



MELTON LOCAL PLAN – PRE SUBMISSION DRAFT (NOVEMBER 2016)

For official use only
Respondent Ref:
Date Received: 19.12.2016

Melton Borough Council proposes to submit the Melton Local Plan (MLP) to the Secretary of State of Communities and Local Government for independent examination. Before submitting the MLP, the Council is required to publish the document and invite the public to make representations on its 'soundness'. The MLP, once adopted will be the development plan for Melton Borough.

This form has two parts:

- Part A: Personal Details
- Parts B and C: Your representation(s).

When making representations, please use a separate Part B form for each policy or paragraph you wish to comment on. Before completing the form you should read the accompanying Guide to Making Representations. Please ensure that your representation relates to the correct test of soundness (details can be found in the Guide to Making Representations)

Completed forms should be returned to the address below no later than Monday 19th December, 2016. Representations received after this deadline will not be accepted.

Planning Policy Team
 Regulatory Services
 Melton Borough Council
 Parkside, Station Approach
 Melton Mowbray
 Leicestershire
 LE13 1GH

Alternatively, you can access this form on the Council's website <http://www.melton.gov.uk/localplan/site/index.php> and print it out or complete it electronically and e-mail your response to planningpolicy@melton.gov.uk
 Representations can also be made via the Council's on-line consultation portal - <https://meltonboroughcouncil.citizenspace.com>

PART A: ABOUT YOU/YOUR ORGANISATION (If you are an agent, please complete the personal details of your client in 1 and complete agent's details in 2).

1. Personal Details

Full Name:
 TRACEY WATTS

Organisation (if applicable)

2. Agent's Details (if applicable)

Full Name & Company:

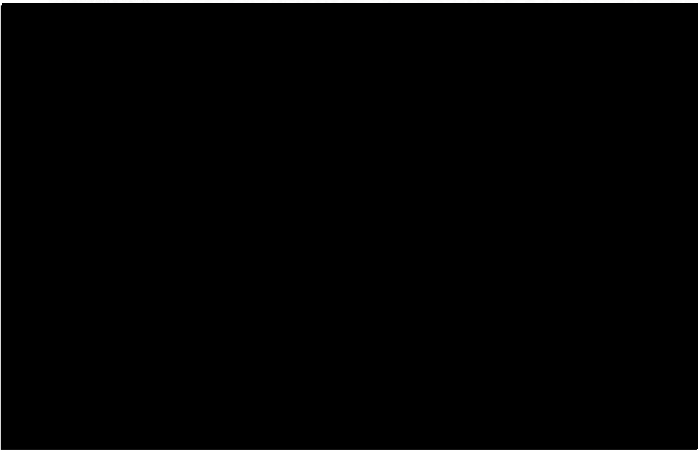
Organisation/Client Representations on Behalf Of

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

Contact Number:



Number of Representations Enclosed: _____

Signature: _____

Date: 19/12/16

8. Can your representation seeking a change be considered by written representations or do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination? *(Please tick the appropriate box)*

Written Representations

Participate at the Oral Examination

9. If you wish to speak at the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

Please note: The Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

PART C: WHO YOU REPRESENT

To help us collate the responses to this consultation, we would be grateful if you could tell us which category best describes who you are representing *(Please tick the appropriate box)*

Melton Borough Resident

Planning Agent/Planning Consultant

Developer

Utility/Service Provider

Government Organisation

Amenity Group

Other Organisation

Residents Group

Business

Town/Parish Council

Other *(Please state)*

Do you want to have further involvement in the Melton Local Plan? *(Please tick the appropriate boxes)*

If you wish to be notified at the address/~~e-mail~~ provided in Part A when the Melton Local Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government

If you wish to be notified at the address/~~e-mail~~ provided in Part A when the Inspector's Report is available to view

If you wish to be notified at the address/~~e-mail~~ provided in Part A when the Melton Local Plan is adopted

If you/your organisation wish to be included in future consultations on the Melton Local Plan

If you/your organisation **do not** wish to be included in future consultations on the Melton Local Plan

Thank you for taking the time to submit representations on the Melton Local Plan: Pre Submission Draft (November 2016). It should be noted that representations cannot be treated as confidential.

