

Chapter 5: Melton's Communities – Strong, Healthy and Vibrant

5.1 Strong, healthy and vibrant communities are crucial to the sustainability of places, and contribute greatly to quality of life and wellbeing.

5.2 The Local Plan aims to support and strengthen local communities throughout Melton Borough, focusing on people's needs, including accessible services, housing, transport and jobs.

5.3 Housing

5.3.1 Housing of sufficient quantity, quality, affordability and type is critical for successful communities throughout the Borough.

5.3.2 Melton has many specific housing needs that are to be catered for through the Local Plan. These are:

- an ageing population
- vulnerable groups such as homeless people
- households with additional access requirements
- households on low and uncertain incomes or whose needs cannot be met by the market
- people living in houses occupied by more than one household
- people in need of extra care
- Gypsies and Travellers

5.4 Housing Allocations

5.4.1 In accordance with **Policy SS2 – Development Strategy** the Local Plan will allocate a range of sites for development across the Borough.

5.4.2 To identify the preferred housing sites, the Council carried out a systematic assessment of a wide range of potential housing development options which were mostly identified through the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), consultation responses received during local plan preparation as well as Council owned land. Each of the sites received through any of the sources listed above that were capable of accommodating 10 or more dwellings and were within or adjacent to a service centre or rural hub (identified in Policy SS2) were assessed separately against a number of factors, and the resultant site selections are included in Policies C1(a) and C1(b), and in Appendix 1, alongside individual 'site-specific' policies.

5.4.3 The assessments have provided the site options available to meet the housing requirement for each location. The assessment ranks sites according

to their suitability, with availability and possible alternatives also being taken into account. The residual requirement for each Service Centre or Rural Hub is set out in Table 4 of Chapter 4, and the most suitable, sustainable and achievable sites identified to meet these residual requirements as closely as possible. Sites completed and under construction at end of April 2017 and small sites with planning permission but not yet started were accounted for in calculating the residual requirements for each settlement, whereas large sites with planning permission (or a resolution to grant) do contribute to meeting the residual requirement, and are usually the highest ranked option in each settlement.

- 5.4.4 *Whilst the housing requirement has been adjusted to include sites completed and under construction and small sites, it does not include large sites which already have planning permission (or a resolution to grant), as these are included in the settlement assessments, usually as the highest ranked option to meet allocations.* Small sites with planning permission but not yet started in each village have been discounted from the village requirement in the same way as sites completed and those under construction.
- 5.4.5 The Council needs to demonstrate that the plan will deliver a rolling five year housing land supply and that this supply is deliverable and realistic. In order to demonstrate a 5 year land supply, the sites have been identified taking into account their deliverability.
- 5.4.6 **Appendix 1** comprises a ‘settlement-by-settlement’ approach, including bespoke policies for each settlement to reflect its circumstances and the individual requirements. For example, policies may be required in some locations that allow sites to progress only once infrastructure issues have been resolved, and sites may have critical design and layout requirements that need to be addressed for them to be regarded as ‘suitable’.
- 5.4.7 Whilst the Local Plan as a whole includes a methodology for monitoring and trigger points for review (Appendix 5), it is considered good practice to build in flexibility within the plan itself to allow for a more robust approach and ‘insulate’ the need for review arising from relatively minor shortcomings on delivery, e.g. if an allocated site should become unavailable, or problems of a detailed nature are identified at application stage resulting in delay or non-delivery or if sites cannot deliver as many new homes as envisaged. The Plan therefore includes ‘reserve sites’ in Melton Mowbray and Service Centre settlements where there are further suitable, available, and deliverable / developable sites to offer this flexibility and additional resilience. These are identified separately in Appendix 1 and are the subject of Policy C1(B), which also outlines the **limited** circumstances in which they could come forward. A limited amount of flexibility is provided within Policy C1(A) through the

allocations (a surplus of ~~223~~ 756 homes¹) whilst the majority of flexibility is provided by the reserve sites (a surplus of 562 homes), and the windfall allowance.

¹The difference between the housing requirement (6125) and all the sources in Table 2 except for the windfall allowance.

Policy C1 (A) – Housing Allocations

New housing will be delivered within the Local Plan on the following sites:

Melton Mowbray		
Site Reference	Address	Capacity
MNSN	Melton North Sustainable Neighbourhood	1500
SMSN	South Melton Sustainable Neighbourhood	1700
MEL1	Land at Nottingham Road	85
MEL2	Site of King Edward VII school, Burton Road	120
MEL3	Hilltop Farm, Nottingham Road	75 45
MEL4	Top End, Cattle Market	26
MEL5	Silverdale, Scalford Road	16
MEL6	Land fronting Dieppe Way, Scalford Road	37
MEL7	Land at Thorpe Road	16
MEL8	Beeby's Yard, Burton Street	11
MEL9	Wycliffe House, Snow Hill	20
MEL10	Land adjacent to St Bartholomew's Way and Horseguards Way	70
MELTON MOWBRAY TOTAL		3676 3646

Service Centres		
Site Reference	Address	Capacity
ASF1	Land east of Station Lane & south of Klondyke Way	100
ASF2	Fields south of Bypass and north of Regency Road	55 60
ASF3	Land off Hoby Road, Asfordby	70
Asfordby Total		225 160
BOT1	Land rear of Daybell's Farm & 18 Grantham Road	41
BOT2	Land off Grantham Road	65
BOT3	Rectory Farm	163
BOT4	Land at bottom of Beacon Hill, Normanton Lane	88 55
Bottesford Total		357 324
CROX1	Land west of Saltby Road east of Highfields Farm	39 35
CROX2	Land east of Saltby Road & south of A607	10
CROX3	Land south of Main Street (A607) and west of the Nook	10
Croxton Kerrial Total		59 55
HAR1	Allotment Gardens, Boyers Orchard	15
HAR2	Former Cheese Producing Dairy, Langar Lane	10
HAR3	Former Millway Foods, Colston Lane	53
HAR4	Land at Colston Lane	50 61
Harby Total		128 139
HOS1	Land off Canal Lane	41 42
HOS2	Land west of Harby Lane	35
Hose Total		76 77
LONG1	Land at Melton Road	10
LONG2	Corner of Broughton Lane & Hickling Lane	35
LONG3	Birleys Garage, Waltham Lane	45 41
LONG4	Land off Sandpit Lane	55
Long Clawson Total		90 141

