

Chapter 3: Vision and Strategic Priorities

3.1 The Vision for Melton Borough

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 land-based 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.**

3.1.2 The vision, its delivery and the strategic priorities have been developed with significant input from Local Plan Reference Groups, and they have been refined by the consultation undertaken to date.

3.2. Strategic Issues, Objectives and Priorities for Melton Borough

3.2.1 Strategic priorities are the main overarching matters that the Local Plan will help make happen, in support of a range of other plans and strategies being developed and delivered by the Borough Council and its partners. These priorities have emerged to address the key strategic issues, identified in Table 1, that the Borough will face over the next 20 years or so.

Strategic Issue	Summary of Issue
1: Ageing Population	The Borough’s population is ageing, to such an extent that if trends continue unchecked, there will be an increase in deaths over births in the Borough by 2036. Arising from this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would become increasingly difficult to meet the need and demand for services. • In local areas like many villages where older people would predominate, the ability to support local services, including local schools and public transport, would be at risk.
2: Amount and type of new housing	Not enough new housing, nor of the right type, has been built in the Borough in recent years, making it difficult for first time buyers, young families and others on lower incomes to move into or to continue to reside within the Borough.
3: Insufficient available local workforce	Arising from No. 2 above, local employers experience difficulties recruiting into relatively low skilled and low paid positions, affecting their efficiency and competitiveness. Most of the working age population is already in work, and wages are not high enough to incentivise people outside of the Borough to travel to work in the Borough, or to move to the Borough for the

Strategic Issue	Summary of Issue
	same purpose.
4: Impact of road traffic and congestion in Melton town centre	Melton Mowbray town centre is blighted and partially severed by high volumes of road traffic, including many heavy good vehicles, travelling across and through the town. This adversely affects local businesses, the attractiveness of Melton Mowbray to visitors, the ability of local people to go about their daily business, and the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole.
5: Connectivity	Arising from 4 above, there is poor effective road connectivity through and across the town.
6: Flooding	There is a significant flood risk in some areas of the Borough. This arises from fluvial flooding, run-off from hillsides, groundwater flooding, flooding of sewers and drains and blockages to artificial drainage systems. Unless this can be mitigated viably, this can act as a significant constraint on new development.
7: Safeguarding valued heritage and local landscapes	The amount and quality of the Borough's historic buildings and landscapes are highly valued and a key selling point for the Borough in marketing itself as an attractive place to live, visit or set up a business. Any new development will need to reflect and be sympathetic to that in its siting, design and layout.
8: Absence of a large park in the north-east of the Borough	These areas are not served by provision elsewhere in the Borough. There is no significant single site that local people in this area can visit and enjoy for recreational use or play.
9. Employment sites and premises	There is an insufficient supply of freehold sites and premises, preferred by many local small medium enterprises (SME's).
10. Town Centre vitality and viability	Whilst the level of occupancy of town centre retail, financial and professional services is holding up compared to similar centres elsewhere, the quality and range of the retail offer is limited. The lack of modern office space within the town centre could also be depriving the centre of enhanced economic activity, daytime footfall and associated expenditure.

Table 1: Key Strategic Issues for Melton Borough

3.3 Strategic Objectives and Priorities

3.3.1 The strategic objectives are the main or high level things that the Local Plan is designed to help achieve. The strategic priorities are the most important of these. It is where the Local Plan can make most impact to address the issues identified in Table 1. The Local Plan can significantly contribute to achieving the other objectives, but to a lesser extent, and often in support of the complementary actions from other functions of the Council and its partners.

3.3.2 The strategic objectives and priorities for the Melton Local Plan will flow through the plan into various chapters. They reflect the key issues identified above and also relate to the objectives of the Melton Borough Sustainable Communities Strategy, which are to:

- **Improve the local economy and infrastructure**
- **Re-vitalise Melton Mowbray town centre**

- Improve learning opportunities to help individuals achieve their potential
- Make existing structures and projects more accessible
- Reduce traffic congestion in Melton Mowbray
- Focus our work in the priority neighbourhoods
- Create a safer and stronger community
- Enable and support the provision of affordable housing
- Improve the health and well-being of local people

3.3.3 They also link directly to the sustainability objectives of the Melton Borough Sustainability Appraisal, but are not identical.