Charity House
7, Chapel Lane
Somerby
Melton Mowbray
LE14 2PR

Melton Borough Council,
Burton Street
Melton Mowbray,
Leics
LE13 1GH

10/12/2016

Dear Sir or Madam,
Draft Local Plan & Site SOM 2 MBC /023/16

I write in connection with the above and wish to inform you of my objection to the proposal to include the site SOM 2 MBC/023/16 as potential for the development of 42 houses in the village of Somerby.

The site (SOM 2 MBC/023/16) has only recently been disclosed in the draft local plan (DLP) and the local community has not had sufficient period of time to review the proposals. In particular I think it is unreasonable to announce for the first time the site SOM 2 MBC/023/16 in the draft plan and allow a mere 6 weeks for the community to review and respond. I note MBC has allowed only the very minimum period of 6 weeks for responses under the Local Plan Regulations 17 & 19 2012. The DLP contains 156 pages and references many other reports. For example the Pre-submission draft plan sustainability appraisal report alone runs to 1191 pages! The MBC DLP, an extremely important document, contains all the hallmarks of being rushed through the process with the inevitable consequence that it is unbalanced and lacks proper consultation.

The draft local plan (DLP) is set over a too long period. Twenty five years is too long and it is impossible to forecast many important factors such as population growth, the impact of BREXIT (which is likely to be the single most important event in the last 40 years). It is simply folly to create a plan over this time frame and make major present day decisions including strategic land allocation by simply considering land that may be available now. This is not a sensible long term analysis or a coherent strategy. It would be preferable to plan over a shorter time period of 15 years whereupon key estimates may be assessed with a greater degree of accuracy. In the village of Somerby we have already witnessed a number of planning applications as developers seek strategic land allocation with the likelihood that Somerby will increase the population of the village by 50% within one or two years rather than the next twenty years anticipated by the draft Local Plan.

We originally moved to Somerby to enjoy the tranquil setting and the heritage of the village. It is set in an area of important countryside of High Leicestershire. It seems as though Melton BC are determined to urbanise our village and destroy the very reason why many people came to live here in the first instance.

The reasons for my objection to SOM 2 MBC/023/16 being included in the DLP as potential for residential development are as follows:-

- The whole of the SOM 2 site comes within the Primary Green Infrastructure area. It fails policy EN3. (page 102 DLP) This site is adjacent the very important footpath Leicestershire Round which is described in the Somerby South Farm Turbine appeal as “a flagship for the local rights of way network”. SOM 2 is also parallel to a well used footpath on the south West of Somerby too. Indeed the Melton Green Infrastructure document notes in respect of the visitor attraction Burrough Hill “This country park is one of several major green infrastructure assets within the Borough. It has cultural, historic and wildlife value and located close to the Jubilee Way promoted path and surrounded by several small attractive villages. This site should be promoted as a destination, with circular access routes, improved signage and enhanced visitor infrastructure will make this subregional GI asset a ‘full day’ visitor attraction.” I do not understand how a residential development on the route of the Leicestershire Round, part of the circular walks around Burrough Hill Park (less than one and a quarter mile away) will assist this being a visitor attraction. In respect of Leicestershire Round the MBC Green Infrastructure strategy document states on page 71 “Planning policy should seek to refuse development deemed to compromise the network function and/or future function”. The Leicestershire Round is the County’s main long distance footpath. Furthermore the Green Infrastructure Strategy for Melton Borough Nov 2011 page 25 states “Promoted paths such as the Melton Way, Leicestershire Round and National Cycle Network Routes are also important elements of Melton’s visitor infrastructure”. MBC are simply wrong to ignore the Leicestershire Round as a Primary Green Infrastructure area.

In addition I would point out that the Leicestershire Round is extremely important to the village economy with walkers either enjoying lunches in the Stilton Cheese village pub or using the local shop. Development on the route will harm this vital trade thereby reducing the sustainability of our village and the viability of these businesses.

The National Planning Policy Framework Section 8 sets out “local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them.” In addition local green space designation may be used “where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance for example because of its beauty, historical significance, recreational value (including as a playing field) tranquility or richness of wildlife and where the green area concerned is local in character” Areas of Separation, settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study (August 2016). I believe there is a very strong case for the land under SOM 2 to be designated local green space due to its heritage and tranquil setting.

