

# Melton Mowbray Transport and New Development Position Statement

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Melton  
Borough  
Council



Leicestershire  
County Council

Prepared by Melton Borough Council & Leicestershire County Council  
supported by Jacobs

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Melton Borough Council (MBC) in partnership with Leicestershire County Council (LCC) with the support of transport consultants Jacobs on the interpretation of traffic model outputs.
- 1.2 MBC is in the process of preparing its new Local Plan. Early work clarifies the need to see Melton Mowbray grow as the Borough's main town and as a key centre in Leicestershire and the East Midlands.
- 1.3 MBC and LCC recognise the need for growth and the necessity to release land for development in and around the town whilst the Local Plan is being prepared; however, this should not be at the expense of adverse economic, environmental and social impacts. MBC and LCC are therefore committed to working proactively with developers to find development solutions which can meet the short term need for growth without prejudice to these factors and to the longer term need. Both authorities are committed towards working together to try and support the delivery of infrastructure in the town that can assist with delivering sustainable growth.
- 1.4 This statement therefore has two main aims:
  1. To provide clarity to developers on MBC's and LCC's position in response to the transport infrastructure challenges identified through recently completed transport evidence against the background of the emerging Local Plan.
  2. To communicate the development potential of Melton Mowbray as a thriving Market Town, with a significantly enhanced local and regional role to support any applications for funding which could assist with overcoming infrastructure barriers to growth.
- 1.5 As the Local Plan is being developed a large volume of new evidence will be prepared. This statement will draw from the best available evidence at any given time and will be regularly reviewed to take account of new evidence as and when it is completed.

## 2.0 Melton Local Plan Context

- 2.1 The Melton Local Plan is in the process of being prepared. In accordance with the adopted Local Development Scheme<sup>1</sup> consultation on the Melton Local Plan Issues and Options was completed 12<sup>th</sup> January 2014. Work is now underway on the Melton Local Plan Preferred Option (Draft Plan) which is scheduled for consultation in June 2015. The Melton Local Plan is scheduled to be adopted mid-2017.

## The Melton Local Plan Vision

- 2.2 The draft Vision for the Borough was approved by Full Council on the 30 April 2014 and then on 18 September 2014 when the Borough Council approved the Issues and Options for consultation. Extracts from the vision are set out below:

*...promote and manage development...*

*....Meet the needs of business to provide a diverse competitive and innovative economy....*

*....Strengthen Melton Mowbray's role as a historic market town as the main social and economic focus for the Borough...*

*....Raise the quality, interest and diversity of Melton Mowbray's town centre and reduce the impact of traffic...*

*...Provide the necessary infrastructure to support economic and population growth...*

- 2.3 This vision was developed in partnership with the Melton Local Plan Reference Groups. MBC's formal approval of this vision demonstrates the ambition to see Melton Mowbray realise its growth potential for the next 15 to 20 years.

## Context Set by the Melton Local Plan Issues and Options

- 2.4 The Melton Local Plan Issues and Options<sup>ii</sup> sought views on matters such as the plan period, the overall level of development needed in the Borough and how this should be distributed.
- 2.5 Assuming a plan period of 2011 to 2036, the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment<sup>iii</sup> (SHMA) 2014 identifies an objectively assessed housing need for the Borough of up to 245 dwellings per annum. This would equate to 6125 dwellings for the Borough between 2011 and 2036.
- 2.6 Between 1994 and 2014, 3,517 new dwellings were built in the Borough, which is an average of 175 dwellings a year. Of these 1,943 were built within and adjoining Melton Mowbray (average of 97 dwellings a year). Therefore over the last 20 years Melton Mowbray accommodated 55% of the Borough's housing growth.
- 2.7 Looking forward to the period 2011 to 2036, the Issues and Options looks at options for the distribution of development ranging from 50% to 70% of new development focussed on Melton Mowbray. For Melton Mowbray this would equate to between 3,063 new dwelling's (122 a year) and 4,288 (172 a year). It is suggested that the upper end of this range is preferable but even the lower end of the range represents a significant uplift in development in comparison to previous years. It should also be noted that due to slow rates of delivery since 2011 the shortfall in housing each year will need to be made up-over the plan period, resulting in a further increase.
- 2.8 A key challenge identified in the emerging Local Plan is the relationship between housing and employment. If sufficient new homes are not built there is a significant risk that the labour force will be insufficient to fill the current and projected level of jobs in the Borough.

A restriction in housing supply could therefore impact on the sustainability of the Borough's existing jobs and business and will restrict the Borough's economic growth potential and attractiveness to investors.

### **Melton Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Planning**

- 2.9 Alongside each Melton Local Plan preparation stage an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be prepared. The Melton Local Plan Issues and Options Infrastructure Delivery Plan<sup>iv</sup> draws on early discussion with infrastructure providers and the existing evidence base to highlight a number of potential infrastructure issues that if not addressed could adversely affect the town and prejudice the ability to deliver the overall level of development needed in Melton Mowbray and the Borough.
- 2.10 The early infrastructure planning work highlights transport as the key challenge facing the sustainable development of Melton Mowbray. It highlights that there are junction capacity issues in and around the Town Centre and any development will need to be carefully considered to ensure the negative effects do not outweigh the positives particularly in terms of congestion and the associated impact on the economy and the environment. This work also identifies challenges in terms of planning for the Town's educational needs. Whilst this will not be considered in detail in this paper, a direct relationship exists between the transport challenge and vehicle movements generated by education. This relationship will need to be considered carefully moving forwards.

## **3.0 Housing Land Supply**

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework<sup>v</sup> (NPPF) requires Local Authorities to maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land plus appropriate buffers. At the current time the Borough cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land and will be unlikely to be able to do so until new allocations are brought forward through the new Local Plan. However in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development MBC has a positive approach to new development and will continue to work with developers to facilitate the growth needed in the Borough and where possible in advance of the new Local Plan. At the current time MBC and LCC are in detailed discussion with site proponents of a number of development sites in and around Melton Mowbray.

## **4.0 The Melton Transport Evidence Base**

- 4.1 MBC and LCC are working together on a suite of transport studies to support the development of the Melton Local Plan and to help facilitate consideration of planning applications in the area. Many transport studies have been developed to support previous development strategies in Melton. However, whilst this statement specifically refers to transport evidence prepared from 2014 onwards, this does not mean that transport Evidence prepared prior to this time is invalid. It should also be emphasised that whilst the

work to date has been extremely helpful in developing an understanding of the causes of transport problems in the town, and by extension the likely general magnitude of the transport measures required to address these issues, at this stage no definitive conclusions have been reached as to the *exact nature* of the measures required. These will be identified in the next phase of the work, which is due to be concluded around the end of spring 2015. (See paragraph 5.0 onwards for more information on the work to development potential mitigation solutions.).

- 4.2 The work to date makes use of the Leicester and Leicestershire Integrated Transport Model (LLITM). This model built, in accordance with Department of Transport's modelling and appraisal guidance, is a forecasting tool and as such is suitable for the initial, strategic identification and quantification of transport issues. The analysis undertaken below should be considered in this context.

### **Melton Mowbray Cumulative Development Transport Impact Study**

- 4.3 The Melton Mowbray Cumulative Development Impact Study<sup>vi</sup> was completed in October 2014 and approved as Technical Evidence to support the Melton Local Plan and the assessment of planning applications by Full Council on 16 December 2014. This work had two main purposes:
1. To assess the current issues facing the Melton Mowbray road network to generate specific understanding of how congested junctions and road links are already and how this is impacting upon journey times moving around and through the Melton Mowbray road network.
  2. To assess how the road network would operate in 2031, with and without a number of potential development sites built equating to 2550 new dwellings split roughly 50% to the north and 50% to south of the Town.
- 4.4 The work uses LLITM and shows that at present Melton Mowbray has a high level of congestion in the AM and PM peak in Melton town centre and possibly the worst levels of congestion in the county outside of the PUA (Leicester). Speeds through the town are as low as 7mph in the peaks on some routes (see **Appendix A**).
- 4.5 For our purposes the report classes a severe impact on delay per mile as 3 minutes or more. The table included as **Appendix A** demonstrates that most of the journey time routes considered experience delays in excess of 3 minutes per mile. In 2011 the routes incurring the longest delay per mile are the A606 southbound and A6006/B676 westbound through the town centre in the AM peak. By 2031 delays per mile have deteriorated on all routes with and without development.
- 4.6 The analysis shows that under current traffic levels, congestion is having an impact on the town centre road network, and in the future without any development these problems are exacerbated and require further study to identify proportionate and effective mitigation.

