



13th July 2020

Clarification matters for Melton Borough Council

The representations from the Ovens Family (and Appendix 4 in particular) question the way in which the Plan has been prepared.

Please can the Borough Council comment about this matter in general, and the way in which the preparation of the Plan has complied with the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations in particular?

Melton Borough Council response

As expressed in the regulation 16 representation, the Council maintains its position in considering field 198 (and fields 148, and 147) as potential extensive tracks of land, particularly when seen as a whole, and consequently contrary to the aims of the national policy. However, we do not identify a specific issue in relation to the procedures to designate it (or them) as Local Green Space(s).

We are aware that one of the questions addressed to the Qualifying Body in the Clarification Note seeks further insights in terms of size, local significance and compliance with the NPPF for the proposed Local Green Spaces. The response from the Qualifying Body will aim to reinforce the designation of these fields by their own merits. A similar approach is applied to the objector's comments associated to the settlement boundaries, the other policy addressed by the Oven's Family in their representation. Consequently, the Council will focus on responding to the potential procedural issues and lack of community engagement referred in the objection.

The Council considers that during the prescribed consultation periods, and more specifically the consultation associated to the Regulation 14 of *The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012*, the Qualifying Body complied with the requirements shown in the regulation by consulting in an appropriately manner, and giving the necessary publicity to the Neighbourhood Plan consultation as proven in their Consultation Statement. Additionally, the objectives associated to Regulation 15 of *The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012* are met, including the production and submission of a Consultation Statement with details of who was consulted, how they were consulted and the Qualifying Body's consideration of the main issues and concerns compiled during the consultation.

It is our understanding that Neighbourhood planning regulations only refer (indirectly) to community participation through the statutory consultation processes. Although desirable, other elements of community engagement are not prescribed in the regulations. Additionally, by considering the number and content of the consultation responses received, the Council infers that the local community is not pursuing the allocation of the objector's land, or any land in addition to the Local Plan's allocations, in their Neighbourhood Development Plan. Still, if this is not the case, the local community would have the opportunity to show their disagreement with the Plan during the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum.

Yours sincerely,

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