained in its approved form providing a circular area of open space that wraps around the site.

6.4 The relationship of the site to the adjoining built up area would need to be carefully designed to ensure that the development provides for a transition to the countryside whilst responding to the existing built form. This will be managed through the landscaped masterplan through identifying development areas, appropriate densities and the inclusion of landscaping into the proposed layout.

6.5 The topography of the site is gently undulating but does not represent a significant constraint to development. The concept plan can be landscaped to ensure that any visually prominent or landscape sensitive areas are treated sympathetically.

6.6 The drainage of the site would need to be carefully designed to work with the existing SuDS pond on the site and the Wash Brook but as this site is in Flood Zone 1, this would be a technical matter capable of resolution with a detailed scheme.

6.7 Access to the site would need to be from the south-eastern boundary to link the development to the built up area and to avoid severing the country park.

Key opportunities would include:

- Well located to Leicester and PUA;
- Well located and adjacent to Oadby;
- Delivery of housing in a sustainable location;
- Delivery of affordable housing where it is needed;
- Good connection to facilities and public transport;
- No designations affecting the land;
- The site is well contained by the topography; and
- Potential to expand and improve the countryside.

6.8 The site is well related to the wider urban areas of Leicester and the Leicester PUA and the adjoining built up area of Oadby. This would allow the delivery of housing in an appropriate location providing for the local and wider housing demands. In addition, the site would provide the opportunity to deliver affordable housing where it is needed.

6.9 The site has good access to local facilities and public transport within Oadby and is well connected to the existing built up area.

6.10 There are no designations affecting the site or adjoining land and the site is well contained by the local topography as well as by the areas of woodland that form the circular Country Park around the site.

6.11 There are potential opportunities to expand and/or reinforce the Country Park through the development of this site. There are also opportunities to provide biodiversity and green infrastructure improvements connecting this land to other green corridors.

7 | LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

7.1 This section sets out the landscape analysis for the site and the relationship of the site within the wider green infrastructure framework and how future development should the site be allocated would fit within the existing landscape framework.

Setting the Scene

7.2 Green Infrastructure (GI) is recognised at the national and local level and is included within number policy documents including the Qadby and Wigston Borough Council Emerging Local Plan which defines GI as: "A network of multi-functional green space, both urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities." (Policy 8)

7.3 There are several benefits and principles of GI which would need to be considered in the development of the site should it be allocated. Principles of GI include:

- Multi-functionality - an ecosystem services led approach to integrate with, contribute to and enhance natural systems;

- Interconnectivity - with the connection of urban and countryside areas whilst creating new recreational facilities;
- Connectivity - avoid fragmentation of existing habitats, and natural features, to increase potential for natural regeneration and migration of species of flora and fauna associated with the effects of climate change;
- Contribute to protection, conservation and long term management of the local landscape;
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity, ensuring that the site results in a net gain of biodiversity assets;
- Provide a focus for social inclusion, community development and lifelong learning; and
- Be designed and managed to a high standard of quality to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.



7.4 A number of policies within the Oadby and Wigston Borough Council local plan are relevant to GI and proposed development within the area, notably Policy 8 (Green Infrastructure), Policy 9 – which sets out the provision for open space, sport and recreation facilities in order to improve people’s quality of life and promoting social inclusion. Policy 43 – Countryside states that justified development within the countryside must be appropriate in terms of layout, scale, height, materials, form, impact and siting and Policy 44 – Landscape and Character.

7.5 Policy 8 recognises the importance of GI in contributing to a high quality built and natural environment that enhances the quality of life for existing and future residents as well as biodiversity and ecological provisions.

7.6 Policy 44, Landscape and Character states that development proposals should reflect the “prevailing quality, character and features” of the area. Attention should be paid to important views, settlement patterns, open space and significant natural habitats.

7.7 Should the site be allocated, it is important that the proposed development reflects the relevant local GI and landscape policy, the issues discussed above are reflected in the landscape vision and concept plan for the site later on in this report.



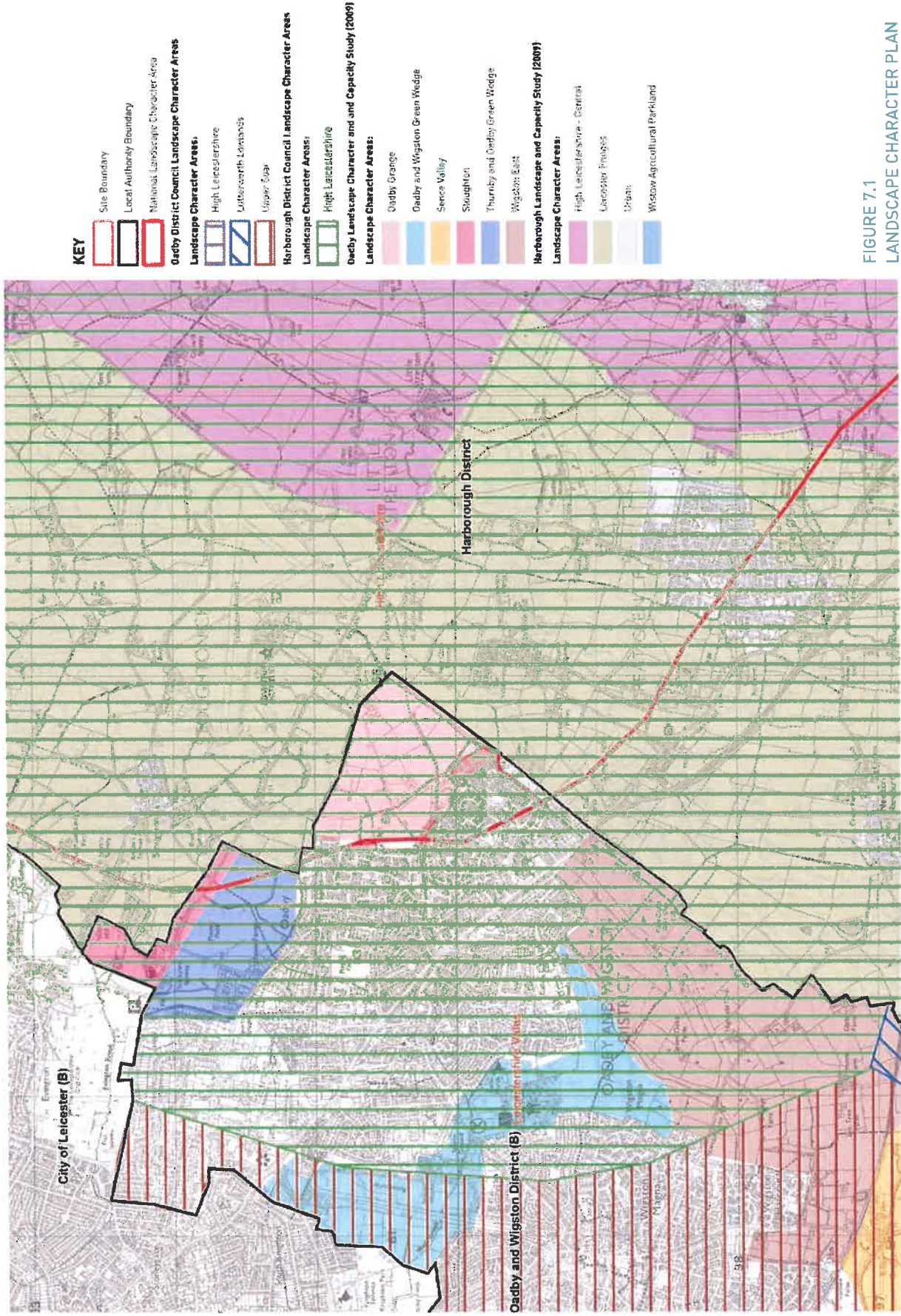


FIGURE 7.1
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER PLAN

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

7.8 The landscape character of the site and its surroundings is defined by a number of published guidance documents from a national level down to a local level.

National Level:

7.9 At the national level the site predominantly located within the Natural Character Area (NCA) 93 – High Leicestershire, however a small portion of the western part of the site is located within the adjoining NCA 94 – Leicestershire Vales with the key characteristics for the NCA 93 summarised below:

- 'Rolling ridges and secluded valleys' created from the varied geology, with Lias Group mudstones predominating, the rural character of the area comprises undulating fields with a mix of pasture on higher, sloping land and arable farming on the lower flatter land';
- 'Historic character of the area is also very important... numerous sites of remnant ridge and furrow';
- 'Abundant wide hedgerows, hedgerow trees, copses, spinneys and small woodlands, the last often sited on ridges'; and

- 'A wooded character is often created through small field patterns and overgrown hedgerows;

7.10 The NCA profile summarises the opportunities for management of the area, including the following of relevance to the area:

- SEO1: Protect and manage the 'strong visual and historic character' of the varied including field patterns and remaining ridge and furrow landscapes and hedgerow networks which add to the historic character of the area to 'enhance sense of place and history so that the area can be enjoyed by all for its tranquility';

- SEO2: Maintain the sense of place that exists within this area by enhancing the biodiversity networks to encourage wildlife by working with landowners to enhance tree cover through enhancing or introducing areas of woodland, coverts and spinneys;

- SEO3: 'Manage and enhance recreation assets', particularly Public Rights of Way that improve access to assets and the open countryside such as Country Parks that connect users to the countryside

from local towns and cities to provide benefits to the health and wellbeing of users. In addition, it is recognised that there is the need to provide opportunities to educate and raise awareness of the benefits of green infrastructure including as a recreational asset; and

- SEO4: 'Manage, conserve and enhance woodlands, hedgerows, streams, rivers and field ponds' including the Eye Brook and its tributaries to enhance the biodiversity of the local area and improve the 'water quality, flow availability'.

7.11 A small section of the site falls within NCA 94, however this is on the western edge of the site where there is a transition in character to the urban fringe, therefore less emphasis should be placed on the key characteristics of the Leicestershire Vales character area as they are more strongly linked to the rural areas south west of Leicester such as surrounding Lutterworth and Hinckley. The relevant characteristics to the study area are summarised below:

- 'Land use characterised by a mixture of pasture and arable agriculture' with a notable increase in arable farming in recent times;

- Large woodlands are not characteristic but a 'Woodland character is derived largely from spinneys and copses on the ridges' with new planting buffers along residential edges will help to mitigate potential visual impacts; and
 - 'Diverse levels of tranquillity associated with contrasts between urban and rural areas' with large settlements dominating the open character of the landscape. Although the area has the ongoing challenge of managing development growth, this growth also provides the opportunity to raise the standards of green infrastructure and provide improved habitats and connectivity for a range of wildlife.
- 7.12** The NCA profile summarises the opportunities for managements of NCA 94, including the following of relevance to the area:
- SE01: 'Protect and appropriately manage the strong historic character... within the rural and urban landscapes...' to ensure that development is fully integrated into and informed by the landscape' this can be achieved through use of locally sourced building materials. It notes that it is important to integrate GI into new and existing development, providing accessible greenspace, protecting valuable heritage assets and increasing biodiversity in urban areas;
 - SE02: 'Manage, conserve and enhance the woodlands, hedgerows, streams and rivers' to enhance biodiversity and recreational opportunities. In particular maintaining linear habitats along watercourse to enable movement corridors for wildlife and encouraging access along watercourse corridors for recreation;
- SE03: Increase, manage and enhance the recreation assets' through identifying new opportunities to create recreation assets that offer visitors and local residents a chance to learn more and have better access to the landscape around them including community involvement through volunteering schemes; and
 - SE04: 'Create new habitats where opportunities exist to extend, link or buffer areas of existing habitat to reduce impacts of fragmentation.' In particular, new wildlife corridors that can provide a range of habitats and help to mitigate climate change with an emphasis of 'wood pasture and parkland, wet woodland and grazing marsh' to help contribute to a sense of place, enhance biodiversity resilience and habitat networks;.

County District Level

7.13 At a county/district level, the 2001 Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Woodland Strategy published by Leicestershire County Council sets out a description of the site included within the High Leicester Landscape Character Area. The relevant characteristics to the site are summarised below:

- A rural area with arable and grassland land uses with ridge and furrows distributed throughout the area evidencing the historic arable cultivation of the land;
- Field ponds are also characteristic;
- Regular field patterns with well-maintained field boundaries of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Some areas of woodland, with some designated as ancient, however 'there is little evidence of systematic management' to ensure new woodland planting to retain this wooded character.

7.14 It is noted that the landscape issues include loss of hedgerow trees and lack of managed or over management of hedgerows.

Local District Level

7.15 The Oadby & Wigston Landscape Character Assessment carried out by David Tyldesley & Associates on behalf of Oadby & Wigston Borough Council (March 2005) categorises the landscape character at the local level and discusses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each area. This site is located within the Oadby Grange Landscape Character Area.

7.16 The key characteristics of the LCA, relevant to the site are described by the document as:

- Land falls 'southwards and westwards relatively steeply but evenly to the Wash Brook';
- 'House building is on-going along the southern boundary as an extension of the Oadby Grange estate';
- Existing footpaths create a good link between the countryside and the urban fringe area;
- 'Small to medium regularly sized and roughly rectangular in shape fields, predominantly used for arable agriculture with some cattle grazing fields close to the urban edge;

- Field boundaries give a 'lush, well-vegetated appearance to the area' with mixed well-maintained hedgerows with trees;
- 'Remnant ridge and furrow visible on some grassland';
- 'The skyscape is more dominant than the townscape'; and
- There are a number of small copses and spinneys on boundaries and at the junction of fields.

7.17 The Oadby & Wigston Landscape Character Assessment identifies the site is well defined with a strong vegetative edge but with extensive PROWs linking to the urban and open countryside. The Assessment acknowledges that the area has been weakened by industrial sized farm buildings but that there are opportunities to establish more woodland which is currently lacking in the Borough.

7.18 The Assessment concludes with objectives derived from this analysis which are included below with the overall aim 'to conserve the natural rural and visual characteristics and to maintain a predominantly open transitional area between town and country.'