- 4.7 The study suggests that any development irrespective of size would have a notable impact in further deteriorating traffic conditions in the town (whether measured by congestion, delay or travel times) and concludes that:

*“Any development coming forward in the town requires a detailed transport assessment undertaken to ensure that suitable mitigation is proposed. To ensure a suitably robust assessment this should be undertaken using LLITM, which also ensures traffic re-assignment impacts are taken into account, and that the effectiveness of the mitigation proposals can be analysed in a cumulative context”*

- 4.8 Furthermore the work suggests that the use of a standardised LLITM assessment should be undertaken for any individual proposal >50 dwellings (~30 peak hour trips) in or adjacent to Melton Mowbray for reasons of consistency, equity and robustness.
- 4.9 Whilst this study did not factor in any mitigation associated with the cumulative development, the study suggested that given the limited spare network capacity, any mitigation would need to be of demonstrably sufficient magnitude to not only mitigate the impacts of the development itself, but also contribute to a wider benefit for residents and as part of the overall growth strategy for the town. That is not to say that developers should (bearing in mind the CIL tests) or could pay solely for such a scale of mitigation. Given this, it is potentially possible that the scale of mitigation required might exceed that which could reasonably be funded by developer contributions alone. Furthermore, ongoing pressures on local government finances severely limit both LCC’s (the local highway authority) and MBC’s (the local planning authority) ability to fund new transport infrastructure to enable housing and economic growth from their own budgets. Thus, at this time it appears probable that (external) funding from other sources will be required to deliver the transport measures necessary to enable Melton Mowbray to realise its sustainable growth potential.

## Melton Mowbray Transport Study – Phase 1

- 4.10 Melton Mowbray Transport Study Phase 1 was commissioned by LCC to investigate existing traffic movements within the town, as well as how traffic movements would evolve by 2031 even if there was no further significant development in the town. The Phase 1 study used LLITM to provide a better understanding of the patterns and composition of traffic travelling into, out of, within and through Melton Mowbray. A primary aim of the Transport Study was to help in the identification of measures likely to help address the existing and future traffic problems identified through the Melton Mowbray Cumulative Development Transport Impact Study. A summary of the main findings for each stage of work undertaken so far are provided below.

### Stage 1 – Through Traffic Movements

- 4.11 Stage 1 looked at through traffic movements in Melton Mowbray using LLITM outputs for 2011 and 2031. As part of this, outputs were derived from LLITM which indicate that in 2011, through traffic volumes peak at around 1,300 vehicles per hour (vph) during the PM Peak, with a daily through traffic estimate of around 14,600 vehicles per day. The 2031 forecast suggests that through traffic volumes will continue to peak during the PM Peak hour, rising by 12% relative to 2011 to around 1,450 vph, whilst daily through traffic volumes

are estimated to grow by 15% to approximately 16,700 vehicles in total. The LLITM outputs also indicate that in 2011, through traffic represents around 18% of all traffic within Melton Mowbray, dropping slightly to 17% by 2031.

- 4.12 The outputs show that through traffic is spread across the main routes through Melton Mowbray rather than being overwhelmingly concentrated along a single route/corridor. However, they do show a greater concentration of traffic along the A606 Nottingham / Oakham axis than other through routes. In absolute terms the A606 axis carries through traffic of around 3,400 vehicles daily in 2011 (rising to 3,700 vehicles in 2031), which in several places amounts to more than 40% of all traffic using the road. This means that the A606 axis also has the largest share of total through traffic in Melton Mowbray, ranging from just under 20% in 2031 AM peak to nearly 30% in 2011 PM peak. Generally most through traffic seems to be entering and exiting between points to the south and west of the town centre in an arc from the B676 round to the A606 towards Nottingham.
- 4.13 Between 2011 and 2031 heavy goods vehicle (HGV) through traffic volumes are forecast to increase significantly and are a major component of the overall projected growth in through traffic. In the peak periods they double in volumes whilst over the day they increase by around 80%. In the AM peak hour an additional 70 HGVs are negotiating their way through the town centre by 2031. The increase is approximately 50 HGVs in the PM peak hour. Over the day the increase is almost an additional 1000 vehicles per day. By 2031 HGVs make up around 13% of all through traffic compared with around 8% in 2011.
- 4.14 The forecast growth in HGV through traffic between 2011 and 2031 is heavily concentrated on a single route through Melton Mowbray between the A6006 towards Loughborough and Castle Donington and the A606 towards Oakham. A further piece of work was undertaken by LCC to investigate where the additional HGV through traffic along this corridor was coming from and going to. This revealed that most of the additional HGVs are long distance traffic between the proposed 'East Midlands Gateway' Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (near Castle Donington and M1 Junction 24 in North West Leicestershire) and Norfolk and Suffolk. Much of this traffic would be expected to be travelling to or from the container ports at Felixstowe on the southern edge of Suffolk (i.e. via the A1).
- 4.15 In practice, it is anticipated that the majority of this HGV traffic would use the strategic M1-A14 route rather than cutting through Melton via the A6006 and A606; indeed the modelling work for the East Midlands Gateway development shows this to be the case. Furthermore, a sense check of routes between the proposed East Midlands Gateway site and Felixstowe using internet route planning software identified that the M1 and A14 is currently likely to be faster and more attractive than the A6006/A606 via Melton Mowbray for most traffic.
- 4.16 Essentially, LLITM is focused on the implications for travel affecting Leicestershire. In this regard, detailed forecasting is concentrated within the county with diminishing detail required as distance increases from the sphere of influence. Consequently, LLITM makes



