

**MELTON LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION
EXAMINATION STATEMENT OF MELTON BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

8th January 2018

**MATTER 10
Infrastructure Delivery**

QUESTION 10.1 In the light of new policy IN1 on the Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy and the policy for Transport, Accessibility and Parking (old policy IN1), does the Plan provide an evidence-based, integrated and effective policy framework for transport that will support the implementation of the spatial strategy? How will any impacts on areas beyond the Borough boundary be addressed?

- 1.1 Melton Borough Council (MBC) has worked closely with Leicestershire County Council (LCC) to develop a transport strategy that is integrated with the draft local plan's proposed spatial strategy¹ and objectives².
- 1.2 LCC, as the Local Highway Authority (LHA), has commenced engagement early and proactively with MBC to understand its objectives for the town; to understand the potential implications of the town's future growth and to identify appropriate measures to facilitate Melton's ambitions. As such the LHA is confident that the Plan has a sound basis in terms of transport evidence and ability to deliver the transport infrastructure required to support it.
- 1.3 The transportation evidence underpinning the local plan has been developed from a "clean sheet". What this means, is that the evidence has been objective-led, analysing both existing transport and future transport and traffic conditions in the town, and considering the full suite of available options, covering all modes, in deriving the preferred strategy.
- 1.4 Whilst it was evident that the scale of development proposed would be likely to require transport investment to facilitate it, work was undertaken by independent consultants to confirm the key transport issues currently affecting the town and likely to impact on its future ability to grow; as well as additional issues emerging as a result of further growth within the town. The results of this independent study are set out in the Melton Mowbray Cumulative Development Impact Study Report (2014)³.
- 1.5 Further, independent detailed studies⁴ have been carried out to provide a thorough assessment of potential options to address those issues and meet Local Plan objectives. This quantitative evidence was supplemented by qualitative evidence obtained through a range of workshops and focus groups including the Local Plan Reference Group.

¹ MBC/G4d, Chapter 4 on <https://www.meltonplan.co.uk/supporting-documents>

² MBC/G4d, Chapter 3

³ MBC/T2

⁴ MBC/T5, MBC/T6A, MBC/T12

- 1.5 This work concluded that whilst measures to improve walking, cycling and public transport and/or relatively minor highway improvements were likely to have certain benefits in terms of supporting the town's future growth, there was still a need for investment in significant new highway capacity. This has resulted in the ongoing development of a comprehensive Transport Strategy for Melton Mowbray, comprising a range of measures, with an outer Distributor Road (MMDR) as its central component.
- 1.6 The elements of the transport strategy will be funded and delivered in various ways. Policy IN1 (as per the focused changes) is framed to allow new development to come forward provided that appropriate contributions and mitigations are put in place. It is anticipated that the delivery of more minor measures will come forward via developer funding secured through the planning process in the normal way, including via Section 106 agreements and/or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as appropriate (the LHA will still explore other funding sources to supplement this as necessary)⁵. As part of this, there is the ability for flexibility to be applied in accordance with the timing of delivery of development sites, given that delivery of the strategy as a whole can be scalable.
- 1.7 Traditionally, mechanisms for the delivery of major pieces of transport infrastructure (or otherwise) do not readily align with housing growth / delivery, i.e. all other things being equal the ability to deliver housing 'on the ground' comes ahead of the ability to deliver the infrastructure.
- 1.8 Recognising this, the County Council has been prepared to adopt a pragmatic and flexible approach to the Local Plan and its growth proposal, including splitting the MMDR into 3 distinct sections.
- 1.9 Certain sections of the Distributor Road and wider transport infrastructure will need to be delivered in conjunction with the MMSNs. In particular, LCC and MBC are working proactively with promoters of the MMSNs to plan for the delivery of the northern and southern sections of the Distributor Road on an agreed basis (this collaborative approach is evidenced by the letters of support for the MMDR that have been provided by the promoters of the Northern and Southern Sustainable Neighbourhoods, please see Appendix A and B to this document). This includes maximising developable land within the MMSNs without compromising the ability to deliver a suitable standard of road to achieve the objectives.
- 1.10 Recognising this has also led LCC and MBC to an early start in securing funding towards delivery of the entire route; and to deliver it ahead of

⁵ However, as specifically set out in Policy IN1 of the Local Plan, the Transport Strategy does not absolve developers of the need to carry out proportionate assessments of the transport impacts of their proposals and to identify specific measures as necessary to deal with this, in accordance with the usual planning process.

housing phasing. Early completion of the route in its entirety would provide the opportunity to accelerate housing growth whilst ensuring achieving the objectives of the Local Plan.