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE BASELINE STUDY

7.19 Further to the landscape policy that sets out the opportunities and constraints for the area at a local level, there are a number of GI themes that need to be considered at the site level. It is important to identify the existing GI assets in order to integrate them into the future proposals should the site be allocated and in the development of a landscape led masterplan. The GI topics listed below are now discussed in order to aid the development of the landscape strategy for the site:

- Amenity and Recreation
- Biodiversity and Ecology
- Access and Movement
- Sustainable Water Management

Amenity and Recreation

7.20 Within Gadby there are several amenity and recreation assets for the community, for example there are large recreation parks with sport pitches, outdoor gym equipment, play areas and informal recreation opportunities. In addition, there are many informal spaces with play opportunities set within public open space throughout the town and in close proximity to the site for example Hill Field Park on Florence Wragg Way.

7.21 Part of the site is included within Gadby Grange Country Park which forms part of the north eastern and southern boundary which currently provides dog walking routes and informal recreational opportunities. Parking is provided in a small car park to the south of the country park accessed from Bluebell Close. It is important to note this existing GI asset as a primary GI asset for the site to be incorporated into the proposals and enhanced for users and biodiversity.

Biodiversity and Ecology

7.22 To the east of the site the landscape is predominantly rural farm land with varied field boundaries (trees and hedgerows) which help to form the existing landscape framework and create green corridors across this area for biodiversity and habitats for wildlife. Much of the site is currently used as agricultural pasture comprising grassland with field boundaries of hedgerows and hedgerow trees. In addition, there are areas of woodland, scattered trees and shrubs which offer a wide range of biodiversity and habitat opportunities.



Access and Movement

7.23 At a local scale, a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) aid in the creation of a local network through and around the site, typically in an east/west direction. These can be accessed from neighbouring residential streets and also from the car park, off Bluebell Close, to the east of the large drainage basin. These routes link into the wider network providing sustainable movement across the site and the surrounding area providing access from the town of Oadby into the surrounding landscape. Here, it is important to note the existing movement network that provides access through the site which can be successfully integrated into the proposals for the site.

Sustainable Water Management

7.24 The Wash Brook crosses the site from the west to east and along the south-western boundary. To the south of the site there is a large drainage basin that was constructed as part of recent residential development on adjoining land at Oadby Grange and is currently permanently wet. In addition to the larger drainage basin there are also two smaller balancing ponds in the area adjacent to the site which manage the surface water run-off from the existing surrounding residential developments.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

7.25 The site comprises a series of small irregular grazing fields for cattle defined by vegetated field boundaries consisting of mixed hedgerow and associated trees. Oadby Grange Country Park wraps around the northern, western and eastern boundary providing early maturity woodland accessible through existing Public Right of Ways and informal footpaths allowing for dog walking other recreational use.

7.26 Development of parts of the site would inevitable result in the loss of the existing land use of the pastoral fields. However, any proposed development would create the opportunity to provide enhancements to the existing landscape structure, ensuring the retention of valued features and elements for the long term, as well as providing additional biodiversity and green infrastructure benefits as recommended in the published landscape character guidance and policy. Appropriate advice regarding the retention and enhancement of existing valued landscape/GI features is set out within the opportunities and constraints plan which is developed into the concept masterplan (refer to Figure 9.1).

7.27 Photos A to G illustrate the typical views of the site from within the immediate vicinity and from elevated land to north and south.

7.28 As noted in the published landscape character assessments, the landscape character in the site's immediate surroundings to the east has a very rural character that is abundant with hedgerows, small woodland and tree cover which helps to limit views and screen existing development. This land and landscape features would be retained to aid in the screening of proposed development within the site. To the west the landscape is defined by the urban form of the edge of Oadby, the existing built edge of the residential development limits views into the site or out to the further landscape (refer to Photo A).

7.29 The site benefits from a high degree of visual containment provided by topography and by the mature vegetation along much of its external boundaries as well as from the internal field boundaries which subdivide the site internally. The multi-layering effect of this existing vegetation, residential area and the sloping topography limit the views into the site from the north and south (refer to Photo B).





C



D



G

VIEWS

7.30 Within the residential streets on Severn Road, Hunters Way and Florence Wragg Way, publicly accessible views into the site are limited due to the existing built form, the topography and existing vegetation (including the site's western boundary and vegetation with the curtilage of properties). Long range views are available from a small section of Florence Wragg Way towards and beyond the site to the large farm buildings associated with Oadby Lodge Farm (refer to Photo C), the scale of these buildings and the limited views creates a suburban fringe rather than a rural character.

7.31 Views from Public Rights of Way are limited from those outside of the site's boundaries however the two Public Rights of Way that cross the site from west to east provide views within each of the fields as such the views are foreshortened by the field boundaries (refer to Photo D). Due to the topography, the skyline dominates many views along the Public Rights of Way within the site itself. However, glimpsed views of the existing residential properties located on 'The Pastures' adjacent to the site are available from the public right of way, due to the rise in landform (looking south east) giving a perception of suburban character rather than a purely distinctly rural landscape.

7.32 From within Oadby Grange Country Park views are limited to the west into the site due to the existing vegetation (refer to Photo E). However, there are a small number of glimpsed views of the site's fields where the vegetation is gappy in places but predominantly views are limited or brief.

7.33 Views from along the Wash Brook corridor which runs across the middle of the site are limited to the Public Right of Way. This southern section of Public Right of Way, adjacent to the Wash Brook, is distinct from the others that cross the site in that it follows the transitional edge between the suburban residential estate and the naturalistic landscape of the Oadby Grange Country Park and areas of pastoral land within. Views into the site are brief and limited due to vegetation cover which runs along the western boundary of the Country Park (refer to Photo G).

7.34 Views across the site from the area of public open space which includes the large drainage basin to the south of the site have a distinct suburban character due to the properties on James Gavin Way being clearly visible (refer to Photo F). With the basin presenting an attractive ecological feature within the view to provide a perception of naturalistic character as the land use transitions to the rural landscape beyond.

7.35 In summary, the visibility of the site from within the immediate surroundings are limited due to the landform and existing mature vegetation, both within and off site. Existing built form also limits the views into the site from the adjoining roads.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Landscape Objectives

7.36 The following section addresses the landscape objectives in relation to the GI topics and landscape visual analysis which are to be integrated into the concept masterplan:

Access And Movement

- Retention and integration of existing Public Rights of Way;
- Creation of a sustainable residential development with direct walking/cycling links to the surrounding rural and urban areas;
- Improved connectivity to the surrounding settlement through enhanced road networks and links;
- Provision of new safe pedestrian and cycle links set within landscape corridors to improve the movement network across the site; and
- Providing links between the public open spaces to ensure usability with clear signage where appropriate.

Recreation And Amenities

- Protect and retain existing vegetation including hedgerows and trees;
- Provide a series of safe and usable open spaces that are well linked to the surrounding landscape with connections to the adjacent residential areas;
- Inclusion of play opportunities to create a variety of play and education opportunities for children of all ages and abilities; and
- Create of a sense of place by creating a local identity for the new and existing community.

Biodiversity and Ecology

- Retention and enhance of key habitat features (including existing woodland, trees, hedgerows and large drainage basin where possible);
- Conserve and enhance the existing biodiversity on site in line with ecological aims and recommendations;
- Integration into the green infrastructure elements to ensure ecological connectivity and improved functionality throughout the site;
- Opportunities for new habitat creation and consideration of planting species; and
- Connections into the wider ecological framework through the creation of green corridors.

Visual Amenity

- Accommodate the existing public footpaths through the site, having regard for existing views and character of the route;
- Retention of existing early mature woodland that screens views from countryside to the north, east and south;
- Provision of new tree planting within the proposed development, particularly along the field margins and in public spaces, to help absorb the development into its local setting;
- Assist visual integration of the development by the creation of a varied edge of built form; and
- Provide space for feature trees within the landscape framework to create key vistas for users and enhance views within the public open space.

Sustainable Urban Drainage

- Incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) including the retention and enhancement of existing ponds and creation of new SuDs features where required to reduce the impact of surface water run-off; and
- Create visually attractive SuDs features to become key linkages, focal points and destinations across the open space network for residents and visitors.

LANDSCAPE VISION

7.37 The landscape vision for land at Oadby Grange, Oadby is...

To support and contribute to the wider vision for the potential development on Land at Oadby Grange, a Green Infrastructure network will be created and maintained to provide a high-quality network of multi-functional spaces utilising the existing GI assets for the local and wider community to enjoy.

7.38 The overarching aim for the landscape proposals for the site is to create a series of green, open spaces and corridors that integrate the site into the existing landscape framework whilst creating an exciting and attractive place for the new community with a variety of formal and informal public open spaces.