OLD1	North Lodge Farm, Longcliffe Hill	28
Old Dalby Total		28
SCAL1	Land south of Melton Road	23
Scaford Total		23
SOM1	Football field at Somerby	27
SOM2	Land off High Street	42
Somerby Total		69
STAT1	Point Farm, Main Street	65
STAT2	Land adjacent Lavesley House 14 City Road Stathern	10 17
Stathern Total		75 82
WAL1	Land rear of 48 High Street	26
WAL2	Land east of Melton Road	105 88
Waltham on the Wolds Total		131 114
WYM1	Glebe Road	12
WYM2	Land off Butt Lane	21
WYM3	Land known as Brickyard Lane	22
Wymondham Total		55
SERVICE CENTRES TOTAL		1316 1267

Rural Hubs		
Site Reference	Address	Capacity
ABK1	Land off A606	10
Ab Kettleby Total		10
ASFH1	Land off Houghton Close & Glebe Road	40
ASFH2	Land of Stanton Road	47
Asfordby Hill Total		87
EAST1	Land east of Green Lane	9
EAST2	Land west of Green Lane	12
Easthorpe Total		21
FRIS1	Land off Great Lane	48
FRIS2	Water Lane	22
FRIS3	Land south of village	48
Frisby on the Wreake Total		137
GADD1	Holme Farm	14
GADD2	Land off Pasture Lane	11
GADD3	Land north of Pasture Lane	11
Gaddesby Total		36
GREA1	Land off Burdett Close	37
Great Dalby Total		37
THOR1	Land to the South East of Thorpe Road, (A607)	13
THOR2	Land to the west of Thorpe Road	11
Thorpe Arnold Total		24
RURAL HUBS TOTAL		333

Housing proposals will be supported where they provide:

1. A mix of dwellings in accordance with Policy C2;
2. Affordable housing in accordance with Policy C4;
3. The necessary infrastructure required to support development in accordance with Policy IN1; and
4. High quality design in accordance with Policy D1.
5. The requirements as set out in Appendix 1 **or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.**

The development of sites allocated in Neighbourhood Plans that have reached post examination status prior to the adoption of this local plan and which are not identified in Policy C1(A) or C1(B) may also be permitted, subject to the conditions and criteria above.

Policy C1 (B): Reserve Sites

Proposals for new housing development on the reserve sites listed in this policy and identified on the Policies Map approved **will be permitted where:**

- a) **It helps to meet the identified housing requirement and development needs of the settlement; and**
- b) **It will secure the sustainability of the settlement; and ~~Which help to meet the development needs of the Borough which~~**
- c) **It is demonstrated that a) and b) above cannot be achieved through allocation under Policy C1(A) and other permissions granted ~~and which help to meet the development needs of the Borough and secure the sustainability of the settlement, will be approved where the proposal helps to meet the identified housing target for the settlement, and it is demonstrated that allocated sites and existing permissions are unable to do so.~~**

Where proposals on reserve sites are submitted, assessment will be carried out taking into account the following:

- i. the degree to which the allocated requirement is unmet **within a settlement;**
- ii. the likelihood that the allocated sites and outstanding permissions in the relevant settlement category (Melton Mowbray or Service Centre) will be delivered; **and**
- iii. evidence of the extent of community **support through allocation of reserve sites in Neighbourhood Plans and/or bespoke approaches to measuring support;**
- ~~iv. the wider public benefits arising from the development; and~~
- ~~v. compliance with each of the criteria of Policy SS3.~~

Reserve Sites		
Site Reference	Address	Capacity
MEL11	Snow Hill, Melton Mowbray	240
HAR5	Land south of Colston Lane, Harby	13
LONG4 5	Canal Farm, Long Clawson	40
OLD2	Debdale Hill Field, Old Dalby	23
SOM3	Land off Burrough Road, Somerby	33
STAT3	Land west of Blacksmiths End, Stathern	45
WAL3	Land east of Melton Road, Waltham on the Wolds	168
Total		562

5.5 Housing Mix

- 5.5.1 Melton has a very distinctive mix of housing, with few smaller ‘entry level’ properties such as terraced houses or flats and a large proportion (40%) of larger, detached houses.
- 5.5.2 A limited offer in terms of housing mix has implications for affordability and demand for affordable housing.
- 5.5.3 Furthermore, Melton has an ageing population, (over the 2011-36 period the number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 92% with a higher (192%) increase in the number of people aged 85 and over), with many households residing in large and potentially unsuitable properties, increasing the need to provide smaller homes suitable for downsizing households. This in turn would release existing family housing stock back into the market.
- 5.5.4 The Local Plan aims to ensure that the new housing provided in the Borough over the next 20 years best meets the changing needs of the population. An appropriate mix of housing is necessary to secure mixed and balanced communities where people’s needs and aspirations for new housing are met. The policy seeks to provide greater choice in the housing market.
- 5.5.5 To offer a mix of housing suitable for a wide variety of housing needs and to balance the current stock, the Melton Local Plan will encourage a mix of property types on developments of 10 or more dwellings.
- 5.5.6 Melton Borough Council’s Housing Needs Study which examines the housing needs of the Borough at a detailed ward level, shows that the greatest need for both market and affordable housing is for two and three bedroom houses and bungalows. The low proportion of smaller homes currently available in the Borough makes it difficult for older people who want to downsize, those on low incomes and benefits, and younger people who want to find their first home. There is still a need for some medium and larger family homes,

although we expect to see less of these types of homes than in the past. We also need to ensure that the design of new houses addresses the different needs of people in our community, including older people and those with disabilities.

5.5.7 The 2016 Melton Borough Council Housing Needs Study (HNS), rather than the more recent 2017 Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), is used as evidence for the optimum housing mix (see Table 9) because it is based on the demographic change likely to be associated with the delivery of 245 dwellings per annum. Affordable housing is split between intermediate housing and social/affordable rented, to reflect the difference in the housing mix requirements of each. The housing mix table will be **be applied having regard to the particular characteristics used together with site specific circumstances of a scheme** when providing advice on planning applications **or where planning permission is sought. Further guidance on how housing mix will be dealt with through development management will be set out in an affordable housing and housing mix supplementary planning document. Until that document is completed, the Housing Needs Study (MBC, 2016) and the HEDNA (2017) will be used as the evidence to inform the determination of planning applications.**

	1-bed*	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed
Market	5%	30%	45-50%	15-20%
Intermediate	15-20%	50-55%	25-30%	0-5%
Social/affordable rented	30-35%*	35-40%	20-25%	5-10%
All dwellings	15%	30-35%	35-40%	15%

Table 9: Optimum Housing mix requirements for market and affordable housing

*: ~~A caveat needs to be placed on the~~ The 1 bed need for affordable housing ~~as this figure~~ is an anomaly and over inflated. ~~This is because the 1 bed need figure is mainly for~~ includes elderly people, and as they are not affected by ~~the housing benefit spare room subsidy current welfare benefit changes,~~ they could, on some occasions, be allocated a 2 bedroom property.

Policy C2 – Housing Mix

We will seek to manage the delivery of a mix of house types and sizes to balance the current housing offer, having regard to market conditions, housing needs and economic viability, taking account of the **site specific circumstances and the housing mix information set out in **Table 9 or in any future update of the housing mix evidence and site specific circumstances.****

Residential proposals for developments **for 10 or more dwellings** should seek to provide an appropriate mix and size of dwellings to meet the needs of current and future households in the Borough including extra care and accessible housing, having regard to the latest evidence of housing need. Residential developments which include bungalows will be particularly supported.

Proposals for retirement homes, sheltered homes and care homes will be supported and encouraged to meet the technical standard for access of Building Regulations 2015 Part M4(2) or any subsequent revisions.

Proposals for wheelchair accessible dwellings, where the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating residents, will be encouraged to meet the technical standard for access of Building Regulations 2015 Part M4(3), or any subsequent revisions.

5.6 Housing Standards Review

- 5.6.1 New homes need to be high quality, accessible and sustainable. To achieve this, the Government has created the new national technical standards comprising new additional optional Building Regulations on water and access, and a new national space standard. This system complements the existing set of Building Regulations, which are mandatory. The optional regulations and space standard can only be applied where there is a local plan policy based on evidenced local need and where the viability of development is not compromised.
- 5.6.2 The demographic profile for Melton indicates a future need for housing for older and disabled people (including wheelchair user dwellings). The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2017 (HEDNA) estimates that the population change for people with mobility problems will be 100% over the plan period.
- 5.6.3 There are two optional higher technical standards for access in Part M of the Building Regulations 2015.
- M4(2) is the standard applicable to dwellings that provide a higher level of accessibility that is beneficial to a wide range of people who occupy or visit the dwelling, and provides particular benefit to older and disabled people, including some wheelchair users.
 - M4(3) is the standard applicable to dwellings that are suitable, or potentially suitable through adaptation to be occupied by wheelchair users.

5.7 National Space Standard

- 5.7.1 The National Space Standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for

the gross internal (floor) area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy, as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height.

- 5.7.2 There is a need for smaller houses in Melton to meet the first time buyer and downsizing market and as such, this standard will ensure that new smaller properties have sufficient circulation, storage and living space. This should help make the offer of smaller dwellings more attractive to ‘empty nesters’ and effectively release more family sized dwellings onto the market.
- 5.7.3 Unlike other aspects of the Housing Standards Review, the space standard has not been incorporated into the Building Regulations. The standard is set out in Table 10.
- 5.7.4 Melton Borough Council’s Housing Needs Study recommends that providing the right mix of housing may provide more flexibility than adopting the space standard. For example, a three-bedroom home which does not meet the standard may be preferable to a two bedroom one which does. However, the Council has aspirations to deliver as many homes which meet the standard as possible, and as such a specific policy is included in the Local Plan. House builders are also encouraged to address the lack of transparency in sales literature regarding whether bedrooms are designed for one or two-person occupancy.

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bedspaces (persons)	1 storey dwelling	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built in storage
1b	1p	39 (37)*	-	-	1.0
	2p	50	58	-	1.5
2b	3p	61	70	-	2.0
	4p	70	79	-	
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

Table 10: Minimum Gross Internal Floor Areas and Storage (m²)

- *1. Built-in storage areas are included within the overall GIAs and include an allowance of 0.5m² for fixed services or equipment such as a hot water cylinder, boiler or heat exchanger.
 2. GIAs for one storey dwellings included enough space for one bathroom and one additional WC (or shower room) in dwellings with 5 or more bedspaces. GIAs for two and three storey dwellings include enough space for one bathroom and one additional WC (or shower room).

Additional sanitary facilities may be included without increasing the GIA provided all aspects of the space standard have been met.

3. Where a 1b1p has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m² to 37m², as shown bracketed.

4. Furnished layouts are not required to demonstrate compliance.

Policy C3 – National Space Standard and Smaller Dwellings

Residential developments for open market housing will be particularly supported where the national space standard is applied to dwellings with up to and including 3 bedrooms. For affordable housing, schemes using the Housing Quality Indicators standards will be supported

5.8 Affordable Housing

5.8.1 ~~Affordable housing is housing that meets the needs of those whose needs are not met by the market. It is defined by the National Planning Policy Framework and the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any subsequent amendments. Affordable housing is defined as “social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market”. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 inserts a new Affordable Housing definition into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and includes Starter Homes (as defined by the Act).~~

5.8.2 Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

5.8.3 Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

5.8.4 Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

5.8.5 Melton’s housing situation reflects the national situation, with house prices outstretching average earnings, meaning many cannot afford to buy or even rent a home. The relationship between the cost of homes and wages is called affordability. Affordability is an issue for the Borough; to buy one of the cheapest 25% of homes sold in the Borough, residents need to earn more

than the national average wage. The availability of smaller or 'average' priced homes is limited in comparison to the number of larger and more expensive homes in the Borough. This highlights the problem that many households within the Borough face with not being able to afford a home.

5.8.6 Affordable housing is mainly provided by the following sources:

1. Directly by local authorities and private registered providers, often relying on external grant investment.
2. By developers on site.
3. Rural exception sites, also reliant on external grant investment.
4. Financial contributions. This is where affordable housing provision is not met on site, but instead a lump sum or commuted sum is provided to the Local Authority who takes the lead on converting it to new affordable homes in the Borough.

5.8.7 The types of affordable housing range from rented housing, usually rented from a private registered provider (PRP) or local authority, part-ownership part rental properties through a PRP, to a low cost home ownership property, usually bought directly from house builders.

5.8.8 The Local Plan aims to address the needs of these people by seeking an element of affordable housing as part of new private housing development, alongside supporting appropriate grant or other funded PRP and Council led affordable housing schemes, which are expected to continue throughout the plan period.

5.8.9 The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), Jan 2017, indicates that some 1,750 affordable houses are required to satisfy need over the plan period (70pa), but this could increase or decrease over the lifetime of the plan in response to changing economic circumstances.

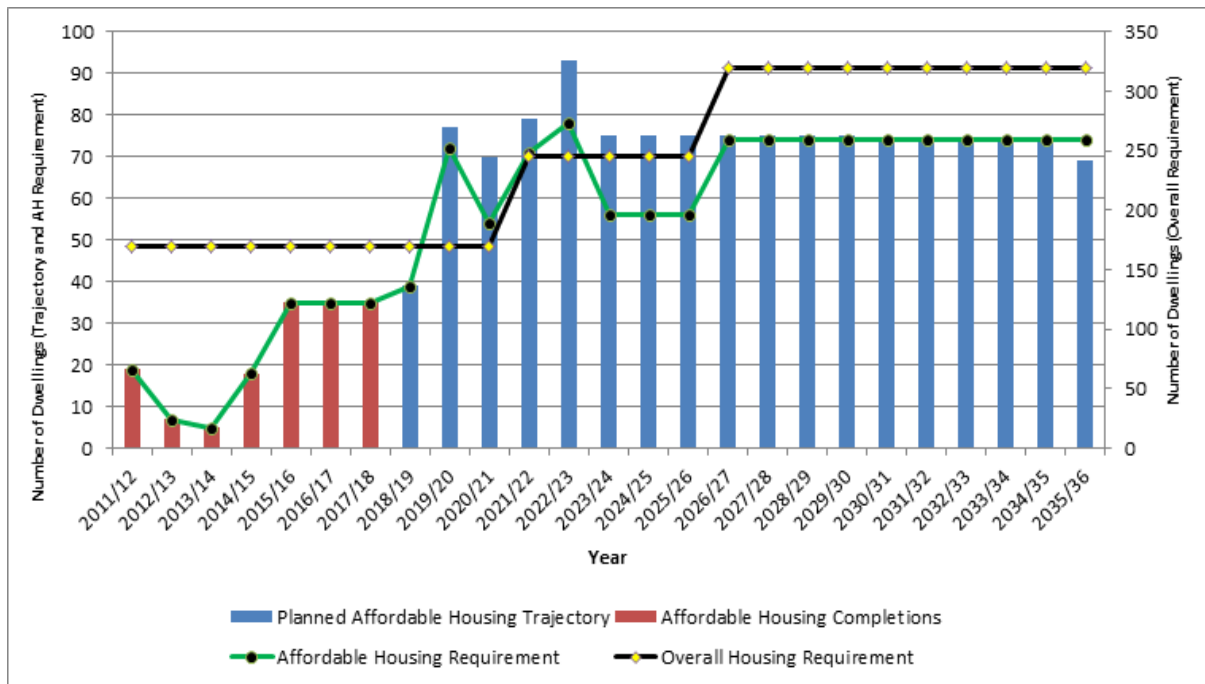
5.8.10 In order to meet the identified need, the Local Plan seeks to maximise the amount of affordable housing possible on qualifying private housing sites without undermining overall scheme viability. Smaller sites do not 'qualify' for affordable housing under National Planning Guidance so provision is sought from sites of 11 or more units and/or where the floorspace exceeds 1000 m².

5.8.11 The Council's Local Plan and CIL Viability Study indicated that it is not viable to meet all the identified affordable housing needs for the Borough, and that there is significant variation in the percentage of affordable housing that would be viable in different parts of the Borough. The 'value areas' to which different required minimum percentages of affordable housing would apply are identified in Policy C4 and in Figure C4.1.

5.8.12 Based on an analysis of where new housing is planned and the minimum percentage of affordable housing that the viability study indicates can be sought in different parts of the Borough, the local plan includes a target of 1300 net additional affordable homes to be provided. **In the first five years after adoption, an uplift in new affordable homes provision is expected, arising**

from delivery through Section 106 agreements on sites with planning permission, small scale Registered Provider schemes and increasing newbuild by the Council. Thereafter, contributions from S106 sites, RPs and the Council are expected to be steady and sustained, underpinned by delivery at the Sustainable Neighbourhoods. The planned delivery of these is indicated in the affordable housing trajectory in Figure C4.2 below.

Figure C4.2: Affordable Housing Trajectory



Notes

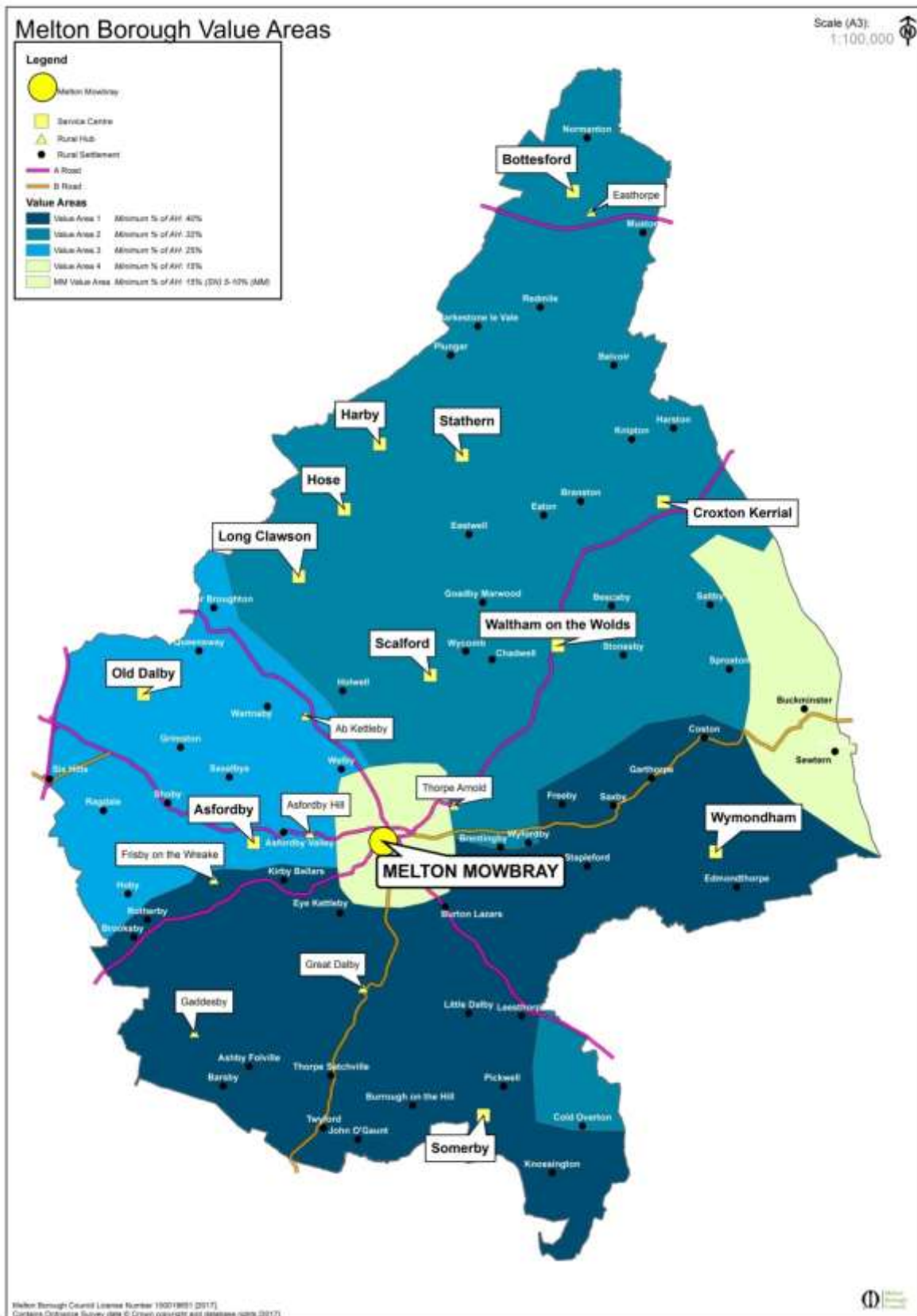
1. The planned delivery trajectory is the annual amount of new affordable housing that is expected to come forward from the sources of supply referred to in paragraph 5.8.12 above.
2. The affordable housing requirement is the proportion of the remaining overall housing requirement that will be delivered as affordable housing.

5.8.13 On individual planning applications, regard will be given to the housing need at that relevant time, along with the projected level and mix of affordable housing needed. A viability assessment may be requested in the exceptional circumstance where an applicant considers the level of affordable housing provision being sought to be unviable.

5.8.14 An affordable housing and housing mix supplementary planning document (SPD) will set out further guidance about delivery in this area of housing. It will include the following items:

- Mix, type, design and layout of affordable housing
- Off site provision
- Commuted sums
- Financial contributions
- Affordable housing in perpetuity
- Allocation of affordable housing
- Local connection
- Starter Homes

Fig C4.1



5.8.15 With large scale, phased developments, it might be necessary to consider a varied approach to affordable housing delivery and/or contributions. For

example, to ensure the delivery of the scheme and its associated infrastructure, the affordable housing contribution could be deferred until later phases of the development, or a reduced contribution rate could be agreed on the basis of securing other infrastructure provision in place of the total affordable housing requirement for the scheme. These approaches could be assessed via scheme-based viability assessments.

Policy C4 – Affordable Housing Provision

Melton Borough Council will seek to manage the delivery of around 1300 new affordable homes between 2011 and 2036 in order to balance the housing stock and meet the community’s housing needs.

It will do this by applying a target for affordable homes within housing developments on all sites of 11 or more units and/or where the floor space exceeds 1000 m², having regard to market conditions, housing needs, housing mix (in regard to tenure, type and size), economic viability and other infrastructure requirements based on the following percentages for different value areas:

Location	Minimum percentage of affordable housing
Value Area 1	40%
Value Area 2	32%
Value Area 3	25%
Value Area 4	15%
Melton Mowbray Northern SUE	15%
Melton Mowbray Southern SUE	15%
Melton Mowbray	5% -10%

The Council will also manage the delivery of schemes through private registered providers and our own delivery programme of affordable housing over the whole plan period.

5.9 Rural Exception Sites

5.9.1 Another means of delivering affordable housing is through the ‘exception site’ policy. This is where land adjacent to existing settlements is used to provide for an identified affordable housing need (established through the Melton Borough Council Housing Need Study, Rural Housing Need Surveys and Neighbourhood Plan surveys) to meet the needs of local people, or those with a ‘local’ connection. This land would not normally be promoted for residential development and should be held in perpetuity for affordable needs (through a legal agreement making certain stipulations e.g. rent to be set at a social rent to ensure the housing remains affordable forever). This type of affordable housing provision has proved successful in Melton Borough with rural exception sites in Wymondham, Waltham on the Wolds, Somerby, Old Dalby

and Long Clawson. Other villages will be subject to a programme of Rural Housing Need Surveys in order to identify whether there is a requirement for new affordable homes.

- 5.9.2 This type of provision is reliant on external grant investment, but National Planning Policy now allows for the provision of market housing on such exception sites, provided that it cross-subsidises the affordable housing. Cross subsidy with market housing will be considered on specific planning applications rather than being included in policy. For affordable housing through rural exception sites, the population must be 3,000 or less, otherwise the area would not be considered rural. This is the Government accepted size of population to determine a rural area. The exception sites should reflect the character and scale of the settlement. The exception relates to development outside the criteria outlined in Policy SS3, limiting development in some settlements. It is not an exception to key constraints, such as high flood risk, etc.

Policy C5 – Affordable Housing through Rural Exception Sites

To enable the provision of affordable housing in the rural areas, the Council will consider proposals for 100% affordable housing on sites which would not normally be acceptable for general market housing, where there is a demonstrable need from people with a local connection. This ‘Rural Exceptions’ housing shall remain ‘affordable’ in perpetuity to continue to meet local need. Starter Homes will not be provided on rural exception sites as they cannot be held in perpetuity in the same way as affordable housing. Rural Exceptions schemes will be considered in settlements with a population of fewer than 3,000 where a demonstrable need exists. Provision may also be made where groups of villages can demonstrate a combined local need. In some circumstances (most likely due to viability), it will be acceptable to provide an element of market housing on rural exception sites, to cross subsidise the affordable housing.

5.10 Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

- 5.10.1 Definitions for Gypsies and Travellers vary across pieces of legislation. The definition used for planning purposes is set out in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (August 2015): *“Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such”.*

- 5.10.2 Gypsies and Travellers mainly live on pitches. Pitches are permanent authorised sites either provided by Local Authorities or owned by Gypsies and

Travellers themselves. Pitches can be large enough to accommodate a single static caravan and a touring caravan. They often also have a day room, with water and electric supply, to provide utility washing and bathroom facilities. Pitches in rural areas can often be a lot larger and may accommodate many caravans.

- 5.10.3 Transit sites are authorised sites which are used for short stays by Gypsies and Travellers. The sites are provided on a permanent basis and have basic amenities and services, which include water supply, shared toilets, washing facilities/utility room, and waste disposal.
- 5.10.4 National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) requires all Local Authorities to set targets for new pitches and plots. Local authorities must also identify and maintain a five-year supply of sites in order to meet their targets for both new permanent residential and transit pitches.
- 5.10.5 As evidenced in the Leicester and Leicestershire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2017, Melton's permanent pitch requirement from April 2016 to March 2021 is 2 permanent residential pitches, and between April 2021 and March 2026 it is 1 permanent residential pitch. Work has started on 3 permanent pitches and 2 transit pitches, granted planning permission (2015) as an extension to the existing Valley View site on Dalby Road, Melton Mowbray. Work has also started on a further 2 permanent pitches, granted planning permission (2016) at Sandy Lane, Melton Mowbray. These permanent pitches meet all currently identified need, and there is currently no further requirement for any pitches from April 2026 to 2036. Further permanent pitches will only be sought if subsequent GTAA reviews establish a need.
- 5.10.6 The GTAA 2017 has identified a current need for public transit pitch provision of 36 caravan spaces (or managed equivalent) spread over 2-3 sites in Leicestershire. It suggests that an initial review should be completed of potential sites that are deliverable in the short-term, and that new provision should be prioritised where needs are greatest, in the North West of the County and the City, and that further provision should reflect the location of unauthorised encampments, the strategic transport network, and overall geography of the county. It indicates that consideration should be given as to whether new sites and/or managed approaches to dealing with unauthorised encampments, such as tolerated stopping or Negotiated Stopping Agreements, offer the best option to accommodating transit needs.
- 5.10.7 The GTAA also indicates that unauthorised encampments should be reviewed once there is sufficient evidence available, as changes to national policy in 2015 could result in more households travelling, and the consequent need for transport sites. The Council therefore commits to undertaking the appropriate

evidence base review and working with the other Leicestershire Local Authorities to establish, if the review shows a requirement, the most appropriate and deliverable location for additional transit provision.

5.10.8 A regular review of Gypsy; Traveller and Travelling Show people permanent pitch and plot requirements (including transit pitch requirements) will be undertaken.

5.10.9 The GTAA 2017 has not identified need for any plots for showpeople for Melton between April 2016 and 2036.

Policy C6 – Gypsies and Travellers

The most recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment will be used to identify pitch and plot requirements and where a need is found, ~~steps will be taken to deliver sites the Council will take steps to deliver the necessary sites in a timely manner in order to support the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community.~~ The GTAA will also be used as a basis for determining planning applications, together with the criteria within the most up to date national Planning Policy for Traveller Sites.

~~We will support sites for Gypsies and Travellers that:~~

- ~~1. facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community; and~~
- ~~2. are appropriate in scale, well designed, and provide suitable landscaping and boundary treatments; and~~
- ~~3. provide an acceptable living environment for occupiers and are free from flooding, pollution, hazards or other adverse impacts on standards of living; and~~
- ~~4. are well related to local infrastructure and services of a nearby town or village, including safe and convenient access to the road network; and~~
- ~~5. promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community.~~

5.11 Sustainable Communities

5.11.1 With the exception of the town of Melton Mowbray, Melton Borough is largely rural in nature. It is neither possible nor desirable for all new development to take place in the town and it is important that appropriate development is supported in the villages in order to maintain their vitality, to meet local need and to provide housing choice. This is outlined earlier in Chapter 4.

Accessing Services in Melton Borough

5.11.2 Every year, Melton Borough Council conducts an audit of Village Services. The services, as considered by the audit, are listed below;

- education facilities (nursery and primary school and secondary school)
- local shops, post offices and petrol stations/garages
- health care facilities (general medical practice, dentist and pharmacy)
- community facilities (village hall, public house, library, sport and leisure groups and places of worship)
- transport facilities (a regular 6 day a week bus service)
- opportunities of employment in other businesses
- allotments

5.11.3 Community facilities are not specifically defined, although any facility or service which enjoys wide support could be regarded as belonging to the "community". The items listed above offer an illustration of the facilities which would be considered as community facilities. The list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Development which will improve community assets

5.11.4 An increase in community facilities can contribute towards the continuing viability of villages. It is important, therefore, that proposals which would result in either an increase in, or improvements to, community assets and facilities are supported. Gains can also be made by the replacement of existing community assets. For example, replacing an old or outdated village hall with a modern facility could allow the old site to be redeveloped to create a new village asset such as a playing field, or for affordable housing.

Development which will result in loss of community assets

5.11.5 It is recognised that there needs to be scope for change of use where there is no longer a demand for the service or facility and it is no longer viable. Proposals for a change of use or for development which will result in the loss of community facilities and/or services must be fully justified. They must demonstrate that all options for continued use have been fully explored and that retention would not be economically viable. They must show that there is no reasonable prospect of the established use being retained or resurrected, and that there is little evidence of public support for the retention of the facility.

5.11.6 In the case of public houses and shops, it must be demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been made to sell or let (without restrictive covenant) the property as a public house or shop and that it is not economically viable.

5.11.7 Where permission is given for a change of use of a community facility and/or land, preference will be given to the premises remaining in some form of community or employment use, provided that the proposal adheres to other policies in the Local Plan.

5.12 Community Right to Buy

5.12.1 The Government has introduced legislative changes, as part of the Localism Act, which allows community groups to nominate "assets of community value". This gives communities an opportunity to bid to acquire and operate those assets should they become available. This national initiative complements the objectives of Policy C7. However, the process of nominating assets and bidding for the right to acquire them would form an important part of the assessment of a proposal through Policy C7.

Policy C7 – Rural Services

Support will be given to proposals and activities that protect, retain or enhance existing community services and facilities* or that lead to the provision of additional assets that improve community cohesion and well-being to encourage sustainable development.

Proposals for the change of use of community facilities*, which would result in the loss of the community use, will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that either:

- 1. there are alternative facilities available and active in the same village which would fulfill the role of the existing use/building, or**
 - 2. the existing use is no longer viable (supported by documentary evidence),**
- and there is no realistic prospect of the premises being re-used for alternative business or community facility use.**

The proposal must also demonstrate that consideration has been given to:

- a) the re-use of the premises for an alternative community business or facility, and that effort has been made to try to secure such a re-use;**
- and**
- b) the potential impact closure may have on the village and its community, with regard to public use and support for both the existing and proposed use.**

* including facilities such as community/village halls, village shops, post offices, schools, health services, care homes, public houses, playing fields and allotments.

5.13 Self-Build and Custom Build Housing

5.13.1 Custom build housing, including self-build, is housing built by individuals or groups of individuals for their own use, either by building the home on their own or working with builders.

- 5.13.2 The self-build and custom build sector makes an important contribution to housing supply, with about 1 in every 10 homes being built or commissioned by individuals. Yet this ratio is far lower than the proportion seen in most European countries.
- 5.13.3 The Government wants to enable more people to build their own home and wants to make this form of housing a mainstream option in order to increase the capacity and diversity of the house building industry to build more high quality new homes faster.
- 5.13.4 Many self-builders and custom builders find it difficult to secure a building plot for their projects and this is currently seen as the single biggest barrier to more self-build and custom build projects coming forward.
- 5.13.5 The Custom Build Homes programme was introduced by the Government in 2011 to support and encourage more people to build their own homes. As a result, national planning policy and guidance requires Local Authorities to establish the demand and, where a demand exists, to plan for such housing in their area.
- 5.13.6 The Self-Build and Custom House Building Act 2015 places a duty on Local Authorities to hold a register of individuals and associations of individuals who wish to acquire serviced plots of land to bring forward self-build and custom house building projects. The Act also places a duty on Local Authorities to have regard to those registers in carrying out planning and other functions namely housing; the disposal of any land of the authority; and regeneration.
- 5.13.7 The self-build and custom build dwellings policy provides a mechanism for developers of large residential developments to sell a proportion of serviced plots to prospective self-builders or custom builders. There are a number of models which a developer could pursue which include any of the following:
- **DIY** – the customer buys a serviced plot and builds their own home to their own specification or uses a contractor.
 - **Self-finish** - the customer buys a serviced plot and works with the developer to create a home to their specification which is then built as a watertight shell. The customer then finishes the dwelling themselves or uses a contractor.
 - **Full Custom Build** - the customer buys a serviced plot and works with the developer to create a home to their specification. The house is completed by the developer.
 - **Community** – a group of individuals join forces to purchase a number of plots. They may employ a planning consultant, architect and a contractor.

5.13.8 In 2015 the Council assessed the demand for self-build and custom build in Melton Borough and determined that it was such that a specific policy in the Local Plan was justified. The company BuildStore was used to carry out a search of how many people had subscribed to their Plot Search facility (people looking for self-build plots) and their Custom Build Register (people looking specifically at custom build sites). A total of 63 people in Melton Borough were registered as searching for either a self-build plot or a custom build site. Local chartered surveyors have up to 3 enquiries per week from self-builders and hold a register of potential self-builders seeking a building plot.

5.13.9 The Melton Housing Needs Study 2016 assessed the demand for self-build in the Borough. Evidence provided by local estate agents indicates that significant demand exists for self and custom build projects and the biggest barrier to success is the lack of available land.

5.13.10 The Self-build and Custom Build policy requires a proportion of plots on large housing proposals to be marketed for self and custom builders. The Melton Housing Needs Study recommends that in order to ensure adequate plots are marketed, such a policy should set out a minimum size. An analysis of people on the Council's Self/Custom Build Register reveals that the majority wish to build a single detached dwelling, and as such minimum plot requirements reflect this. The Study also recommends that appropriate marketing should include direct contact with people on the Council's Self/Custom Build Register and via the National Custom and Self-build Association (NaCSBA) portal or similar. This should include that administered by Buildstore. In addition, the Study recommends that the price of marketed plots must be commensurate with their value.

Policy C8 – Self Build and Custom Build Housing

To support prospective self-builders and custom builders on sites of 100 dwellings or more, developers will supply at least 5% of serviced dwelling plots, for sale, at an appropriate price, to self-builders or custom builders, which will be controlled by the following means:

A) the Council may seek developments of 5 self-build or custom build dwellings in a single site location to be developed in accordance with an agreed design code;

B) where plots have been made available and marketed appropriately for at least 12 months and have not sold, the plot(s) may either remain on the open market or be built out by the developer.

C) marketed plots should be of a size at least equal to that of those for detached dwellings of 2-3 bedrooms on the main development site.

In locations within or adjacent to the built form of settlements and those in keeping with the surrounding area, self-build proposals for community schemes will be particularly supported.

5.14 Health

5.14.1 National Planning Policy states the purpose of planning is to *'contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'* and to *'support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities'*.

5.14.2 Positive planning can lead to reductions in health inequalities, by improving access to healthy food, through offering choices in the local market and reducing obesity by encouraging physical activity through the inclusion of open-spaces and leisure facilities. Planning can also facilitate social interaction which in turn can lead to improvements in mental health and general well-being.

5.14.3 Health and wellbeing is covered throughout National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) including the themes of transport, natural environment, climate change and design. Considering health at the design stage of a development proposal can therefore help to realise significant health benefits

5.14.4 There is a close relationship between poor housing and poor health. Poor housing can have a negative impact on a wider range of physical and mental health problems. Good housing can have beneficial impact on health, wellbeing and wider community benefits, including increasing energy efficiency, addressing fuel poverty, adapting homes to improve accessibility and wider programmes of home and neighbourhood improvement and support.

5.14.5 Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy states that there is a strong link between deprivation and health and wellbeing. It makes growing the economy of Leicestershire, improving infrastructure to make Leicestershire an attractive place to invest in and focusing on growth in new high value economies a priority. Although Leicestershire is rural and affluent, there are long standing challenges posed by deprivation with some of the lowest household incomes clustered around parts of Melton, where Melton Egerton ward has the lowest income levels. The Leicestershire Health and Wellbeing Board is working with the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) to maximize the health gain associated with new employment opportunities in Leicestershire.

5.14.6 The Public Health Team at Leicestershire County Council is now responsible for most of the public health services previously provided by the NHS. The team recommends that for large residential strategic developments of 1,000 dwellings and over, planning proposals should be accompanied by a Rapid Health Impact Assessment. For other non-strategic major developments, where the Local Planning Authority considers it is important to assess the proposal's impact on public health, a desk-based assessment is appropriate.

Policy C9 – Healthy Communities

All development proposals should make a positive contribution to the following promoters of health and well-being:

- a. Good quality, accessible green spaces, public realm, sports and recreational facilities close to where people live and work, to encourage greater participation in play, sport, walking and cycling and to maximise opportunities for social interaction;**
- b. Safe, convenient and attractive network of streets, paths and cycleways integrated with public transport which connect homes, workplaces, shops, schools, healthcare, leisure and other services and facilities to encourage active travel and prevents social isolation;**
- c. High quality local food growing spaces, including green roofs, edible landscaping, garden plots, community gardens, allotments and local markets, in order to provide access to fresh, healthy and affordable food;**
- d. 'Healthy Homes' that are affordable, easy to warm, have good natural light, decent space (internal and external), exploit views, safe from flooding and overheating, and are adaptable to people's changing circumstances that can occur over a lifetime;**
- e. High quality residential amenity;**
- f. A range of employment opportunities in accessible locations;**
- g. The avoidance of over concentration or clustering of any use type that could detract from people's ability to adopt healthy lifestyles (including hot food takeaways, payday lenders and betting shops);**
- h. Good local air quality, with new development in an air quality management area to be consistent with the aims and objectives of the Air Quality Action Plan, providing an air quality assessment where appropriate.**

Contributions will be sought from developers towards the provision of health facilities where their development would impact on the capacity of existing healthcare provision.

Proposals for new health care facilities should relate well to public transport services, walking and cycling routes and be accessible to all sectors of the community. Opportunities for the multi-use and co-location of health facilities with other services and facilities should be considered to provide co-ordinated care and a community focus.

Health impacts of major development proposals should be considered early in the planning process through the submission of a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) with a planning application, where the Local Planning Authority requests it.

5.4.17 The HIA will enable the applicant to demonstrate how this policy has been met and should be commensurate with the size of the development.

KEY EVIDENCE:

2011 Census

Melton Borough Council Housing Needs Study, JG Consulting 2016

Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, GL Hearn 2014

Leicestershire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016

Melton Village Services Audit 2014

Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2016

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015

Melton Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment, Cushman and Wakefield 2016

This page is intentionally blank