



# Local Plan Partial Update Issues and Options consultation

November 2023

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Five-Year Review of the Melton Local Plan

1.1.1. The [Melton Local Plan](#) was adopted in October 2018. It is a legal requirement<sup>1</sup> that councils review their local plan within 5 years of adoption, to decide whether the plan needs to be updated, either in whole or in part.

1.1.2. The [Five-Year Review of the Melton Local Plan](#) was considered by a meeting of the Council on 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2023. The review assessed the local plan's policies, taking account of the following factors:

- Conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Alignment with the Planning Practice Guidance.
- Alignment with the Council's Corporate Strategy.
- Performance based on the Authority Monitoring Reports.
- Performance based on Development Management officer's feedback, and appeals performance.
- Consideration of an independent gap analysis of the evidence base
- Changes to local circumstances (for example, Local Housing Needs).
- Housing Delivery Test performance and having more than 5 years' worth of housing land supply.
- Deliverability of key site allocations.
- Changes to higher tier plans.
- Cross-boundary issues (for example, unmet housing and employment needs).
- Significant economic changes that may impact on viability.
- New social, economic, or environmental priorities may have arisen.

1.1.3. Most, but not all, of the policies were assessed as needing revision ([Appendix A](#) provides a summary of the conclusions). The review concluded that there was no need to reconsider the spatial strategy, housing targets or housing allocations (specifically, policies SS2, C1(A), C1(B) and Appendix 1) but that employment allocations and many of the development management policies would need updating. Therefore, the decision was taken to prepare a partial update of the Melton Local Plan.

### 1.2. Background

1.2.1. The Government is in the process of reforming parts of the planning system, including how local plans are prepared and parts of national planning policy<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 17 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012.

<sup>2</sup> The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and National Planning Policy Framework: draft text for consultation, both published 2022.

The timetable for preparing this Update means that it will be prepared under the current law, but any future Update will need to accord with the new local plan system.

- 1.2.2. The current Local Plan timetable, as adopted in the [September 2023 Local Development Scheme](#) practically mirrors the deadline to submit local plans under the current regime as suggested by the Central Government<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.2.3. Neighbourhood Plans will continue to form a key part of the planning system in Melton. The Local Plan Update should not prevent continued work on Neighbourhood Plans. Existing Neighbourhood Plans will be considered while writing the Local Plan Update.

### 1.3. How to use the Issues and Options

- 1.3.1. This Issues and Options Report is the first consultation stage in preparing the Melton Local Plan Partial Update. It is designed to give you the opportunity to consider the policy wordings of the current (adopted) Melton Local Plan and to suggest if and how you would like them to change.
- 1.3.2. It is split into short sections, each considering a single policy of the adopted Melton Local Plan or a specific section (Vision) or related to the potential production of new evidence. Each section contains the following parts:
  - The full policy/specific section wording from the adopted Melton Local Plan;
  - The issues which lead the council to believe the policy needs updating;
  - A number of options about how to update the policy and a short discussion of each option; and
  - Consultation questions which you can use to guide your response.
- 1.3.3. You are invited to answer one, some or all the questions on as many of the policies/sections as you wish. To respond to this consultation, please use the [online form](#) (preferred method). If you encounter any problems completing the online form, please use the alternative formats that can be found on our website (<https://www.meltonplan.co.uk/issues-and-options>) and send by post to:

*Melton Borough Council (Planning Policy), Burton Street,  
Melton Mowbray. LE13 1GH.*

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<sup>3</sup> Levelling-up Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy, consultation published in December 2022.

**The deadline for responses is the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2024.**

- 1.3.4. We cannot accept anonymous comments. We need to attribute comments to individuals/organisations to process, seek clarifications and respond to them. Comments will be summarised and responded to in a publicly available document, but personal data will be redacted. Our [privacy notice](#) is available online under the 'Planning Policy' tab.
- 1.3.5. The Council has published its [Statement of Community Involvement](#) which contains policies about how we will consult on local plans.
- 1.3.6. You can also read and comment on the [Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report](#) which is being published at the same time as the Issues and Options Report.
- 1.3.7. Once the consultation deadline has passed, the Council will consider all of the responses received before preparing a draft Melton Local Plan Partial Update which will be subject to consultation. The Council has published a [Local Development Scheme](#) which contains the proposed timetable, which will be kept under review and amended where necessary.

## **2. Vision and objectives**

### **2.1. Current (adopted) Vision and Strategic Priorities**

#### **A Vision for Melton Borough**

**In 2036, Melton Borough will be a thriving borough with new and well established local employers benefiting from a sufficient pool of appropriately skilled local workforce. There will be improved connectivity and ease of movement within and across the town, and to and from the nearby larger centres of Leicester, Loughborough, Nottingham and Grantham and the Borough's many villages. This will have elevated Melton Borough as a desirable place to live, work in and visit, both sub-regionally and beyond. Much new housebuilding, including a significant proportion of new homes suitable for first time buyers, young families and those on lower incomes, will have helped balance the local housing stock and slow down or reverse the trend towards an ageing population. It will also have increased the vibrancy of neighbourhoods, and helped to sustain local shops, schools and other services, both in Melton Mowbray and many of the villages. The strong historic and landscape character of the Borough will be as apparent and cherished as ever, and new development will be notable for the success with which it has been reflective of that character and integrated into its setting. The efficient use of land and the location of new development will have ensured that the best and most versatile agricultural land can continue to support a strong rural economy and that development overall during the plan period has created a more sustainable pattern and form than was prevalent at the outset.**

#### **Delivering the Vision**

**To deliver the vision, the Borough Council will work with its partners and others to promote and manage development in a way which consolidates and builds upon the unique reputation, heritage, character and rural nature of Melton Borough so that it meets the needs of the local community, benefits the economy and maintains or improves the quality of the local environment.**

**We will facilitate a sustainable pattern of high quality development which:**

- Meets the needs of businesses to provide a diverse, competitive and innovative economy with high levels of local employment and good opportunities for training;**
- Meets the current and future housing needs of the whole community;**
- Provides the necessary infrastructure to support economic and population growth;**

- Strengthens and enhances Melton Mowbray’s role as a historic market town and as the main social and economic focus for the Borough;
- Raises the quality, interest and diversity of Melton Mowbray’s town centre and reduces the impact of traffic;
- Respects the individual character and distinctiveness of Melton Borough’s town and villages, preserving their heritage and promoting good design;
- Ensures that people benefit from having better access to key services and facilities to create strong, healthy, safer communities;
- Retains the character of the countryside whilst supporting landbased industries and tourism opportunities;
- Enhances and minimises harm to the natural environment;

Addresses the causes and effects of climate change and reuses and recycles resources.

## **Strategic Objectives**

### **Housing Objectives**

1. Help provide a stock of housing accommodation that meets the needs of the community, including the need for affordable housing.
2. Develop a housing stock to provide for the future aspirations for the local economy.

### **Jobs and Prosperity Objectives**

3. Enhance the vitality and viability of Melton Mowbray town centre.
4. Provide sufficient land to meet current and future employment needs.
5. Help regenerate the rural economy.
6. Promote the tourism potential of the Borough through its food, equestrianism and heritage assets creating a Melton Borough “brand”.
7. Create a mixed economy with increased knowledge-based jobs and wages.
8. Provide better training opportunities and increase educational attainment.

### **Accessibility and Transport Objectives**

9. Reduce the need to travel by car and improve access to public transport.
10. Reduce traffic congestion in Melton Mowbray.

### **Safety and Protection Objectives**

11. To improve community safety, reduce crime and the fear of crime.

### **Community Development Objectives**

12. Improve access to services and facilities, including health, schools, social care, jobs, recreation, sport and education, broadband.
13. Promote sustainable communities.
14. Improve facilities for all the community.



**15. Improve the health of the Borough and reduce health inequalities within the community.**

### **Environment Objectives**

- 16. Promote high quality and innovative design which is visually attractive, reflects local context and distinctiveness, and, contributes to a safe and accessible environment, to make places better for people.**
- 17. Conserve the historic environment and Melton Borough's heritage assets.**
- 18. Protect the rural character of the Borough.**
- 19. Reduce the risk of flooding and avoid development in areas prone to flooding.**
- 20. Protect and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity.**
- 21. Reduce pollution.**
- 22. Protect and manage the use of natural resources and mitigate activities that cause their loss or degradation.**
- 23. Prepare for, limit, and adapt to climate change and promote low carbon development**
- 24. Minimise the use of energy and promote forms of renewable energy generation in appropriate locations.**

**Ensure that the reuse and recycling of waste is maximised.**

## **2.2. Issues with the Vision and Objectives**

- 2.2.1. The current Vision for Melton Borough is covered by the whole of Chapter 3 in the adopted Local Plan. This Vision itself is long, this and its wide ranging focus, means that it is not clear what the most important local priorities and issues are.
- 2.2.2. The vision is also somewhat dated, and it does not fully align with current plans and policies, at both a national and local level. For example, it does not reflect changes to the Climate Change Act, the introduction of the national carbon reduction framework or the need to reach net zero by 2050. Options for updating the Vision and Objectives

### **Option 1: No change**

The Vision and Objectives are still relevant, and change is not needed. Although broadly, most of the vision and objectives in the adopted Local Plan are still relevant, there are specific topics that have gained prominence since 2018, including Climate Change. Considering this, we do not recommend retaining the Vision and Objectives as they are.

## Option 2: Refocused and simplified version [preferred option]

This option seeks to simplify the current Vision and Objectives to provide a clearer statement of what we want the Local Plan to help achieve. In this option we are expecting to retain key elements of the adopted Vision and Objectives, such as a growth focussed on Melton Mowbray and the Local Plan's overall aim to create a better Borough for people, business, and nature.

This option would use feedback from this consultation to help update the Vision and Objectives, to ensure that they continue to align well with what the local community wants for the Borough of Melton.


We are not starting from scratch. The existing Vision and Objectives, as well as more recent feedback from the local community, from the strategic objectives developed in community led Neighbourhood Plans to wide ranging consultations undertaken by the Council since 2018 to develop its corporate priorities, improve Melton Mowbray town centre and on topics such as climate change and housing, suggests the key issues to focus the Vision and Objectives on:

- Improving facilities for all of the community and providing the new infrastructure needed to support our growing population
- Addressing the causes and effects of climate change
- Ensure local housing meets the local communities current and future needs
- Supporting a diverse, competitive and innovative rural economy
- Enhancing Melton Mowbray's town centre
- Promoting high quality and well-designed development that helps to create healthy, sustainable, and safe communities
- Enhancing nature and minimising harm to the natural environment

These seven key issues provide us with a good starting point to seek further community feedback on.

In addition to the feedback sought in this consultation, we recognise that the Vision and Objectives will need to be finessed with the outcomes of future publications such as a new Corporate Strategy or a Climate Change Strategy and be relevant to the remit of the adopted Local Plan and the Local Plan Update.

### 2.3. Consultation questions

-  Question 1 Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

✚ Question 2 Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this section [Free text]

✚ Question 3 What do you think are the most important objectives to be covered by our Vision? Please select your top 3 [Rank]

- Improving facilities for all of the community and providing the new infrastructure needed to support our growing population
- Addressing the causes and effects of climate change
- Ensure local housing meets the local communities current and future needs
- Supporting a diverse, competitive and innovative rural economy
- Enhancing Melton Mowbray's town centre
- Promoting high quality and well-designed development to help create healthy, sustainable and safe communities
- Enhancing nature and minimising harm to the natural environment
- Other (please specify) [free text]

### 3. Policy SS1. Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

#### 3.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.**

**Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.**

**Where there are no policies relevant to the application, or the policies which are most important for determining an application are out of date at the time of making the decision, then the Council will grant permission unless:**

- **the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or**
- **any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the national planning policy framework taken as a whole.**

#### 3.2. Issues with the Policy

3.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:

- Consistency error in relation to a reference to the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### 3.3. Options for updating the Policy

##### Option 1: Delete the policy

National planning policy sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and this policy duplicates this presumption. However, paragraph 16 in the National Planning Policy Framework indicates that plans should, among other things, 'serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area', including policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. Deleting the policy will simplify the Local Plan and shorten its content.

Even though unnecessary duplication needs to be avoided, this was explored by the Inspector in her report, where she indicated that 'While it is not necessary to repeat

national policy in a local plan, the aims of Policy SS1 underpin the Plan and it is reasonable to retain’.

### Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]

If the policy is retained, it should consistently refer to “the National Planning Policy Framework” throughout, a purely grammatical/minor change which would not impact on its meaning or application.

### 3.4. Consultation Questions

- ✚ Question 4 Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]
  - Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  - Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  
- ✚ Question 5 Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **4. Policy SS3. Sustainable Communities (unallocated sites)**

### **4.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**In rural settlements outside the main urban area, the Council will seek to protect and enhance existing services and facilities and will support sustainable development proposals in accordance with Policy SS2 above which contribute towards meeting local development needs, contributing towards the vision and strategic priorities of the plan, and improving the sustainability of our rural areas.**

**In addition to those sites allocated through the local plan, planning permission will be granted for new residential development in the rural area within or on the edge of existing settlements, provided it is in keeping with the scale and character of the host settlement and where:**

- The development provides housing which meets a proven local need as identified by substantive evidence, for example within in a Neighbourhood Plan or appropriate community-led strategy, or a housing needs assessment or other evidence provided by the applicant; and**
- The development respects the Borough's landscape and settlement character such that it conforms with policies EN1, EN4 & EN6; and that (where relevant), the design conforms with Policy D1; and applicable environmental policies in any relevant Neighbourhood Plan; and**
- The development will be served by sustainable infrastructure and or provide new infrastructure or services to the wider benefit of the settlement; and**
- The development respects ecological, heritage and biodiversity features and where appropriate provides mitigation to prevent any potential harm; and**
- Where possible the development does not result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land; and**
- The development can be adequately drained and would does not increase the risk of flooding, in accordance with Policy EN11.**

### **4.2. Issues with the Policy**

**4.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:**

- The 'proven local needs' element of the policy is not clear for decision makers.**

- The policy is failing to adequately consider wider social, economic and environmental sustainability, including tackling climate change.

### 4.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

Housing delivery within the local plan is not reliant on policy SS3 and its deletion would have little impact on overall housing delivery or the overall plan's spatial framework. The small rural settlements to which this policy applies have the least local services and facilities and are the most reliant on private cars to meet every day's needs. They are not considered sustainable places where significant additional new housing should be located.

The plan already contains an alternative rural worker accommodation policy (D3) and a rural exception site policy for rural affordable housing (C5) that make provisions for rural housing in limited circumstances that could apply to these smaller settlements. There is limited evidence to suggest that there is need for a specific policy to support market housing development in these locations.

Deletion would however remove any support in the plan for housing development within the smallest and least sustainable rural settlements within the borough. In some circumstances development might help to maintain and enhance the sustainability of smaller rural settlements or meet a specific local housing need that may be considered reasonable and valued by rural communities.

An inflexible approach that does not provide any room to accommodate rural community aspirations for development is not considered appropriate or positively prepared, so deletion of the policy is not recommended.

#### Option 2: Review the policy to better define meeting local need

This option proposes to clarify what proven local housing needs are, to set out a clear framework for applicants and decision makers. This would set out what a local housing need is and how it can be proven, to help address the main issue identified with the policy. This type of approach works well elsewhere in the plan, for example for rural workers accommodation (policy D3). The issues with this approach are:

- It fails to consider wider sustainability issues or how the development could enhance longer term local sustainability of a settlement, given a new home is likely to stand beyond the needs of any immediate occupant.
- It may weaken the role of local community plans, including neighbourhood plans in determining support for development under policy SS3
- By setting out exact 'housing need' criteria, there is a risk that if too prescriptive the criteria might not be sufficiently flexible to address an applicant's specific needs or conversely be open to exploitation. A careful balance is required to ensure that the policy works well whilst protecting

against overdevelopment which could result in a cumulative negative impact on the character the Borough's smallest settlements or impact the overall spatial delivery plan.




### Option 3: Review the policy to enhance wider sustainability [preferred option]

This option supports going further, to consider what is meant by 'enhancing local sustainability'. This option seeks to realign the policy to ensure that any housing development under policy SS3 is not only justified by an immediate need, but that it also contributes to making the settlement it sits in a more sustainable place. This approach considers not just the housing needs of the immediate occupant, but of generations to come, by considering wider social, economic and environmental sustainability criteria. This would introduce additional considerations that support exemplar development, such as requirements for low energy green homes and to help to improve the mix of homes within in a village, to better meet the long term needs of local people.

This option also proposes to strengthen the role of local community support, including through neighbourhood planning, supporting the rural communities who will be most impacted by the policy to have a stronger role in setting out and shaping what types of development and infrastructure they think should be supported under SS3.

The downside of this option is that it can make the policy more restrictive and complex, reducing the potential for development in the smaller settlements of the Borough.

#### 4.4. Consultation Questions

-  Question 6 Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]
  - Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  - Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  - Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  
-  Question 7 Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]
  
-  Question 8 Under what circumstances do you think new homes in the borough's smallest and least sustainable settlements are justified? [Free text]



🚧 Question 9 Do you think criteria should be introduced to require homes built in the borough's smallest and least sustainable settlements to be built to the highest sustainability standards? If yes, what types of criteria do you think the policy should consider? [Free text]

## **5. Policy SS4. South Melton Mowbray Sustainable Neighbourhoods**

### **5.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**Melton Borough Council will work in partnership with developers and delivery partners to deliver the South Melton Mowbray Sustainable Neighbourhood (SSN) identified as a strategic development location on the Policies Map. The Sustainable Neighbourhood will provide:**

#### **Housing**

**h1: 2,000 homes (of which 1,700 will be delivered before 2036), 15% of which should be affordable subject to viability;**

**h2: Homes of a range of tenures, types and sizes in accordance with Policy C2;**

**Extra care housing to meet the needs of our ageing population in accordance with Policies C2, C3 and C8.**

#### **Employment**

**em1: 20 hectares of employment land for B1 (business) B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) uses to expand and enhance the existing Leicester Road Business Park.**

#### **Community facilities**

**c1: A new primary school (2.5 hectares) as part of a local centre and financial contributions towards secondary education, to meet the identified need for school places; and**

**c2: An accessible local centre to serve the needs of the residents of the development including:**

- A: A parade of shops providing up to 400 sq.m (net) of A1 (retail)**
- B: Up to 400 sq.m (net) of other 'A2 – A5 class' uses;**
- C: Small-scale employment opportunities (including B1 (a) office uses); and**
- D: A range of appropriate non-retail and community facilities and services (including community hall and medical services).**

#### **Transport**

**t1: A comprehensive package of transport improvements informed by an appropriate transport assessment including:**

- A: A strategic road link connecting the A606 to the A607 forming part of the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road as part of a wider agreed scheme; and**
- B: Measures to mitigate the short and medium term impacts of development on the existing transport network where adverse impacts are identified.**

- **C: New and enhanced bus services connecting the development with the Town Centre and local employment opportunities;**
- t2: Measures that seek to achieve a modal shift away from private car use including:**

- **A: frequent bus service from the site into Melton Mowbray Town Centre and local employment opportunities with accessible bus stops which are less than 400 metres walk from all new residents;**
- **B: well-connected street patterns and walkable neighbourhoods providing high quality, safe and direct walking, cycling and public transport routes including links using the green infrastructure network;**
- **C: the retention of existing and provision of new walking, cycling and road connections within Melton Mowbray, to town centre facilities, and to existing and new employment and education services; and**
- **D: provision of a Travel Plan for new residents which includes measures to encourage the use of public transport, as part of a wider travel plan.**

### **Environment**

**en1: Protection of the separate identities of Burton Lazars and Eye Kettleby in accordance with Policy EN4 and respond to settlement fringe sensitivity in accordance with Policy EN1 to create a locally distinctive development and an improved town edge, with particular regard to the ridgeline to the south of Melton Mowbray that separates the visual connection between Melton Mowbray and Burton Lazars;**

**en2: Protection and enhancement of important areas of bio-diversity (habitats and species), in accordance with Policy EN2, including:**

- **A: Protection and enhancement to the existing wildlife corridors and, where appropriate, provide new corridors to create a coherent network of biodiversity and green infrastructure, specifically the River Wreake tributaries and the Edendale Brook; and**
- **B: Establish a protection zone between the River Eye SSSI and any future development; and**

**en3: Protection and enhancement of historic and archaeological features in accordance with Policy EN13; high quality, sensitive design to mitigate the impact of the development including the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road on the setting of St Mary and St Lazarus Hospital Scheduled Ancient Monument, connecting green links within the development to the wider landscape setting of the monument, and contributions towards improvements in the public understanding of its value.**

**en4: Provide a network of new high quality multi-functional green spaces in accordance with the Council's open space standards set out in policy EN7;**

**en5: Provision of, or contributions towards, sports pitches and indoor leisure facilities in the town, in accordance with the Playing Pitch Strategy and emerging Indoor Facilities Assessment (see Policy EN7);**

**en6: Encourage developers to provide a development that complies with building regulations for energy efficiency and carbon emissions, and to seek 10% of houses that obtain energy from renewable sources;**

**en7: Buildings and spaces which are adaptable to future climatic conditions including extremes of temperature, drought and flooding;**

**en8: Development that provides appropriate SuDS and flood alleviation measures in accordance with the Melton South assessment in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Areas of the MSSN that are at higher risk of flooding shall not be used for built development; and**

**en9: Protection and enhancement of water quality.**

### **Master planning and delivery**

**A master plan, including a phasing and delivery plan, should be prepared and agreed in advance of, or as part of, submission of a planning application for the Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood (SSN). In order to achieve a comprehensive approach, the master plan should be prepared for the whole SSN including the adjacent employment site. It will set out in detail the structure and development concepts of the SSN to include, amongst other things:**

**m1: The amount, distribution and location of proposed land uses alongside a timetable for their delivery;**

**m2: Important environmental features, including high grade agricultural land and biodiversity sites, and heritage assets that are to be protected;**

**m3: Areas of green infrastructure and green space (including important strategic green gaps to be protected); and,**

**m4: Areas of new landscaping;**

**m5: Design which performs well against Building for Life 12 and seeks to develop the principles of 'Active Design', in accordance with Policy D1.**

**The SSN master plan will be prepared in consultation with key stakeholders. Planning permission will not normally be granted for the SSN until a comprehensive master plan has been completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.**

**The Local Planning Authority will monitor compliance of the delivery of the SSN in accordance with the agreed master plan and delivery timetable. Where slippage against the agreed delivery timetable in excess of 1 year is identified, the Local Planning Authority will review the master plan and delivery timetable with partners to ensure sustainable development is delivered in accordance with the Policy.**

**Subsequent development shall be in accordance with the master plan and agreed design codes.**

## 5.2. Issues with the Policy

5.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:

- Revised education needs evidence, demonstrated by recent Local Education Authority consultation responses relating to housing growth across the Borough indicates that additional education facilities are required over and above the current policy, including a new secondary school and a further primary school within this site.
- Funding for significant sections of the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road has been obtained from various government funding streams. Part of the bid involved agreement to change various aspects of the allocation including a deliverable route for the road and additional land for housing and employment delivery.
- The site masterplan was revised by the Council and approved in 2021 to incorporate these new requirements, see the [Approved Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood Masterplan 2021](#) which render the policy requirements of SS4 out of date.

5.2.2. To contextualize the issues covered above:

- The policy allocates land for 2000 homes, 20 hectares of employment land, a new primary school and other community infrastructure and significant transport improvements including part of the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road. Its delivery is central to the strategy of the local plan.
- Planning permission has been granted for 555 dwellings on part of the site, currently under construction, and 85 dwellings have been already built.
- The Masterplan demonstrates that a further 1975 homes can be delivered across the site.

## 5.3. Options for updating the Policy


### Option 1: Delete the policy

The site is and will continue to be a centrepiece of the local plan strategy, delivering crucial employment, housing and transport infrastructure. Deletion is not feasible.


## Option 2: Amend to reflect the 2021 Masterplan [preferred option]

The masterplan reflects new evidence on delivery, and agreements between key partners on infrastructure matters. The Masterplan also demonstrates that the MMDR South can be delivered in terms of buy-in from land-owners and developers. The amendments it contains are considered necessary to deliver the site, and therefore the plan as a whole. This is the preferred option.

### 5.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **10** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **11** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **6. Policy SS5. Melton Mowbray North Sustainable Neighbourhood**

### **6.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**Melton Borough Council will work in partnership with developers and delivery partners to deliver the North Melton Mowbray Sustainable Neighbourhood (NSN) identified as a strategic development location on the Policies Map. The Sustainable Neighbourhood will provide:**

#### **Housing**

**h1: 1,700 houses (of which 1500 will be delivered before 2036), 15% of which should be affordable; subject to viability**

**h2: Homes of a range of tenures, types and sizes in accordance with Policy C2;**

**Extra care housing to meets the needs of our ageing population in accordance with Policies C2, C3 and C8; and**

#### **Employment**

**em1: Small scale employment uses as part of a new local centre. Employment uses will mainly be for B1(a) offices. Other employment uses will be acceptable where they could be satisfactorily accessed and activities undertaken without adversely affecting the amenities of the residents of nearby houses.**

#### **Community facilities**

**c1: A new primary school (2.5 hectares) as part of a local centre and financial contributions or additional land provision towards secondary education to meet the identified need for school places;**

**c2: An accessible local centre that will incorporate a mix of uses including 'small-scale' retail uses (up to 200 square metres), office based employment uses and a range of community facilities & services, including healthcare facilities as necessary.**

#### **Transport**

**t1: A comprehensive package of transport improvements informed by an appropriate transport assessment including:**

- A: A strategic road link connecting A606 Nottingham Road to Melton Spinney Road forming part of the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road as part of a wider agreed scheme;**
- B: Securing a route that allows north/south connectivity as part of the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road;**
- C: Measures to mitigate the impact of development on the existing transport network where adverse impacts are identified;**
- D: New and enhanced bus services connecting the development with the town centre and local employment opportunities; and**

- **E: Provision of new walking and cycle links as part of the proposed development.**
- **F: The Melton Park Greenway – a series of measures that improve accessibility and the attractiveness of walking and cycling connections through the Melton Country Park to the town centre and other town attractors such as employment, education and retail.**

**t2: Measures that seek to achieve a modal shift away from private car use including:**

- **A: a frequent bus service from the site into Melton Mowbray Town Centre and local employment opportunities with accessible bus stops which are less than 400 metres walk from all new residents;**
- **B: Well-connected street patterns and walkable neighbourhoods providing high quality, safe and direct walking, cycling and public transport routes including links using the green infrastructure network;**
- **C: The retention of existing and provision of new walking, cycling and road connections within Melton Mowbray; to town centre facilities; and to existing and new employment and education services; and**
- **D: Provision of a Travel Plan for new residents which includes measures to encourage the use of public transport, as part of a wider travel plan.**

### **Environment**

**en1: Protection to the separate identities of Scalford and Thorpe Arnold in accordance with Policy EN4 and respond to settlement fringe sensitivity in accordance with Policy EN1 to create a locally distinctive development and an improved town edge;**

**en2: Protection and enhancement of historic assets and their settings;**

**en3: Seek to retain and mitigate any potential harm to notable areas identified in the biodiversity study, in accordance with Policy EN2, including:**

- **A: Protection and enhancement to the existing green infrastructure, local wildlife sites, wildlife corridors and, where appropriate, provide new corridors to create a coherent network of biodiversity and green infrastructure providing links from existing green infrastructure to the countryside, specifically Melton Country Park, Scalford Brook and Welby Brook and the disused railway line;**
- **B: Establish a protection zone between Melton Country Park and any future development. Development should respond to the local topography and utilise it to define the protection zone. This zone should also include the provision of an undeveloped area of land between part of the existing northern boundary of the park and the proposed distributor road.**
- **C: Establish a protection zone between areas of high ecological importance identified around Scalford Brook in the biodiversity study and any future development;**

**en4: Provide a network of new high quality of multi-functional green spaces in accordance with the Council's open space standards set out in Policy EN7;**



**en5. Provision, or facilitation, of sports pitches in the immediate vicinity, and contribute towards indoor built leisure facilities within Melton Mowbray, in accordance with the Playing Pitch Strategy and emerging Indoor Facilities Assessment (see Policy EN7);**

**en6: A development that complies with exceeds building regulations for energy efficiency and carbon emissions, where viable;**

**en7: Buildings and spaces which are adaptable to future climatic conditions including extremes of temperature, drought and flooding;**

**en8: Development that provides appropriate SuDS and flood alleviation measures in accordance with the Melton North assessment in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Areas of the MSSN that are at higher risk of flooding shall not be used for built development, and;**

**en9: Protection and enhancement of water quality.**

### **Master planning and delivery**

**A master plan, including a phasing and delivery plan, should be prepared and agreed in advance of, or as part of, submission of a planning application for the Melton North Sustainable Neighbourhood (NSN). In order to achieve a comprehensive approach, the master plan should be prepared for the whole NSN. It will set out in detail the structure and development concepts of the NSN to include:**

**m1: The amount, distribution and location of proposed land uses alongside a timetable for their delivery;**

**m2: Proposed key transport links, within and outside of the development, including those between the main housing and local centre, town centre and nearby employment uses, services & facilities;**

**m3: Important environmental features, including high grade agricultural land, biodiversity sites and heritage assets that are to be protected;**

**m4: Areas of green infrastructure and green space (including important strategic green gaps to be protected);**

**m5: Areas of new landscaping: and**

**m6: Design which performs well against BfL12 and seeks to develop the principles of 'Active Design', in accordance with Policy D1.**

**The NSN master plan will be prepared in consultation with key stakeholders. Planning permission will not normally be granted for the NSN until a comprehensive master plan has been completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.**

**The Local Planning Authority will monitor compliance of the delivery of the SSN in accordance with the agreed master plan and delivery timetable. Where**

slippage against the agreed delivery timetable in excess of 1 year is identified the Local Planning Authority will review the master plan and delivery timetable with partners to ensure sustainable development is delivered in accordance with the Policy.

Subsequent development shall be in accordance with the master plan and agreed design codes.

## 6.2. Issues with the Policy

6.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:

- Revised education needs evidence relating to housing growth across the Borough indicates that additional education facilities are required over and above the current policy, including the extension of an existing secondary school onto land within this site and a further primary school.
- A site masterplan was approved by the Council in 2021 reflecting these requirements, see the [Melton North Sustainable Neighbourhood Masterplan 2021](#) which render the policy requirements of SS5 out of date.

6.2.2. To contextualize the issues covered above:

- The policy allocates land for 1,700 homes, a new primary school and other community infrastructure and significant transport improvements including part of the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road. Its delivery is central to the strategy of the local plan.
- Delivery is underway, with planning permission for 883 dwellings including some under construction and a further 1,230 dwellings subject to a planning application currently under consideration. Additionally, 123 completions have been recorded. The North and East Melton Mowbray Distributor Road is currently under construction.

## 6.3. Options for updating the Policy


### Option 1: Delete the policy

The site is and will continue to be a centrepiece of the local plan strategy, delivering crucial employment, housing and transport infrastructure. Deletion is not feasible.


### Option 2: Amend to reflect the 2021 Masterplan [preferred option]

The masterplan reflects new evidence on delivery, and agreements between key partners on infrastructure matters. The amendments it contains are necessary to deliver the site, and therefore the plan as a whole. This is the preferred option.

## 6.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **12** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **13** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **7. Policy SS6. Alternative Development Strategies and Local Plan Review**

### **7.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**Melton Borough Council is committed to meeting its requirements for housing, employment and other development and infrastructure. The Council will regularly monitor delivery of new development in the context of policies and targets within this plan. Where monitoring identifies significant and persistent shortfalls in the delivery of housing and employment, infrastructure or spatial distribution that deviates significantly from the plan strategy, or there are changes within the HMA to the objectively assessed need for development or the spatial distribution of growth across the HMA, the Council will consider an early a full or partial review of the Local Plan to identify alternative or additional development sites.**

**To ensure any plan review arising from the above should be is carried out quickly, the Council will prioritise exploring potential alternative or long term options in terms of their suitability, availability, infrastructure and deliverability.**

**The circumstances in which a review (defined as being publication of an invitation to make representations in accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012) will be carried out are specified as follows:**

- The adoption by the Council of the Strategic Growth Plan and the Memorandum of Understanding, which proposes a quantity or spatial approach that is significantly different to that set out in the Local Plan, unless there is sufficient flexibility already provided for within the Plan; or**
- 5 years from adoption and every 5 years subsequent to the completion of the Review; or**
- changes occur within the HMA to the objectively assessed need for development or the spatial distribution of growth across the HMA including Melton; or**
- Where, when demonstrated by the Monitoring Framework (Appendix 5), that:
  - (i) the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery is below 75% of the housing requirement as set out in the housing trajectory, over the previous three years; or**
  - (ii) The circumstances for review specified in Policies SS4 and SS5 above in respect of the masterplanning and delivery of the Melton Mowbray Sustainable Neighbourhoods, become applicable.****

**The review will be commenced within 6 months of occurrence of one of the above circumstances.**

**Where there is a made Neighbourhood Plan, the review will carried out in consultation with the NP 'qualifying bodies' and, where applicable, solutions**

**prepared via the NP revision process. If a NP is in preparation but not made, the Council will inform the qualifying body who may consult with their community to identify alternative proposals for consideration.**

## 7.2. Issues with the Policy

7.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- Need to address updated positions in areas such as Leicester City's unmet needs

## 7.3. Options for updating the Policy

### Option 1: Delete the policy

The policy is not binding on the Council and there is no stated outcome if the review is not undertaken in accordance with the criteria. The policy could be considered to have been overtaken by the legal requirement for a local plan review at least every five years, as now set out in regulation 10A of the 2012 Local Planning Regulations, supplemented by the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. Deleting the policy would leave a more concise local plan and avoid the potential for inconsistency with national requirements.

However, this would not allow for more Melton-specific criteria leaving decisions about the need for local plan updates more uncertain/flexible.

### Option 2: Reduce to locally specific criteria only [preferred option]

The policy is fairly long and contains very specific triggers, timescales and review requirements which may become out of date, unnecessary or onerous. The policy, in any case, is not binding on the Council and there is no stated outcome if the review is not undertaken in accordance with the criteria. It does not fully accord with the new legal and policy requirements set out in regulation 10A of the 2012 Planning Regulations, supplemented by the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. The policy assigns the Housing Delivery Test a role which goes beyond what the test is designed for. This option gives the opportunity to reinforce the Council's commitment to collaborate with other local authorities in order to meet unmet needs from other authorities within the Housing Market Area.

However, the inclusion of only locally specific criteria could provide a partial picture to the reader of the plan, since the national tests and requirements would not be

specified, although this could be overcome by inclusions in the policy's explanatory text.

The locally specific criteria could be:

- Significant changes to the Strategic Growth Plan or other relevant agreement to meet other councils' housing need within Melton Borough (already part of the policy).
- Delivery issues associated with the Northern and Southern Sustainable Neighbourhoods (already part of the policy).
- Failure to deliver the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (new criterion).


### Option 3: Additional criteria

There are currently general references in the policy to employment, infrastructure delivery and spatial distribution of development but these are not then referred to in the more specific criteria. Inclusion of more specific triggers would make the policy clearer, but at the same time would reduce the flexibility of the Council in relation to future reviews, leading to local plan updates which may not be immediately necessary. This would also extend the length of the policy and make it less concise. This option also gives the opportunity to reinforce the Council's commitment to collaborate with other local authorities in order to meet unmet needs from other authorities within the Housing Market Area.

If additional criteria are considered appropriate, they could include:


- Failure to deliver necessary infrastructure generally, or specific items of infrastructure such as the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road.
- Failure to deliver employment land.
- Indications that the distribution of development will be significantly different from the local plan strategy.
- Failure to meet the Council's duties under the Climate Change Act.

## 7.4. Consultation Questions

 Question 14 Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **15** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 8. Policy C2. Housing Mix

### 8.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**We will seek to manage the delivery of a mix of house types and sizes to balance the current housing offer, having regard to market conditions, housing needs and economic viability, taking account of the site specific circumstances and the housing mix information set out in Table 8 or in any future update of the housing mix evidence.**

**Residential proposals for developments for 10 or more dwellings should seek to provide an appropriate mix and size of dwellings to meet the needs of current and future households in the Borough including extra care and accessible housing, having regard to the latest evidence of housing need. Residential developments which include bungalows will be particularly supported.**

**Proposals for retirement homes, sheltered homes and care homes will be supported and encouraged to meet the technical standard for access of Building Regulations 2015 Part M4(2) or any subsequent revisions.**

**Proposals for wheelchair accessible dwellings, where the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating residents, will be encouraged to meet the technical standard for access of Building Regulations 2015 Part M4(3), or any subsequent revisions.**

### 8.2. Issues with the Policy

8.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The mix of housing delivered is balanced towards a larger supply of 4+ bedroom open market properties than the ideal housing mix, as set out in the Local Plan table 8
- The word 'optimum' housing mix for table 8 is being used to not deliver the percentages set out in table 8 for the different size of properties, ie. higher percentage of larger 4+ beds.
- The wording of policy C2 is not robust enough to ensure that the aims of the housing mix policy are met
- The current housing mix table contains the recommended mix using data from 2017, which has been updated since in 2022 and will be updated further at a Melton Borough local level in 2023.
- There has been an increase in applications which include an office/study/hobby room, rather than stated as a bedroom and using this to demonstrate requirements for smaller properties are met (this is for example a 2-bedroom dwelling with office rather than a 3-bedroom dwelling).



- There is a lack of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings.

### 8.3. Options for updating the policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The National Planning Policy Framework states how important it is that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.

Whilst deletion of the policy would reduce the length of the Local Plan and somewhat increase flexibility, deletion of the policy is not considered appropriate.

#### Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]

Based on the issues raised above, amending the policy would provide clarity to decision-makers, including at appeal. These changes would involve the following:


- Update the housing mix table with the most up to date evidence
- Move the housing mix table from the reasoned justification to be contained instead within the policy wording.
- The wording of policy C2 to be altered to be more definitive with less exception clauses, such as removing “having regard to market conditions and economic viability”.

These changes are likely to make the policy longer. These changes would also reduce the flexibility of the policy overall which may have unintended consequences, for example, reduced viability (and therefore either less affordable housing or a change to the types of affordable housing provided to include more viable forms) and inappropriate development/design in certain situations.


However, by amending the policy, this would strengthen it and mean it would be more robust to challenge.

Not amending the policy would be high risk because further decisions could be made, including appeal decisions, which do not meet the aims of the policy. Appeal decision re: EAST1 and 2 (20/00295/FUL) was allowed and one of the reasons was that the housing mix table (table 8) is in the reasoned justification and not in the actual policy.

#### 8.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **16** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **17** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 9. Policy C3. National Space Standard and Smaller Dwellings

### 9.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**Residential developments for open market housing will be particularly supported where the national space standard is applied to dwellings with up to and including 3 bedrooms. For affordable housing, schemes using the Housing Quality Indicators standards will be supported.**

### 9.2. Issues with the Policy

9.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The policy currently does not require the affordable housing to be built to the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and instead supports schemes using the Housing Quality Indicators standards, which do not require rooms to have as much space.
- Homes England expects homes funded through their Affordable Homes Programme to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards.

### 9.3. Options for updating the policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The National Planning Policy Framework states that Local Plan policies may make use of the nationally described space standard, where the need for an internal space standard can be justified.

Through the Local Plan, the Council would like to enable the delivery of housing which is of a sufficient internal space size to have adequate circulation, storage and living space.

The Nationally Described Space Standards do not automatically apply to new homes unless required by a Local Plan policy. Deletion of the policy, therefore, is not considered appropriate as it would remove all requirements for space standards in Melton.

#### Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]


Considering the issues above, enhancing the policy would help to deliver affordable housing, which is adequate in size for circulation, storage and living space. These changes would involve the following:

- Change the policy so that the Nationally Described Space Standards is required (rather than “support”) for all dwellings, including the affordable housing and dwellings with more than 3 bedrooms.


The implementation of these amendments could have a negative impact on the financial viability of a site.

However, these amendments would mean that new affordable housing is built to the Nationally Described Space Standards, providing households with larger internal dwelling spaces. It would also mean that affordable housing is comparable in size and indistinguishable to the open market housing.

#### 9.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **18** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **19** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 10. Policy C4. Affordable Housing Provision

### 10.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**Melton Borough Council will seek to manage the delivery of around 1300 new affordable homes between 2011 and 2036 in order to balance the housing stock and meet the community's housing needs.**

**It will do this by applying a target for affordable homes within housing developments on all sites of 11 or more units and/or where the floor space exceeds 1000 m2, having regard to market conditions, housing needs, housing mix (in regard to tenure, type and size), economic viability and other infrastructure requirements based on the following percentages for different value areas:**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Minimum percentage of affordable housing</b>
<b>Value Area 1</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Value Area 2</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Value Area 3</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Value Area 4</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Melton Mowbray Northern SUE</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Melton Mowbray Southern SUE</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Melton Mowbray</b>	<b>5%-10%</b>

**The Council will also manage the delivery of schemes through private registered providers and our own delivery programme of affordable housing over the whole plan period.**

### 10.2. Issues with the Policy

10.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- Changes have been made to both the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance regarding affordable housing, including the definitions, since the adoption of the Local Plan
- The evidence underpinning the current affordable housing policy target has now been updated with the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2022) evidence. The affordable housing target will be updated further with a Local Housing Needs Assessment of the Melton Borough (2023).

### 10.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The National Planning Policy Framework states that where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required. The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2022) identified a continued need for affordable housing throughout the plan period. The delivery of affordable housing has also been identified as a priority for the Council.

Deletion of the policy, therefore, is not considered appropriate.


#### Option 2: Amend the policy to reflect National Planning Policy Framework and new evidence [preferred option]

The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance have been amended since the local plan was adopted including the definitions of affordable housing. New affordable housing requirements are expected to be incorporated as part of the publication of new evidence. The following changes are expected to make the policy clearer for decision makers and help the Council to maximise the amount of affordable housing on major residential sites that can be gained:


- Amend the policy with a new affordable housing requirement figure based on the most up to date housing need and viability evidence.
- Update the threshold for the affordable housing requirement to reflect the updated definition of major development, which is “for housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more”.
- Insert a requirement for affordable housing provision in the rural areas of the Borough for sites of 5 dwellings or more.
- Update the policy with the new affordable housing definitions.

By amending the policy, this will mean that an update is likely to be needed every 5 years to reflect the latest housing need evidence, as this continually changes. Whereas, at present the housing need requirement in the policy and the trajectory reflects the position as at the start of the Local Plan period.

#### 10.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **20** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **21** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **11. Policy C7. Rural Services**

### **11.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**Support will be given to proposals and activities that protect, retain or enhance existing community services and facilities\* or that lead to the provision of additional assets that improve community cohesion and well-being to encourage sustainable development.**

**Proposals for the change of use of community facilities\*, which would result in the loss of the community use, will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that either:**

- 1. there are alternative facilities available and active in the same village which would fulfill the role of the existing use/building, or**
- 2. the existing use is no longer viable (supported by documentary evidence), and there is no realistic prospect of the premises being re-used for alternative business or community facility use.**

**The proposal must also demonstrate that consideration has been given to:**

- a) the re-use of the premises for an alternative community business or facility, and that effort has been made to try to secure such a re-use; and**
- b) the potential impact closure may have on the village and its community, with regard to public use and support for both the existing and proposed use.**

**\* including facilities such as community/village halls, village shops, post offices, schools, health services, care homes, public houses, playing fields and allotments.**

### **11.2. Issues with the Policy**

**11.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:**

- The policy would benefit from a potential reword and more clarity, particularly in relation to marketing evidence and time scales.**
- The policy would benefit from a change of name to ensure clarity.**
- Lack of coverage of town community services and facilities out of the town centre boundary.**



### 11.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The protection, retention and enhancement of existing community services and facilities in rural area is a key corporate and national policy requirement.

Consequently, deletion of this policy is not recommended.


#### Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]

The scope of the policy, which could also benefit from renaming to reflect its focus on community services and facilities, is currently limited by implication to rural areas. Important community services and facilities exist in Melton Mowbray, but currently fall between the town centre policies and C7. The policy could be amended to cover the whole of the Borough other than Melton Mowbray town centre, providing a more comprehensive coverage.


The other key issue for the policy is a lack of guidance on what documentary evidence is required to permit the loss/change of use of a community facility under criterion 2. For example, the policy could be amended to require that the property is widely marketed for 12 months at a reasonable price for the existing (not proposed) use. Additionally, require the applicant to demonstrate how the proposal would benefit the local community.

Aside from slight lengthening of the policy, there are no obvious disadvantages to this approach and, therefore, it is the preferred option.

### 11.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **22** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **23** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 12. Policy C8. Self Build and Custom Build Housing

### 12.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**To support prospective self-builders and custom builders on sites of 100 dwellings or more, developers will supply at least 5% of serviced dwelling plots, for sale, at an appropriate price, to self-builders or custom builders, which will be controlled by the following means:**

**A) the Council may seek developments of 5 self-build or custom build dwellings in a single site location to be developed in accordance with an agreed design code;**

**B) where plots have been made available and marketed appropriately for at least 12 months and have not sold, the plot(s) may either remain on the open market or be built out by the developer.**

**C) marketed plots should be of a size at least equal to that of those for detached dwellings of 2-3 bedrooms on the main development site.**

**In locations within or adjacent to the built form of settlements and those in keeping with the surrounding area, self-build proposals for community schemes will be particularly supported.**

### 12.2. Issues with the Policy

12.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The policy is not effective in the Sustainable Neighbourhoods. Uncertainty around the viability to develop this type of housing.
- The policy is silent for smaller rural schemes (less than 100 dwellings).
- There is not a clear link between the policy and the self-build and custom housebuilding register.
- There is not a clear link between the policy and the housing mix policy.
- Evidence indicates that demand is increasing with 18 and 19 new entries in the register in 2020/21 and 2021/22, as opposed to an average of 9 in the previous 5 years.

### 12.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

National Policy does not require for local plans to incorporate a specific Self Custom Build policy. To promote self and custom builds, some additional wording could be

added to, for example, policies C2 (Housing Mix), C5 (Rural Exception Sites) or SS3 (Sustainable Communities (unallocated sites)).

However, considering that the Government is promoting self/custom building, and that we have identified an increasing demand, the deletion of the policy could be considered a step back to deliver more self and custom builds. Embedding self and custom building within other policies can also reduce the clarity in the Local Plan. Therefore, this option is not considered appropriate.

### **Option 2: Address increasing needs**

To respond to the increasing demand for self and custom builds, the policy needs to be amended to support additional supply. This option proposes to:

- Reduce the threshold from 100 dwellings, to 20 as long as it is justified, viable and considers local needs. However, given the inefficiency of the policy in relation to the sustainable neighbourhoods, the inclusion of a timeframe for the plots to be sold would be beneficial. For example, plots can be built by the developer if they have been appropriately marketed (at a prevailing market value) and unsold for 6 months.
- Support community-led self/custom build housing as long as it is justified and considers local needs.

This option however could increase the complexity for planning applications and could be ineffective without adequate means to monitor the consideration of new builds as self/custom buildings.

### **Option 3: Address increasing needs and add local-specific criteria [preferred option]**

This option uses Option 2 as starting point.

In addition to the suggestions covered in Option 2, some elements could be incorporated to the policy in order to deliver higher standards of self/custom builds. It is proposed to:

- Encourage a diverse provision of self/custom builds by supporting smaller and more affordable options.
- Encourage exemplar sustainable housing options.
- Require developments above the threshold in Option 2 (20 dwellings or more) to allocate suitable plots at the entrance of the scheme, to avoid unnecessary disruption to self/custom builders.

Similar to Option 2, this option could increase the complexity for planning applications and could be ineffective without adequate means to monitor the consideration of new builds as self/custom buildings. Additionally, the criteria specifically addressed in this option could represent an unnecessary barrier for the delivery of self/custom builds.


#### **Option 4: Adding the two optional local eligibility tests**

The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) enables local authorities to include up to two optional local eligibility tests, namely a local connection test and a financial solvency test.


Strong justification is needed to enable these tests as it could potentially reduce the number of self/custom builds being delivered.

Given the relatively reduced number of constraints in the Borough and the increasing demand, this does not seem to be a reasonable option to be implemented at the present time.

#### **12.4. Consultation Questions**

 **Question 24** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 4: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 **Question 25** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **13. Policy C9. Healthy Communities**

### **13.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**All development proposals should make a positive contribution to the following promoters of health and well-being:**

**a. Good quality, accessible green spaces, public realm, sports and recreational facilities close to where people live and work, to encourage greater participation in play, sport, walking and cycling and to maximise opportunities for social interaction;**

**b. Safe, convenient and attractive network of streets, paths and cycleways integrated with public transport which connect homes, workplaces, shops, schools, healthcare, leisure and other services and facilities to encourage active travel and prevents social isolation;**

**c. High quality local food growing spaces, including green roofs, edible landscaping, garden plots, community gardens, allotments and local markets, in order to provide access to fresh, healthy and affordable food;**

**d. 'Healthy Homes' that are affordable, easy to warm, have good natural light, decent space (internal and external), exploit views, safe from flooding and overheating, and are adaptable to people's changing circumstances that can occur over a lifetime;**

**e. High quality residential amenity;**

**f. A range of employment opportunities in accessible locations;**

**g. The avoidance of over concentration or clustering of any use type that could detract from people's ability to adopt healthy lifestyles (including hot food takeaways, payday lenders and betting shops);**

**h. Good local air quality, with new development in an air quality management area to be consistent with the aims and objectives of the Air Quality Action Plan, providing an air quality assessment where appropriate.**

**Contributions will be sought from developers towards the provision of health facilities where their development would impact on the capacity of existing healthcare provision.**

**Proposals for new health care facilities should relate well to public transport services, walking and cycling routes and be accessible to all sectors of the community. Opportunities for the multi-use and co-location of health facilities with other services and facilities should be considered to provide co-ordinated care and a community focus.**

**Health impacts of major development proposals should be considered early in the planning process through the submission of a Health Impact Assessment**

**(HIA) with a planning application, where the Local Planning Authority requests it.**

## 13.2. Issues with the Policy

13.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- Health and creating healthy places for all sections of the community, is a key local priority. The policy fails to fully integrate health (and wider determinants of health) considerations across the Plan.
- Health impact assessments have been rarely undertaken.
- We need to refresh our understanding of local health issues and how local planning policies can help address them.
- We need to improve the alignment of the local plan with new and emerging local strategic health plans.

## 13.3. Options for updating the Policy

### Option 1: Delete the policy

Policy as currently written does not for the most part set out any clear and deliverable objectives or criteria, it in effect largely acts as a strategic objective that highlights how development proposals can make a positive contribution to the promotion of health and well-being. The majority of the criteria within C9 are also considered elsewhere within other local plan policies, including those for open and green spaces, developer contributions, climate change, transport and design standards. Deletion of the policy would therefore have limited impacts on these aspects of the policy.

Parts G and H of C9 relate to the over concentration of uses that may detract from health and well-being (such as betting shops and hot food takeaways) and local air quality which are not covered in other parts of the plan. The policy also makes reference to undertaking health impact assessments. If this policy were deleted then this would create a gap for these parts of the policy. The impact of providing no guidance on how and when health impacts should be assessed is considered unacceptable, so that deleting this policy is not considered appropriate.

### Option 2: Revise the policy but also make health and wellbeing a key thread that runs throughout the entire plan [preferred option]


The local plan has a key role in helping to create healthy places, this policy and the wider plan could be reviewed to improve its ability to achieve this, to reflect updated

understanding and evidence on local health issues and support the developing Melton Borough Community Health and Wellbeing Plan.


This option proposes to:

- Refocus and reduce the policy to only cover health issues not better dealt with elsewhere in the plan (such as within climate change, transport, design, developer contribution, open and green space policies) to reduce replication and improve clarity within the plan.
- Ensure that it is clearer when and how health impacts should be assessed in line with current best practice and provide specific guidance where evidence suggests there is a need to do so.


#### 13.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **26** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **27** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

 Question **28** Do you think the Local Plan should require Health Impact Assessments for large scale developments? [Yes/No/Unsure]

 Question **29** If you answered 'yes' to question **28**, what size and types of development do you think should require them and why? [Free text]

## **14. Policy EC1. Employment Growth in Melton Mowbray**

### **14.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**The Council will seek to meet the employment needs of its residents and the wider economy, by providing sufficient new employment land for the period up to 2036 in the following locations:**

- 1. 10 hectares of employment land within on brownfield land available at Asfordby Business Park for class B employment uses (as shown on the Policies Map);**
- 2. 20 hectares of employment land, located off Leicester Road, as part of the South Melton Mowbray Sustainable Neighbourhood; and**
- 3. 1 hectare of employment land for B1(a) office space within or adjacent to Melton Mowbray town centre and/or including PERA Business Park.**

**Proposals for employment development on allocated and non-allocated sites in Melton Mowbray will be allowed where:**

- 4. The site is located in an area that can be easily accessed by public transport, walking and cycling, and can be satisfactorily accessed by service and other employment related vehicles;**
- 5. It provides a mix of B-class employment uses that seek to meet local business and employment needs;**
- 6. The sequential approach to town centre uses is applied where offices (use class B1(a)) are proposed.**

### **14.2. Issues with the Policy**

**14.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:**

- **Change of Use Classes Order in 2020, removed B1 as a Use Class and created the E Use Class which incorporates a wider range of business types. This means that buildings can now change between office, retail, restaurant, medical and other commercial uses without requiring planning permission.**
- **Evidence base for the policy, the Employment Land Study, was published in 2015 and is considered out of date.**
- **The allocated sites require a reassessment to understand their developability.**
- **Identification of a shortfall in the development of employment land as per the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2022).**
- **The policy's content does not align with its title.**



### 14.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The allocation of employment land within Melton is a key corporate and national policy requirement and the National Planning Policy Framework expects the incorporation of policies based on up to date evidence. Deleting the policy would leave the Council with limited ability to deliver large scale employment land. This is not a feasible change.

#### Option 2: Amendments to reflect Use Class Order, new evidence and National Planning Policy Framework

Make amendments to the policy in accordance with latest National Planning Policy Framework, the Use Class Order and new evidence, these amendments could include the following;

- Revising the definitions of employment land in the policy to include a wider range of Use Classes, such as B2, B8 and E, subject to the sequential and impact tests where relevant (for example, in relation to retail proposals). This would reflect the changes in the Use Classes Order and would ensure that a range of use classes are encouraged within employment sites enabling a more viable and long-term future for the development.
- Allocation or de-allocation of allocated employment sites based on new evidence, site-specific decisions to be made based on updated evidence and consultation during later stages of the Local Plan Update.
- Creation of site-specific policy criteria for retained or new employment allocations.
- Amending the title of the of policy to ensure greater correlation with the content, recommended to be “Employment Growth on Allocated Sites and within Melton Mowbray”

The changes would reflect the new evidence which would include the Employment Land Study, the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment and the Strategic Economic Land Availability Assessment.

However adding site specific policies is likely to make the policy even longer, potentially more complex and difficult to use in relation to planning applications.

### Option 3: Create separate policies for employment allocations and employment development in Melton Mowbray

The issues raised above are ones which need to be considered but, as set out in Option 2, adding them in would make the policy longer and more complicated. The policy is currently a mix of site allocation and general employment growth within Melton Mowbray. This creates some confusion when Asfordby Business Park is not located within Melton Mowbray.

Therefore, the existing policy could be separated into two individual policies, one being focused on allocated employment sites, with site specific criteria and the other focused on employment growth within Melton Mowbray. This may then create greater clarity and useability of the policies. Both policies would need to consider the impact of the change in the Use Classes Order (as set out under Option 2). Similarly, as set out in Option 2, the allocations policy would be revised following site-specific assessments and evidence and further consultation.

A disadvantage of this approach would be that it would expand the number of policies within the Plan although the overall usability of the plan would probably improve. Depending on the specific criteria included, the site-specific policies may become too prescriptive to encourage development within these sites.

#### 14.4. Consultation Questions

- ✚ Question **30** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]
  - Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  - Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  - Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  
- ✚ Question **31** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]
  
- ✚ Question **32** Unless submitted already as part of the Employment-only Call for Sites (June-July 2023), is there any employment site you want us to consider as a potential allocation? If there is, please submit the details, including a location plan showing the boundaries to [planningpolicy@melton.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@melton.gov.uk) and add a note in this section [Free text]

## **15. Policy EC2. Employment Growth in the Rural Area (Outside Melton Mowbray)**

### **15.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**In order to support the rural economy, the Council will allow for:**

- A) new employment land to be provided in rural settlements; and/or;**
- B) rural employment proposals which create or safeguard jobs.**

**The following types of rural employment development are acceptable:**

- 1. The re-use of existing farm buildings and well-designed new buildings for employment;**
- 2. Schemes for farm diversification involving small-scale business and commercial development that help to support the viability and retention of the farm holding;**
- 3. Small-scale tourism proposals, including visitor accommodation, such as glamping, camping and bed & breakfast;**
- 4. The expansion of existing rural businesses, dependent upon the nature of the activities involved, the character of the site and its accessibility;**
- 5. Small scale employment development to meet local needs; and**
- 6. The use of land for agriculture, forestry and equestrian activity. Subject to the proposal:**
- 7. Being of an appropriate scale for its location;**
- 8. Having sufficient accessible off road car parking provided on site or in the nearby vicinity to cater for the use proposed.**

### **15.2. Issues with the Policy**

**15.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:**

- **Changes to National Planning Policy Framework encouraging “sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas”, the current adopted policy stipulates certain types of employment growth, which therefore does not align with the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- **Changes to National Planning Policy Framework acknowledging that to meet local employment needs in rural areas, development land may need to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. Therefore point 4 specifically “the character of the site and its accessibility” does not align with the National Planning Policy Framework.**

- Identified by Development Management Officers there is confusion in how the policy should be used and the hierarchy of the points specifically points 7 and 8 of the policy.

### 15.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

Much of the policy reflects national policy and guidance, and therefore landscape, local character protection and growth on local needs would persist if the policy was deleted. However, it should be noted that the policy contains locally relevant criteria which go beyond national policy and guidance. In addition, employment growth within the whole Borough is a corporate priority and deleting the policy would leave the Council with limited ability to control how employment growth is delivered in the rural areas. This is not a recommended change.

#### Option 2: Policy Wording Amendments [preferred option]

Make amendments to the policy to ensure its alignment with the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular reflecting the changes to all types of business growth and the accessibility of site by public transport. The Council's priority for the new Local Plan would be to incorporate more climate change criteria within policies, therefore this would be explored within this policy.

In addition, recommendations and findings from new evidence would be reflected within the policy, specifically around local employment needs. It is recommended that a reconfiguration of the policy in terms of hierarchy of criteria is carried out, which would provide greater clarity to decision makers when using the policy. Alongside this a reassessment of the current criteria to ensure that it aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework should be considered.


A specific amendment would be to criteria 8, it is considered that expanding to other forms of transport or to incorporate EV charging is necessary to further encourage sustainable developments.

The disadvantage to this approach is that it makes the policy broader and more generalised, which may be less useful on a site specific case. However, consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework is a soundness test and therefore this is the preferred option.

### 15.4. Consultation Questions

- 🚦 Question 33 Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **34** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **16. Policy EC3. Existing Employment Sites**

### **16.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**The following employment sites and industrial estates across the Borough will be retained for employment uses (within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order).**

#### **Employment facilities listed for retention**

- **EC3 (i): Masterfoods HQ, Waltham.**
- **EC3 (ii): Asfordby Business Park, Asfordby Hill**
- **EC3 (iii): Holwell Works (Melton Mowbray Business Park), Asfordby Hill**
- **EC3 (iv): Stanton Plc (St Gobain), Asfordby Hill**
- **EC3 (v): Saxby Road Area (Incorporating Hudson Road Estate), Melton Mowbray**
- **EC3 (vi): Crown Business Park, Old Dalby**
- **EC3 (vii): Six Hill Business Area, Six Hills**
- **EC3 (viii): Old Dalby Trading Estate, Old Dalby**
- **EC3 (ix): Melton And Kettleby Foods, Melton Mowbray**
- **EC3 (x): Leicester Road Estate, Melton Mowbray.**
- **EC3 (xi): Normanton Lane, Bottesford.**
- **EC3 (xii): Orston Lane, Bottesford.**
- **EC3 (xiii): Hickling Lane Employments Sites, Long Clawson.**
- **EC3 (xiv): Snow Hill Industrial Estate, Melton Mowbray**
- **EC3 (xv): Burrough Court, Burrough on the Hill**

**Proposals to change the use of all of part of an existing employment site or allocation to non-employment uses will be permitted where:**

- a) **it can be demonstrated, through an acceptable viability study, that the site is no longer economically viable for employment purposes in the long term nor can be made so, and either:**
- b) **its release for other purposes would offer significant benefits to the local area, in particular where proposals have demonstrable community support, for example through an allocation in a made Neighbourhood Plan or:**
- c) **the site is no longer needed to provide the employment land and facilities to meet employment needs with the local area.**

**Proposals for non B-class employment uses on employment sites will be allowed where they would support the effective operation of that site and would not be more appropriately located in town centres or are required to make the site viable and are not in conflict with policies contained within this Local Plan.**

## 16.2. Issues with the Policy

16.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- Change of Use Classes Order in 2020, removed B1 as a Use Class and created the E Use Class which incorporates a wider range of business types. This means that buildings can now change between office, retail, restaurant, medical and other commercial uses without requiring planning permission.,
- The extent to which the current existing employment sites are performing needs to be reassessed and the mix of use classes within these sites need to be explored.
- The policy is rigid and does not provide a sufficient degree of flexibility to adapt to changing economic markets and to create viable and long-term employment sites.

## 16.3. Options for updating the Policy

### Option 1: Delete the policy

Deletion of the policy would result in the removal of any reference to the retention of existing employment sites from the Local Plan. Therefore, the protection to these sites for employment use would be diminished as this is the only policy in the local that sets out these protections. In addition, employment growth and retention within the Borough is a key corporate priority for the Council. It is therefore considered that deletion of the policy is not appropriate.

### Option 2: Add specific class uses to policies

Reflecting the new evidence and the Use Classes Order 2020, the policy could be amended to include specific use classes which would be allowed within the existing employment sites, this would include breaking down the E use class.

This could ensure that greater protection for employment uses within the sites would be achieved within the context of the new Use Classes.

However, this would create a prescriptive policy and be inflexible to future changes in the Use Class order and economic conditions. In any case, the policy would be ineffective in controlling changes of existing buildings within the new E Use Class since planning permission is no longer needed.

### Option 3: Adding Flexibility to the Policy


In order to ensure alignment with the Use Classes Order, the revised permitted development rights and new evidence, amendments should be made to include the following;

- Removal of reference to B use class from the policy this would add greater flexibility to the policy if there were future changes to the use class order. In addition, due to the E Use Class, existing units that were B1 are now able to change to any E use without the need of planning permission. Therefore, this would ensure alignment with the Permitted Development Rights.
- Provide clarity as to how applicants and developers can provide evidence that non-employment uses “would support the effective operation of that site”
- Reassessment of the value of the current existing employment sites based on new evidence such as the employment land study.


The level of flexibility added to the policy will be dependent on the outcomes and recommendations of the new evidence, specifically in regards to what is classified employment uses.

The disadvantages to this approach, is that it may not provide sufficient protection to other uses not being developed within these area due to the added flexibility. In addition, it would allow and may encourage retail and leisure uses to be developed in these sites which may impact the vitality of the town centre as these could be developed away from the town centre.

#### 16.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **35** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **36** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]



## 17. Policy EC4. Other Employment and Mixed-use Proposals

### 17.1. Current (adopted) Policy

Proposals for employment and mixed-use developments (incorporating employment uses) outside of existing or allocated employment sites will be encouraged where:

- the employment component of the scheme can be satisfactorily accessed by service and other employment related vehicles;
- the proposed uses are not more appropriately located in town centres;
- the site is located in an area that can or has the scope to be easily accessed by public transport, walking and cycling;
- the mix of uses does not result in an unacceptable impact on residents by reason of noise, disturbance, air quality or other emissions caused by the use of the building or the vehicle movements associated with it;
- the proposal does not adversely affect land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the settlement; and
- the proposal is of an appropriate scale in the context of the existing settlement.

### 17.2. Issues with the Policy

17.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- There is no definition of mixed-used developments which creates ambiguity and confusion over which developments the policy relates to.
- There is repetition between policies EC4 and EC2, meaning there is not a clear distinction as to what the aim of the policy is.
- Changes to National Planning Policy Framework acknowledging that to meet local employment needs in rural areas, development land may need to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. Therefore point 3 specifically “the site is located in an area that can or has the scope to be easily accessed by public transport, walking and cycling” does not align with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Recent Changes to the Planning Policy Guidance, stipulate that planning permission may or may not be needed for home working and running a business from the home. The Local Planning Authority must consider whether any purposes to which it is put are reasonably incidental to its use as a dwellinghouse.

### 17.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### **Option 1: Delete the policy**

A significant number of the criteria within the current policy are covered by other policies within the Local Plan such as policies EC1, EC2, EN7, D1 etc. Therefore, its purpose and aim are not specifically clear and robust. By placing reference to mixed-used developments within policies EC1 and EC2, the need for Policy EC4 would not be necessary and therefore could be deleted. This would reduce the number of policies within the local plan and reduce repetition.

The disadvantage of this approach is that the promotion of mixed-used development may have less weight if contained within policies EC1 and EC2. This may mean the Council's ability to encourage the growth of mixed-use developments is weakened. It would also create longer policies for policies EC1 & EC2.

#### **Option 2: Wording amendments and define Mixed-use Development**

The policy is currently lacking clarity due to no specific definition of mixed-use development either within the policy or supporting text. Therefore, this amendment would see a definition of mixed-used development applied to the policy enabling greater useability for decision makers. To ensure alignment with National Planning Policy Framework point 3 of the policy would need to be amended.

The disadvantage of this approach is that the definition could then exclude certain types of mixed-use developments and restrict the use of the policy in a different way than not having a definition. Furthermore, it is likely that a single definition would not capture the varying scales of mixed-used development and the planning implications of different scales and mixes of use will vary significantly.

#### **Option 3: Split the Policy**

Due to the wide-ranging nature of mixed-use developments, it is suggested that the policy is split into 2 new policies. By splitting the policy, it will enable greater clarity on various types of mixed-use developments for decision makers and enable specific criteria to be focused on that scale and type of mixed-use development. These 2 policies are summarised below.


One policy would focus on the running of a business from an existing residential property, whether within the property or within an outbuilding of the property. Criteria would likely to be centred around car parking and traffic movements, neighbouring amenities and appropriate scale and any other environmental impacts as required by the Planning Policy Guidance. The policy would need to recognise that in many

cases, no planning permission is required to work from home as stipulated in the Planning Policy Guidance.


The second policy would focus on new mixed-use developments of residential and employment uses. It is suggested to be aimed towards providing guidance and encouraging the development of mixed-use. Criteria would likely be centred around the matters of layout, design and scale to create successful vibrant neighbourhoods with a good range of homes, jobs and facilities, managing potential conflicts while encouraging accessibility, walkability and a liveable environment.

The disadvantage of this approach is that it would create more policies within the Local Plan. Also, each of the policies would need to ensure compliance with the other policies in the Local Plan which may hinder their ability to encourage mixed-use developments specifically in relation to policies EC5 & EC6.

#### 17.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **37** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **38** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 18. Town Centre and Retail Evidence

### 18.1. Issues with the Evidence

The adopted local plan is supported by the Melton Retail Study 2015, prepared by Peter Brett Associates. This report forecast retail needs of 12,670 square metres convenience floorspace by 2036. The Local Plan Update does not look further forward than 2036, so still has over 10 years remaining, but the evidence is obviously based on data from 2015 or earlier. It could therefore be considered out of date. On that basis, supported by the general national advice to carry out such assessments for local plans, the evidence review prepared for the Council by the Planning Advisory Service recommended the preparation of an up-to-date retail and town centre study.

However, it is evident from recent retail studies that the need for retail floorspace is currently reducing, largely arising from continued growth in online retailing. It therefore seems highly likely that a retail needs assessment carried out for Melton Borough would show significantly less need compared with the 2015 study. This is exacerbated by recently developed retail floorspace in Melton Mowbray (specifically three new out of centre food stores) and increases in town centre vacant floorspace. Further, the scope of the partial local plan update is not expected to include retail allocations. It is therefore likely that carrying out a new forecast of retail need would not provide any benefit to the preparation of the Local Plan Update, and therefore would not be a proportionate use of Council's resources.

On the other hand, there is certainly a need for further study and advice in relation to town centre planning policy, including measures to implement the agreed Vision for Melton Mowbray Town Centre and changes to policies required to take account of changes to the Use Classes Order and review Primary Shopping Frontages and thresholds for retail impact assessment.

### 18.2. Options for updating the Evidence

#### Option 1: Focus on Melton Mowbray Town Centre

Melton Mowbray is the Borough's only town centre. The Council adopted a new [Vision for Melton Mowbray Town Centre](#) on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022, setting out steps for enhancing its role, environment and function. The Local Plan Update should include policies to implement key elements of this vision, to support other activities of the Council. There is also a need to reflect changes in the Use Classes Order (retail now being part of a wider "commercial, business and service" class) and update other town centre policies such as shopping frontages. It is therefore considered important to procure a report or reports which include advice on the enhancement and regeneration of the town centre and other relevant policy contents in the context of the agreed Vision.