Also PPS 9 states “Local authorities should aim to maintain networks by avoiding or repairing the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats through policies in plans. Such networks should be protected from development”. SOM 2 will fragment this natural habitat and destroy the amenity of the walks down Newbold Road, the Leicestershire Round and the other important footpaths on the southern edge of our

village.

There are a number of key requirements by MBC to retain green infrastructure that appears to be completely ignored by the current planning proposals and site allocations in the DLP. They seem to be encouraging more development in the wrong locations which go against ^{their (MBC)} own policies.

- The development of SOM 2 will disrupt the movement of wildlife between the important local wildlife sites historic woods Owston, areas North of Somerby (Somerby Meadows) and between Somerby and Burrough. It is adjacent to important ecological sites the Earthworks Grasslands, Somerby Meadow and Southfields Farm. SOM 2 is directly on the Ecological Network and is contrary to Policies EN 3 and EN2. MBC site assessment of SOM 2 MBC/023/16 on biodiversity is inadequate. The NPPF states at clause 109

“minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;”

Also the NFPP highlights the importance of corridors at Clause 117

“identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation;”

The site SOM 2 does not minimize the impact on biodiversity but will be another example of the destruction of green belt land around a village and urbanization of a rural community. I would argue for the extension of the existing Somerby Conservation area by at least one field which would fit with the “Enhanced Green Spaces within and around our settlements also allows for contact for people with nature and increases the permeability of urban areas for wildlife” Page 9 B of the Melton Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011.

- The site SOM 2 MBC/23/16 is adjacent to the Somerby conservation area. This proposed site is part of the heritage setting from which it is possible to see The Grade 1 listed All Saints church, the grade 2 listed buildings Manor Farm House, Burley Cottage, and the Victorian school etc. It is also will be directly adjacent to my property which, whilst not listed, is a medieval cruck cottage dating back to possibly before 1600. Refer page 42 of Somerby remembered which notes “When the first day school was set up in Someby is not known ,but it occupied part of the Elizabethan Workhouse (Charity House) at the top of Chapel Lane”. SOM 2 will also be adjacent to the cottages on the west of Manor Lane which date back over 225 years. All these historic properties are local ironstone construction. Indeed the central part of Somerby conservation area has a very high concentration of listed buildings particularly on Chapel Lane, Manor Lane and Church Lane. The development of SOM 2 will harm this heritage setting and destroy a field

enclosure, which has remained unchanged for at least 250 years since the enclosure awards of 1761. SOM 2 will not comply with policy EN13 NPPF (DLP page 103) both in terms of harm on heritage assets, and the scale of the development that will swamp the locally important heritage assets many of which are small cottages. A development of 42 houses would simply be too large. The development of SOM 2 will irreparably damage an important part of the character and identity of Somerby. It is essential that such heritage assets are recognized and protected in their important heritage scene. The site SOM 2 will be contrary to NPPF and “the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal’s economic, social and environmental benefits).”

- In addition to the built environment heritage the site SOM 2 MBC/23/16 is noted as a ridge and furrow field however it also indicates evidence of previous earthworks and medieval activity. The site seems to be more complex than ridge and furrow containing interesting hollows and mounds. SOM 2 will destroy this important site. It will not be in accordance with policy EN3 DLP (page 103) as the objective is to retain areas of archeological interest. The assessment of SOM 2 by Melton BC is inadequate and lacking and proper assessment. NFPP 169 page 41 states
“Local planning authorities should have up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and use it to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment. They should also use it to predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future”.

The proposed development of SOM 2 will be considered to be contrary to NPPF in relation to safeguarding heritage. Ridge and furrow earthworks are a significant and vanishing component of Leicestershire rural historic landscape which ought to be protected.

This landscape is capable of being viewed from the southern hill above on both the Leicestershire Round and the footpath south of the village (east of The Grove).

Indeed in Melton Borough Areas of Separation Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study INF_0318 Sept 15 (by independent and objective consultants) page 189 -190 notes in respect of the Southern Area of Somerby and the SOM 2 site

the section “Landscape scale and pattern including cultural pattern” page 189 importantly outlines:

“However, within this simple landscape framework are areas of medieval ridge and furrow which would be considered more susceptible to change (potential impact of development upon historic landscape legacy).”