- 1.11 Leicestershire County Council is therefore working on securing appropriate funding to deliver the eastern section as soon as is practically possible. Significant progress has already been made through the MMDR scheme being awarded DfT Outline Business Case development monies (in 2016), and the submission of the Outline Business Case for the scheme in December 2017 (MBC/T11, MBC/T12 and MBC/T13). Given this stage of business case development, and the fact that the scheme is already within Departmental funding processes; there is every reason to be confident that the complete route will be in place by the end of the Plan period.
- 1.12 The County Council's Cabinet is expected to confirm a MMDR route for the purposes of planning and statutory procedures in summer 2018. In the meantime, the intention of the Corridor of Interest (CoI) is not to seek to establish a particular final route for the MMDR, nor a particular extent of land that it might take. Rather, its role is to ensure that should development proposals come forward that might fall with the CoI, the local planning and the local highway authorities have a clear policy basis to work with the site promoters to understand how the proposals might potentially interact with the MMDR. The intention is to seek to ensure that development proposals and the MMDR are mutuality compatible so far as is practicably possible, avoiding a situation where one risks prejudicing the delivery of the other.
- 1.13 As the most sustainable location in the Borough, concentrating the bulk of growth at Melton Mowbray presents the greatest opportunities to limit levels of external trips to elsewhere in the Borough and more widely, including cross-boundary; with rail and public transport links to major centres of employment, e.g. Leicester, there are opportunities for external trips to be made by sustainable modes. There is nothing that has been shown by the evidential work to date to suggest that levels of external trips are sufficient so as to require strategic transport investment.
- 1.14 Detailed work to identify the transport impacts of the growth proposed through the Local Plan has been focussed on Melton Mowbray, as the only location within the Borough subject to strategic growth of such as scale that would require a comprehensive approach and/or strategic transport investment. Based on its initial consideration of the proposed local plan allocations throughout the Borough, the LHA is satisfied that the transport impacts of the allocations outside the town can be considered and as necessary addressed through the normal transport assessment process forming part of any planning application; including any associated cross-

boundary issues. Of course this position would change were larger-scale growth proposals to come forward elsewhere in the Borough.

- 1.15 Parking is locally derived policy and with regards to the provision of effective car parking and servicing as detailed at point 6 of Policy IN2, the Council will continue to refer to Leicestershire County Council's most up to date design guidance. Leicestershire County Council is the Local Highway Authority and is responsible for all publically maintained highways in Leicestershire (except those which are managed by Highways England).
- 1.16 The County Council's most recent published guidance is the 6Cs Design Guide which was adopted in 2007. This sets out (amongst other things) the required parking standards for new development in Leicestershire. This is managed by the highways development management function in their role as statutory consultee, thereby ensuring that appropriate and effective parking provision is provided for new development in accordance with the policy. This, or any equivalent successor document agreed by the Local Highway Authority will form the basis for considering the adequacy of parking provision proposed as part of new development.

QUESTION 10.2 Taking account of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the delivery schedule in Appendix 4 and the processes for updating them, Policy IN2 and other supporting policies in the Plan, are there grounds for reasonable confidence that the necessary infrastructure will be provided to support the timely implementation of the spatial strategy?

Highways and transport infrastructure

- 2.1 The Local Highway Authority is confident that the transport infrastructure required to support the Local Plan's growth proposals is deliverable within the plan period.
- 2.2 The objective-led, and evidence based work to date has provided a sound basis for the development of the Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy and there is no reason to suppose that the more minor elements of that strategy cannot be delivered by the new developments that it will support. There is the ability for flexibility to be applied as necessary in accordance with the timing of delivery of development sites, given that delivery of the strategy as a whole can be scalable.
- 2.3 Recognising its relative scale and complexity, the LHA has prioritised development of the MMDR element of the strategy up to this point and is pursuing multiple approaches to secure the scheme's delivery; thereby avoiding over reliance on a particular approach.