However, taking account of general and local evidence, it seems highly likely that a formal retail needs assessment would forecast a lower level of need than that shown in the 2015 study. This is primarily due to the continued growth in online retailing, which has already exceeded the assumptions used in the 2015 report. There has been retail development in Melton Mowbray since the report was published, as well as a growth in vacant town centre premises. Such a result may be of interest, but it would not be particularly useful to plan-making and would be expensive to carry out. It may therefore not be proportionate to include this element in a new retail study.


### Option 2: Carry out a full Town Centre and Retail Study including needs assessments

The National Planning Policy Framework states that local plans should be supported by relevant and up-to-date evidence. It further states that plans should provide for objectively assessed needs, and specifically to meet anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses looking at least 10 years ahead.


Taking these statements into account, there could be a soundness issue if the retail (and other) needs forecast was not updated. It may therefore be a necessary, if more resource intensive, approach to procure a full retail and town centre study for the local plan update.

Against this is the fact that the “justified” soundness test within the National Planning Policy Framework refers to “taking account of proportionate evidence” and it is argued above that the full retail needs assessment is not a proportionate use of resources.

### 18.3. Consultation Questions

 Question **39** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **40** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this section [Free text]

## **19. Policy EC5. Melton Mowbray Town Centre**

### **19.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**Melton Mowbray Town Centre will be the focus for retail growth in the Borough of Melton. The extent of the town centre and primary retail frontages is defined on the Policies Map.**

**As part of a wider strategy to promote and enhance the town centre, the Council will work proactively with business and property owners within and on the edge of the town centre to identify development, redevelopment and site assembly opportunities to meet the identified needs for 12,670m<sup>2</sup> net of additional comparison retail floorspace by 2036.**

**A sequential approach will be applied to the location of proposals for main town centre uses which prioritises sites within centres ahead of edge of centre sites. Out of centre locations will only be considered if sequentially preferable sites are not available within the town centre or on the edge of the centre and if the location is accessible and well connected to the town centre.**

**Retail impact assessments will be required to accompany proposals in Melton Mowbray for main town centre uses in edge of centre or out of centre locations where the gross floorspace proposed is above 200sqm.**

**Proposals for new retail, leisure and other 'town-centre' developments will be allowed within the defined town centre where they:**

- 1. Enhance the compact, legible and walkable character of the town centre;**
- 2. Maintain a vibrant and active continuous shop frontage in and around the retail core;**
- 3. Incorporate a high quality of shop front and advertisement design;**
- 4. Are sympathetic to the numerous heritage assets within and adjacent to the town centre; and**
- 5. Make adequate provision for car parking where possible and appropriate.**

**In primary shopping frontages, proposals for new, or change of use to:**

- a. A1 retail uses will be encouraged, subject to the proposal incorporating a high quality design of shop front and advertisements.**
- b. A2 – A5 uses will be allowed where this does not have an adverse impact on the character and/or sustainability of the primary frontage.**

**Outside of primary shopping frontages, but within the defined town centre, proposals for commercial leisure uses, restaurants, bars & pubs and hot food takeaways will be supported where these support day and evening activity and the main retail use of the town centre.**

## 19.2. Issues with the Policy

19.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The main evidence dates from 2015 and could benefit from an update, although please note the earlier section seeking views on the extent to which the evidence should be updated.
- The policy is not performing well according to the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), which shows that retail and business space in the town are underachieving.
- The policy needs to align with the recent changes to the Use Classes Order, National Planning Policy Framework and Policy Guidance.

## 19.3. Options for updating the Policy

### Option 1: Delete the policy

The subject matter is of significant importance and needs to be amended and updated according to new evidence obtained from a new retail study (subject to decisions about its scope) and to ensure it aligns/supports the Vision for Melton Mowbray Town Centre. The National Planning Policy Framework requires the inclusion of appropriate policies for town centres. Therefore, deletion of the policy is not recommended.

### Option 2: Update and incorporate elements of the Town Centre Vision

#### [preferred option]

The responses that are received from the evidence question will be considered for the evidence bases needed/used for the retail policies EC5, EC6, EC7 and EC8. Your response on that question will be much appreciated to ensure we are obtaining/using the correct evidence and government guidance for these policies.


There have also been changes to the Use Classes Order and permitted development rights which impact planning control over town centre uses. While it will continue to be appropriate to maintain the town centre as the focus for retail and other town centre uses, the other elements of the policy may need to be reconsidered in the light of the evidence. It is difficult to be certain in advance of the evidence being prepared, but this could include new approaches to the range of uses and their location within the town centre and design requirements where development/redevelopment occurs. It is currently not considered necessary to

consider new or amended development allocations for retail or other town centre uses.


The Council adopted the Vision for Melton Mowbray Town Centre and its associated Action Plan in 2022. The Local Plan provides a key opportunity to deliver some of the actions to bring about the adopted vision. Subject to the responses to the evidence question on the town centre and retail study, the policy would consider how it can incorporate elements of the Vision. This could involve changes to the definition of the town centre and the approach to primary retail frontages for example.

At this stage, this option is considered the only feasible one, with further details to emerge during later stages of the Plan's production based on the emerging evidence.

#### 19.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **41** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **42** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]



## 20. Policy EC6. Primary Shopping Frontages

### 20.1. Current (adopted) Policy

The Primary Shopping Frontages of Melton Borough Council, as designated on the Policies Map, are where the majority of A1 retail uses will be focussed over the Local Plan period.

Unless permitted development rights (or any successor) indicate otherwise, ground floor A1 units in the Primary Shopping Frontages should be retained predominantly for retail use. Proposals that would involve the loss, by change of use or re-development at ground floor level will be supported provided that:

1. It makes a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of the Primary Shopping Area, as shown on the Policies Map;
2. It would not result in non-A1 retail uses within larger units being grouped together in such a way that it undermines the retail role of the frontage;
3. It would not result in a loss of A1 retail floor space or frontage of a scale harmful to the shopping function of the area;
4. It would positively restore and/or enhance the character and appearance of the unit; and 5. It would allow upper floors to be effectively used, including the possibility of independent use, where appropriate.

### 20.2. Issues with the Policy

20.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The main evidence dates from 2015 and could do with being updated.
- The policy needs to align with recent changes to the Use Classes Order, permitted development rights, National Planning Policy Framework and Policy Guidance.

### 20.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The policy's aim was to ensure that there was a clear understanding of what uses were permitted in designated centres, therefore primary and secondary shopping frontages were defined on a map. However, there has been an update to the Use Classes Order which provides more flexibility and undermines the role of this policy. In addition, it would align with the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 86 d) to ensure town centre uses are not limiting site availability.



However, the removal of the shopping frontages would leave the key shopping and service streets with no specific guidance on uses, which would make the Town Centre Vision more difficult to achieve.

### Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]

References to A1 would need to be updated to take account of the amendments to the Use Classes Order and changes to permitted development rights associated with retail and town centre uses. The specifics of the policy and which frontages it should apply to would need to take account of the adopted Town Centre Vision and be guided by updated evidence which is to be prepared by the Council.

This is the recommended option because it will provide an updated approach to control of uses in frontages with the aim of protecting and enhancing the town centre's vitality and viability. The details would need to follow on from the receipt of that evidence. There are no obvious disadvantages to this approach.

## 20.4. Consultation Questions

-  Question **43** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]
  - Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  - Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  
-  Question **44** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 21. Policy EC7. Retail Development in the Borough

### 21.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**In other settlements with an existing retail offer that acts as a service centre, town centre developments will be supported where they would be physically integrated, be of an appropriate scale and not have an adverse impact on the character of the village.**

**A retail impact assessment will be required for all retail proposals in these locations. Assessments will be used to ensure that retail proposals do not adversely affect the vitality and viability of Melton Mowbray town centre and other retail facilities within service centres. Small independent village shops, post offices and social enterprises and farm shops up to 200 square metres are exempt from this requirement.**

**Outside of Melton Mowbray town centre and service centres, in all cases a retail impact assessment will be required to accompany applications.**

### 21.2. Issues with the Policy

21.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The main evidence dates from 2015 and could do with being updated.
- The policy needs to align with changes to the Use Classes Order and Planning Policy Guidance.
- Reword and clarity are required in order to identify when retail impact assessments are needed and exempt.

### 21.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy


The subject matter is of high importance to the viability of rural settlements and the town centre and needs to be amended and updated according to new evidence obtained from the new retail study or to ensure it aligns/supports the Melton Mowbray vision action plan. Deletion of the policy is not considered appropriate.

#### Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]


While we want to encourage business within the Borough, the aim is to not detract from the town centre. There are assessments such as retail and viability need to be provided to ensure this is the case. The policy needs to be clearer on the requirements for when the retail impact assessments are needed.

To provide clarity on how to achieve this the evidence base is being reviewed as per the evidence question, including impacts of recent changes to the Use Classes Order, permitted development rights, National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance. This is the recommended approach.

#### 21.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **45** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **46** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 22. Policy EC8. Sustainable Tourism

### 22.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**Sustainable tourism, visitor and cultural development proposals will be supported where they improve the facilities for visitors, including attractions and accommodation subject to the proposal:**

- 1. being of an appropriate scale in the context of the host settlement; and**
- 2. having benefits to local businesses in creating the potential to generate revenues.**

**Attractions and facilities of a significant scale should be located firstly within the town centre, then on the edge of the town centre, and then at other accessible locations.**

**Melton Borough Council will support, where appropriate, the restoration of the Grantham Canal. Moreover the Borough Council will resist planning applications which will have an adverse impact on tourism across the Borough, but with particular protection applied to valued attractions such as the Vale of Belvoir, Belvoir Castle and Burrough on the Hill Iron Age Fort, two of the most valued tourist attractions in the Borough.**

**Larger proposals for tourist attractions/accommodation outside of Melton Mowbray, Service Centres and Rural Hubs may be supported, provided it can be proven to add significantly and demonstrably to the Borough's economic or tourist offer and can be demonstrated that a suitable more sustainable location is not available or practicable.**

### 22.2. Issues with the Policy

22.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The policy requires modifications to provide greater clarity in how it operates for decision makers and developers/applicants.
- Updating the policy gives an opportunity to define sustainable tourism.

### 22.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

Supporting sustainable tourism, visitor, and cultural development proposals where they improve tourism within and on the edge of the town centre as well as the other accessible location in the Borough are important for economic growth and key corporate and national policy requirements. While the National Planning Policy Framework provides some advice, this is not focused on the specific issues facing the Borough, therefore deletion of this policy is not recommended.

### **Option 2: Clarify the policy to focus on socio-economic benefits**

The policy is currently somewhat lacking in focus, including clarity on what it is seeking to achieve. The title “sustainable tourism” somewhat exacerbates this problem. Under this policy option, the policy would be focused more directly on achieving social/economic benefits to communities. Examples of the forms of tourism which would achieve this could include:

- Additional high-quality accommodation within or near to settlements, encouraging overnight stays within the Borough and expenditure in local services by visitors.
- Improved facilities for walkers and cyclists near to the green infrastructure network.
- Businesses which relate to and support the Borough’s rural food capital status.
- New or enhanced attractions which encourage visitors, particularly overnight ones.

This would provide a clear focus for the policy and support the Council’s place marketing activities. However, it might not fully support the climate change/sustainability thread which runs through the plan.

### **Option 3: Amend the Policy to define sustainable tourism**

The policy still has a clear purpose aligned with planning and corporate objectives, but it could benefit from further clarity in relation to the definition of ‘sustainable tourism’ and how it could be achieved.


The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as “Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities”.

Using the definition above the policy would aim to outline how this could be achieved and supported, including factors such as those set out in option 2, as well as:


- Locations with sustainable travel potential.
- Support for biodiversity enhancement and access to nature.
- Use of renewable/low carbon energy.
- How this would be implemented could be looked at in the evidence that retail study and align with the Melton Mowbray vision action plan.

This option would ensure the policy defines what sustainable tourism is and provides an opportunity to explore how this can be achieved in the town and borough through existing and future developments, infrastructure, and economic growth. However, these additional requirements could act to limit the opportunities for new or expanded tourism businesses, and in doing so reduce the overall economic/social benefits of tourism.

## 22.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **47** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **48** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **23. Policy EN2. Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

### **23.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**The Borough Council will seek to achieve net gains for nature and proactively seek habitat creation as part of new development proposals. It will protect and enhance biodiversity, ecological networks and geological conservation interests throughout the Borough and beyond its boundaries, by supporting proposals which:**

- A) protect, extend or strengthen the Borough's most ecologically sensitive areas, including the River Wreake Valley;**
- B) contribute to the provision of coherent wildlife networks;**
- C) create new habitat;**
- D) re-naturalise rivers and streams wherever possible through the removal of hard engineered structures such as reinforced banks, weirs and culverts;**
- E) promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats as listed in the UK Priority Habitat Species List and Leicestershire Local Biodiversity Action Plan; and**
- F) promote the use of fencing which incorporates holes for wildlife. Provided they do not harm:**
- G) existing, potential or proposed internationally important sites, such as Rutland Water Special Protection Area/Ramsar either individually or cumulatively in association with other plans or projects;**
- H) nationally important sites;**
- I) Local Wildlife Sites (including candidate and potential), Local Geological Sites, including ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, hedgerows and existing corridors such as disused railways, that allow movement of wildlife between sites;**
- J) river corridors;**
- K) biodiversity and geo-diversity designations identified in a Neighbourhood Plan; and**
- L) priority habitats & species identified in the UK Priority Habitat Species List and Local Biodiversity Action Plans and the Melton Biodiversity and Geodiversity Study, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no alternative site available and there are clear and convincing benefits of the development that clearly outweigh the nature conservation or scientific interest of the site. In this case, adequate mitigation measures or, exceptionally, compensatory measures will be required at a level equivalent to the biodiversity value of the habitat lost. Such proposals**



**must be accompanied by ecological surveys and an assessment of the impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity.**

**Proposals for allocated sites should be informed by the site survey results and the recommendations for mitigation and enhancement in the Biodiversity and Geo-diversity Study.**

**The Borough Council will support the need for the appropriate management and maintenance of existing and created habitats through the use of planning conditions, planning obligations and management agreement.**

## 23.2. Issues with the Policy

23.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:

- Needs to consider Biodiversity Net Gain legal requirements.
- New evidence and guidance will come from the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- No reference to the mitigation hierarchy.
- Issues regarding the interpretation and application of the policy by decision makers.

## 23.3. Options for updating the Policy

### Option 1: Delete the policy

Much of the policy reflects national policy and legislation, and therefore protection of national and international wildlife sites would persist if the policy was deleted.

However, national policy requires that plans contain policies to protect wildlife, and this is the only policy in the local plan that sets out these requirements directly. Deletion of the policy is not considered appropriate.

### Option 2: Amend the policy

The issues raised above are ones which need to be considered alongside the existing policy requirements and will impact how the policy is used. This would involve additional criteria covering:

- Biodiversity Net Gain
- The Mitigation hierarchy
- Any advice and information arising from the production of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, bearing in mind that this is as yet uncertain, as the LNRS is yet to be prepared.

- Ensuring that net gain is not applied to irreplaceable habitats and European wildlife sites.
- Crossover with climate change mitigation and adaptation.

However, this is likely to make the policy even longer, potentially more complex and difficult to use in relation to planning applications.

### Option 3: Split the policy


The issues raised above are ones which need to be considered but, as set out in Option 2, adding them in would make the policy longer and more complicated. The policy is currently a mix of site protection, design guidance and proposals for enhancement. There is also some crossover with the Melton Green Infrastructure Network defined in policy EN3. The existing policy could be separated into two or three individual policies, each covering a more focused aspect of biodiversity and geodiversity including relevant elements of the “missing” aspects set out above.

As an example, there could be three policies:

- Protected biodiversity and geodiversity sites and networks.
- Biodiversity friendly design of new development, Biodiversity Net Gain and the mitigation hierarchy.
- Enhancement strategy, taking account of the results of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, possibly in combination with the update of policy EN3.

The disadvantage of this approach would be that it would expand the number of policies within the local plan, albeit in a way which should improve usability.

## 23.4. Consultation Questions

 Question 49 Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

✚ Question **50** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **24. Policy EN3. The Melton Green Infrastructure Network**

### **24.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**A strategic approach to the delivery, protection and enhancement of green infrastructure will be taken by the Borough Council working with partners, in order to deliver new assets where deficits have been identified in the green infrastructure strategy and to enhance the following primary green infrastructure areas:**

- 1. Melton North and Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhoods in accordance with Policy C1;**
- 2. Areas of Separation in accordance with Policy EN4;**
- 3. River Wreake and River Eye strategic corridor;**
- 4. Jubilee Way;**
- 5. Leicestershire Round Footpath**
- 6 Melton Country Park;**
- 7 Grantham Canal;**
- 8. The Wolds Escarpment;**
- 9 Burrough on the Hill Country Park; and**
- 10. Newark to Market Harborough disused railway line.**

**New development proposals will be supported where they retain and enhance important green infrastructure elements such as:**

- 11. Watercourses (including ditches) and their riparian zones with buffers (free from development or formal landscaping) extending to a minimum of 8 metres from the top of the bank (on both banks) of any given watercourse;**
- 12. Woodland, orchard, mature trees, hedgerows;**
- 13. Local BAP Habitats and those supporting local BAP priority species and species in the UK Priority Habitat Species List;**
- 14. Access routes (public rights of way and permitted routes);**
- 15. Existing public green space including sports pitches in accordance with the Playing Pitch Strategy, allotments and designated Local Green Space;**
- 16.Areas of geological and archaeological interest;**
- 17.Green infrastructure identified in the Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study; and**
- 18.Historic Parkland.**

**The Council will particularly support proposals which contribute towards:**

**19. The 6Cs Green Infrastructure and Strategic Networks and**

**20. The Woodland Trust's Access to Woodland Standards.**

**New or enhanced green infrastructure corridors and assets should be as inclusive as possible and look to make provision for more than one of the following:**

**A) access to employment and leisure facilities and to the countryside;**

**B) physical activity and well-being opportunities for local residents such as formal sports in accordance with the Playing Pitch Strategy, parks and allotment provision;**

**C) provide high quality bridleways, walking and cycling links between the corridor and towns and villages;**

**D) educational resources for local residents;**

**E) biodiversity opportunities including the provision of tree planting, shrubs and other natural features on all new development sites;**

**F) mitigating and adapting to climate change, including through tree planting;**

**G) enhancement of landscape character in accordance with Policy EN1;**

**H) protection or enhancement of heritage assets and their setting in accordance with Policy EN13; and**

**I) opportunities for sustainable leisure and tourism.**

**Where new development has an adverse impact on green infrastructure corridors or assets, alternative sites and scheme designs that have no or little impact should be considered before mitigation is provided (either on site or off site as appropriate). The need for and benefit of the development will be weighed against the harm caused.**

## **24.2. Issues with the Policy**

**24.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:**

- The main evidence dates from 2011 and may require updating.
- The policy would benefit from incorporating a wider range of green infrastructure assets and improved connectivity between open spaces.
- The policy could be more concise.

### 24.3. Options for updating the Policy



#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The subject matter is of increasing importance, emphasised by the publication of the Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework and almost certainly by the forthcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Deletion of the policy is not considered appropriate.

#### Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]

The concept of the policy aligns with planning and corporate objectives and new evidence would allow it to be enhanced and updated, taking account of the Green Infrastructure Framework, Local Nature Recovery Strategies, climate change objectives and any update to policy EN2. This is the preferred option.

### 24.4. Consultation Questions

-  Question **51** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]
  - Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  - Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
  
-  Question **52** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 25. Policy EN5. Local Green Spaces

### 25.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**Local Green Space Development proposals will be required to protect designated Local Green Spaces in the Borough.**

**Proposals should not harm the key features, value and functionality of a Local Green Space such that its character is protected.**

**Neighbourhood Plans are encouraged to designate additional Local Green Space as evidenced by the Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study or other up to date evidence document.**

### 25.2. Issues with the Policy

25.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:

- The National Planning Policy Framework requires that policies for managing development within a local green space are consistent with green belt policies, and this needs to be incorporated.

### 25.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

This would involve deleting the existing local green spaces from the local plan and would require neighbourhood plans to designate them. The National Planning Policy Framework advice has not changed so there is no basis for doing so, and this is not recommended.

#### Option 2: Incorporate Green Belt criteria

This is a policy requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework and is therefore necessary for a sound local plan update. The revised policy would need to incorporate criteria such as:

- Plan positively to enhance their beneficial use.
- Inappropriate development, including most new buildings, should not be approved except in very special circumstances, giving substantial weight to harm to the Local Green Space.
- Development should preserve the openness of the Local Green Space and not conflict with the purposes of its designation.

### Option 3: Designate additional Local Green Spaces


On top of the requirement that the policy reflect National Planning Policy Framework Green Belt policies, as set out in Option 2, it is open to the local plan to designate additional Local Green Spaces as part of the update. This would give the opportunity for added protection to particularly cherished greenspaces serving their communities without the necessity of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

You are invited, therefore, to propose areas of land to be designated as Local Green Spaces. You must send a map clearly showing the area being proposed, information on ownership (if known) and why you think the land meets all the necessary criteria. The necessary criteria are that the site is:


- a) *in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- b) *demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- c) *local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."*


The assessment of a significant number of such proposals could be a time-consuming operation, so one disadvantage of this is that it may lead to delays in the timetable or additional cost in preparing the local plan update.

#### 25.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **53** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **54** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

 Question **55** If you wish to propose a new area for Local Green Space, please send a map and supporting information to [planningpolicy@melton.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@melton.gov.uk) and add a note in this section [Free text]

## 26. Policy EN7. Open Space, Sport and Recreation

### 26.1. Current (adopted) Policy

Where there are identified local deficiencies in the quantity, accessibility and/or quality of open space, sports and recreational facilities, new residential development of 10 dwellings or more will be required to contribute towards their provision and/or enhancement, in accordance with the table below, subject to viability considerations.

Open Space typology	Standard (ha/1000 population)
Parks and gardens	1.92
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	1.38
Amenity greenspace	0.77
Provision for children and young people	0.13
Allotments	0.38
Playing pitches	Requirement (ha/1000 population)
Football pitches	0.41

New development proposals will be supported where they protect sports facilities and strategically important sites and key centres as identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

The strategic open space, sport and recreation needs of the Borough up to 2036 will be met by working in partnership with Parish Councils through the development of Neighbourhood Plans, and with other partners, to deliver:

- A. New allotment space as part of new development in Melton Mowbray, Bottesford and Waltham on the Wolds.
- B. Enhancement of the following natural greenspaces: Stathern Road Local Nature Reserve; Wymondham Rough SSSI; Cribbs Meadow SSSI and National Nature Reserve; and River Meadow (Lake Terrace) and Dieppe Way/Nottingham Road.
- C. 7.5ha of amenity greenspace in central Melton and 0.25ha of space in west Melton.
- D. 2.59ha of parks/gardens in central Melton.
- E. 0.44ha of facilities for children and young people in central Melton, 0.1ha of provision in north Melton and 0.38ha of provision in west Melton.
- F. New teenage facilities to a minimum of 0.04ha in Buckminster and 0.04ha in Burton & Dalby.



## **G. Redevelopment of King Edward VII community sports centre to the Melton Sports and Leisure Village, a multi-sports hub, in accordance with the Melton Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2016-2021.**

### 26.2. Issues with the Policy

26.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:

- New evidence on playing pitches, indoor sports facilities and open spaces is available and should be incorporated into the policy.
- A wider open space study is required to cover the whole of the Borough.

### 26.3. Options for updating the Policy


#### **Option 1: Delete the policy**

The provision of public open space is a key corporate and national policy requirement and the National Planning Policy Framework expects the incorporation of policies based on up to date evidence. Deleting the policy would leave the council with limited ability to deliver open spaces. This is not a recommended change.

#### **Option 2: Update the policy, particularly the standards [preferred option]**

There is considerable new evidence available (and soon to be available) and the current policy is therefore out of date. The new or forthcoming Open Space, Green Infrastructure, Playing Pitch and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategies should be used to inform the update of the policy. There are no disadvantages to making this change which is therefore the recommended option.

### 26.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **56** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

- ✚ Question 57 Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 27. Policy EN8. Climate Change

### 27.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**All new development proposals will be required to demonstrate how the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change has been considered, subject to considerations of viability, in terms of:**

- **Sustainable design and construction in accordance with Policy EN9 – ensuring energy efficient and low carbon development.**
- **Provision of green infrastructure in accordance with Policy EN3 – the Melton Green Infrastructure Network.**
- **Provision of renewable and/or low carbon energy production, including decentralised energy and/or heat networks in accordance with Policy EN10 – energy generation from renewable sources.**
- **Flood risk in accordance with Policy EN11 – minimising the risk of flooding and policy EN12 – sustainable urban drainage systems.**
- **Providing opportunities for sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policy IN1 – delivering infrastructure to support new development.**

### 27.2. Issues with the Policy

27.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The policy does not fully align with climate change law, regulations and national policy.
- There have been advances in our collective knowledge and in the adoption of new technologies.
- Current plan policy does not reflect changes to Climate Change Act, the national carbon reduction framework or reaching net zero by 2050.
- Policy EN8 does not set out clear and deliverable criteria.
- The policy does not fully align with local community expectations.
- There is a need for additional evidence on how to best mitigate and adapt to climate change at a local level.

### 27.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The policy as currently written does not set out any clear and deliverable objectives or criteria, in effect it acts as a strategic objective that signposts the reader to other policies within the local plan, highlighting their role in helping to address climate change.

Climate change is already set out in the introduction of the plan as a key strategic objective, so the justification for the need for this policy in its current form is very weak. If this policy were removed, it would have no direct impact on local plan policy for climate change.

However, there is a critical need to help adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change and actively take steps to help promote lower carbon forms of development. Removing this policy, without making any wider amendments to other parts of the plan would result in limited narrative on how the plan specifically does this and imply a reduced commitment to climate change objectives. This may fail to meet requirements for the plan to consider climate change in line with both local community expectations and as set out as required by the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### Option 2: Delete the policy, and make climate change a 'core thread' that runs throughout the entire plan

Climate change is something that directly or indirectly impacts most aspects of development and planning policy. By limiting climate change considerations to a small number of policies as set out in EN8, the plan fails to consider climate change holistically.

This option proposes to;

- Set out clearly in the introductory sections of the local plan, the role of the local plan as a whole, to mitigate and adapt to climate change and how all the policies of the plan need to be considered to achieve this. This could be achieved by reinforcing the existing strategic objectives more clearly. Effectively replacing the narrative and need for policy EN8 in its current form.
- Make changes across the wider plan to ensure that climate change is a fully integrated consideration within all policies, by having a core climate change thread that runs throughout the entire plan. This will ensure each policy does its part to help to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The key issue of this approach is that:


- This is a partial update where not all the plan policies are expected to be updated, so this approach could only be applied policies being updated, resulting in a limited and piecemeal fashion.
- Removal rather than revision of the policy may fail to take advantage of opportunities to maximise planning powers to help to mitigate and adapt to climate change and promote exemplar development.

**Option 3: Retain but update policy EN8 and make climate change a core thread that runs throughout the entire plan [preferred option]**


As set out above, however the policy is retained and revised to overcome the key limitations of option 2;

- Policy is retained to address any gaps or improve guidance for plan policies not updated as part of the partial review.
- Policy is reframed to promote exemplar sustainable and low carbon development.
- Policy amended to set out clearly where sustainability statements, to demonstrate how development has considered climate change impacts, may be required and what they should include. They are currently only required in limited form within design and access statements to demonstrate compliance with EN9.
- Consider the role of nature-based solutions in mitigation and adaptation.

#### 27.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **58** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **59** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **28. Policy EN9. Ensuring Energy Efficiency and Low Carbon Development**

### **28.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**Major development proposals will be required to demonstrate how the need to reduce carbon emissions has influenced the design, layout and energy source used, subject to viability. A design and access statement will need to consider the following:**

**Development proposals, including refurbishment, will be supported where they demonstrate the following, subject to viability:**

- 1. How effective use has been made of materials that have been reused, recycled, are renewable, locally sourced, have been transported in the most sustainable manner, and have low embodied energy;**
- 2. How the design optimises natural sunlight and solar gain, and prevents overheating including providing non-mechanical means of ventilation and opportunities for cooling from tree planting and landscaping.**
- 3. How heat loss from all elements of the building envelope will be prevented;**
- 4. Water efficient measures to reduce demand on water resources, including through the use of efficient appliances, rainwater recycling, water butts and underground storage tanks, where technically feasible;**
- 5. How developments (dwellings and non-dwellings) have considered on-site renewable, low carbon or de-centralised energy provision, including connection to existing networks, where feasible, in accordance with Policy EN10.**
- 6. Space for a home office in new homes;**
- 7. Space for cycle storage in new homes and employment sites and, where appropriate showers and changing facilities.**
- 8. Charging points for electric cars.**

**A site waste management plan which emphasizes waste minimization, re-use and recycling during demolition and construction will be required for major development proposals;**

**Development should be phased to ensure sufficient waste water treatment capacity is available before development is complete;**

**The retrofitting of existing buildings so as to maximise opportunities to prevent heat loss from all elements of the building envelope will be supported where it:**

- does not harm heritage assets or their significance; and**
- protects the character of conservation areas.**

## 28.2. Issues with the Policy

28.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The policy does not fully align with climate change law, regulations and national policies, including new building regulations (2022), proposed Future Homes and Future Building standards and Government commitments to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions.
- The entire of Melton borough was formally classified as a water stressed area from 2021.
- The policy does not fully align with local community expectations.
- Current wording in the policy has very limited impact in practice.
- Some elements in the policy, could be more effective if considered within wider plan policies.
- There is a need for additional local area evidence.

## 28.3. Options for updating the Policy

### Option 1: Delete the policy

This policy as currently written does not set out any clear and deliverable standards or criteria and it is ineffective in practice.

Aspects of the policy which relate to improving building standards have been taken forward by the Government through the building regulations regime, which reduce the need for local plan policies to consider local building standards, with further revisions and improvements expected before any revised local plan is adopted, which will deliver 'net zero ready' new homes. It can be argued that this national approach through building regulations is more effective and simpler for local developers to comply with.

Deletion of the policy and relying on a national approach would remove complexity for developers and simplify the local plan.

However, there is a critical need to help adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change and actively take steps to help promote lower carbon forms of development, to seek and support higher standards where possible. The policy also covers issues not included within new or proposed national building standards (water efficiency, home offices, cycle parking, design of developments, onsite renewable, use of materials and waste from construction).

Given the new water stressed status of the Borough, there is an increased need for the local plan to address water efficiency. This in itself, in line with Government guidelines, is considered sufficient reason to not simply delete this policy.

### **Option 2: Refocus the policy and split it into new more specific policies as required [Preferred approach]**

This option is to review each part of the policy considering the revised building regulations, other regulatory changes and wider local plan policies.

- To remove parts of the policy that are considered redundant and best dealt with elsewhere, such as within new building regulations
- To move parts of the policy to other more relevant local plan policies to increase effectiveness
- Amend EN8 (as set out as preferred option for that policy) to provide a general policy to require development to consider and demonstrate how the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change has influenced a development proposal and support and encourage exemplar development standards.
- Refocus EN9 on issues not better dealt with elsewhere, this option may lead to the development of new individual policies with specific standards, should local evidence support this. A new separate policy to consider water efficiency may be required, to reflect evidence on local water scarcity and introduce specific water use standards for different types of developments.
- This option is considered practical and deliverable. It reduces complexity and duplication of standards for developers, to make it simpler to deliver local development whilst concentrating the policy where we most need to raising specific standards, based on local evidence of need. Equally, this option is in line with the Government's preferred approach for local plans to move away from over prescribing building standards.


### **Option 3: Make the policy more robust and specific, to ensure all new development meets the highest standards**

This would see the policy updated to introduce a series of high specific standards that all developments would need to meet, based on best practice across each issue.

The key issue of this approach is that the Council would be required to develop an in depth and wider ranging evidence base to support this option, meaning that it will involve significant costs and it may delay the adoption of the Local Plan Update. Equally, this creation of evidence could be largely futile given the established local development viability context, which provides limited potential to further increase development standards without significantly impacting on other priorities such as affordable housing, education and transport. This option is perhaps more relevant when developing a new local plan in the future, particularly where new sites for


development are allocated, where there is greater scope for developers to negotiate land acquisition costs to reflect the need to further increase building standards.

#### 28.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **60** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **61** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]



## **29. Policy EN10. Energy Generation from Renewable and Low Carbon Sources**

### **29.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**Renewable and low carbon energy proposals appropriate for Melton, including biomass power generation, combined heat and power (CHP), hydro, wind, solar and micro generation systems, will be supported and considered in the context of sustainable development and climate change.**

**Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy technology, associated infrastructure and integration of renewable and low carbon technology on existing or proposed structures will be assessed both individually and cumulatively on their merits taking account of the following factors;**

- 1. Siting, so as to gain maximum effect from wind/solar/water sources;**
- 2. The surrounding landscape, townscape and heritage assets;**
- 3. Residential and visual amenity;**
- 4. Noise impacts;**
- 5. Odour impacts;**
- 6. Designated nature conservation, geo-diversity or biodiversity considerations, including potential impact on ancient woodland and veteran trees;**
- 7. Ecology;**
- 8. Aircraft movements and associated activities, including effects on radar, communications and navigational systems;**
- 9. Electromagnetic transmissions;**
- 10. High quality agricultural land;**
- 11. Access for construction, maintenance and de-commissioning;**
- 12. Not creating demand for bio-energy fuels known to result in net carbon emissions through production methods, transport requirements and/or loss of carbon sinks;**
- 13. General safety in terms of highways, power lines, icing, visual distraction; and**
- 14. Transport movements for importation of biomass fuel. In the case of proposals for wind energy development involving one or more wind turbines, planning permission will only be granted if:**
- 15. A bond is in place to cover de-commissioning; and**
- 16. The development site is in an area identified as being suitable for wind turbine development in a Neighbourhood Plan; or**
- 17. The development site is in an area identified as being of low or low-moderate sensitivity to wind turbine development in the Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study 2014. These areas and acceptable**

turbine requirements are set out in the table below. The landscape character units are indicated on the Policies Map; and

18. 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.

<b>Landscape Character Assessment Unit</b>	<b>Maximum Acceptable Turbine Height (to blade tip) and Cluster Size</b>
<b>LCU1 Vale of Belvoir</b>	<b>&lt;25m as a single turbine or clusters of two/three in larger scale areas</b>
<b>LCU3 Leicestershire Wolds: Dalby to Belvoir Wolds</b>	<b>&lt;25m as a single turbine or clusters of two/three in larger scale areas</b>
<b>LCU5 Leicestershire Wolds: Ragdale to Saltby Woods</b>	<b>&lt;25m as a single turbine in the smaller vales or two/three turbines in elevated areas</b>
<b>LCU6 Kesteven Uplands: Saltby and Sproxton Limestone Edge</b>	<b>Up to 75m as clusters of two/three turbines in wooded areas or clusters of four/five in open arable areas</b>
<b>LCU8 High Leicestershire Hills: Great Dalby and Gaddesby Pastoral Farmland</b>	<b>Up to 50m as clusters of four/five turbines and in areas of varied, steeply sloping topography and small field patterns clusters of two/three</b>
<b>LCU9 Leicestershire Wolds: Wreake Valley</b>	<b>&lt;25m as clusters of two/three turbines</b>
<b>LCU10 Leicestershire Wolds: Eye Valley</b>	<b>&lt;25m as a single turbine in the east of the area and two/three turbines in the west.</b>
<b>LCU11 High Leicestershire Hills: Gaddesby Valley</b>	<b>&lt;25m as clusters of two/three turbines</b>
<b>LCU13 Leicestershire Wolds: Buckminster, Wymondham and Freebt Farmland</b>	<b>Up to 50m as clusters of two/three turbines</b>
<b>LCU14 Leicestershire Wolds: Asfordby Quarry</b>	<b>Up to 50m in clusters of four/five turbines</b>
<b>LCU15 Leicestershire Wolds: Melton Farmland Fringe</b>	<b>Up to 50m as clusters of two/three turbines</b>

In developing proposals for new thermal generating stations, developers should consider the opportunities for CHP and district heating from the very earliest point and it should be adopted as a criterion when considering locations for a project. Renewable and low carbon energy proposals which will directly benefit a local community in the medium and long term and/or are targeted at residents experiencing fuel poverty will be particularly supported.

## 29.2. Issues with the Policy

29.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The policy does not fully align with climate change law, regulations and national policies, including net zero and the revised national planning policy.
- There have been advances in knowledge and technological change, including a reduction in the cost of solar energy schemes.
- New evidence suggests that Melton borough might be suited to geothermal energy projects.
- The policy does not fully align with local community expectations.
- There is a need for additional local area evidence to support local energy needs and requirements to transition to low carbon electricity.

### 29.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

This policy as currently written sets out detailed guidance for assessing renewable energy projects. It is reported that overall it works well to guide decision making, setting out clearly the issues that need to be considered in a clear way.

If this policy were deleted;

- we would have to rely on national planning policy alone, it would weaken our ability to help promote appropriate renewable energy development that takes into account local impacts including on our valued local landscapes.
- It would be less clear, for both local people, developers and decision makers, as to what types of renewable energy development would be appropriate where.
- It would fail to use our local planning powers to tackle climate change effectively in line with local community aspirations.

For the reasons above, this option is not recommended.

#### Option 2: Review the policy to ensure it works well for all types of renewable energy schemes [preferred approach]


This option proposes to review the policy to ensure its wording works well for all types of renewable energy development, supported by an updated evidence base that considers all potential types of local renewable energy schemes and aligns well with meeting our future energy needs, to ensure local energy security.

The option proposes to;


- Ensure policy works well for all types of renewable energy, including solar and geothermal energy schemes

- Pulls together all policy for renewable energy generation within this single policy, including onsite renewables (currently addressed in policy EN9), to support more consistent decision making and recognise both the community support for and potential collective contribution of roof top solar schemes.
- Provide an opportunity, based on new evidence developed to support the review of the policy, to consider the need to include additional guidance related to flexible, smart grid and battery storage, local energy security and delivery of community benefits from local renewable energy projects

#### 29.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **62** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **63** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **30. Policy EN11. Minimising the Risk of Flooding**

### **30.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**Melton Borough Council will ensure that development proposals do not increase flood risk and will seek to reduce flood risk to others. The Council will do this by working in partnership with the appropriate agencies (the Environment Agency, Leicestershire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, Internal Drainage Boards, Severn Trent & Anglian Water and the Canal and River Trust), developers and landowners.**

**The Borough Council will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management with the aim of locating development on land with the lowest risk of flooding (Zone 1 and outside of surface water flood risk). For development in Flood Zones 2, 3a & 3b, the exception test will be applied in accordance with Table 3 of National Planning Practice Guidance. In addition:**

**The development of sites in Zone 2 will be permitted where development:**

**A) is resilient to flooding through design and layout which follows a sequential approach and includes hazard free access to sites for pedestrians and vehicles in the event of flooding;**

**B) has floor levels which are above the 1 in 100-year flood level plus an allowance for climate change (in line with the latest climate change guidance), with appropriate freeboard; and**

**C) incorporates appropriate mitigation measures, such as on-site flood defence works and/or a contribution towards or a commitment to undertake such off-site measures as may be necessary.**

**Development in defended Zone 3a will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that it meets requirements A), B), & C) above, and:**

**D) it is safe from residual risk of flood defences failing, e.g. overtopping breach and pump failure, and**

**E) it does not impede flow rates or reduce flood plain storage unless compensatory storage is provided on a level-for-level and volume-for-volume basis.**

**Development on undefended Zone 3a will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that it meets requirements of A), B), C), E) above and:**

**F) is appropriate in accordance with Table 3 of the National Planning Practice Guidance, or**

**G) cannot be located on land at lower risk due to lack of suitable land, where there are exceptional reasons for the development to take place in that location;**

**Development on the functional floodplain (Zone 3b) will be allowed for watercompatible uses and essential infrastructure only, where no reasonable**

alternative sites are available and the requirements of A), B), C) and E) above are met.

All planning applications for development in Flood Zones 2 and 3, or which exceed one hectare should be accompanied by a flood risk assessment which should:

- Be informed by the Melton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the best available information covering all sources of flood risk;
- Be proportionate to the degree of flood risk, as well as the scale, nature and location of the development;
- Include a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that the proposed drainage scheme, and site layout and design, will prevent properties from flooding from surface water, allowing for climate change effect and that flood risk elsewhere will not be exacerbated by increased levels of surface water runoff;
- Incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems and considers their ongoing maintenance unless they are demonstrated to be not technically feasible;
- Demonstrate that the development will be safe during its lifetime, does not affect the integrity of existing flood defenses and any necessary flood mitigation measures have been agreed with the relevant body;
- Demonstrate that the adoption, ongoing maintenance and management of any mitigation measures have been considered and any necessary agreements are in place;
- Demonstrate how proposals have taken a positive approach to reducing overall flood risk and have considered the potential to contribute towards solutions for the wider area;
- Demonstrate that the condition of any relevant defences and residual flood risk has been considered.

Where appropriate the Council will require developers to restore watercourses to a more natural state through the removal of hard engineering, such as culverts and bank reinforcement, in order to reduce flood risk and provide local amenity and biodiversity benefits

Normally no buildings should be constructed within 8 metres of the banks of watercourses, to allow access for maintenance as well as providing an ecological corridor. In addition, proposals should not result in the loss of any existing open water features.

Proposals will need to demonstrate that there is the capacity within the foul water sewerage network or that capacity can be made available prior to the occupation of the development.

Proposals for flood management or other infrastructure offering improvements that lower the risk of flooding will be supported, subject to the proposal not resulting in an increase in flood risk elsewhere.

**Proposals for development located adjacent to the Grantham Canal will need to consider the residual risk in the event of overtopping and/or breaches of the embankment due to culvert collapse or animal burrowing.**

**For allocated sites in areas at risk of flooding, proposals should demonstrate how site-specific flood risk implications identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment have been addressed.**

### 30.2. Issues with the Policy

30.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:

- The National Planning Policy Framework and Practice Guidance have been updated and the council is due to prepare a new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, all of which need to be considered in any policy revision.
- The policy is lengthy and incorporates fairly detailed technical guidance, which may be better left to other documents, including national guidance.

### 30.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The National Planning Policy Framework and the Practice Guidance contain full policy and guidance on planning for flooding, including the sequential and exception tests and the need for flood risk assessments with planning applications. That policy and advice has considerable weight in relation to planning applications. It is therefore possible that there is no need for a policy in the local plan.

However, it should be noted that the policy contains locally relevant criteria which go beyond national guidance including reference to flooding from the Grantham Canal. In addition, given the importance of this topic for the location and design of development and the likely increase in flooding arising from climate change, to delete the policy would exclude an important aspect of planning from the local plan.

#### Option 2: Add new elements of national policy

National policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance has been amended since the local plan was adopted and incorporates a number of additional or amended elements. These include

- The Avoid-Control-Mitigate-Manage hierarchy, which builds on the sequential and exceptions tests.

- Consider and design out conflicts with other requirements such as accessibility and heritage.
- Consideration of operation, funding and maintenance of flood management measures.

Incorporation of these would bring the policy more in line with national guidance. However, it would further increase the length and complexity of the policy which is already roughly two pages long and covers a range of strategic and detailed requirements.

### Option 3: Restrict policy to strategic overview and local matters


With national policy and guidance containing detailed and specific requirements for the application of the sequential and exceptions tests, the requirement for and contents of flood risk assessments and flood resilience requirements, the policy may contain unnecessary levels of detail. Under this option, the policy would be stripped back to contain the overall strategic approach to planning for flooding but leave the detailed requirements for national and technical guidance published from time to time. Specific local flooding issues could continue to be incorporated. The policy could contain issues such as:

- The Avoid-Control-Mitigate-Manage hierarchy.
- The sequential and exceptions tests.
- Flood resilience and safety of occupants.
- Multiple sources of flooding.
- Overtopping from the Grantham Canal.

This approach would reduce the length and complexity of the policy significantly, reducing the likelihood of future inconsistency with national policy.

The disadvantage of this is that the policy may provide a less comprehensive overview of flooding and drainage matters.


## 30.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **64** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree



- Option 3: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **65** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **31. Policy EN12. Sustainable Drainage Systems**

### **31.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**For major developments, proposals should demonstrate through a surface water drainage strategy that properties will not be at risk from surface water flooding allowing for climate change effects.**

**Surface water management should be undertaken, wherever practicable through the utilisation of appropriate SuDS techniques which mimic natural drainage patterns, and where appropriate achieve net gains for nature through the creation of ponds and wetlands near watercourses and the introduction of blue green corridors. For SuDS techniques which are designed to encourage infiltration, a site-specific infiltration test will be required to ensure that the water table is low enough.**

**For sites which lie within or close to groundwater protection zones or aquifers, guidance should be sought from the Lead Local Flood Authority.**

**Where SuDS are not technically feasible, the applicant is required to provide evidence that a connection to a public surface water sewer is necessary.**

**All developments will be expected to be designed to achieve, where appropriate, a net decrease in surface water run-off rates, including through green infrastructure provision such as the planting of native trees and bushes and the consideration of using 'green roofs'. All developments on greenfield sites will be expected to achieve greenfield run-off rates.**

**All developments will be required to manage surface water through keeping to a minimum the creation of non-permeable areas.**

**For allocated sites, any surface water management strategy should demonstrate how site-specific guidance in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been implemented.**

### **31.2. Issues with the Policy**

**31.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:**

- **No reference to adoption and maintenance of the SUDS for the lifetime of the development.**
- **No requirement to justify the form of SUDS to be incorporated.**
- **No support for multifunctional SUDS design.**

### 31.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

There is a considerable raft of national guidance, including technical guidance, indicating how SUDS should be incorporated into developments. It is the role of Leicestershire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority to provide technical advice on SUDS. It may therefore be unnecessary for the local plan to contain a specific policy on SUDS, and instead the local planning authority could rely on Lead Local Flood Authority advice and national policy and guidance.

However, the incorporation of SUDS in new development is an important element of layout and design and can involve a significant land take. It also has an impact on the design of open spaces and green infrastructure within developments with the potential for multiple use of land. This would indicate that deleting any reference to SUDS would be counter-intuitive, at least.

#### Option 2: Incorporate additional requirements

The policy could be enhanced by the addition of criteria covering:

- The requirement for long term maintenance.
- Multifunctional SUDS design.
- The requirement to justify the form of SUDS used.

These additional criteria would allow the local planning authority to require improved quality SUDS provision, benefitting local development quality.

However, this would increase the length of the policy, which could be a disadvantage of this approach.

### 31.4. Consultation Questions

- ✚ Question **66** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

✚ Question **67** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **32. Policy IN1. Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy (MMTS)**

### **32.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**The Borough Council will work with Leicestershire County Council, landowners, developers and others to deliver a transport strategy for Melton Mowbray. The MMTS will comprise the following key components, to be funded and delivered by private developers and the public sector:**

- (a) A Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR) from the A606 Nottingham Road to the A607 Leicester Road around the east of the town, in accordance with the broad design standards and requirements outlined in paragraph 8.3.17, for which a ‘corridor of investigation’ is shown on the Policies Map; and**
- (b) A package of complementary measures, including enhanced pedestrian, cycling and public transport facilities and access to the town centre and the other main local journey attractors from the southern and northern urban extensions.**

**If development is proposed within the corridor shown on the Policies Map, it may be permitted provided that it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority that it would not prejudice the ability to deliver the MMDR as a whole.**

**Where necessary, the Council and/or the Local Highway Authority will use its compulsory purchase powers to deliver section(s) of the MMDR.**

**Where a transport assessment indicates that development will add to the cumulative traffic and other transport problems of Melton Mowbray, a financial or in kind contribution will be sought towards delivery of the MMDR and/or complementary measures proposed through the wider MMTS, including appropriate mitigation necessary to reduce local traffic impacts whilst the MMDR is incomplete.**

**The Borough Council will also work with other bodies to explore opportunities to enhance the public realm in and around Melton Mowbray town centre arising from the development of the Strategy.**

### **32.2. Issues with the Policy**

**32.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issue and concluded that an update was required:**

- The County Council adopted an interim MMTS in 2021 to support the local plan and provide a framework for deciding priorities and coordinate investment.**

- The County Council have stated that there is very little funding available in their capital programme to contribute towards MMTS delivery.
- The policy does not reflect the most up to date agreements on funding the Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy including the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road. It also does not reflect recent progress in MMDR construction.
- The National Planning Policy Framework has been updated since the local plan was adopted to provide a stronger emphasis on sustainable travel.

### 32.3. Options for updating the Policy


#### Option 1: Delete the policy

The policy contains key transport infrastructure for Melton Mowbray and, together with policies SS4 and SS5, forms a central plank of the Local Plan's strategy. Significant funding has been agreed and delivered on the basis of its existence. The measures are partially delivered and its deletion is not feasible.

#### Option 2: Reflect the latest position in the policy [preferred option]

The policy continues to provide an appropriate basis for delivering transport infrastructure in and around Melton Mowbray, but could be updated to reflect the current position, including agreements with Leicestershire County Council, Homes England and the Department of Transport and elements already delivered. This would ensure it continued to provide an effective basis for delivering the infrastructure the town needs. Additionally, recognising the substantial, significant investment in infrastructure in Melton Mowbray the policy could be amended and updated to reflect the area(s) that would be expected to contribute towards the costs of the infrastructure. This would give additional certainty to both developers and the County Council who are forward funding the infrastructure. This is the only realistic option.

### 32.4. Consultation Questions

 Question 68 Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

✚ Question **69** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## **33. Policy IN2. Transport, Accessibility and Parking**

### **33.1. Current (adopted) Policy**

**The Council and its delivery partners will support and promote an efficient and safe transport network which offers a range of transport choices for the movement of people and goods, reduces the need to travel by car and encourages use of alternatives, such as walking, cycling, and public transport.**

**All new developments should, where possible, have regard to all the following:**

- 1. Be located where travel can be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes maximised;**
- 2. Minimise additional travel demand through the use of measures such as travel planning, safe and convenient public transport, dedicated walking and cycling links and cycle storage/parking links and integration with existing infrastructure;**
- 3. Seek to generate or support the level of demand required to improve, introduce or maintain public transport services, such as rail and bus services;**
- 4. Do not unacceptably impact on the safety and movement of traffic on the highway network or that any such impacts can be mitigated through appropriate improvements;**
- 5. Support the enhancement of existing or proposed transport interchanges such as the railway stations at Melton Mowbray and Bottesford;**
- 6. Provide appropriate and effective parking provision and servicing arrangements.**

### **33.2. Issues with the Policy**

**33.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:**

- A significant amount of changes have occurred within national policy and regulations since the adoption of the Local Plan which result in the current policy not aligning with these policies. An example being the National Planning Policy Framework placing greater focus on attractive walking and cycling networks and Electric Vehicle charging.**
- A revised Leicestershire Highways Design Guide has been published, since the adoption of the local, with differing guidelines to the one used to formulate the current policy.**



- Development management officers have stated that the policy current lacks clarity and usability for site-specific circumstances. Specifically that there is no significant requirement on developers to implement transport and accessibility infrastructure.

### 33.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

Deletion of the policy would result in the removal of the key policy within the Local Plan that stipulates the requirements for all new developments to consider and implement sustainable transport infrastructure, have an accessible design and incorporate sufficient parking. In addition, sustainable transport and accessibility within the Borough is a key corporate priority for the Council. It is therefore considered that deletion of the policy is not appropriate.