Further the section “Overall landscape sensitivity: Judgement and comment” page 189 states in respect of Somerby South

“However, ridge and furrow field systems are again evident and limit the potential for

residential development. “

It comments further in the summary on Somerby South LCZ 4 in “Landscape guidance/principles in relation to development” page 190.

“Ridge and furrow fieldscapes form a constraint to development in this area. The focus should be on conservation and enhancement of such landscape features”;

It is clear that the site SOM 2 would not be in accordance with either the independent consultants report or the NPPF.

- The development of SOM 2 MBC /023/16 will isolate the setting of the Grove (West end of the village and Listed Glass House) from the conservation area of Somerby village and sever the link of this property to the heart of the village.
- The land at SOM 2 is Grade 3a or Grade 2 prime agricultural land. The assessment and report on which the draft local plan is based in respect of SOM 2 is flawed. It is very general in its analysis and taken from Soils of Midland and Western England” (Ragg et al) published in 1984 at 1:250,000 scale. However the Natural England Agricultural Land Classification states of the scale of 1:250,000 “This map represents a generalised pattern of land classification grades and any enlargement of the scale of the map would be misleading.” Furthermore land around Somerby and part of SOM 2 is generally classified as Grade 2. NPPF at 112 page 26 states

“Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.”

I do not believe a proper assessment has taken place and the draft local plan has failed to take the Grade 2 land classification of SOM 2 into account.

- The development of site SOM 2 will inevitably result in the loss of mature trees in the existing children’s play area and also result in the irreparable harm to those trees adjacent to the site at the western edge of the boundary with tree root damage and changes to soil levels. It will also result in the loss of hedgerows. The site does not accord with Policy EN3 (DLP page 102) as it does not retain or enhance important green infrastructure elements such as those mature trees, hedgerows. As part of the Somerby opportunities and constraints analysis in 1977 stated that “Important individual trees, groups of trees and open areas should be retained” also “Special protection is afforded to trees within Conservation Areas which are not the subject of a Tree Preservation Order” and “Consideration will be given to the contribution that trees, open spaces and other soft landscaping make to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.” The trees in the play area are directly on the boundary of a conservation zone. The play area was protected open space in the 1977 local plan. This area ought to remain protected. The NPPF 118 page 27 states that

“planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of

aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss □

The draft Local Plan does not take into account the impact of the development of SOM 2 on the veteran trees on or adjacent to the site. The development of SOM2 would mean a continuous uninterrupted ribbon of development through the whole of the village with no visible open space. In effect create a wholly urban landscape.

Also the NPPF 74 page 18 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land including playing fields should not be built on. 7.14.4

- Somerby does not fulfill the criteria of Policy IN1 regarding Transport & Strategic Infrastructure. SOM 2 is not located where travel can be minimized. There are no realistic local employment opportunities. The village is a commuter village with the minimum distance travelled is 7 miles for those working in either Oakham or Melton. SOM 2 will unacceptably impact on the safety and movement through the village and such impacts cannot be mitigated. It will not achieve a modal shift away from private car in accordance with policy SS4. Under NPPF there has not been a proper Transport Assessment to determine “what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development”. This site will not promote sustainable modes of transport in accordance with NPPF but simply result in (based on an average 1.77 cars per household) a further 74 cars in the village plus all the associated vehicles servicing those new households. It will not comply with NPPF as the increase in cars will not “support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate”. The local roads are C class and unsuited to further increases in volumes of traffic.
- There is no direct bus service to Leicester or Loughborough or Nottingham from Somerby. Connectivity to those cities cannot be easily improved. A bus journey to Leicester will take two hours involve two buses and yet is only 17 miles away! Increasing the population of Somerby will simply increase the use of cars and thereby increase traffic congestion in Melton Mowbray and this will not achieve one of the key strategic objectives of the local plan.
The existing public bus service (and no doubt subsidised service) is rarely used for a reason- it is not practical. The two hour service with no service in the evenings or Sundays or Public Holidays will not assist sustainability. People prefer using a car due to the convenience and speed of transport it provides. The local plan assumes the bus service provides a viable alternative but it does not. Increasing the population of Somerby and thereby increasing car journeys by development of SOM 2 MBC/23/16 will only increase carbon emissions and pollution. Melton Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011 page 12C states an objective to "Reducing traffic congestion, protect and advance the built environment, protect the rural character of the Borough". I see no evidence of this in the selection of site SOM 2 a large new housing development in a very rural location.
- The site SOM 2 MBC/023/16 fails DLP 9.4.18 it will have a severe cumulative adverse

