



EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF MELTON

PARKSIDE, STATION APPROACH, BURTON STREET, MELTON MOWBRAY

27 JULY 2016

PRESENT

Councillor D.R. Wright (Mayor)
P.M. Baguley, T.S. Bains, T. Beaken, M. Blase,
G.E. Botterill, P.M. Chandler, T. Culley, P. Cumbers, R. de Burle,
J. M. Douglas, T. Greenow, L. Higgins, E. Hutchison, J. Illingworth,
S. Lumley, V. Manderson, J.T. Orson, A. Pearson,
J.B. Rhodes, J. Simpson, J. Wyatt

Chief Executive
Strategic Director (CAM), Strategic Director (KA),
Head of Communications & Monitoring Officer,
Head of Regulatory Services, Local Plans Manager
Democracy & Involvement Officer

CO30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Glancy, Graham MBE, Holmes, Hurrell, Posnett, and Sheldon.

CO31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Orson, Pearson and Rhodes each declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Leicestershire County Council due to their roles as County Councillors.

Councillor Rhodes added to this declaration that in his capacity as a County Councillor he did not take part in property related decisions concerning Melton Borough or those pertaining to the Local Plan at County Council meetings. Councillor Pearson also made the same statement.

Councillor Botterill declared his disclosable pecuniary interest as a tenant of the Belvoir Estate at Croxton Kerrial.

Councillor Orson declared his disclosable pecuniary interest as a land owner within the Borough and indicated he would leave the meeting before the item on the Melton Local Plan.

[Councillor Orson here left the meeting.]

CO32. MELTON LOCAL PLAN - CONSIDERATION OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES ON MELTON LOCAL PLAN (EMERGING OPTIONS)

Members had before them a report prepared by the Head of Regulatory Services which set out in detail the results of the consultation carried out between 11 January and 4 April 2016 in respect of the Melton Local Plan (Emerging Options) and made recommendations as to how the representations received could be taken into account and carried forward into the next stage of the Local Plan, the 'submission version'.

The report had previously been circulated accompanied by a suite of appendices which considered the representations on a chapter by chapter basis. Each comment made had been compiled into a table on a policy by policy basis and included the officer response and, where applicable, the recommended action arising. Members were advised that the additional evidence continued to be collated and there was the potential for this to influence the position further. Such evidence would be reported to future meetings alongside consideration of its impact.

As chairman of the Melton Local Plan Working Group, Councillor Chandler commended the report to the Council during which she:

- referred to the 10,000 comments received;
- mentioned some criticism received that the consultation period had not been long enough: at 12 weeks the period allowed had been twice as long as the statutory 6 week period;
- emphasised that there could potentially be further changes before the Plan was finalised;
- stated that the rejected Core Strategy had identified a figure of 20% for new housing allocation in the villages but that had been acknowledged as insufficient and this had now been increased to 35%;
- made reference to the Neighbourhood Plan Groups formed under the duty to cooperate contained in the Localism Act 2011 noting that take up in Melton had been slow.

Councillor Chandler moved the following recommendations contained in the report as amended where highlighted to reflect that two documents had been withdrawn because they were still under consideration:

That the Council

- (1) notes the representations received;
- (2) agrees to the responses provided in each of the appendices (A1 – A10) to the report, **with the exception of:**

A3 – Chapter 4: Primary Rural Service Centres
A3 – Chapter 4: Secondary Rural Service Centres

(3) agrees that the Local Plan (Submission version) is prepared on the basis indicated in each of the appendices, subject to the impact of additional evidence to be received;

(4) notes that further assessment is taking place in respect of settlement roles and site allocation, which be the subject of a future report to Council.

Councillor Illingworth seconded the motion expressing his appreciation to those who had taken the time to submit representations and that this was a better response than many other authorities had received. He referred to the amount of documentation before Members, stating that this represented a significant amount of work and officer time to get to this crucial stage. Members' support was sought in order to allow the Melton Local Plan to move forward.

A query was raised on part (2) of the motion regarding officers' comments. The Chief Executive advised that officers would prepare the next draft report on that basis which would be considered at further meetings of the Working Group. This document would then be subject to another consultation period before the final draft submission is brought back to the Full Council. She confirmed that Members were being asked to agree the process moving forward with officers' comments. The Head of Regulatory Services added that there would also be an examination stage.

