

# OAKTHORPE – SITE ASSESSMENT

## SETTLEMENT SUMMARY

### Settlement Hierarchy

- Oakthorpe is a Sustainable Village in the adopted Local Plan.
- It is proposed to remain a Sustainable Village in the new Local Plan.

### *Key services and facilities*

- Oakthorpe has a primary school (Oakthorpe Primary). No current capacity issues have been identified. However, a potential shortfall in capacity has been identified for the period January 2025 to 2026, with a shortfall of 13 places by the end of this period.
- The closest secondary school is in Ashby de la Zouch (Ivanhoe School). Ivanhoe School is an 11-16 school. The school is over capacity but there are several schemes underway to increase pupil capacity using S106 funds. The school has recently secured planning permission to build a new sports hall with four additional classrooms. The school can be accessed by the No 19 Bus Service.
- Oakthorpe is served by three bus frequent bus services (hourly) providing connections to Ashby de la Zouch, Swadlincote and Burton upon Trent.
- Oakthorpe has a village convenience store (The Village Store).
- There are no employment opportunities in Oakthorpe. The closest primary employment area is the Westminster Industrial Estate, Measham, which is located within 2km of some parts of Oakthorpe.

### *Other services and facilities*

- The settlement also has a post office (Wednesday only), a Community Leisure Centre including formal playing pitches and informal recreation pitches.
- The closest GP and pharmacy are located in Measham along with other services and facilities.

### Settlement Features

- **River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**– The settlement and surrounding area are in the catchment of the River Mease SAC, where it is necessary to ensure that development does not negatively impact the river’s water quality. To date, the impact of development in the River Mease catchment has been mitigated by developers, mainly via two Developer Contribution Schemes. At present there is no capacity for further development in these schemes. It is proposed that in the future, treated foul water flows will be pumped out of the River Mease catchment. This is anticipated to occur in 2027. This means that development in the SAC is unlikely to be able to commence until 2027, unless an alternative means of mitigation (deemed acceptable by the Environment Agency and Natural England) is proposed by the site promoter.
- **National Forest** – The settlement and surrounding area is in the National Forest.
- **Minerals Consultation Area (MCA) for at or near surface Coal** – The majority of the settlement, including all the sites, is located within this MCA .
- **Coal Development Risk Areas** –
  - The southwestern part of the settlement and surrounds has a low risk of unrecorded coal mining related hazards. Encompasses part of Site Oa3.

- The north-eastern part of the settlement and surrounds has a high risk of unrecorded coal mining related hazards meaning a Coal Risk Assessment would be required in advance of any development. Encompasses the remainder of Site Oa3 and all the other sites.
- **Leicestershire & South Derbyshire Coalfield Landscape Character Area (LCA)**– All sites are located in this LCA which encompasses land around the settlement.
- **Ashby Canal** - The historic route of the Ashby Canal runs across Chapel Street and then passes over the north side of the village. The adopted Local Plan includes a policy (IF6) which seeks to reconstruct the canal from Snarestone to Measham as well as protect the historic route from development which would prejudice its restoration.
- **HS2** – HS2 has now been cancelled. The proposed route ran to the east of the settlement.

### STAGE 1 – SITE IDENTIFICATION

The 2021 SHELAA identifies 11 sites for housing in Oakthorpe:

Site Reference	Site Address
Oa1	Oakfield House, Burton Road
Oa2 (EMP60)	Burton Road
Oa3	Land at Chapel Street
Oa4	Land adjacent Measham Road
Oa5	Land at School Lane
Oa6	Former Holly Bush Inn, Main Street
Oa7	Land off Measham Road
Oa8	Measham Works, Burton Road
Oa9	49 Chapel Street
Oa10	Land rear of 47 Chapel Street
Oa11	Stretton View

### STAGE 2 – SITE SIEVE

Seven sites were sieved out at this stage, leaving four sites for further assessment.

Site Reference	Site Address	Reason for being sieved out
Oa1	Oakfield House, Burton Road	Remote from limits to development
Oa2 (EMP60)	Burton Road	Remote from limits to development
Oa6	Former Holly Bush Inn, Main Street	Detailed planning permission
Oa8	Measham Works, Burton Road	Remote from limits
Oa9	49 Chapel Street	<10 dwellings given the site characteristics
Oa10	Land rear of 47 Chapel Street	<10 dwellings given the site characteristics
Oa11	Stretton View	<10 dwellings