3.3.4 The strategic objectives of the plan are set out below, with the priorities identified in *italics*.

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 in the correct locations*

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

3.3.5 Figure 5 indicates the broad spatial strategy of the Local Plan, and its context.

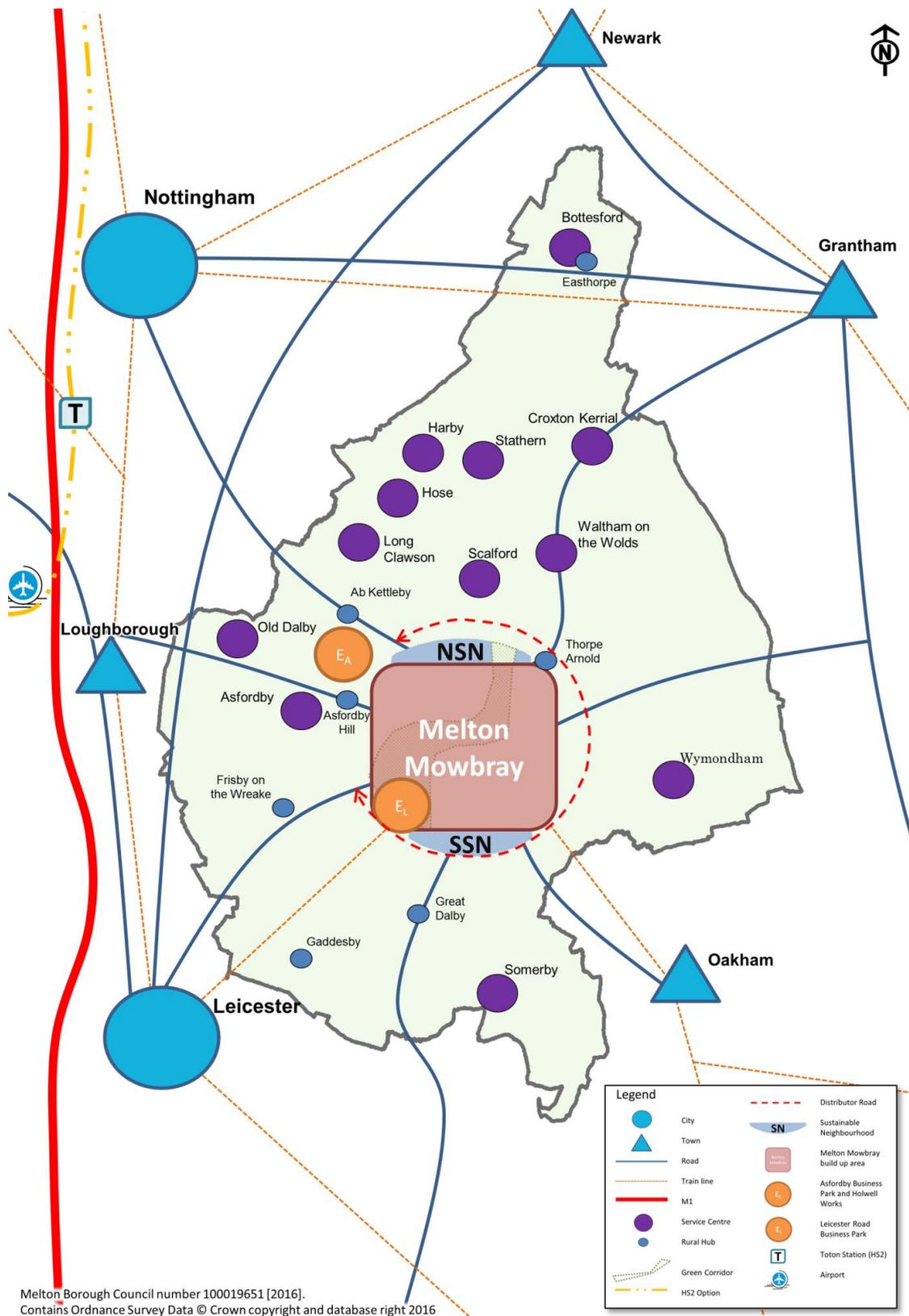


Figure 5: Pre Submission Draft Plan Key Diagram