A Member endorsed Councillor Illingworth's thanks to those who had made representations stating they had done a sterling job and had been assiduous in their detail. He referenced to a number of topics covered in the documents, in particular in Chapters 1 and 2, those who still expressed doubt about the bypass. The Mayor then proposed that the Council consider each of the documents in turn, chapter by chapter with Members' comments and views being summarised and recorded in that manner:

Appendix A1: Chapter 1 (Introduction) and 2 (Melton Borough Today – A Portrait)

- page 3 point 2.2.3 – housing given approval in neighbouring authorities to Bottesford. How will this be addressed? Officer response: other authorities will be able to accommodate their own development needs for those towns so as not to impinge on the villages in Melton Borough.

Appendix A2: Chapter 3 Melton's Communities – Vision and Strategic Priorities

- page 12 response ID ANON-BHRP-4HUR-F – a Member wished to see a more robust officer response to comments on landscape designations/sensitivity study.
Officer response: scope of the study referred to was on a macro scale and would be applied to the life of the Plan; there was no extra tier of policy and therefore already covered. The Member requested this be listed in the new draft.

- As above – comments on how employment growth and infrastructure sustainability will be addressed. How will the Council convey its vision of where jobs are coming from, how will it help small businesses to grow and incubate the next generation of employers and develop higher level employment in food technology industries?
- Need to adequately cater for the resources and support for an ageing population as well as the needs of younger people. Important to maintain and enhance the special character of the town.
Officer response: main drivers are the birth rate, more divorces increase demand for single occupancy houses, and increasing aging population. Comments would be taken on board for the next stage.
- Page 14 response ID ANON-BHRP-4HU7-M comments on access to Broadband. Member queried whether there would be a policy to put pressure on suppliers to provide a better service.
Officer response: The detail was not included within this policy as it appeared in the Development Management policies which would include detail that all new homes should be equipped with Broadband capability.
- A Member commented that the special character of the Borough needed to be protected and enhanced strategically.

Appendix A3 – Chapter 4 Comments as a Whole

- Page 10 & 11 response ID ANON-BHRP-4H6H-6 – comments on Spatial Strategy and the unsuitability of Great Dalby Airfield as a development site. Member questioned if this site was on the table as a development site.
Officer response: In terms of the Council's approach to the Spatial Strategy it was not proposed that the Great Dalby Airfield site, or the others, are proposed as a way forward; development to focus in and around the edge of Melton.

Policy SS1

- Page 30 response ID ANON-BHRP-4HUU-J – comments on scrapping declassification of villages. Member supported views expressed.
Officer response: Council is committed to a route and branch review of the settlement hierarchy which incorporates the distribution between the villages, and the town and the villages. A report would be submitted to the Council in September.
- Noting Members comments on rural transport being underused; poor services lead to people using cars and then the services are withdrawn.

Policy SS2

- Noting that the majority of responders opposed this policy and part 2, it was suggested that note should be taken of this;
- Suggestion that the support with observations needs to be more defined; also need to note that there are some people who do want housing in some of the spacial strategies who may have not commented;
- Proposed that if Policy SS2 was under review then it should not be approved at this meeting

Officer response: Agree with comments put forward: Policy SS2 to be brought back to the Extraordinary Council meeting on 1 September 2016.

- Settlement Roles Spatial Strategy – to be treated alongside Policy SS2 due to the overlap and refer to the next meeting.

Policy SS3

- Page 2 response ID BHLF-BHRP- 4HAX-1 – comments on some of the settlements having 3 dwellings or less. It was suggested that this document be considered at the September meeting.

Officer response: These policies about the previous policies rather than overlap. The wording referred to in the comments concerns the need to prevent an accumulation of the application of the policy. As a response to this it is proposed that 3, 5 or 10 houses are not implemented repeatedly. Extra wording would be included to create a cap on the numbers of dwellings. The document could be dealt with at this meeting as it did not contain the essence of the distribution of houses and was therefore a generic policy which addresses unplanned, windfall development. The paper suggests wording so that it is effective in that intent; the extent to which applications can be repeated must be limited so that they do not double or treble, or beyond.

Members indicated they were not agreeable to approving this policy and wished it to be deferred to the September meeting. The Chief Executive advised that this policy could be added to the other 2 deferred to the September meeting in order for the matter to proceed; officers would accept that in order to move forward. However, officers feel it is a policy that will stand whatever the Council decides in relation to the final assessment of rural settlements and land allocations. It could be looked at in that context during the debate at the meeting on 1 September.

Policy SS4

- Noting that the support with observations contained a number of objections.

Policy SS5

- Page 2 response ID ANON-BHRP-4H45-H – concerns regarding development abutting Melton Country Park. Member requested that in view of the number of comments on this subject, it required an officer response for the residents and the Ward Members not present at the meeting. Councillor Lumley confirmed Ward Members were in talks with the residents on these issues.

