

# Non-Technical Summary of the Second Sustainability Appraisal Addendum for the Melton Local Plan Main Modifications

- 1.1 In October 2017 Melton Borough Council submitted the Melton Local Plan for examination by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. An integrated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report relating to the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan (October 2016) was submitted alongside the Plan, as well as an SA Addendum (June 2017) relating to some 'Focussed Changes' that Melton Borough Council made to the Local Plan before it was submitted.
- 1.2 Following public examination hearings, the Inspector prepared a schedule of Main Modifications to the Plan, which were published for consultation from 10<sup>th</sup> May. However, on 15<sup>th</sup> June (prior to the end of the consultation), Melton Borough Council suspended consultation on the Main Modifications as it became apparent that some further changes needed to be proposed. The updated set of proposed Main Modifications is to be published for a new six week consultation period from 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018. These Main Modifications are proposed changes to the content of the examined Local Plan, which reflect matters raised during the examination.
- 1.3 The full Second SA Addendum, which this Non-Technical Summary relates to, considers the implications of the updated set of proposed Main Modifications for the SA findings reported previously.

## Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.4 The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development by integrating sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. SA is a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and involves appraising the likely social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies within a plan from the outset of its development.
- 1.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is also a statutory assessment process. The SEA Regulations require the formal assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment, and set the framework for future consent of projects requiring Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.6 SEA and SA are separate processes but have similar aims and objectives. Simply put, SEA focuses only on the likely environmental effects of a plan whilst SA includes a wider range of sustainability considerations, extending to social and economic impacts. Government guidance outlines how it is possible to satisfy both requirements by undertaking a joint SA/SEA process. This integrated approach has been taken to the SA/SEA of the Melton Local Plan and the term 'SA' should therefore be taken to mean 'SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Regulations'.
- 1.7 Information about how the SA process has informed the preparation of the Local Plan at each stage is provided in the October 2016 SA Report which accompanied the examined Local Plan.

## Sustainability Objectives

- 1.8 Each proposed policy and site allocation has been assessed against a framework of SA objectives throughout the preparation of the Local Plan. The SA framework sets out a series of sustainability

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<sup>1</sup> Under EU Directives 85/337/EEC and 97/11/EC concerning EIA.

objectives and associated questions which can be used to 'interrogate' options and policies drafted during the plan-making process. These SA objectives define the long-term aspirations of the Borough with regard to social, economic and environmental considerations. During the SA, the performance of the plan options (and later, policies) are assessed against these SA objectives and appraisal questions.

- 1.9 Melton's SA framework is presented in Appendix 1 of the full Second SA Addendum and covers all of the topics required in the SEA Regulations.

## Appraisal of the Main Modifications

- 1.10 Table 1 in the full Second SA Addendum presents the schedule of proposed Main Modifications and the Council's reasons for proposing each change, with a final column added to record the implications of each Main Modification for the SA conclusions reported previously. The SA implications have been considered based on whether each Main Modification changes the conclusions of the October 2016 SA Report for the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan, as updated in the June 2017 SA Addendum.

## Findings

- 1.11 The proposed modifications would result in a number of changes to the SA scores previously identified for the Local Plan. These changes are summarised in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1: Summary of changes to SA scores as a result of the proposed modifications**

Local Plan policy/proposal	Change to SA findings
SS2: Development Strategy	<b>The effects of this policy will be more pronounced later in the plan period when housing delivery rates would be higher, compared to later in the plan period and beyond.</b> This would apply to the potential significant positive effects identified previously (SA objectives 1: housing, 2: education, 3: sustainable transport, 4: economy and employment, 9: access to services, 13: economic growth, 14: health and 15: greenhouse gases and air quality) as well as the potential significant negative effects identified previously (SA objectives 5: landscape, 6: biodiversity and geodiversity, 7: cultural heritage and 8: efficient use of land and minerals).
C1(A): Housing Allocations	<b>The SA scores for the overall housing allocations policy C1(A) are unchanged</b> from those identified previously, as the removal of one allocation (LONG4) and the addition of another (ASF3) does not change the overall effects of the housing allocations in combination. <b>The new site allocation ASF3 is appraised in Appendix 2 in the full Second SA Addendum</b> - potential significant positive effects have been identified in relation to SA objectives 2: education, 3: sustainable transport, 9: social cohesion, 10: social deprivation and 15: greenhouse gases and potential significant negative effects have been identified in relation to SA objectives 6: biodiversity and 8: efficient use of land and resources. <b>The removal of allocation LONG4 means that the likely effects of that site allocation would no longer occur.</b> Potential significant positive effects were previously identified in relation to SA objectives 9: social cohesion, 10: social deprivation, 14: health and 15: greenhouse gases, and a potential significant negative effect was identified in relation to SA objective 8: efficient use of land and resources.
ASF3	<b>The new site allocation ASF3 is appraised in Appendix 2 in the full Second SA Addendum</b> - potential significant positive effects

Local Plan policy/proposal	Change to SA findings
	have been identified in relation to SA objectives 2: education, 3: sustainable transport, 9: social cohesion, 10: social deprivation and 15: greenhouse gases and potential significant negative effects have been identified in relation to SA objectives 6: biodiversity and 8: efficient use of land and resources.
LONG4	<b>The removal of allocation LONG4 means that the likely effects of that site allocation would no longer occur.</b> Potential significant positive effects were previously identified in relation to SA objectives 9: social cohesion, 10: social deprivation, 14: health and 15: greenhouse gases, and a potential significant negative effect was identified in relation to SA objective 8: efficient use of land and resources.
C6: Gypsies and Travellers	Amendments to this policy mean that some of the effects previously identified would no longer occur and <b>effects would instead be negligible</b> . This is the case for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA objective 3: sustainable transport (previously minor positive).</li> <li>SA objective 9: social cohesion (previously minor positive).</li> <li>SA objective 14: health (previously minor positive).</li> <li>SA objective 16: flood risk (previously minor positive).</li> </ul> In addition, <b>some of the previously mixed effects are no longer mixed</b> – this is the case for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA objective 5: landscape (previously +/-? now -?).</li> <li>SA objective 7: cultural heritage (previously +/-? now -?).</li> </ul>
EC3: Existing Employment Sites	The new criteria included in the policy in relation to the change of use of employment sites could have a <b>minor positive (+?) effect on SA objective 1: housing</b> .
EC8: Sustainable Tourism	The additional policy wording means that the minor positive (+) effect previously identified in relation to SA objective 3: sustainable transport <b>is now uncertain (+?)</b> and the minor negative part of the overall mixed effect (+/-) previously identified in relation to SA objective 15: greenhouse gases is reinforced.

- 1.12 Although a number of changes to SA scores would result from the Main Modifications, some of which reduce or remove positive effects previously identified, the changes to the SA findings (summarised in **Table 1** above) do not fundamentally alter the in-combination effects of the Local Plan as described in the Pre-Submission Draft SA report (October 2016) and updated in the first SA Addendum for the Focused Changes. The overall scale of development proposed in the Local Plan, and the spatial strategy, are unaffected by the modifications. The removal of site allocation LONG4 and the inclusion of the new allocation ASF3 do not measurably affect the in-combination effects of the numerous sites allocated through the Local Plan in policy C1(A).

## Next Steps

- 1.13 The Second SA Addendum and this Non-Technical Summary will be published alongside the proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan.
- 1.14 Following the consultation on the proposed modifications to the Local Plan, the Inspector will consider the representations raised in respect of the Main Modifications and will report on the modified Local Plan's soundness.
- 1.15 If the Local Plan is found to be 'sound', it can be formally adopted by Melton Borough Council. Once the Local Plan has been adopted, a SA Adoption Statement will be published to report the full plan-making and SA process and the framework for monitoring future effects.

LUC  
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