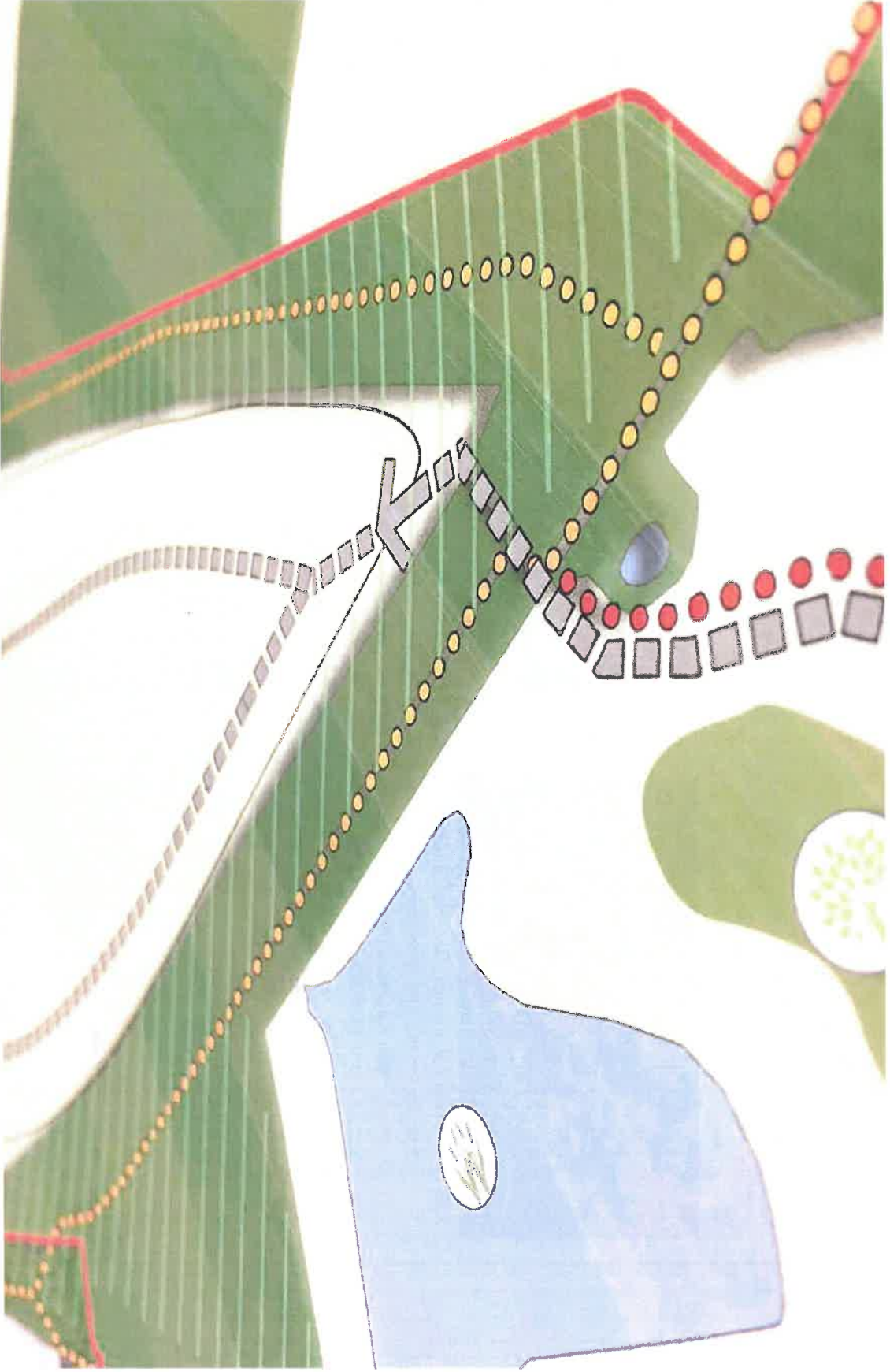
7.39 A Green Infrastructure network and landscape-led masterplan will ensure that the site at Oadby is an attractive, accessible and connected place where people want to live and where biodiversity thrives. The site could deliver a cohesive and high quality Green Infrastructure network that:

- Encourages and promotes healthy active lifestyles through the provision of high quality, safe and accessible open space for leisure, recreation and play;
- Supports local landscape character to provide an attractive sense of place whilst considering visual amenity;
- Creates and supports inclusive, safe and cohesive communities;
- Protects and enhances existing green infrastructure assets to be enjoyed and valued by everyone for future generations;

- Protects, creates and supports habitats that enable biodiversity, habitats and species to survive and thrive;
- Enhances connectivity to promote and facilitate sustainable travel movements; and
- Is resilient and adaptive in the face of climate change.

7.40 The concept masterplan is discussed within section 9, and shows how the landscape and visual opportunities and objectives have been incorporated. Furthermore, it demonstrates how, if allocated proposed development could be successfully integrated in a GI network for the site





8 | ACCESS

HIGHWAY CONSTRAINTS

- 8.1 Initial advice has been sought from Woods Hardwick Infrastructure LLP and they advise that the access to the site could be taken from Florence Wragg Way. This would be by changing the priorities at the Florence Wragg Way/Bluebell Close/Pipistrelle Way junction such that Florence Wragg Way (via a realigned Blue Bell Close) continues straight in to the site with vehicles coming from Pipistrelle Way giving way.
- 8.2 The Highway Authority Design Guidance states that up to 400 dwellings can be served via a single point of access based upon a 6.75m carriage way. Therefore, the internal road layout would provide a 6.75m carriageway into the Site up until the first internal loop at which point the road widths could be reduced to 5.5m.
- 8.3 A secondary access or emergency access leading onto Devonia Road could also be achieved, if this was required.
- 8.4 Regard has also been had to the wider road network. The Highway Authority Design Guidance advises that up to 1,000 dwellings can be served from this a road width of 6.75. Florence Wragg Way is also a wide residential road which falls well that would accord with the road width requirements. Additionally, the wider estate has more than one access onto the A6.
- 8.5 Woods Hardwick Infrastructure LLP conclude that access issues do not appear to represent a constraint to the development.