Officer response: the comments relate to the criteria within Policy SS5 and focus on the environment. The Policy proposes to protect the Country Park through a series of ten requirements. Officers consider the policy covers this adequately and there is no need for any addition.

Policy SS6

- A Member suggest that this policy affects development on Great Dalby airfield site, Normanton airfield site, and Six Hills and could only be considered when the Plan is reviewed at some point in the future; if debating the allocation of houses on 1 September, one of these sites needed to be brought into the discussion at this stage;
- Objections were raised that the Great Dalby airfield site should be considered as an alternative development site; 1500 to 2500 extra houses on that site would be a massive addition to the town which was not acceptable.
- Comments were made in relation to the Six Hills site having regard to its close proximity to the A46 and how it would create employment and infrastructure for the town.

Officer response: If Members were dissatisfied with the re-working of the approach taken at present, then one of these sites would need to be brought into the debate. This policy was about the alternatives: Normanton airfield and Six Hill site were among options that could be considered should the preferred approach fail.

[Councillor Baguley left the meeting at this point.]

Appendix A4 – Chapter 5: Comments on Chapter as a Whole

- Page 15 – Officers’ comments in relation to update the grouping of villages based on the revised settlement roles.
Officer response: to be presented to the 1 September meeting.
- Comments made in relation to the regulations to build healthy houses; the quality of the living space was crucial to enable people to live well and this should be a focus of the built environment;
- Page 9 response ID ANON-BHRP-4HGW-6: comments on affordable housing in Somerby – concerns over applications for 5 or 6 bedroom houses or 1 and 2 bedroom houses. Young people wanting to stay in the village communities to keep them vibrant and raise a family required 3 bedroom houses. ‘Affordable’ housing had different meanings and had received some bad press. There was an acute shortage of 3 bedroom houses through the Borough but particularly in the rural areas.
Officer response: Policy C2 to be submitted shortly which addresses housing development should address the needs of the immediate locality at parish level. The Housing Needs Study commissioned provides all the data and evidence about what the needs are in each of the parishes; this will be effective when the Plan is effective. The Government is proposing changes to the definition of Affordable Housing that will bring in starter homes i.e homes discounted by 20%
- Page 6 – comments on Bottesford Parish Neighbourhood Plans: a Member welcomed the results of this study being reflected in the final draft Local Plan.
- Comments on National house builders being interested in Melton and allocation for affordable housing: how was the Local Plan going to ensure that the Borough was an attractive place for national developers.
Officer response: All Plan Viability Study would address the key question of whether the Plan was asking too much. Melton’s attractiveness compared to

other areas was about profitability – a trade-off between the price of land and the sales value, the build costs and section 106 contributions – it was a trade-off between all of those factors which would determine our attractiveness compared to other locations.

- Policy C6 – page 11: consultation on Gypsies and Travellers sites suggested locations north and south. A Member suggested that 10 pitches already in the south should not be increased further.
- Policy C5 – page 12 response ID ANON-BHRP-4H3G2 : rural exceptions sites and the officer recommendation. A Member asked if there was anything further to add.

Officer response: The role of an SPD on this subject would be to address all those very detailed issues about tenureship, who is eligible for the housing, how it would cascade, how people could increase their share of the shared ownership etc. which are too detailed for the Plan itself.

- Policy C5 – page 12 response ID BHLF-BHRP-4HDH-M comments on restricting buy to let in rural areas. A Member asked if this could be considered Borough wide not just in the rural areas.
- Policy C8 - Self Build and Custom Build Housing – A Member commented on exploring the type of prefabricated building used in Germany and suggested this could be suitable and explored here.

Appendix 5 – Chapter 6: Melton's Economy

- Pages 44 and 45 comments on the regeneration of the town centre. A Member expressed the view that there were a number of issues to be addressed: footfall was down in the town and the market, more shopping was being done on line. Although not part of the Local Plan, the Council should not work in a silo and join up with the LLEP bid and the Town Area Committee. Tourism was crucial for Melton and this should be all part of improving the economy.
- Deputy Leader referred to tourism in Melton Borough being up 4% on last year thanks to the efforts of the Town Centre Managers; he had accompanied the Strategic Director (KA) to Aylesbury Vale Council who had a vision of where they would like their town to go looking at the type of shops they wished to attract, taking on prudential borrowing to provide a property portfolio to attract the desired retailers. The Council became an enabler and was able to bring in an income from their properties. Melton Borough was working on similar lines with its Leisure Vision and the Transport Strategy. On Tourism, the town needed to link in with the cluster of villages which offered fishing, walks, cycle routes and equestrian activities: Melton had one of the strongest brands in Leicestershire and the Council needed to keep this on a national and international level.