generalisations about the start/end destinations for traffic to/from Norfolk and Suffolk<sup>1</sup> which are likely to have distorted the route choices of traffic to/from East Midlands Gateway to some extent.

- 4.17 Nonetheless, the sense check did indicate the A6006/A606 through Melton Mowbray to be a potentially competitive alternative to the M1/A14 should future conditions on the Strategic Road Network deteriorate to a sufficiently significant extent. This is particularly the case for HGVs given that they are subject to lower speed limits than general traffic on most interurban roads and therefore stand to gain less relative benefit from using high quality routes such as the M1/A14.
- 4.18 As such, whilst the forecast increase in HGV through traffic needs to be treated with caution, it does indicate a potential issue which could have implications for Melton Mowbray in terms of future levels of congestion, journey times, local air quality and safety.
- 4.19 In terms of the impact of through traffic on Melton Mowbray town centre, the study suggests that congestion at junctions along Wilton Road, Leicester Street and Norman Way will impede through traffic movements and that growth in through traffic not only exacerbates the congestion problems on these routes but also contributes to the use of rat runs.

## Stage 2 – Non Through Traffic Movements

- 4.20 Stage 2 looked at non-through traffic movements in Melton Mowbray using LLITM outputs for 2011 and 2031. The outputs indicate that in 2011, hourly non-through traffic volumes peak at around 5,900 vehicles during the PM Peak hour, with a daily non-through traffic estimate of around 67,000 vehicles. The 2031 forecast suggests that non-through traffic volumes will continue to peak during the PM Peak hour, rising by 14% relative to 2011 to around 6,700 vehicles, whilst the proportionate growth in daily non-through traffic volumes is estimated to be slightly higher at 19% to around 80,000 vehicles in total. The LLITM outputs also indicate that in both 2011 and 2031, non-through traffic represents over 80% of all traffic within Melton Mowbray.
- 4.21 Generally the proportion of trips which are entirely within Melton Mowbray is around 36% of all non-through traffic in 2011, falling to around 29% in 2031 which corresponds with a modest drop in absolute vehicle numbers. Conversely, the overall growth in non-through traffic is due to large increases in internal-external and external-internal traffic, which grows by around 32% over the course of the day from around 42,900 vehicles in 2011 to 56,600 vehicles in 2031. This includes particularly large increases in external-internal (inbound) traffic of 40% during the AM peak from around 2,000 vph in 2011 to 2,900 vph in 2031, and in internal-external (outbound) traffic of 37% during the PM peak from around 1,800 vph in 2011 to 2,500 vph in 2031.

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<sup>1</sup> A single zone is used to represent the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk within LLITM and the centroid for this zone (where it links to the highway network) is located roughly in the position of Norwich, some 60/70 miles north of Felixstowe.

- 4.22 The outputs show that trips entirely within Melton Mowbray concentrate within the town centre (i.e. Norman Way, Wilton Road, Leicester Street, Thorpe End and connections) and particularly on a North West-South East axis through the town centre broadly similar to the pattern observed for through traffic movements. By contrast, non-through traffic from and to Melton Mowbray (internal-external and external-internal movements) are most heavily concentrated on the A607 and A6006 corridors to the North East, West and South West of Melton Mowbray town centre and especially on the A607 corridor towards Leicester, with the highest volumes at the entry/exit points to the town.
- 4.23 Between 2011 and 2031 heavy goods vehicle (HGV) non-through traffic volumes increased marginally from around 180 to 200 vehicles per hour during the AM peak and from around 2,100 to 2,400 vehicles over the course of the day.
- 4.24 The study identifies that across all time periods in 2011 and 2031 the amount of all vehicle and HGV only traffic to and from the town centre amounts to between 10% and 15% of non-through traffic. Non-through traffic crossing the town centre on a north-south axis amounts to around a third of all non-through traffic and around 50% to 60% of non-through traffic does not cross the town centre.
- 4.25 Whilst around a third of non-through vehicle trips involve crossing the town centre on a north-south axis a significantly greater proportion of these (over 30% more over the day) are to or from locations on the north side of the town than on the south side of the town.
- 4.26 As this analysis applies in 2031 as well as 2011, it suggests that policies and measures focussing on improving local accessibility to work, education and services within the north and south of the town centre should be a priority. These would not only target the majority of non-through traffic but may also reduce the need for local traffic to cross the town centre not just on a north-south axis but also on an east-west axis.