- Key
- Site Boundary
 - Existing woodland
 - Dadby Grange Country Park
 - Potential development area
 - Area of lower housing density
 - Existing SUDs basin
 - Existing PRoW
 - Site access
 - Potential pedestrian access
 - Potential green corridor with pedestrian access
 - Existing field boundary hedgero
 - Potential tree planting
 - Potential landscape corridor
 - Potential SUDs Feature
 - Potential open space
 - Potential play provision
 - Dadby Grange Country Park relocated car parking

FIGURE 9.1:
CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

9 | THE CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

INTRODUCTION

9.1 The Concept Master Plan (Figure 9.1) has been landscape led and demonstrates how the site could be developed in a way which responds sensitively to the opportunities and constraints that have been identified earlier in this report.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

9.2 The Concept Masterplan demonstrates that the site could provide for a scheme of between 270 and 320 dwellings split into two development parcels. This would equate to an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare (based on the net developable area) which would allow the layout to provide for different character areas with the density being slightly higher in parts of the site which directly adjoins the urban area and then feathered out to the edge of the site as it transitions to the countryside.

9.3 The Concept Masterplan would allow for a range of houses to be provided, with smaller 1 and 2 bed units, including apartments, as well as 2 to 4 bedroom family housing with typical building heights being of 2 to 2.5 storeys in height. In line with Emerging Local Plan Policy 13, the scheme would include 30% affordable housing with the mix and tenure reflecting the housing needs of the area. These dwellings would be incorporated into the development to ensure a tenure blind design and layout.

9.4 The sense of place for the development will be generated by a mix of the site's natural features and the proposed landscaping features to be developed as part of the scheme. Strong existing landscape features such as the existing boundaries on the edge of the site will form the back-drop to many of the new dwellings, while new and enhanced landscape features will provide focal points and character for development. Moreover, the landscape opportunities set out within the Concept Masterplan form an integral part of the scheme and would secure a high quality, accessible and multi-functional green infrastructure network in accordance with Policies 8, 9, 43 and 44 of the Local Plan.

Access and Movement

9.5 The existing public footpaths (no. Z5 across the site, no. Z4 to the north and no. Z10/C42 to the south), set the base for the movement strategy on the site. These will be retained in place and enhanced through the addition of landscaped spaces that follow the existing routes. These spaces comprise naturalistic amenity spaces with supplementary planting as well as the opportunity for informal spaces to allow for recreation and leisure use.

9.6 Movement, access and circulation will be an integral part of the scheme providing a linked network of formal and informal routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. The hierarchy will be complimented with street trees and hedging to create a streetscape that is in keeping with surrounding landscape context.

Recreation and Amenity



9.7

Public and private spaces would be clearly defined with the positioning of the built form in order to ensure a continuity of boundaries, variations in enclosure, for example with hedgerows, railings and fences. This would also increase the variety of experiences to help focus social activity and interaction within the public spaces whilst providing clear distinction between the public and private realm. Public spaces which are overlooked and fronted by buildings would help to create a safe public realm for users through natural surveillance. This is notable along the eastern and western edge of the development which overlook the adjacent areas of public open space.

9.9

Within the landscape proposals, play provisions, informal recreation e.g. walking, jogging would be provided, at key strategic locations within the public open space. The legibility of the public open spaces would be aided through signage which would denote directions to the various footpaths that link across the site and the amenity green space within the site and the surrounding area. Where appropriate interpretation boards could also offer an educational element to the space, informing users about key habitats and species on the site.



9.8

A clear hierarchy of open spaces would be created through formal greens to informal green corridors. With legible and direct links to the nearby local amenities and the town centre would encourage walking and cycling through the site and out to the wider area. This, helps to encourage health and wellbeing, on-street surveillance and ownership of the public realm to help foster a sense of place and identity for the new community.

Biodiversity and Ecology

9.10 The site contains existing early mature woodland with the associated understorey scrub, currently part of the Oadby Grange Country Park. This woodland would be retained and incorporated into the layout and design of the open space network as part of the development proposals. Supplementary tree and shrub planting would further improve the biodiversity, integrating the development into the existing landscape framework. Native plant species would be chosen to complement the existing flora of the site and respect any local provenance as well as providing habitats beneficial for wildlife.

9.11 The existing trees and vegetation along the site's boundaries enclose the site visually and physically, in particular along the north, east and southern boundary.

9.12 New native planting and the provision of buffer to the existing field boundaries would secure connective foraging and commuting habitats for wildlife, as well as creating an attractive landscape setting for proposed residential areas. Mixed native hedgerow planting inclusive of nectar rich species would also provide a welcome resource to bats and other wildlife in this area.