**Oa2 (EMP60)** will still be assessed regarding its suitability for employment uses.

### STAGE 3 - SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

SA Ref	SA Objective	SA Summary
SA1	Improve the health and wellbeing of the District's population	Oa4, Oa5 and Oa7 score <b>minor positive</b> Oa3 scores <b>minor negative</b>
SA2	Reduce inequalities and ensure fair and equal access and opportunities for all residents	Oa4, Oa5 and Oa7 score <b>minor negative</b> Oa3 scores <b>significant negative</b>
SA3	Help create the conditions for communities to thrive	-
SA4	Provide good quality homes that meet local needs in terms of number, type and tenure in locations where it can deliver the greatest benefits and sustainable access to jobs	++
SA5	Support economic growth throughout the District	0
SA6	Enhance the vitality and viability of existing town centres and village centres	++
SA7	Provision of a diverse range of employment opportunities that match the skills and needs of local residents	-
SA8	Reduce the need to travel and increase numbers of people walking cycling or using the bus for their day-to-day needs	+
SA9	Reduce air, light and noise pollution to avoid damage to natural systems and protect human health	-
SA11	Ensure the District is resilient to climate change	0
SA12	Protect and enhance the District's biodiversity and protect areas identified for their nature conservation and geological importance.	--
SA13	Conserve and enhance the quality of the District's landscape and townscape character	?
SA14	Ensure land is used efficiently and effectively	--
SA15	Conserve and enhance the character, diversity and local distinctiveness of the District's built and historic heritage	0
SA16	Protect water resources and ensure they are used efficiently	0
SA17	Ensure the efficient use of natural resources, including reducing waste generation	?

#### STAGE 4 – DETAILED SITE ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

##### Oa3 – Land at Chapel Street (1.5ha / about 37 dwellings)

*Services & Facilities* – In line with the parameters in the accompanying methodology, all sites in Oakthorpe are in good walking distance to public transport. This site is in reasonable walking distance to a convenience store, primary school and formal, informal recreation and employment. Like all sites in Oakthorpe, travel outside the settlement is required to access secondary education and GP and pharmacy services. The closest bus stops (regular service) are located on Coronation Lane, approximately 580-650m from the site. These stops provide access to the frequent No 19 Service (Burton to Ashby)

*Summary of SA*

SA Objectives																
Health and Wellbeing	Inequalities	Community	Housing	Economy	Town/Village centres	Employment	Sustainable travel	Air, Light & Noise	Flooding	Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Landscape	Land-use efficiency	Historic Environment	Water & Soil	Waste	
SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16	SA17	
-	--	-	++	0	++	-	+	-	0	--	?	--	0	0	?	

As with all sites in Oakthorpe this site performs well against SA4, SA6 and SA8 but poorly against SA12 and SA14. These are all greenfield sites over 1 hectare in size. For all sites landscape sensitivity is unknown. This site however is not so well located as other sites, to the local convenience store, primary school and recreation facilities and therefore scores a significant negative against SA2 and a minor negative against SA1.

*Key Planning Considerations*

- Development of the site would increase housing in the settlement by 12%.
- Greenfield site that adjoins the Limits to Development along part of its northern boundary. Boundaries comprise a mix of hedge and trees. A treed area is sited within the southern part of the site.
- Grade 3 Agricultural Land although no issues have been raised at this stage.
- The site does not have a satisfactory access but no specific highway issues have been raised.
- Potential presence of badger, bats and Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats but no objection has been raised from LCC Ecology and mitigation is suggested.
- Potential for coal mining related hazards across the site and part of the site is located within the Coal Development High Risk Area. A Coal Mining Risk Assessment will be required.
- The site is in a wider parcel of land (19OAK-A) deemed to have medium landscape sensitivity and medium visual sensitivity for housing (Landscape Sensitivity Study).

*Deliverability/Developability* – The site is promoted on behalf of the landowner with no evidence of developers interest and therefore can only be considered to be potentially available. There are also questions over the site’s suitability relating to significant encroachment into the countryside and its relationship with the settlement pattern.

#### Oa4 – Land adjacent Measham Road (1.57ha / about 39 dwellings)

*Services & Facilities* – In line with the parameters in the accompanying methodology, all sites in Oakthorpe are in good walking distance to public transport. This site is also in good walking distance to a convenience store, primary school and formal and informal recreation and reasonable walking distance to employment. Like all sites in Oakthorpe, travel outside the settlement is required to access secondary education and GP and pharmacy services. The closest bus stops (regular service) are located on New Street and Measham Road, approximately 455m from the site. These stops provide access to the frequent No 19 Service (Burton to Ashby)

#### Summary of SA Issues

SA Objectives															
Health and Wellbeing	Inequalities	Community	Housing	Economy	Town/Village centres	Employment	Sustainable travel	Air, Light & Noise	Flooding	Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Landscape	Land-use efficiency	Historic Environment	Water & Soil	Waste
SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16	SA17
+	-	-	++	0	++	-	+	-	0	--	?	--	0	0	?