## 5.0 Working towards Mitigation Solutions

- 5.1 The final package of mitigation needed for the town to support the level of growth needed will be formally agreed through the development of the Melton Local Plan and the Melton Infrastructure Delivery Plan. However work has already started to identify potential mitigation options.
- 5.2 In November and December 2014, MBC, LCC and Jacobs undertook two detailed workshops with the Melton Local Plan Reference Groups testing the early transport evidence and generating a number of potential mitigation options for Melton Mowbray.
- 5.3 Officers and Jacobs have undertaken further analysis of those options, identified new options and revisited a number of options that had been considered previously through previous development strategies for the town, these will be developed into a further piece of work by Jacobs and will be published spring 2015.

## 6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 This paper sets out MBC's and LCC's aspiration to see Melton Mowbray to grow to improve the opportunities it can provide for current and future residents and to fulfil an enhanced role in the Borough, Leicestershire and the East Midlands.
- 6.2 However, the paper highlights a number of transport challenges that will need to be overcome if the vision for Melton Mowbray is to be realised.
- 6.3 At this stage in the modelling work, it is too early to draw any definitive conclusions about the exact nature of the transport measures required to address these challenges. However, the early transport evidence suggests that to deliver successfully the levels of development required, i.e. without significant adverse economic, environmental and social impacts on the town, a coordinated approach to transport mitigation will be required.
- 6.4 It also suggests that the scale of transport measures required might exceed that which could reasonably be funded by developer contributions alone. Furthermore, ongoing pressures on local government finances severely limit both LCC's (the local highway authority) and MBC's (the local planning authority) ability to fund new transport infrastructure to enable housing and economic growth from their own budgets. Therefore, at this time it appears probable that (external) funding from other sources will be required to deliver the transport measures necessary to enable Melton Mowbray's successful future growth.

## Appendix A

### Melton Mowbray Cumulative Development Transport Impact Study Table Extracts:



Figure 3-J Journey time routes

Route		Time Period	Speed (Miles Per Hour)			Delay Per Mile (MM:SS)		
			2011	2031 With Dev	Change in net speed	2011	2031 With Dev	Change in Delay
1 (A606)	North to South (Red)	AM	7.16	6.13	-1.04	05:06	06:31	01:24
		PM	9.11	8.02	-1.09	03:24	04:25	01:01
	South to North (Green)	AM	15.99	13.82	-2.17	00:02	00:03	00:00
		PM	19.47	14.52	-4.95	00:04	00:05	00:00
2 (A607)	South to North (Yellow)	AM	8.69	7.94	-0.75	04:10	05:00	00:50
		PM	9.35	8.82	-0.53	03:21	03:51	00:30
	North to South (Blue)	AM	9.81	9.65	-0.16	04:17	04:23	00:06
		PM	9.00	9.03	0.03	04:26	05:06	00:39
3 (A6006/B676)	East to West (Green)	AM	6.94	6.55	-0.39	06:45	07:27	00:41
		PM	10.22	8.80	-1.43	03:56	04:49	00:52
	West to East (Green)	AM	10.20	8.98	-1.22	03:45	04:32	00:47
		PM	10.90	9.94	-0.96	03:17	03:50	00:32
4 (Scafford Road / Dalby Road)	North to South (Blue)	AM	8.82	7.70	-1.12	04:47	05:50	01:02
		PM	11.20	9.72	-1.48	03:27	04:17	00:50
	South to North (Blue)	AM	8.58	7.70	-0.88	04:47	05:51	01:03
		PM	10.83	9.72	-1.11	03:28	04:19	00:50

Table 4-E Delay (minutes per mile) and speeds by journey time route 2031 with development and 2011

## References

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