

Response ID ANON-MWX6-MJER-Z

Submitted to Melton Local Plan Update: Issues and Options Consultation
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About you

What is your name?

Name:
Tamsin Cottle

What is your organisation? (if relevant)

Organisation:
Green 4 Planning

What is your Job Title/Role (if relevant)

Job title/role:
Director

What is your email address?

Email:
[REDACTED]

Are you making a submission on behalf of someone else?

Yes

If you are submitting on behalf of someone else, please provide details:

Name (on behalf of):
Dean Weldon

Organisation (on behalf of):
Deeley Group Ltd

Vision and objectives

Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 1: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 1 - Option 1: No change:
Somewhat agree

Question 1 - Option 2: Refocused and simplified version [preferred option]:
Somewhat agree

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

Please, provide further context:

Although we agree with a simplified version to make it clear what the key objectives are, we feel the focus should remain on the fact Melton Borough is predominantly rural. Therefore we would not want the main focus to be on Melton town centre but to continue to support development in sustainable locations throughout the Borough to ensure local communities can support themselves and reduce the need to travel.

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

Question 3 - Improving facilities for all of the community and providing the new infrastructure needed to support our growing population:
2

Question 3 - Addressing the causes and effects of climate change:

Question 3 - Ensure local housing meets the local communities current and future needs:
1

Question 3 - Supporting a diverse, competitive and innovative rural economy:

3

Question 3 - Enhancing Melton Mowbray's town centre:

Question 3 - Promoting high quality and well-designed development to help create healthy, sustainable and safe communities:

Question 3 - Enhancing nature and minimising harm to the natural environment:

Question 3 - Other (please specify below):

Please, provide further context:

Policy SS3. Sustainable Communities (unallocated sites)

Policy SS3: Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 6: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 6 - Option 1: Delete the policy:

Strongly disagree

Question 6 - Option 2: Review the policy to better define meeting local need:

Somewhat agree

Question 6 - Option 3: Review the policy to enhance wider sustainability [preferred option]:

Strongly agree

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

Please, provide further context:

As rural borough we would strongly disagree with removing a policy that allows for some housing to come forward in rural settlements unless allocated. There needs to be some flexibility to allow housing where there is a need for it and/or it can offer additional benefits.

We would not want this to be overly prescriptive but should have clear criteria. Often when faced with having to prove a local need this is based on the current needs of the settlement residents rather than looking forward at what the settlement could benefit from and how an increase in housing could help support local services so reducing the need to travel.

In addition the policy talks about protecting and enhancing existing services and facilities, we believe it needs to go further and actually encourage the provision of additional services such as GP's or extra care facilities where there is a needs for them. This will then fully contribute towards creating sustainable communities.

Question 8: Under what circumstances do you think new homes in the borough's smallest and least sustainable settlements are justified?

Please, provide further context:

When there is a local need for housing and the site is an obvious infill or extension to the settlement.

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?

Please, provide further context:

This could form part of the criteria but as an 'or' not essential as there could be valid reasons for providing housing but allowing it only when of the highest sustainability standards would make it unviable.

Policy SS6. Alternative Development Strategies and Local Plan Review

Policy SS6: Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 14: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 14 - Option 1: Delete the policy:

Strongly disagree

Question 14 - Option 2: Reduce to locally specific criteria only [preferred option]:

Somewhat agree

Question 14 - Option 3: Additional criteria:

Somewhat agree

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

Please, provide further context:

We agree with retaining this policy as there will need to be a review of the strategy if housing targets are not met

Definitions

Policy C2. Housing Mix

Policy C2: Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 16: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 16 - Option 1: Delete the policy:

Somewhat disagree

Question 16 - Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]:

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 policyPlease, provide further context

Please, provide further context:

The amendments being proposed to this policy are far too restrictive. There does need to be some recognition that the housing market is ever changing and insisting on a specific mix, is not appropriate especially if it does not reflect the current market or is not commercially viable. Defining the mix in the policy is only appropriate if an exception clause remains which allows for a different mix if evidenced based. In addition the policy should include reference to the housing needs of the elderly with sites identified to meet this need as per the December 2023 NPPF.