impact on the local and wider highway network. The existing traffic problems on High Street are well known and will be exacerbated by further houses in SOM 2. The Melton Local Plan adopted in June 1999 stated in respect of Somerby “The street scene along High Street is particularly marred by traffic congestion. This is mainly caused by excessive levels of on-street parking. There are no areas to the rear of High Street that could be effectively used to provide off-street parking facilities. Furthermore, the Highway Authority has no proposals to alleviate the problem.” Obviously in the 17 years since this plan was written the traffic through the village has increased significantly! This road is already limited to virtually single file traffic, has two ninety-degree blind bends and is not suitable for large vehicles. Clearly the site assessment has failed to take into account the impact of on traffic along High Street. The pedestrian footpaths are very narrow and large vehicles regularly mount the pavement due to the restricted width. The Field, Chapel Lane, Manor Lane and Church Lane all access on to High Street and are virtually blind T junctions. Further traffic on to High Street as caused by SOM 2 MBC/023/16 will increase the danger to vehicles exiting these three roads onto High Street. In addition the wider road network is not adequate for increased traffic. For example through the villages of Burrough on the Hill or Pickwell or Leesthorpe or Owston.

- The Leicestershire County Council Transport Plan LTP 3 at 2.10 stated as regards to housing growth 2011-2026 and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) “The RSS had a policy of urban concentration to deliver these numbers, with much of the additional housing likely to be delivered through the extension of existing urban areas including Leicester, Melton Mowbray, Loughborough, Hinckley and Coalville (referred to as Sustainable Urban Extensions, or SUE’s). SUEs are envisaged as thriving communities providing a mix of housing, employment opportunities and community facilities, such as shops, schools and open space. Recently commissioned studies have confirmed there is sufficient land to provide the planned additional dwellings in Leicester and Leicestershire in an urban concentration approach.”

LTP3 also states SUE will “provide an opportunity to promote sustainable development by aligning homes with jobs, reducing the need to travel and providing platforms for low-carbon development, something that will be fundamental to the success of LTP3.”

However it is clear that the approach adopted by MBC does not conform to this strategy and does not sufficiently focus on Sustainable urban extensions (SUE’S) moreover the targeted housing growth for rural areas such as SOM 2 will simply mean an adverse impact on the performance and reliability of our local transport network, on individuals and the environment. The DLP does not address this issue in Chapter 8.

- The site SOM 2 is currently used as a paddock for an adjacent well renowned important equestrian business. There are a number of other such equestrian facilities in the area.

This area is well recognised as a centre of excellence for horse riding. There is a further stabling and equestrian business planned on the Somerby to Pickwell Road. Increasing traffic from the site SOM 2 will be detrimental to such businesses and also create further hazard for horse riders on the quiet country lanes. As such the planned enlargement of Somerby will jeopardise a key source of rural employment and a tourist visitor attraction. It will negatively impact sustainability and reduce opportunities for sport and recreation in the area. It will be contrary to the objectives in NPPF Clause 28.