As with all sites in Oakthorpe this site performs well against SA4, SA6 and SA8 but poorly against SA12 and SA14. These are all greenfield sites over 1 hectare in size. For all sites landscape sensitivity is unknown. This site however is well located to the local convenience store, primary school and recreation facilities and therefore scores a minor positive against SA1. Despite good access to local services, access to GP services is poor and this is reflected in the minor negative score against SA2.

#### Key Planning Considerations

- Development of the site would increase housing in the settlement by 12%.
- Greenfield site (Grade 4 Agricultural Land) outside of but adjoining the Limits to Development. Frontage is open but south eastern boundary comprises landscaping.
- The site does not have a satisfactory access and highway concerns have been raised whether a safe and appropriate access can be achieved.
- There is the potential for impact on biodiversity and boundary hedgerow maybe a potential BAP. However, no objection has been raised from LCC Ecology and mitigation is suggested.
- Potential for coal mining related hazards across the site and also located within the Coal Development High Risk Area. A Coal Mining Risk Assessment will be required.
- The site was located within the HS2 Safeguarding Zone and would have had implications on the site's deliverability of the site.
- The site is in a wider parcel of land (19OAK-B) deemed to have medium-low landscape sensitivity and low visual sensitivity for housing (Landscape Sensitivity Study). It is also identified 'Higher Visual Sensitivity' to Development.

*Deliverability/Developability* – The site is promoted on behalf of the landowner with no developer interest and therefore can only be considered potentially available. There are also questions over the site's suitability relating to its visual impact in the countryside and ability to provide a safe access.

## Oa5 – Land at School Lane (1.88ha / about 47 dwellings)

*Services & Facilities* – In line with the parameters in the accompanying methodology, all sites in Oakthorpe are in good walking distance to public transport. This site is in good walking distance to a convenience store, primary school and formal and informal recreation, and within reasonable walking distance to employment. Like all sites in Oakthorpe, travel outside the settlement is required to access secondary education and GP and pharmacy services. The closest bus stops (regular service) are located on Main Street, approximately 260-270m from the site (if accessed through the new adjacent residential development). These stops provide access to the frequent No 19 Service (Burton to Ashby)

### Summary of SA Issues

SA Objectives															
Health and Wellbeing	Inequalities	Community	Housing	Economy	Town/Village centres	Employment	Sustainable travel	Air, Light & Noise	Flooding	Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Landscape	Land-use efficiency	Historic Environment	Water & Soil	Waste
SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16	SA17
+	-	-	++	0	++	-	+	-	0	--	?	--	0	0	?

As with all sites in Oakthorpe this site performs well against SA4, SA6 and SA8 but poorly against SA12 and SA14. These are all greenfield sites over 1 hectare in size. For all sites landscape sensitivity is unknown. This site however is well located to the local convenience store, primary school and recreation facilities and therefore scores a minor positive against SA1. Despite good access to local services, access to GP services is poor and this is reflected in the minor negative score against SA2.

### Key Planning Considerations

- Development of the site would increase housing in the settlement by 15%.
- Greenfield site (Grade 4 Agricultural Land) adjoining the Limits to Development. Adjoins residential development, in part, including the recent ongoing residential development at Home Farm. Southern and western boundary comprises landscaping.
- Several footpaths run across the site. LCC Highways have advised that access from School Street appears to be difficult on the basis of available corridor width and potential visibility issues, as well as narrow footways. However, no concerns have been raised in respect of accessing the site from the adjoining development at Home Farm.
- Potential for impact on biodiversity including the presence of badgers and BAP habitats on site and site survey work is suggested. No objection has been raised from LCC Ecology and potential for mitigation.
- Potential for coal mining related hazards across the site and located within the Coal Development High Risk Area. A Coal Mining Risk Assessment will be required.
- The site is in a wider parcel of land (19OAK-C) deemed to have medium-low landscape sensitivity and medium-low visual sensitivity for housing. (Landscape Sensitivity Study). It is also highlighted as being 'Higher Landscape Sensitivity' to Development.

*Deliverability/Developability* – The site is promoted by an agent on behalf of the landowner and a housebuilder is involved. Its availability was last confirmed in 2022. It is in a suitable location for housing, with a satisfactory relationship with the settlement and opportunity for landscaping improvements to minimise its visual impact and could be potentially developed during the Local Plan period.