- 2.4 **Department for Transport (DfT) Local Majors Funding:** The LHA has already secured entry of a scheme comprising the northern and eastern sections of the MMDR (i.e. A606 to A606) onto the DfT's development pipeline of future Large Local Major schemes. Building on a strong track record of bidding for funding, the LHA has already secured up to £1.9m of DfT funding to develop and submit an Outline Business Case⁶(OBC) for the scheme. This has been submitted to the DfT on-programme, in December 2017. The LHA has also committed up to £4m of its own resources to continue the further development of the scheme post-submission of the OBC such that it is in a position to submit a planning application and be ready to undertake any necessary statutory processes by summer 2018.
- 2.5 Based on all the work to date, there is nothing to suggest that construction of the scheme could not commence by spring 2020 (in accordance with the DfT's specified timetable and as set out in the OBC) subject to the award of further funding from the DfT.
- 2.6 The inclusion on the local major schemes list and the award of up to £1.9m for OBC development demonstrates the DfT's acceptance of the need for and potential benefits of the scheme and its in-principle deliverability. The DfT is expected to announce in spring/summer 2018 whether funding for the scheme's construction will be awarded this time around; as ever with Government bidding opportunities, they are normally over-subscribed in the current financial year. If unsuccessful this time around, the LHA is confident that on the basis of evidence, it is a case of 'when' and not 'if' the scheme is delivered.
- 2.7 **Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) 'Forward Funding' Bid:** The LHA has recently submitted a HIF 'forward funding' expression of interest for the southern section of the MMDR in partnership with Melton Borough Council and Davidsons (as the main developers of the Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood). This seeks to secure funding to enable the early full construction of this section; from the A606 Burton Road across to the A607 Leicester Road.
- 2.8 **Without Immediate/Short-Term Public Funding:** LCC and MBC are working proactively with promoters of the MMSNs to plan for the delivery of the northern and southern sections of the distributor road in accordance with the Local Plan objectives, in the unlikely event that no public funding is received in the short to medium term.

⁶ The OBC was submitted to the DfT on 22 December 2017.

2.9 In this scenario, delivery of the northern and southern sections of the route would be aligned with the pace of the housing growth. This would not be an issue for the LHA, as the need for the distributor road to be in place in its entirety will evolve over time relative to the build out of the planned growth including the MMSNs and does not have to be in place from day one of the local plan.

All other infrastructure

2.10 Melton Borough Council commissioned a robust Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) from ARUP ([MBC/INF1](#)). As part of the preparation of this document, direct engagement with all the infrastructure providers was carried out by the consultants, as the primary source of information. This resulted in the IDP being informed by first hand, up to date and robust information.

2.11 IDP's are live documents and as such, it will be updated throughout the life of the plan; indeed, the current IDP is an update of one prepared in November 2016. This approach allows responsiveness to changing priorities and circumstances, such as the availability of new funding. This flexibility within the document ensures the Council can be confident that the infrastructure needed to deliver the spatial strategy can be funded during the life of the plan, even if the potential funding identified for each item of infrastructure does not materialise.

2.12 The Council has already engaged with partners to ensure delivery of infrastructure. The most obvious example is the cooperation between Melton Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council to ensure delivery of the MMDR and adequate education provision. Where schools have been identified to be at capacity, the Council and County Council have worked together to engage architects to draw up expansion schemes and estimate costings. This means through the development management process, officers can accurately inform developers of potential Section 106 requirements to deliver the school growth needed. It also means the Borough Council can spread the costs over a number of schemes, and ensure contributions are collected fairly.

2.13 Furthermore, through the Duty to Cooperate, there is a statutory duty on the Council to work with partner organisations and authorities in the preparation of the IDP. The Council is currently engaging with consultants Cushman and Wakefield to develop CIL, and is expecting to consult on a Draft Charging Schedule in Spring 2018, following consultations on a preliminary draft schedule in Summer 2017. The eventual Charging Schedule and Reg. 123 list will further inform the IDP by providing another avenue for funding, and a refresh of the IDP may be needed to inform further stages of CIL. The authority is aware that items on the Reg.

123 cannot be funded through section 106 agreements. Policy IN3 (as amended by Focused Change 12) sets out the order of the delivery of infrastructure, as per the status described in the IDP. The preparation of Section 106 agreements, to include elements such as timing, will be undertaken through the development management process.