- Page 51 response ID ANON-BHRP-4H3G-2 comments on Bottesford and Asfordby functioning as a separate location.

Officer's response: The Local Plan interacts with various other plans and strategies such as the Tourism Strategy and the forthcoming neighbourhood plan for the town centre which would come forward with proposals to increase the offer provided. The Local Plan was concerned with the built fabric of the area and as such could not go into these areas.

In Melton there is an identified town centre, so the question is raised as to where there are centres such as Asfordby and Bottesford which are as identifiable and distinct that they should be picked out in that manner and

have policies to encourage and protect their retail offer. This was under consideration and would feature in the next version of the Local Plan.

Appendix 6 – Chapter 7: Melton’s Environment Protected and Enhanced

- It was requested that it be recorded that the Council notes the very strong views expressed throughout the Overall Comments document against wind turbines and fracking and that the Council will take this into account;
- Page 1 of Policy EN10 – a Member highlighted that out of the 27 support with observations respondents, 18 had raised objections and asked whether the respondents had been clear on what they wanted to say;
- Page 17 response ID ANON-BHRP-4H6U-K comments on removal of list of LCU’s from the Plan. Concern was expressed that *“Following consultation it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.”* was to be withdrawn from the policies which would be directly contrary to the Secretary of State’s statement in June 2015 on wind turbines, which states: “Where a valid planning application for a wind energy development has already been submitted to a local planning authority and the development plan does not identify suitable areas then the following transitional provision applies in such instances where the local planning authority can find the proposal acceptable if, following consultation, it is satisfied that it has addressed the planning impacts identified by the affected local communities and therefore has their backing.”

Councillor Simpson proposed that the policy be amended to take out the LCU’s and the bullet point relating to the ‘Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study’ on page 136 of the main document. Councillor Rhodes seconded this amendment.

Officer response: (1) responders self selected whether they were supporters, submitting observations or ‘others’ – officers were not making a judgement regarding submissions; (2) the Council was not required to insert word for word the contents of a PPG; it would not be harmful to the success of the Plan to not replicate this; concern was expressed over the removal of reference to LCU’s because whole turbine debate has some urgency to it and at present there was not the level of detail to it in the Local Plan. That detail would be in the SPG which would come some time after the plan. Because of the level of detail, to remove it now would create a vacuum that could undermine efforts in the shorter term.

The Chief Executive advised Members that this was a piece of work that the Council had asked for and had worked in partnership with Rushcliffe Borough Council prior to having the Local Plan in place because it would have otherwise been operating in a vacuum; there was a specific study of landscape areas to indicate the places where policies can be looked at because of the need to have some form of policy documentation approach that could be followed well before the Local Plan level of detail was in place. She asked Officers to reiterate that advice.

A Member raised concerns as to the quality of the Rushcliffe study and that it had been successfully challenged. The Head of Regulatory Services responded that the reason it had been given little weight in recent appeal decisions was because it

was not in a Local Plan. The Council was seeking to address this through the recommended approach.

The Chair of the Local Plan Working Group proposed that this be referred back to the Working Group for further discussion. The mover of the amendment, with the consent of her seconder indicated agreement to this. In so doing, Councillor Simpson expressed her concerns that the Government's manifesto statement on renewable and low carbon energy would be taken seriously. The Chief Executive advised that the Working Group had noted and would give serious and appropriate consideration to the points she had raised. As seconder of the original motion, Councillor Illingworth indicated his agreement to the section on wind energy in policy EN10 to be referred back to the Local Plan Working Group.

[Councillor Bains left the meeting during consideration of the previous item and returned after the decision was taken to defer policy EN10 part 2 to the Working Group.]

Policies EN1 to EN13:

These documents were agreed subject to the decision to refer EN10 part 2 back to the Working Group.

Appendix 7 – Chapter 8: Managing the Delivery of Development: Overall Comments

- Page 11 – a Member referred to the previous points made on the development of the Six Hills site; the developers concerned were possibly looking at starting development in a few years' time by which time there would be Community Infrastructure Levy contributions in place. The CIL would contribute towards the transport strategy. If the site was put on a back burner there would be no CIL contributions, hence why he had supported policy SS6 being deferred to allow proper examination of the Council's integrated policy.