**Oa7 – Land at School Lane (4.62ha / about 86 dwellings)**

*Services & Facilities* – In line with the parameters in the accompanying methodology, all sites in Oakthorpe in good walking distance to public transport. This site is in good walking distance to a convenience store, primary school and formal and informal recreation, and within reasonable walking distance of employment. Like all sites in Oakthorpe, travel outside the settlement is required to access secondary education and GP and pharmacy services. The closet bus stops (regular service) are located on New Street and Measham Road), approximately 250-310m from the site. These stops provide access to the frequent No 19 Service (Burton to Ashby)

*Summary of SA*

SA Objectives																
Health and Wellbeing	Inequalities	Community	Housing	Economy	Town/Village centres	Employment	Sustainable travel	Air, Light & Noise	Flooding	Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Landscape	Land-use efficiency	Historic Environment	Water & Soil	Waste	
SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14	SA15	SA16	SA17	
+	-	-	++	0	++	-	+	-	0	--	?	--	0	0	?	

As with all sites in Oakthorpe this site performs well against SA4, SA6 and SA8 but poorly against SA12 and SA14. These are all greenfield sites over 1 hectare in size. For all sites landscape sensitivity is unknown. This site however is well located to the local convenience store, primary school and recreation facilities and therefore scores a minor positive against SA1. Despite good access to local services, access to GP services is poor and this is reflected in the minor negative score against SA2.

*Key Planning Considerations*

- Development of the site would increase housing in the settlement by 27%.
- Greenfield site (Grade 4 Agricultural Land) that adjoins the Limits to Development along its southern boundary. Salterford Wood is to the north. The proposed route of the reinstated Ashby Canal runs adjacent to the north western boundary of the site and this could be incorporated as a feature. A number of overhead cables are present.
- A number of public footpaths run across the site and its boundary. No highway objections have been raised although accident rates need to be considered.
- A Candidate LWS adjoins the site to the north and there is the potential for presence of badgers and BAP habitats on site. Further survey work is suggested. No objections have been raised from LCC Ecology and buffer zones are requested to provide mitigation.
- Potential for coal mining related hazards across the site and is located within the Coal Development High Risk Area. A Coal Mining Risk Assessment will be required.

- The site is in a wider parcel of land (19OAK-A) deemed to have a medium landscape sensitivity and medium visual sensitivity for housing (Landscape Sensitivity Study). The site also abuts an area defined as 'Higher Landscape Sensitivity' to Development.

Deliverability/Developability – The site is promoted by an agent, on behalf of his client with an option on the land, and a housebuilder is involved. Its availability was last confirmed in 2022. However, there are questions over the site's suitability relating to the scale of development and poor relationship with the settlement pattern.

## **STAGE 5 – OVERALL CONCLUSIONS**

Having regard to the outcome of the SA, Site Oa3 performs the poorest, it is not so well located to local services. Sites Oa4, Oa5 and Oa7 score the same and have better access to local services and facilities.

All sites in Oakthorpe are in the catchment of the River Mease Special Area of Conservation, where it is necessary to ensure that development does not negatively impact the river's water quality. To date, the impact of development in the River Mease catchment has been mitigated by developers, mainly via two Developer Contribution Schemes. At present there is no capacity for further development in these schemes. It is proposed that in the future treated foul water flows will be pumped out of the River Mease catchment. This is anticipated to occur in 2027. This means that development in the SAC is unlikely to be able to commence until 2027, unless an alternative means of mitigation is proposed by the site promoter.

Of the four sites assessed:

Site **Oa3** is a large greenfield site which due to its scale and siting would result in significant encroachment into the countryside and has a poor relationship to the settlement pattern. Comparatively less well located to village services, recreation facilities and bus service.

Site **Oa4** is a greenfield site that provides a rural approach to the village and is mirrored by open land on the opposite side of the road. This site is also identified 'Higher Visual Sensitivity' to Development. It would extend the building line of the settlement further into the countryside. Highway concerns have been raised. This site was located with the HS2 Safeguarding Zones raising questions over its deliverability.

Site **Oa5** is a greenfield site bounded on two sides by the settlement boundary and residential development. Site is also highlighted as being 'Higher Landscape Sensitivity' to Development. However, development would not extend beyond the outer built limits of the settlement and there is potential for landscaping opportunities to minimise the visual impact of any development. Overall, it has good access to village services as well as public transport.

Site **Oa7** is a large greenfield site which due to its scale and siting would result in significant encroachment into the countryside and would not have such a positive relationship with the settlement pattern.

## **Recommendations**

Allocate **Land at School Lane (Oa5)** for around 47 dwellings.

