

# Frisby on the Wreake Neighbourhood Plan 2017 - 2036

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## Initial Comments of the Independent Examiner

**Prepared by**

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**John Slater Planning Ltd**

**1<sup>st</sup> November 2017**

## Introduction

1. As you will be aware I have been appointed to carry out the examination of this Neighbourhood Plan. I have carried out my initial assessment of the Plan and all the accompanying documents that I have been sent. I have also spent half a day visiting the neighbourhood area to familiarise myself with the village and the surrounding countryside. I subsequently asked a number of questions of Melton Borough Council. I have now considered its response, which I have asked to be put on the Councils' website.
2. Whilst it is normal practice for matters to be dealt with on the basis of the examination of the written material, the legislation does allow for the holding of a public hearing if it would assist the examination.
3. I have concluded that a hearing would help me come to a conclusion as to the how the plan meets three of the basic conditions. These are:
  - Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the plan
  - The making of the plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
  - The making of the plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority

## Housing Numbers

4. I would wish to hear from invited parties whether I should be looking at the figure of 78 new dwellings in Policy H1, as a "target" figure, or a minimum figure, bearing in mind Policy SS2 in the emerging local plan, refers to *at least* 6,125 new units. Should I be looking for additional levels of development in the village, having regard to the Government's desire to "boost significantly the supply of housing"?

## Housing allocations

5. I understand that as well as planning permission being granted on the first phase of the Great Lane site (FRIS1), a resolution to approve the planning application 16/00704/OUT on land due south of Frisby (what I will refer to as the Cook land) subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement. I also understand that the Secretary of State has been asked to consider 'call in' powers and he wished to be advised as to progress in order that a decision on that request can be made prior to permission being issued. I need to take a view as to how much weight to give to the Planning Committee's resolution to grant planning permission, in my consideration of the housing allocations in this neighbourhood plan. If planning permission is issued, with the application not being "called in", would it still be appropriate for me to be recommending allocating the extension to the Great Lane site (FRIS1A),

bearing in mind that there will be planning permission committed for 96 houses in the village.

6. Notwithstanding the recent resolution in terms of the Cook land, I would want to explore the respective merits of the 3 sites allocated for Frisby in the emerging local plan against the 2 sites proposed in neighbourhood plan. I would wish to understand the reasons for the changes in the Neighbourhood Plan's view as to which sites should be proposed and how that change is related to objective planning criteria.
7. As part of that consideration I would wish to be appraised of the extent of the Water Lane site that is within the area liable to flood and to what extent the sequential approach should be looking to allocate sites that are not liable to flood.
8. In particular, I need to be satisfied of the relative merits of the Phase 2 Great Lane site, in terms of delivering sustainable development compared to the other two sites, proposed in the emerging local plan. The text in the plan seems to acknowledge that there are issues with the Phase 2 site, in terms of distance the new residents will be from village amenities, public transport and the school. I need to understand why this development, which extends the village into the countryside to the south east, is preferable to the Cook land which has apparent community benefits, not only in terms of walking distance to the village shop, pub, school, church and other village facilities but also offers the opportunity to address some of the problems set out in the plan currently experienced at the village school, by providing additional parking and dropping off facilities for parents.
9. Are the allocation sites being developed to the extent that they are making the optimum use of the land available or are they being arbitrarily restricted to achieve the plan's target figure?

### **Affordable Housing**

10. In view of the suggested changes in the affordable housing policy set out in Policy C4 of the emerging local plan, should I be considering changing the proposed Policy H8 to 40%?
11. I would also like to explore with parties whether the definition of affordable housing should include retirement homes and starter homes.
12. I also need to establish what evidence supports Policy H8 that gives priority to the allocation of the affordable housing in the parish to those with a local connection. I would also wish to hear representations as to whether this is a matter more for the Housing Authority rather than the Local Planning Authority.

### **Windfall Development**

13. Should the limits of 5 units on any windfall sites, as set out in Policy H7 be removed and allow the capacity of a windfall site to depend on its size and the type of development proposed?

### **Limits of Development**

14. Whatever I conclude regarding the allocation sites, should I be looking to amend the Limits of Development to incorporate the allocation sites?

### **The Natural Environment**

15. I would want the Parish Council to clarify for me the relationship between Policy ENV2 Protection of Other Sites of Environmental (Natural and Historical) Significance and Policy ENV 4 Biodiversity.

### **Local Green Space**

16. I would wish to hear representations from both the Parish Council and the respective landowners as to whether Dawson's Field and Mill Lane fields meet the criteria set out in Paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework to be designated Local Green Space.

### **Area of Separation**

17. To achieve its objective of stopping coalescence with Ashfordby, would it be better if the AOS was relocated to the land on the plan's boundary, with that settlement?

### **Concluding Remarks**

18. I hope that this note is useful in explaining to parties, the areas I wish to look at, by way of a public hearing, as part of my examination of this plan. Once arrangements have been made, I will issue a further note setting out how the session will be conducted. I will also issue a set of specific questions which will form the agenda for the day.

John Slater BA(Hons), DMS, MRTPI.

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1<sup>st</sup> November 2017