#### Option 2: Amend policy wording to align with national and local guidance

##### [preferred option]


Make amendments to the policy to ensure its alignment with the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular reflecting attractive walking and cycling networks and EV charging. In addition, amendments to the wording to ensure alignment with regional evidence such as Leicestershire Highways Design Guide is recommended. Detailing these evidence bases within the policy will enable greater clarity as to the requirements of new developments.

It is considered that an amendment to the wording of the policy is necessary to provide greater weight to the implementation and provision of transport and electric vehicle infrastructure within the developments. It is acknowledged that this would need to be subject to viability.


In addition, it is considered that elements of the existing Policy EN9 on Climate change, should be incorporated within this policy to encourage the implement of EV charging, cycle parking and increased uptake of sustainable transport options, including walking and cycling.

The disadvantage to this approach is that it may place extra burden on developers to implement transport and parking infrastructure. In addition, it may make the policy more complex for decision-makers to use.

### 33.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **70** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/  
somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **71** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 34. Policy IN4. Broadband

### 34.1. Current (adopted) Policy

**Information communication networks, such as superfast broadband, will be supported across the whole of Melton Borough to reduce the need to travel and will be a requirement for new developments.**

**Proposals of 30 dwellings or more will be required to provide fixed fibre superfast broadband.**

**Proposals for residential development of less than 30 dwellings and commercial development will be required to provide fixed fibre broadband where this is technically feasible, subject to viability.**

**New developments must be served by either:**

- i) Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) technology ; or**
- ii) Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) technology enabling access to broadband speeds of up to 80 megabits per second.**

### 34.2. Issues with the Policy

34.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The policy is already covered within the National Planning Policy and Building Regulations.
- An update is required to reflect changes in the National Planning Policy Framework.

### 34.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

Deletion of the policy is considered as it is covered in new parts of the Building Regulations and in the National Planning Policy Framework; however, the relevant new elements of the Building Regulations only apply to new dwellings and therefore not to changes of use or non-residential uses such as offices.

The subject matter is of increasing importance, therefore, it is not recommended to delete the policy.


## Option 2: Amend policy [preferred option]

The policy requires an update to reflect minor changes in the National Planning Policy Framework and other practical matters. In this option we are proposing to:


- Extend the requirement to all dwellings and commercial uses, including changes of use.
- Require that the infrastructure provides access for a range of providers to ensure competition.
- Refer to gigabit-capable connections, or a higher speed if building regulations are updated in the future.
- Delete reference to fibre to the cabinet technology.

Although this option could add complexity to the policy, it seems appropriate that, given the importance of broadband provision in our Borough, the policy is retained and updated to make it more effective.

### 34.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **72** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **73** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

## 35. Policy D1. Raising the Standard of Design

### 35.1. Current (adopted) Policy

All new developments should be of high quality design. All development proposals will be assessed against all the following criteria:

- a) Siting and layout must be sympathetic to the character of the area;
- b) New development should meet basic urban design principles outlined in this plan and any accompanying Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD);
- c) Buildings and development should be designed to reflect the wider context of the local area and respect the local vernacular without stifling innovative design;
- d) Amenity of neighbours and neighbouring properties should not be compromised;
- e) Appropriate provision should be made for the sustainable management of waste, including collection and storage facilities for recyclable and other waste;
- f) Sustainable means of communication and transportation should be used where appropriate;
- g) Development should be designed to reduce crime and the perception of crime.
- h) Existing trees and hedges should be utilised, together with new landscaping, to negate the effects of development;
- i) Proposals include appropriate, safe connection to the existing highway network;
- j) Performs well against Building for Life 12 or any subsequent guidance and seeks to develop the principles of 'Active Design' for housing developments;
- k) Makes adequate provision for car parking; and
- l) Development should be managed so as to control disruption caused by construction for reasons of safeguarding and improving health well-being for all.

### 35.2. Issues with the Policy

35.2.1. The five-year review raised the following issues and concluded that an update was required:

- The role of design within planning and plan making has changed.
- The policy does not fully align with National Policy. The policy needs to be considered as strategic policy and refer to the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code.
- Local Authorities are now expected to promote design codes.

- There are some design criteria which are currently set out across the wider plan's policies that might be better and more coherently addressed within the design policy itself.
- The policy does not fully align with local community expectations. Neighbourhood planning has created a new level and vibrant array of local design policy considerations that have been developed to work well for their local contexts and reflect local community aspirations.
- Reassessment of the role of the support text is needed.
- Alignment with the Supplementary Planning Document is desirable.
- There is a need to ensure that the good design principles set out within external documents such as Building for a Health Life and Active Design, which have largely been developed to consider large scale urban development proposals, are applied appropriately, including in local rural contexts.
- The role of design reviews could be widened to help improve the quality of development proposals.

### 35.3. Options for updating the Policy

#### Option 1: Delete the policy

This is not considered appropriate as it would run counter to National Planning Policy Framework and local community aspirations to use design to help create well designed places. A Local plan with no policy for promoting good design is not considered likely to be found sound at examination.

#### Option 2: Review and strengthen policy so it sets out strategic principles for high quality new development [preferred option]

This option proposes to review the policy, so it better aligns with the revised National Planning Policy Framework and the national design guide and model design code as well as local people's aspirations to create better designed developments and places. This option also proposes to increase the policy's weight in decision making by redefining it as a strategic policy.

Specifically, it is proposed to review the policy criteria to ensure that it;


- To ensure the plan works well with the revised National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide and builds upon our existing Design of Development Supplementary Planning Document.

- Broadens specific design principles within it to ensure sufficient emphasis on place, heritage and character as well as ensure it works well to help tackle climate change and improve health.
- Ensure all key strategic design considerations are highlighted within the policy itself rather than expect applicants to develop proposals that align well with and reference varied design considerations from other plan policies as well as external good practice design guidance documents, which are currently referenced in the local plan.
- To ensure the plan works well for local design coding, setting out when and how design codes should be used to support neighbourhood plans and development proposals and what they should consider, including, the extent of the areas they might most appropriately cover, the responsibility and timing of their preparation and the degree of prescription they might appropriately include.
- Introduce wording within policy itself to support the use of design review and seek to widen community consultation on the design of new developments


Given the increased and more varied role that the design policy is now expected to have, this option may result in splitting the policy into two or more policies.


Given how interrelated design is to the wider plan, the precise contents and role of the design policy will be dependent on how the wider plan policies evolve during the review process.

#### 35.4. Consultation Questions

 Question **74** Looking at the options above, which option do you support?  
[Matrix]

- Option 1: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree
- Option 2: strongly agree/ somewhat agree /neither agree nor disagree/ somewhat disagree/ strongly disagree

 Question **75** Please use the comment box below to explain your response or provide any additional information you would like us to consider in our review of this policy [Free text]

 Question **76** Do you think the current design policy criteria covers all design issues adequately, that the current policy works well? Would you like to suggest any criteria to be added or removed from the policy? [Free text]

✚ Question **77** How important do you think each of the following design considerations are for a new development? [Matrix] [not important; somewhat important; neutral; quite important; very important]

- **Attractiveness:** creating a pleasant environment to live and work
- **Sensitive to context:** responds well to its surroundings
- **Distinctiveness:** builds upon the unique characteristics of its surroundings and creates a sense of place in itself (design features such as scale, massing, materials, landscaping and architectural detailing).
- **Neighbour amenity:** does not adversely affect neighbours and nearby uses
- **Legible places:** places that are easily understood by their users, particularly when moving around.
- **Connectedness:** created new and weaves into existing networks
- **Comprehensive:** ensuring development is designed and delivered in a coordinated way, and avoiding piecemeal schemes
- **Safe and attractive streets and spaces:** create spaces and environment that feels safe and secure to be in.
- **Environmental sustainability and adapting to climate change**
- **Mix of uses:** the right range of uses and densities
- **Protecting and enhancing heritage assets**
- **Car parking**
- **Community consultation:** opportunities for community to get involved and help shape development proposals
- **Other:** please state any other key design considerations not highlighted above

✚ Question **78** Do you think there is a need for specific policy guidance about the use of design coding within the local plan? [Yes/No/Unsure]

✚ Question **79** If you responded 'yes' to question **78**, please provide reasons? [Free text box]



## 36. Equalities Impact

36.1.1. We are keen to hear about any potential impact these proposals may have on those with a protected characteristic (as defined in the [section 149 of the Equality Act 2010](#), these are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation), together with any supporting evidence and suggestions for any appropriate mitigation which can assist us in the future.

✚ Question **80** Do you have any views on the potential impact of the proposals raised in this consultation on people with protected characteristics as defined in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010? [Yes/No/Unsure]

✚ Question **81** If you responded 'yes'/'unsure' to question **80**, please provide your reasons and whether there is anything that you think could be done to mitigate any impacts identified [Free text].

## Appendix A. Summary of the conclusions of the Local Plan Review

Policy	Outcome
Policy SS1. Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development	Update needed
Policy SS2. Development Strategy	Update not needed
Policy SS3. Sustainable Communities (unallocated sites)	Update needed
Policy SS4. South Melton Mowbray Sustainable Neighbourhoods	Update needed
Policy SS5. Melton Mowbray North Sustainable Neighbourhood	Update needed
Policy SS6. Alternative Development Strategies and Local Plan Review	Update needed
Policy C1 (A). Housing Allocations	Update not needed
Policy C1 (B). Reserve Sites	Update not needed
Policy C2. Housing Mix	Update needed
Policy C3. National Space Standard and Smaller Dwellings	Update needed
Policy C4. Affordable Housing Provision	Update needed
Policy C5. Affordable Housing through Rural Exception Sites	Update not needed
Policy C6. Gypsies and Travellers	Update not needed
Policy C7. Rural Services	Update needed
Policy C8. Self Build and Custom Build Housing	Update needed
Policy C9. Healthy Communities	Update needed
Policy EC1. Employment Growth in Melton Mowbray	Update needed
Policy EC2. Employment Growth in the Rural Area (Outside Melton Mowbray)	Update needed
Policy EC3. Existing Employment Sites	Update needed
Policy EC4. Other Employment and Mixed-use Proposals	Update needed
Policy EC5. Melton Mowbray Town Centre	Update needed
Policy EC6. Primary Shopping Frontages	Update needed
Policy EC7. Retail Development in the Borough	Update needed
Policy EC8. Sustainable Tourism	Update needed

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Policy EN1. Landscape	Update not needed
Policy EN2. Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Update needed
Policy EN3. The Melton Green Infrastructure Network	Update needed
Policy EN4. Areas of Separation	Update not needed
Policy EN5. Local Green Spaces	Update needed
Policy EN6. Settlement Character	Update not needed
Policy EN7. Open Space, Sport and Recreation	Update needed
Policy EN8. Climate Change	Update needed
Policy EN9. Ensuring Energy Efficiency and Low Carbon Development	Update needed
Policy EN10. Energy Generation from Renewable and Low Carbon Sources	Update needed
Policy EN11. Minimising the Risk of Flooding	Update needed
Policy EN12. Sustainable Drainage Systems	Update needed
Policy EN13. Heritage Assets	Update not needed
Policy IN1. Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy (MMTS)	Update needed
Policy IN2. Transport, Accessibility and Parking	Update needed
Policy IN3. Infrastructure Contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy	Update not needed
Policy IN4. Broadband	Update needed
Policy D1. Raising the Standard of Design	Update needed
Policy D2. Equestrian Development	Update not needed
Policy D3. Agricultural Workers' Dwellings	Update not needed
Site specific policies	Update not needed

## Appendix B. Definitions linked to specific sections

- **Affordable Housing [Policy C4]:** Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions: (a) Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent). (b) Starter homes: is as specified in sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used. (c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households. (d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.
- **Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) [Introduction]:** A report prepared and published by the Council at least annually which contains information on social, environmental and economic changes and progress in preparing local plans.

- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) [Policy EN2]:** A new requirement due to come into effect soon, whereby many new developments will need to ensure that the value of habitats after they are developed is greater than the value beforehand. It uses a mathematical method for calculating biodiversity value of different habitats.
  - broader locations for future growth or larger development opportunities that may require new settlements or urban extensions.
  - deliverable sites for the first five years of a plan.
  - developable sites for 6-10 years or more to help ensure that the five-year supply is topped up.
- **Employment Land Study [Policy EC1]:** A document published by the Council which is used as an evidence base for the Local Plan's economic policies. This study assesses the demand, supply and need for employment land and premises in the Borough. It also provides recommendations on suitable strategic locations for future employment land to be allocated.
- **Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) technology [policy IN4]:** Fibre to the cabinet broadband (or FTTC for short) is an internet connection that runs along fibre optic cables from the telephone exchange to the (usually green) roadside cabinet. Standard copper telephone lines are then used to deliver broadband from the cabinet to various properties in the area.
- **Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) technology [policy IN4]:** FTTP stands for fibre to the premises, and essentially refers to fibre broadband that is wired directly to the home instead of a cabinet that services the area.
- **Flood Zones [Policy EN11]:** Areas defined by how likely they are to flood from rivers or sea in a year. Flood Zone 1 has less than a 1 in 1000 chance of flooding. Flood Zone 2 has between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 chance, while Flood Zone 3 has more than a 1 in 100 chance and can be considered high risk. Within Flood Zone 3, Flood Zone 3a is considered to be functional floodplain, and is at the highest risk within 3 overall. This categorisation does not include any allowance for flood defences.
- **Geodiversity [Policy EN2]:** The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.
- **Gigabit-capable connections [policy IN4]:** Gigabit-capable broadband means download speeds of at least 1 gigabit-per-second (1 Gbps or 1,000 megabits per second, Mbps).

- **Green Infrastructure (GI) [Policy EN2]:** A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.
- **Housing Delivery Test [Introduction]:** A set of targets for housing development in a Council area, based on housing need and local plan housing targets. Failing to meet these targets has various consequences for a council.
- **Housing Market Area (HMA) [Policy SS6]:** A defined area within which a housing market tends to operate, in terms of moving house, changing jobs and other indicators of housing market activity. Melton is considered to be within a Housing Market Area consisting of Leicester and Leicestershire.
- **Housing Quality Indicators [Policy C3]:** The housing quality indicator (HQI) system is a measurement and assessment tool to evaluate housing schemes on the basis of quality rather than just cost. Housing quality indicators measure the quality of housing schemes funded by the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England). The Government has now withdrawn these indicators.
- **Local Development Scheme (LDS) [Introduction]:** A document published by the Council which contains the proposed timetable for the preparation of the local plan.
- **Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) [Policy EN2]:** A new requirement for Councils to prepare a strategy which contains guidelines and proposals to improve biodiversity across an area. The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy is currently being prepared.
- **Main Town Centre Uses [Policy EC5 and Town Centre and Retail Evidence]:** Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)
- **Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy (MMTS) [Policy IN1]:** This is a documented produced and published by Leicestershire County Council and outlines their measures for; the delivery of the MMDR, improving the walking

and cycling network; the implementation of a bus hub and changes to the town centre road network. The document can be found here:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2021/7/27/Interim-Melton-Mowbray-transport-strategy.pdf>

- **Melton Retail Study [Town Centre and Retail Evidence]:** Assesses the future needs for retail and commercial leisure development across the borough of Melton Mowbray.
- **National Planning Policy Framework [Introduction]:** A document published by the Government which sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The most recent one is dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- **National Space Standard [Policy C3]:** This standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height.
- **Permitted Development Rights [Policy EC3]:** There is certain types of development that do not require the need for planning permission. These are called "permitted development rights". These are outlined within [The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(England\) Order 2015](#)
- **Planning Practice Guidance [Introduction]:** An online resource of good practice guidance published and kept updated by the government. It does not have the status of "policy" unlike the National Planning Policy Framework but is relevant to the preparation of local plans and making decisions on planning applications.
- **Primary (and secondary) Shopping Frontages [policy EC6]:** shops within the town centre that are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses.
- **Retail Impact Assessment [policy EC5, EC7 and Town Centre and Retail Evidence]:** is a report that evaluates the impact of proposed development on the vitality and viability of existing centres within the local area.
- **Sequential Approach [Policy EC1]:** In plan-making, the sequential approach requires a thorough assessment of the suitability, viability and availability of locations for main town centre uses. The assessment should consider the current situation, recent up-take of land for main town centre uses, the supply of and demand for land for main town centre uses, forecast of future need and the type of land needed for main town centre uses.

- **Strategic Economic Land Availability Assessment (SELAA) [Policy EC1]:** This is a document published by the Council which identifies the following:

  - deliverable sites for the first five years of a plan.
  - developable sites for 6-10 years or more to help ensure that the five-year supply is topped up.
  - broader locations for future growth or larger development opportunities that may require new settlements or urban extensions.
  
- **Town Centre [Policy EC5 and Town Centre and Retail Evidence]:** Area defined on the Melton Local Plan policies map, including the primary shopping frontages and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. Melton Mowbray is the only designated town centre in Melton Borough. For the purpose of applying town centres policies. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.
  
- **Use Class [Policy EC1]:** A definition of a use for planning purposes. Land or buildings within a Use Class can change use to something else in the same Use Class without the need for planning permission. They are defined by the Use Classes Order (UCO).
  
- **Use Classes Order [Policy EC5, EC6, EC7, EC8 and Town Centre and Retail Evidence]:** A definition of a use for planning purposes. Land or buildings within a Use Class can change use to something else in the same Use Class without the need for planning permission. They are defined by the [Use Classes Order](#) (UCO).
  
- **Viability Study [Policy EC3]:** This is a document that is usually submitted by developers it assesses whether a site is financially viable, by looking at whether the value generated by a development is more than the cost of developing it. This includes looking at the key elements of gross development value, costs, land value, landowner premium, and developer return.