Policy C3. National Space Standard and Smaller Dwellings

Policy C3: Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 18: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 18 - Option 1: Delete the policy:

Question 18 - Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]:

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

Please, provide further context:

Definitions

Policy C4. Affordable Housing Provision

Policy C4: Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 20: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 20 - Option 1: Delete the policy:

Strongly disagree

Question 20 - Option 2: Amend the policy to reflect National Planning Policy Framework and new evidence [preferred option]:

Somewhat agree

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

Please, provide further context:

The policy should be amended to reflect the NPPF, however lowering the threshold for rural schemes to any scheme above 5 may not be viable or practical - it would be very difficult to find a registered provider who would take on 1 dwelling in a rural area. the policy needs to recognise that an equivalent off site contribution can also be sought.

Definitions

Policy C7. Rural Services

Policy C7: Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 22: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 22 - Option 1: Delete the policy:
Strongly disagree

Question 22 - Option 2: Amend the policy [preferred option]:
Neither agree nor 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

Please, provide further context:

We fully support a policy which recognises the importance of community services and facilities in rural areas. Policy support for these type of facilities in rural areas is essential if the Borough Council want to see them delivered. The policy could go further in identifying where there is a need and where there these uses would be encouraged.

Policy C8. Self Build and Custom Build Housing

Policy C8: Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 24: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 24 - Option 1: Delete the policy:
Somewhat disagree

Question 24 - Option 2: Address increasing needs:
Somewhat disagree

Question 24 - Option 3: Address increasing needs and add local-specific criteria [preferred option]:
Strongly disagree

Question 24 - Option 4: Adding the two optional local eligibility tests:
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

Please, provide further context:

Whilst we support the objective of self build, to lower the threshold from 100 to 20 units and more rigorously enforce this, plus defining where these plots should go, will make schemes in rural areas unviable. If the threshold is to be lowered then there would need to be some exceptions in the policy for where this would not be viable or where there is no demand for the self build plots. On a scheme of 20 allowing for 1 self build plot would not make commercial sense. Some thought needs to go into an appropriate threshold and to allow for exceptions that are not just down to the plot being marketed and unsold for 6 months.

Policy D1. Raising the Standard of Design

Policy D1: Relevant context to respond to the questions below

Question 74: Looking at the options above, which option do you support?

Question 74 - Option 1: Delete the policy:
Somewhat disagree

Question 74 - Option 2: Review and strengthen policy so it sets out strategic principles for high quality new development [preferred option]:
Neither agree nor 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

Please, provide further context:

We accept the need for a design policy but this cannot be too prescriptive as there has to be scope for proposals to be designed in accordance with a developers' preference. Whilst encouraging design review is positive, it is not appropriate for small scale schemes and could add prohibitive cost to schemes coming forward. Some caveats would be required as to when it is appropriate to use design review. there has to be scope for developers to

justify their designs rather than conforming to a local design code.

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?

Please, provide further context:

Question 77: How important do you think each of the following design considerations are for a new development?

Question 77 - Attractiveness: creating a pleasant environment to live and work:
Very important

Question 77 - Sensitive to context: responds well to its surroundings:
Quite important

Question 77 - 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).:
Quite important

Question 77 - Neighbour amenity: does not adversely affect neighbours and nearby uses:
Quite important

Question 77 - Legible places: places that are easily understood by their users, particularly when moving around.:
Quite important

Question 77 - Connectedness: created new and weaves into existing networks:
Quite important

Question 77 - Comprehensive: ensuring development is designed and delivered in a coordinated way, and avoiding piecemeal schemes:
Quite important

Question 77 - Safe and attractive streets and spaces: create spaces and environment that feels safe and secure to be in.:
Quite important

Question 77 - Environmental sustainability and adapting to climate change:
Quite important

Question 77 - Mix of uses: the right range of uses and densities:
Quite important

Question 77 - Protecting and enhancing heritage assets:
Quite important

Question 77 - Car parking:
Neutral

Question 77 - Community consultation: opportunities for community to get involved and help shape development proposals:
Neutral

Question 77 - Other: please state below any other key design considerations not highlighted above:

Please, provide further context:

Question 78: Do you think there is a need for specific policy guidance about the use of design coding within the local plan?

No

Question 79: If you responded 'yes' to question 78, please provide reasons?

Please, provide further context: