



Melton Borough Council Local Plan Focused Changes 2017

Representations on behalf of Mr David Cook
Land to the south of Frisby on the Wreake
(FRIS3)

LANDOWNER

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c/o Agent

AGENT

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INTRODUCTION

These representations, made by Fisher German on behalf of Mr David Cook, relate to land to the south of Frisby on the Wreake; Proposed housing allocation FRIS3 in the Local Plan Focused Changes Document. Figure 1, illustrates the location of the site.



Figure 1: Site Location

The site was considered in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) undertaken by Melton Borough Council, where it was given the site reference MBC/007/16.

On 19th September 2016, Full Council agreed new allocations for the Local Plan which included a total of 94 dwellings for Frisby on the Wreake, across 3 sites, with 40 to be delivered on land to the south of Frisby (FRIS3). The November 2016 Pre-Submission Local Plan (Appendix 1: Site Allocations and Policies), confirmed this proposed allocation at FRIS3.

In preparing the Focused Changes, Officers took a report to an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on the 4th July 2017 which suggested that the capacity of FRIS3 should be substantially increased. Members debated this at the meeting, with feedback from the Community provided by Members and debated. It was agreed following the debate that the allocation numbers should be reduced to 48 dwellings to reflect the scope of the planning application for the site, as detailed below.

An outline planning application, for residential development of up to 48 dwellings, community uses, landscaping, open space and drainage infrastructure (with all matters other than access

reserved for future approval), reference: 16/00704/OUT, in September 2017. The planning application was supported by the following documentation:

- Arboricultural Survey (September 2016)
- Archaeology and Heritage Assessment (September 2016)
- Design and Access Statement (September 2016)
- Ecology – Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey (September 2016)
- Ecology – Bat Survey (September 2016)
- Ecology – eDNA Newt Survey (September 2016)
- Flood Risk Assessment (September 2016)
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (September 2016)
- Planning Statement (September 2016)
- Plans and drawings
 - Site Location Plan (110426-001, September 2016)
 - Illustrative Masterplan (5966.ILM Rev C, 24 August 2016)
- Topographical Survey (ref 160359, July 2016 – 6 Sheets)
- Statement of Community Involvement (September 2016)
- Transport Assessment (19 September 2016), incorporating:
 - Proposed site access drawing (ref 18197-02 Rev B – Appendix D)
 - Potential improvement plan for Great Lane/Gaddesby Lane junction (ref 18197-07 – Appendix E)

The illustrative masterplan which supported the planning application, and illustrates how the site could be delivered, is reproduced in Figure 2. The development illustrated in Figure 2 comprises a landscape led residential scheme of 48 dwellings providing extensive public open space, a children's play area and a potential community orchard. The scheme also proposed a new school drop off facility and the opportunity to allocate land for an extension to the school grounds in the future.

Vehicular access is proposed to the site from Gaddesby Lane with a pedestrian link to Rotherby Lane. Existing vegetation will be retained with additional planting proposed throughout the site.



Figure 2: Illustrative Masterplan

The proposed development has been reviewed by the relevant statutory stakeholders and the application has an Officer recommendation to approve the application (27th July 2017 and 17th August 2017). There are no technical objections to the development.

It is recognised that Frisby Neighbourhood Plan is progressing and representations have been made to the various versions of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The representations have objected to the site identification process, which has resulted in the “preferred site/sites” changing each time the Neighbourhood Plan has been consulted on. In addition to this there are questions surrounding the consistency of the Plan with the NPPF and the emerging Local Plan. This is in contrast to the approach the Planning Authority has taken in identifying and allocating sites for development in Frisby.

The proposed development fully reflects the Council's emerging Local Plan which identifies the site (FRIS3) as a proposed allocation for housing. This is a proposed allocation which the Council has identified following a robust site search and having regard to detailed evidence, which Members have voted in favour of.

As set out above, the application has been prepared following detailed environmental review and extensive consultation which has demonstrated that there are no constraints to the delivery of the proposed development. This is reflected in the Officers report and through the expressions of interest in the site which have already been received from housebuilders.

The development provides the opportunity to deliver numerous community benefits, including a new school drop off, land to enable the future expansion of the school, and extensive open space accessible to all.

Comments have not been made to all of the Focused changes policies within the document; only those of most relevance to the land to the south of Frisby (FRIS3); these are summarised below:

- The proposed change FC4 (Appendix 1 – FC4 – Housing site allocations), to increase the dwelling numbers on site from 40 to 48 is supported. As set out above the planning application demonstrates that a sensitive, landscape led scheme of 48 dwellings can be achieved on site. There are no constraints to the delivery of the homes, as confirmed through the Planning Officers report to Planning Committee dated 27th July 2017 and 17th August 2017.
- The Council's Topic Paper identifies a range of 5,750 dwellings (230 dwellings per annum) to 7,000 dwellings (280 dwellings per annum). The Council's proposed provision of 245 dwellings per annum is towards the lower end of this range, and there is no apparent justification as to why this figure is being progressed over 280 dwellings per annum. It is considered that a housing figure at the lower end of the range identified does not fully reflect the NPPF and its objective to significantly boost the supply of housing.
- The Council's assumptions for the delivery of the proposed allocations leave little headroom and flexibility in the overall housing land supply and the five-year housing land supply, throughout the plan period. Sites, such as the land to the south of Frisby (FRIS3) are needed in order to assist with maintaining a five-year housing land supply in the early years of the Plan.

MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN FOCUSED CHANGES

These representations do not provide comments on all of the Focused Changes; the representations below focus on the policies and allocations of most relevance to the south of Frisby (FRIS3).

FC1.1 and FC1.2 – Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) and Housing Requirement

The Council's position to take forward a higher "policy on" housing requirement figure is supported, particularly given the criticisms the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) has come under at the recent North West Leicestershire Local Plan Examination.

However, it is noted that the Council's Topic Paper identifies a range of 5,750 dwellings (230 dwellings per annum) to 7,000 dwellings (280 dwellings per annum). The Council's proposed provision of 245 dwellings per annum is towards the lower end of this range, and there is no apparent justification as to why this figure is being progressed over 280 dwellings per annum. Furthermore, the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum suggests greater benefits from 280 dwellings per annum; particularly the delivery of affordable housing. At 245 dwellings per annum, only 75% of Melton's affordable housing requirement will be delivered.

It is considered that a housing figure at the lower end of the range identified does not fully reflect the NPPF and its objective to significantly boost the supply of housing.

FC1.2, FC1.3 and FC4.1 – Housing Land Supply

It is critical that the Council's assumptions for the delivery of the proposed allocations are correct and realistic in order to ensure sufficient headroom and flexibility in the overall housing land supply and the five-year housing land supply, throughout the plan period.

It is noted that the (Strategic Urban Extensions (SUE's) have a requirement for masterplanning prior to granting planning permission, which will delay their delivery. In addition, and as the Council has already identified through the adjusted delivery rates for these sites, the SUEs will in the first few years be built out at a slower rate than some of the smaller sites. Having regard to both of these matters, the proposed housing trajectory would appear overly ambitious.

Further to the above, the Council currently proposes to address its shortfall over the plan period (Liverpool), rather than within the first five years of the Plan (Sedgefield); it is considered that the Sedgefield method should be adopted to reflect the Government's preferred approach as set out in the NPPG.

The land to the south of Frisby (FRIS3) is immediately available to deliver and contribute to the Council's housing land supply. A planning application has been submitted which

demonstrates that there are no constraints to the delivery of the site; this is confirmed in the Planning Officers Report to Committee. There is strong market interest in the site with a number of expressions of interest already received from housebuilders. It is envisaged that the site could be completed by 2019/2021 if planning permission is granted in Summer/Autumn 2017. The delivery of which would assist with maintaining a five-year housing land supply in the early years of the Plan.

FC4.1 and 4.2 - Housing Allocations and Local Plan Appendix 1: Site Allocations and Policies

Policy C1 (A) – Housing Allocations

FRIS3 - Land south of Frisby

The proposed change FC4 (Appendix 1 – FC4 – Housing site allocations), to increase the dwelling numbers on land to the south of Frisby (FRIS3) from 40 to 48 is supported.

The planning application, and Officers report to Committee demonstrates that a sensitive, landscape led scheme of 48 dwellings can be achieved on site. There are no constraints to the delivery of the proposed development.

As detailed above, the site is immediately able to deliver. The Officer's report to Committee recommends approval for the scheme. Once consented, the site will be sold to a housebuilder. There is strong market interest in the site and a number of expressions of interest have already been received from housebuilders looking to acquire the site. It is envisaged that the site could be completed by 2019/2020 if planning permission is granted in Summer/Autumn 2017. The delivery of which would assist with maintaining a five-year housing land supply in the early years of the Plan.

It is noted that Frisby Neighbourhood Plan is progressing, and that the latest version of the Neighbourhood Plan proposes an alternative site. Representations have been made to the various versions of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan throughout its preparation. The representations have objected to the site identification process which has been undertaken in preparing the Plan; the process has resulted in a different "preferred site/sites" being identified in each version of the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, questions have been raised surrounding the consistency of the Neighbourhood Plan with the NPPF and the emerging Local Plan. It is worth noting, that objections, reflecting our own, have been made by a number of parties, including a former member of the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan is in contrast to the detailed approach the Planning Authority has taken at Frisby in identifying and allocating sites for development.

The planning application which has been submitted for the development to the south of Frisby (FRIS3) fully reflects the Council's emerging Local Plan which identifies the site (FRIS3) as a proposed allocation. The site is deliverable now and there are no constraints to the delivery of the site.