- My family will lose our privacy and amenity of the quiet tranquility we currently enjoy due to the intrusion of SOM 2.
- In the local plan 7.16.6 the aim is to reduce carbon emissions and notes “This emphasizes the importance of spatial strategy which concentrates growth around Melton Mowbray where existing sustainable transport infrastructure can be utilized” however such rural development is completely contrary to such an objective. The site SOM 2 will fail Leicestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP3) as it will not reduce the carbon footprint of Leicestershire.
- The access of SOM 2 MBC /023/16 onto High Street is at the junction of the Newbold Road, close to The Field, is on an extremely sharp bend and is dangerous. The access point onto High Street is the site of previous accidents involving injuries and numerous unreported accidents. Refer accidents [27/01/2003 1 vehicle 1 casualty]; [26/02/2002 vehicles 2 Casualty 1] Refer www.CrashMap.co.uk
- SOM 2 is connected to the walled open space on Manor Lane “a retained historic enclosure” which is noted in the Areas of Separate Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study Sept 15 Page 102 Area 11 as having a strong Character in respect of relationship to settlement and quality. The strategy proposal was to reinforce this area. Any development of the site SOM 2 will diminish and harm this historic enclosure and contrary to the proposal in the aforementioned study. The walled open space on Manor Lane was protected open space in the 1977 local plan. It ought to retain its protected open space status in the DLP.
- The draft local plan sustainability analysis of SOM 2 notes employment opportunities at John O’Gaunt or Burrough Court and yet the likelihood of any of the prospective residents finding employment at this site is virtually zero. There are businesses, which are moving out of this site as it is such a remote location! The consequence is the majority of employed residents will be commuters leading to increased car journeys together with carbon emissions and a dormitory unsustainable village. The objective of the plan was to reduce emissions.
- The site allocations in the rural area within Service Centres and Rural Hubs based on the basis of the existing settlement is neither fair nor reasonable. Pre-submission Draft Plan 4.2.15

I do not consider it "fair" (the word used in the local plan for the distribution of sites) the following do not have any allocated sites:-

- Twford
 - Burrough on the Hill
 - Ashby Folville
 - Little Dalby
 - Leesthorpe
 - Pickwell
 - Sroxton
 - Garthorpe
 - Buckminster
 - Pickwell
 - Plungar
 - Grimston
 - Barkestone
 - Redmile
 - Eastwell
 - Coston
 - Brentinby
 - Stonesby
 - Saltby
 - Holwell
 - Saxelby
 - Cold Overton
 - Knossington
- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| | Harston |
| | Knipton |
| | Nether Broughton |
| | Kirby Bellars |
| | Thorpe Satchville |
| | Feeby |
| | Wartnaby |
| | Branston |
| | Eaton |
| | Scalford |

For example I do not understand how villages such as Twford, a village far more sustainable community on the spectrum of the NPPF, is in the same category as Little Dalby or Leesthorpe. The analysis of MBC is too binary and fundamentally flawed. Policy SS3 works well for villages with little amenity or housing but not for the larger communities outside the service centres/ rural hubs.

Within the Parish of Somerby it seems unreasonable to simply look towards Somerby itself for the provision of the sites. Whilst the other villages in the Parish have no greater ability to accept large sites than Somerby they can nevertheless shoulder part of the housing need. Further housing in those other villages will assist those villages becoming sustainable. In the analysis of proximity to say the Somerby Surgery, residents on the southern edge of Pickwell are nearer to this service than those on the western edge of Somerby SOM 2. This would be justification for another village to accept a development site.

Taking Great Dalby as an example it has a primary school, a church, is closer to Melton Mowbray than Somerby, a public House, community rooms, a bus service and is on a better road network and yet it is not allocated any dwellings. For example there is a 4 acre site off Burdetts Close in Great Dalby which is a prime development opportunity and already has a road hammerhead access installed. I do not see why such land is not designated as having potential for development. To simply ignore such sites, as the owner has not come forward to sell at this moment when the plan lasts for another 20 years is wrong. Similar comments may be applied to the Great Dalby Airfield site. Which surely would present a far better development opportunity since it is a brownfield site, close to Melton, and is a good distance away from a conservation area.

Arguments may be made for many of the above villages such as Nether Broughton with a population greater than Somerby and closer to main road networks, or Twyford, which is on two bus routes and where the parents have a greater choice of schools such as Gaddesby, Great Dalby or Somerby to accept some sites and residential development. It would be more equitable for such villages to accept their fair share of dwellings rather than the burden being placed on a selected few villages. It is a policy purely based on the opportunistic desire by a few landowners, who in 2016 i.e. in a moment in time, wish to develop their land. This cannot be described as planned or considered but simply a policy based on the randomness of availability.