QUESTION 10.3 Is there robust evidence to support the requirements of Policy IN3 (Broadband) and are they deliverable, subject to viability?

- 3.1 Para 44 of the NPPF states that “advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services”.
- 3.2 Melton Borough Council consider this to be especially pertinent in a Rural Borough, with a number of settlements lacking access to service and facilities. Good broadband can help people gain access to such services, provide entertainment, and help prevent social exclusion and aid economic development, by facilitating rural enterprises and home working. As the BE Group Report ([MBC/EL2](#), 2.62) indicates, Melton has some of the highest rates of home working in England. In addition, a recent Ofcom Connected Nations Report⁷ 2017 also states that 82% of homes and businesses in rural areas cannot gain access to a reasonable 4G mobile internet connection, and that over one million homes and offices in rural areas do not have access to decent broadband. This was attributed to being a major constraint for small businesses in rural locations. Therefore the need for good access to Fibre Optic Broadband could be seen as more important in Melton than elsewhere in England or Wales.
- 3.3 Some good progress has already been made. SuperFast Leicestershire is a Leicestershire wide scheme to improve broadband throughout the county. By September 2018, 97% of all properties in Leicestershire will have access to superfast fibre optic broadband. But more needs to be done. Broadband provision is included within the IDP, which further emphasises its necessity, and highlights it as a priority for funding
- 3.4 The policy requirement for all new developments of 30 dwellings to provide fixed fibre superfast broadband should therefore be seen as justified, linking the provision of homes to the plan’s employment

⁷ <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/multi-sector-research/infrastructure-research/connected-nations-2017/concise-summary>

objectives and through access to services, to its sustainable communities objectives ([MBC/G4d](#), page 21), and aligns with national policy.

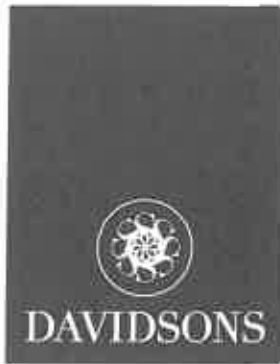
- 3.5 Funding is available through and supported by Openreach and government funding streams. Openreach will deploy FTTP (Fibre to the Premises) free of charge, into all new housing developments of 30 or more dwellings, registered from November 2016. According to Openreach⁸, this could lead to 9 out of 10 new builds having access to free FTTP infrastructure, subject to developer involvement. Other forms of funding are available and are likely to remain available throughout the plan period.
- 3.6 Taking into account the above, the Council considers that the IDP, as discussed in paragraph 2.10 and 2.11, is robust. Also, given the immense importance of high speed broadband, realised by the Government, the Local Authority and residents, and given the funding streams and its proven viability, the Council considers there is sound evidence of deliverability.

END

⁸ <https://www.ournetwork.openreach.co.uk/property-development.aspx>

APPENDIX A: DAVIDSONS LETTER TO SUPPORT

Ms L Godfrey
Transport Strategy and Policy
Environment and Transport
Leicestershire County Council
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicestershire
LE3 8RA



12th December 2017

Dear Sirs

Re: SUPPORT FOR LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE FOR THE MELTON MOWBRAY DISTRIBUTOR ROAD

Davidsons Developments Ltd. Is writing to express support in relation to Leicestershire County Council's Outline Business Case to DfT for the Large Local Majors Fund Bid for the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road.

There is a considerable need for additional housing in Leicestershire and specifically Melton Mowbray as a key focus of significant growth proposed as part of the Council's Submitted Local Plan. The Local Plan, with examination scheduled for January 2018, proposes the provision for over 6000 new dwellings and 51 hectares of employment across the district as part of the Local Plan and as the main urban area in the Borough, Melton Mowbray is a key focus for growth. This planned growth within the town will be located at new developments to the north and south of the town. Davidsons Developments Ltd, in conjunction with local landowners, including the Melton Town Estates, is promoting the greater part of the Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood, which is allocated for up to 1,700 dwelling during the current plan period. An application for outline planning permission has been submitted to the Borough Council and in addition to 1,500 dwellings includes provision for a new primary school and local centre as well as the southern link road, an important part of the proposed highway network to relieve congestion in Melton town centre.

