

**Representation regarding the Consultation Document:  
Melton Local Plan: Main Modifications suggested to ensure  
alignment of the local plan with those neighbourhood plans at  
an advanced stage prior to local plan adoption**

**23/02/18**

**Approach 1: Local Plan Takes Precedence**

*“This approach would mean housing sites and allocations would be as set out in the final adopted Local Plan. This would provide clarity with regards to the housing trajectory, and the best certainty regarding the suitability and achievability of the five year land supply and site specific policies (as contained in Appendix 1 of the MLP). It would ensure all sites included in the Plan have been assessed by the more robust and comparable Local Plan process rather than the ‘lighter touch’ and varied Neighbourhood Plan processes.”*

In my opinion, Approach 1 makes NPs a waste of time and a mockery of the Localism Act. I therefore agree with the opinion expressed in the consultation document.

However, in the case of Frisby, the paragraph quoted above is relevant, as I will address later.

**Approach 2: Local Plan sits alongside NDP’s**

The second approach would produce an excess of housing in the villages and disturb the 65%/35% balance between urban and rural construction.

Again, I agree with the statements in the concluding paragraphs in the relevant section of the consultation document.

**Approach 3: Local Plan to defer to post examination NP’s**

This appears to be the best approach, though I suspect that subsequent NPs will be a waste of effort and time if they are to conform to the strategic policies in the MLP. MBC seek to make virtually all policies that a NP might address, to be strategic in the MLP. So this could be said to go against the spirit of Localism.

**Approach 4: Local Plan to defer to NP’s whenever they are made (regardless of current status)**

This Approach is the most proactive one with regards to supporting the spirit of Localism and would be my favoured approach as I believe that MBC should set housing number requirements but not specify exact site choice. However, it appears that it is not allowed by the NPPF, so I am confused by its inclusion.

**Conclusion**

I agree that Approach 3 is the best option across the Borough, and is the Approach that Frisby residents have long requested as our NP progressed to submission. However, ironically, I must take issue with the proposal to align the MLP Frisby sites to the post-examination Frisby NP.

Instead, we would **request that the MLP sites for Frisby as per the Focussed Changes are maintained in the MLP going forward, at least until after the Frisby Referendum.**

The reasons for this are as follows:

Residents are now in the position of having a post-Examination NP which bears little resemblance to the submitted plan and is highly likely to fail at the Referendum stage. This is due to the many substantive changes imposed on the Frisby NP by the Examiner who, in residents' opinion, has not examined with a 'lighter touch' but in an extraordinarily heavy-handed and dictatorial manner. Frisby PC /NPAC were then given opportunity to check grammar and spelling mistakes, but under no circumstances were we to comment or try to negotiate on the changes recommended, however minor.

Some of these recommended changes are understood, even though they are unpopular. However, other changes seem to be unnecessary, and others seem to be based on contradictory assertions.

For example, the Examiner has deleted part of a policy which stipulates the replacement of any trees lost due to development, on a 'three for one' basis. This is a policy recommendation by the Wildlife Trust and we found it desirable. The Examiner could have recommended to amend the policy to a 'two for one basis' rather than delete it entirely.

Likewise, an entire Policy for Flooding, commended by the EA in Regulation 16, was deleted. This is despite the fact that Frisby is set in a river valley and the policy had local relevance.

Another inexplicable change is the imposed increase in the minimum residual housing requirement from 68 as stated in the MLP, to 78 by the NP Examiner - this is not his judgement to make, but was a number based on thorough and exhaustive calculations by MBC. Frisby was always going to exceed 68, and already has 102 houses permitted.

However, most importantly, FRIS2 should be retained only with the outline as described in the MLP Focussed Changes and not substantially increased in size (the Examiner seems to believe that he is reducing the area, rather than increasing it 250%), when the site is defined by the Developer Panel who were advising the SHLAA process, that the land may **not be "deliverable due to flood risk, drainage, noise, highways, aquifer, sewage constraints"**.

The Applicant for the Planning Application at this site, has just submitted groundwater monitoring data which demonstrates that the water table is only 0.7m below surface – the measurements were taken at a time when the river was only midrange, and so the water table will be much higher during wetter periods or flooding. The SuDs are unlikely to work and the Application intends to drain surface water into a watercourse which Natural England rates as a zero discharge because of the important Frisby Marsh SSSI 200m away.

MBC also removed the western part of this site due to it being insensitive to the settlement edge and Conservation Area. Yet this is the part that the Examiner has required us to include in our LTD by inconsistent reasoning. He removed the NP favoured site (an extension to the LP site FRIS1) because it was too intrusive in the countryside as it spreads the village by 60m or so into the countryside, yet increases the size of FRIS2 so that it extends 200m directly outwards in LCZ2 countryside.

Finally, the Examiner has recommended that the modified NP should be rescreened in the SEA process – this is welcomed by Frisby residents, in light of the radical changes to the housing numbers and the allocated sites (and increased area compared to the LP sites). However, this is unlikely to happen as MBC have stated they do not have money, and nor does the Parish Council.

### **Melton Local Plan and Advanced Neighbourhood Plan Allocations**

In the table containing the numbers of NP v LP provisions, Frisby is shown to require 118 houses. This is an error as MBC have described this as an 'aspirational number' and not the minimum residual requirement. Frisby NP, as submitted, did not under-deliver but rather over-delivered by 15%.

Dr J Warwick on behalf of Frisby Residents Action Group.