- Somerby School does not have any off road car parking or its own green space and is totally unsuitable for further development. The structure is a listed building and will not lend itself to further alteration. It is not easily adaptable for modern teaching methods including the on-going IT requirements. Furthermore the design, running costs, fabric and structure are not carbon efficient (costing an excessive amount to heat) is hardly suitable for the requirements of a modern school. The increased traffic as a consequence of SOM 2 MBC /023/16 and an increased school in terms of pupil numbers will mean additional hazard for those drivers exiting onto High Street from Manor Lane, Church Lane and Chapel Lane, Mill Lane and the Field not to mention hazardous for pedestrians given the narrow footpaths for children and parents walking to school.
- The site SOM 2 will exacerbate the existing drainage problems and other infrastructure issues. The existing drainage system both foul and surface water in Somerby is already inadequate for the existing number of households let alone the additional number of properties being proposed in our village. There have been localised flooding incidents in the past around the village due to the increased discharge volumes through climate change (increased rainfall), increased paved areas promoting rapid discharge into the system and increased population. Whilst MBC might believe this is not their problem the site such as SOM2 will mean other parts of the village are vulnerable to flooding with the inevitable hardship those households will have to endure. This issue is not easily solved as the existing drainage network is, in part, on private land and licences for access for any alterations will be difficult to obtain.
- The village is not on the natural gas network and has an electricity supply which is subject to frequent outages. Restricted energy options for households in Somerby will not assist reducing fuel poverty, which is important in Melton where 18-32 % of households are in fuel poverty in 2012. DLP 7.16.7. It is ironic that the development of SOM 2 and the designation of Somerby as a Service Centre will mean that new properties will be condemned to have a restricted choice for fuel or even worse use methods which are environmentally harmful such as log burners etc.
- A number of properties in the direct vicinity of the site have long established and fully functional water wells for example Manor Cottage Manor Lane , 7 Chapel Lane. These wells have been operational for over 125 years. Any development on the site of SOM 2 will alter the ground water table and risk the contamination of those wells.
- The water table in the field SOM 2 is very high, evident by the presence of natural small pond, in the centre of the site. As a consequence a potential flooding risk will prevail due to surface water run off especially at the south eastern edge of SOM 2 where the historic existing dwellings are sited at a lower level than the main part of the site.

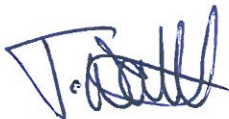
- The draft local plan acknowledges the increasing ageing population(3.2.1DLP page 18) and the need for stock of housing to meet the need of an aging population. Sites such as SOM 2 in Somerby will not meet these needs as it is over 7 miles to the nearest hospital and over 17 miles to a hospital providing primary/geriatric care. It has an inadequate bus service and no bus service at all to Leicester which is the location of the main hospitals. This site will not meet the strategic objective of meeting the needs of the community and the ageing population.
- Somerby is not capable of serving the basic day to day needs of the community. (refer Draft Local Plan (DLP) 4.2.5) It fails the key strand of policy reference SS1 sustainability. It has one small corner shop (as quaint as it is) and is 7 miles from the nearest supermarket. It is entirely dependent on towns. For example how is it possible to classify Somerby a service centre when it is reliant on the car for transportation and the nearest Petrol Station is 7 miles away? There is for example no local taxi service. There is no employment in the village of any note; there is no bus service to Leicester. The MBC view of "sustainability" of the village is residents need to travel to towns to meet their basic retail, leisure and employment needs. Somerby does not have a fully functioning post office as stated in in the site assessment. It provides a limited service two days a week. The convenience shop is on a tight bend does not have adequate parking and yet it is intended to service the needs of the surrounding villages! The assessment of Somerby as a rural service centre is entirely flawed. MBC has conducted a simplistic "desk top" review without any proper analysis or consideration of the practical reality. It is a three mile drive to the nearest A road. (The junction of which (A606 – Pickwell Road) is notoriously dangerous and the scene of many accidents).

I trust the foregoing outlines some of my objections to the inclusion of SOM 2 MBC /023/16 in the draft local plan.

I am happy to discuss these points further in a meeting if this will be helpful.

I hope the Melton BC shares my views and omits the site of SOM 2 MBC/023/16 from the SHLAA and the draft MBC Local Plan.

Yours faithfully,



MRS T.J. WATTS

I should be grateful if you acknowledge receipt of this letter.