Given the transformational number of homes required, the successful delivery of the Melton Local Plan requires a comprehensive set of transport measures to be delivered. This includes a new 'A606 to A606' strategic road link' avoiding the existing town centre ring road.

The MMDR is a key, and significant, piece of infrastructure to accelerate growth and housing delivery to the town, with over 6000 dwellings and 51ha of employment land directly related to the provision of this infrastructure in Melton; and as stated is necessary infrastructure in both the Local Plan, and the Transport Assessment submitted as part of the recent Outline Planning Application.

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It is this active policy and scheme context that makes this a key growth and scheme priority for Leicestershire County Council, Melton Borough Council and the wider Stakeholders, including Davidsons Developments Ltd, emphasising both the strategic importance and deliverability of the scheme.

We have been working with Leicestershire County Council and Melton Borough Council to develop a scheme that satisfies the need to accommodate housing and the requirement for a road that is fit for purpose.

Davidsons Developments Ltd recognises that Leicestershire County Council has an excellent track record on delivery of large and major transport schemes. In recent years these have included, Loughborough Town Centre Scheme and Leicester Park and Ride, Birstall, both of which were completed within budget and programme. We are also working with LCC to deliver major highway improvements at Coalville in North West Leicestershire District as part of the South East Coalville Sustainable Urban Extension.

Davidsons Developments Ltd looks forward to continue to work with LCC, to develop Melton Mowbray as a thriving economic district and market town.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Whetton'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'S'.

Sarah Whetton
Strategic Land Director



An **APLEONA** company

Our Ref: Ref
Your Ref: Ref

19 December 2017

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SUPPORT FOR LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE FOR THE MELTON MOWBRAY DISTRIBUTOR ROAD

Dear Andy

We act on behalf of the representatives of the consortium for the Northern Sustainable Neighbourhood (comprising Barwood, Leicestershire County Council, Richborough Estates, Taylor Wimpey and William Davis) and who wish to express support in principle in relation to Leicestershire County Council's Outline Business Case to DfT for the Large Local Majors Fund Bid for the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR).

There is a considerable need for additional housing in Leicestershire and specifically Melton Mowbray as a key focus of significant growth proposed as part of the draft Local Plan.

The Local Plan with examination scheduled for January 2018, proposes the provision for over 6000 new dwellings and 51 hectares of employment across the district as part of the Local Plan and as the main urban area in the Borough, Melton Mowbray is a key focus for growth.

This planned growth within the town will be located at new developments to the north and south of the town. The Consortium members have significant land interests to the north of the town and control all of the land comprising the Melton North Sustainable Neighbourhood (MNSN) and MMDR.

Given the number of homes to be delivered we note that the policy requires a comprehensive set of transport measures to be delivered. An essential component of the developing Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy is the delivery of northern and eastern section of the MMDR.

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The consortium for the Northern Sustainable Neighbourhood is committed to delivering the housing allocation set out in the Local Plan. Richborough Estates and Leicestershire County Council's are in the process of finalising their masterplan for submitting an outline planning application for development of land between Nottingham Road and Scalford Road in early 2018. The current application by Taylor Wimpey (14/00808/OUT) for 200 houses is due to go to Planning committee with a recommendation for approval in February 2018 and as part of that scheme, a significant contribution is sought by LCC towards the MMDR.

The Consortium have been working with LCC and MBC to develop a scheme that satisfies the need to accommodate housing and the requirement for a road that is fit for purpose. That work is progressing and whilst detailed design changes are inevitable, the principle of the MMDR is fully supported, provided that where the alignment of the MMDR cannot be delivered on the northern most boundary of the proposed allocation, due to geometry and landownership constraints resulting in a severing of the development parcels, that housing development north of the MMDR in these locations is accepted.

It is fully appreciated that the MMDR is key infrastructure in achieving the ambition for accelerated delivery of growth and we have been working closely with LCC and MBC to develop a scheme that satisfies the real need to accommodate housing and the requirement for a road that is fit for purpose. Taking the through traffic out of Melton Mowbray will benefit attractiveness for development by enhancing the town's vitality and its desirability as a place to live.

We look forward to continue to work with LCC, to develop Melton Mowbray as a thriving economic district and market town.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.