9.13 Furthermore, other ecological recommendations would be implemented as part of the proposals. This includes measures to minimise the potential effects of the development, for example, low level and directional lighting would be used within the proposed development with any lighting within the development to avoid lighting retained features such as trees and hedgerows.



Sustainable Urban Drainage

9.14 Sustainable urban drainage features including surface water attenuation basins/swales where required would be incorporated into the landscape proposals to produce additional multifunctional features within the public open space.

Visual Amenity

- 9.15** Existing vegetation is to be retained across the site where feasible ensuring that the sites existing field boundary patterns are retained aiding the development's integration into the existing landscape framework and the surrounding landscape context. The existing woodland vegetation on the north, east and southern boundaries screens views from the eastern countryside and would be retained and integrated into the development proposals.
- 9.16** The indicative concept masterplan shows an enhanced woodland within Oadby Grange Country Park that allows for continued use of existing Public Rights of Way as well as creating new corridors and views out of the site to the surrounding landscape.
- 9.17** Moreover, the Concept Masterplan shows the retention of significant areas of open space on the perimeter of the Site, providing for the linear Country Park as well as providing a softened transition to the countryside utilising the existing land levels and landscaping. This scheme also allows for the enhancement of the existing green infrastructure leading into the Site and the retention of the SuDS area to the front of the Site.
- 9.18** The Site would be split into 2 development parcels bisected by the central landscaping area which runs through the site in a generally north-east to south-westerly direction. These parcels would provide two areas which respond to the adjoining built form and enables the density to feather out on the periphery edges. This would seek to minimise the landscape impact of the development as set out in the landscape analysis.
- 9.19** The access is shown as being from the south-eastern corner of the site connecting into the wider road network, whilst there are opportunities throughout the site to connect to existing PROW routes to allow for a connected and accessible development.



FIGURE 10.1:
AERIAL PLAN OF OADBY

10 | LAND OWNERSHIP AND DELIVERY

10.1 The site is in single ownership and there are therefore no issues with regard to site assembly. The landowner is committed to bringing the site forward for development and is already in discussions with a residential developer.

10.2 As well as being suitable, the site is available and deliverable.

11 | CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 The analysis that has been undertaken demonstrates that there are many merits to the site being allocated for residential development. These include inter alia;
- The site is located immediately adjacent to Oadby; one of the principal towns in the Borough.
 - It is well related to the built-up area and would represent a logical rounding off for the settlement edge.
 - It is accessible to local shops and services and is also accessible by public transport.
 - There are no landscape, ecology or heritage designations that affect the site.
 - The site is not constrained by flooding and is located in Flood Zone 1.
 - The site is well contained by existing trees and hedges which could help mitigate the visual impact of built development when viewed from the wider countryside.
- 11.2 As always it is necessary to weigh the opportunities against the constraints, but in this case it is important to note that the site is not subject to key constraints such as:-
- Green Belt
 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
 - Green Wedge
 - SSSI
 - Conservation Area
 - Scheduled Ancient Monument or Listed Buildings
 - Flood Zone 2 or 3 (high risk of flooding)
 - Local Green Space
- 11.3 Whilst the site is greenfield, the LPA acknowledges that greenfield land will need to be released for development to meet the housing needs of the HMA. Nevertheless, the site has been the subject of an initial landscape assessment as explained in section 8 and this concludes, the site is capable of development without any significant and demonstrable harm to the landscape or visual amenities of the area.

11.4 The Country Park can be retained and incorporated into the concept master plan and could deliver further enhancements.

11.5 The allocation of this site for housing would assist in meeting the housing needs of the HMA on a site which is well located and accessible to local facilities and without resulting in any significant harm to interests of acknowledged importance.

11.6 This report shows that the site is not the subject of any insurmountable environmental, landscape or built environment constraints that cannot be addressed through a sensitively designed landscape led scheme. On this basis, the following conclusions have been drawn;

- **Suitability:** the site is located on the edge of Oadby and is well connected to a range of local facilities. In terms of access, the site is capable of providing a primary access along with the potential for a secondary/emergency access, as required. The site is considered to be suitable for residential development.

- **Availability:** The site is available and could be developed in the next 5 years. The Country Park matter has previously been misunderstood and is not a constraint for the development of the retained land. The site is therefore considered as available.

- **Achievability:** The report confirms that there are no identified environmental, landscape or built environment constraints which make the scheme unviable for residential development. Equally, as highlighted, the Country Park does not restrict the ability to achieve residential development on this site. Accordingly, the site is considered to be achievable.

Summary

Site Capacity

Total Site Area available for development (ha):	7.5 ha
Density Applied (dwellings per hectare):	35 dpha
Development Ratio Applied (%)	80%
Estimated Capacity	270-320 dwellings
Timeframe for Commencement	0-5 years

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PLANNING



DESIGN



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