Appendix 8 – Chapter 9: Managing Development

- Page 10 – response ID ANON-BHRP-4HUB-Y. Officer comments referred to the possibility of including a density target for rural areas and the officer was requested to elaborate.

Officer response: The ambition for this was linked to the other work proposed for the September meeting where the villages would be presented one by one, alongside a narrative on what sites had been chosen and any design imperatives for these sites.

- Page 15 – response ID ANON-BHRP-4HGE-M. A Member commented on the high profile response from Sport England endorsing the policy of active design.
- Page 15 – response ID ANON-BHRP-4HUR-F. Comments on design standards to be addressed. A Member raised a question on where the Council aspired to go in terms of design and branding. Responder had raised a valid point which was not addressed sufficiently in the officer comments. How could a higher quality design be achieved.

Officer response: (1) It was understood that Stamford only operates on what is in our policy D1A - development must be sympathetic to the surroundings which in Stamford were uniform and high quality. There were no special measures taken in Stamford only a similar generic approach to what has been taken in Melton Borough. (2) In Melton Borough we are dealing with all manner of different character of areas so to have some prescription of style does not fit in with the diversity of style here. Where there is a neighbourhood plan, this should be a key element of that. Greatest concern relates to where we have had a higher expectation of build, this affects the price, viability and hence deliverability. The whole package needs to be taken 'in the round' to see whether it is the correct balance.

Appendix 9 – Appendix 3 Monitoring Framework

- A Member referred to the LLEP bid and the Town Neighbourhood Plan and asked if the chairs of these bodies could meet up in order to have a joined up approach moving forward. He expressed concerns that they were working in isolation. The chair of the Local Plan Working Group commented that a retail study briefing had been held which had been open to all but few Members had attended.

Appendix 10 – Policies Maps

- Reference made to “SHLAA’s” (strategic land availability assessments) and clarification given that they were not applications for planning permission but a statutory requirement on local planning authorities.

Summary Statements:

(1) In the absence of the Leader, the Deputy Leader

- thanked Councillors Chandler and Illingworth for proposing the motions;
- thanked all residents, businesses and stakeholders for participating in the Reference Groups
- thanked all Members involved in the Working Group and Reference Groups who had needed to digest a lot of information
- thanked Officers, in particular the Local Plan Manager (Rachel Armstrong) who would shortly be leaving the Council

(2) The Chief Executive summarised the motion before Members.

A member reiterated his concerns that Policy SS6 needed to be considered otherwise there would be a danger that the Council would be closing off an important option in relation to allocations in villages. It may transpire that the Council stays with the preferred approach but this option needed to be left in at this stage. The Chief Executive advised this was the purpose of discussion with officers who considered that to elevate the underpinning policy SS6 to a full policy was to misconstrue its role. A Member spoke in support of deferring the issue on the Six Hills site for further debate. The Chief Executive clarified that the debate on the Six Hill site would still take place within the context of the Working Group meetings and the Extraordinary Full Council meeting on 1 September. Officers considered that SS6 was a step below that.

The Head of Regulatory Services stated he believed that that the motion as presented did not cover the intent behind the deferral of Policy SS6 for debate. He understood that Members' concerns related to the inclusion of Six Hills and the other airfield sites into the overall approach to distribution as a peer rather than a reserve should the other options fail. Councillor Rhodes stated he wished to put this as an amendment to the motion currently put forward. Councillor Greenow seconded the amendment.

The Chief Executive asked the mover and seconder of the motion if they were willing to amend the motion to include Policy SS6 within the list of documents that was to be deferred. Councillor Chandler indicated she would prefer to take a vote on the amendment put forward by Councillor Rhodes. It would represent a good indication to the Working Group of the view of the Council. Councillor Illingworth stated he concurred with this approach.

A vote was then taken on the amendment to include Policy SS6 in the list of deferred issues to be referred to the Local Plan Working Group. The vote was carried. A further vote was then taken on the substantive motion and carried. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the Council

- (1) notes the representations received;
- (2) agrees to the responses provided in each of the appendices (A1 – A10) to the report, with the exception of:
 - A3 – Chapter 4: Primary Rural Service Centres
 - A3 – Chapter 4: Secondary Rural Service Centres; and
 - related papers SS2, SS3, and SS6, together with policy EN10 part 2 concerning wind energy
- (3) agrees that the Local Plan (Submission version) is prepared on the basis indicated in each of the appendices, subject to the impact of additional evidence to be received;
- (4) notes that further assessment is taking place in respect of settlement roles and site allocation, which be the subject of a future report to Council.

The meeting, which commenced at 6.30 p.m., closed at 9.00 p.m.

Mayor