

**BRIEFING NOTE FOR PORTOLIO HOLDERS FOR PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**MELTON LOCAL PLAN UPDATE ISSUES AND OPTIONS (REGULATION 18) CONSULTATION**

**2 JANUARY 2024**

**Background**

The Melton Local Plan was adopted in October 2018. It is a legal requirement that councils review their local plan within 5 years of adoption, to decide whether the plan needs to be updated, either in whole or in part.

A Five-Year Review of the Melton Local Plan was considered by a meeting of the Council on 28th of September 2023. The review assessed the local plan's policies against a range of factors, including, conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and changes to local circumstances (for example, Local Housing Needs).

The review concluded that most, but not all, of the policies were assessed as needing revision. Therefore, the decision was taken to prepare a partial update of the Melton Local Plan.

The issues and options consultation represents the first stage of the review and is open for comments until 7 January 2024. In view of the timescales involved it has not been possible to report this to Local Plan Committee

Officers have reviewed the consultation document and suggest that the following form the Council's response.

**Policy SS2 Development Strategy**

Whilst his policy is not subject to the Issues and Options Consultation, it is noted that Melton are not proposing to change the Local Plan's overall housing target or add any new housing sites as allocations in the Local Plan Update.

The Outcomes of the Melton Local Plan five-year review document (September 2023) refers to the forecast housing provision (paragraph 2.2.4) for the plan period to be 1,750 dwellings more than the local plan target. It is unclear where this figure has come from or how it has been calculated. As the evidence is not clear we would want some reassurance that the stated over provision can be delivered.

**Plan Period**

The plan period is not proposed to be changed and would remain 2011-2036. The time frame of the Local Plan is not consistent with paragraph 22 of the NPPF and this is likely to be raised as an issue by a Local Plan Inspector at examination stage. We would want to be assured that Melton Borough will continue to meet its housing need and any additional need from elsewhere agreed through the Duty to Cooperate (or its replacement).

**Employment Land**

We note that an update is being undertaken on the employment land requirement evidence.

**Policy SS4 – South Melton Mowbray Sustainable Neighbourhood**

The Approved SSN Masterplan Statement includes a Phasing Schedule (page 86) which identifies that 2,033 dwellings could be built by 2036.

Paragraph 5.2.2 of the Issues and Options Consultation document states that planning permission has been granted for 555 dwellings on part of the site, currently under construction, and 85 dwellings have already been built and that the Masterplan identifies a further 1,975 homes can be delivered across the site.

These figures added together equal 2,615 dwellings, which is 582 additional dwellings compared to the figures in the Masterplan. It is unclear why the figures in paragraph 5.2.2 are different to those set out in the Masterplan.

In terms of employment land the SSN Masterplan Phasing Schedule identifies 17.7Ha of employment land compared to the 20Ha identified in the adopted Local Plan Policy. It is noted that a review of the employment land requirement is underway.

### **Policy SS5 – Melton Mowbray North Sustainable Neighbourhood**

The NMN Masterplan splits the site into two parcels: East of Scalford Road and West of Scalford Road. The phasing and timescales section (page 117) of the NSN Masterplan identifies that 1,230 dwellings would be provided on the site to the East of Scalford Road and that 600 dwellings would be provided on the site to the West of Scalford Road by 2036. In total some 1,830 dwellings would be provided on the NSN by 2036.

The Issues and Options Consultation Document (paragraph 6.2.2) states that delivery is underway with planning permission for 883 dwellings including some under construction and a further 1,230 dwellings subject to a planning application currently under consideration. Additionally, 123 completions have been recorded.

These figures added together equal 2,236 dwellings, which is 406 additional dwellings compared to the figures set out in the NSN Masterplan. It is unclear why the figures in paragraph 6.2.2 are different to those set out in the Masterplan.

### **Policy SS6: Alternative Development Strategies and Local Plan Review**

Policy SS6 of the adopted Local Plan sets out the Council's commitment to meeting its requirements for housing and employment and other development and infrastructure. Triggers for a review of the Local Plan include significant and persistent shortfalls in delivery or changes within the Housing Market Area (HMA) to the objectively assessed need or spatial distribution of growth across the HMA.

Options are put forward for how the policy could be amended by:

- Option 1 - Deleting the policy
- Option 2 - Reducing the criteria locally specific matters (the preferred option)
- Option 3 - Adding new criteria

North West Leicestershire District Council considers that options 2 and 3 are the most appropriate, subject to the inclusion and updating of this policy to make reference to collaborative working to meet any unmet need within the HMA.

### **Policy C6 - Gypsies and Travellers**

It is noted that it has been identified that an update to this policy is not considered to be necessary and that the 2017 GTAA study does not identify a need for any pitches in Melton Borough. It is also noted that the Borough Council will co-operate on an update to the GTAA. North West Leicestershire District Council welcomes this commitment.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) THAT THE REVIEW OF THE MELTON LOCAL PLAN BE WELCOMED; AND**
- (ii) THAT THE COMMENTS SET OUT IN THIS REPORT BE FORWARDED TO MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL AS THIS COUNCILS RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION**