

# Chapter 7: Melton Borough's Environment – Protected and Enhanced

## 7.1 Landscape

- 7.1.1 The Borough of Melton is an attractive rural area that has a rich natural environment and built heritage. The area is valued by residents and visitors for its pleasant and tranquil environment and accessible countryside. It is important that the Local Plan ensures that these characteristics are maintained.
- 7.1.2 The gentle rolling landscape varies across the Borough as a result of geological conditions, farming practices and the local ecology. The area is famous for its pasture, dairy and beef suckler herds and sheep, and there is an extensive network of hedgerows, fox coverts and country lanes.
- 7.1.3 The Melton Landscape Character Assessment study identified 20 landscape character areas within the Borough. They include the Vale of Belvoir, which is an expansive gentle vale landscape in the north-east of the Borough; the Wold Scarp which is probably the most dramatic landscape in the Borough; the High Leicestershire Hills which is a classic landscape influenced by the requirements of sporting estates; and the Knipton Bowl, which is probably the most attractive and diverse landscape within the Borough.
- 7.1.4 The 'Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study' assessed the sensitivity of the landscape as it relates to the built form of the settlement edges of Melton Mowbray and the larger villages. This study provides guidance about how to protect the landscape and ensure that the qualities of the Borough which are most valued by the community are retained, including tranquillity and historic features such as ridge and furrow.
- 7.1.5 In the past, the countryside has been a place that has generally been free of noise pollution and traffic movement. Tranquil areas in the countryside allow us to escape the noise and stress of cities, towns and suburbs, to be inspired and to get refreshed. They have generally been relatively undisturbed by light pollution or noise, and are prized for their recreational and amenity value. The Campaign to Protect Rural England has measured tranquillity and produced a tranquillity map for Leicestershire (2007). The county is ranked thirty-third out of eighty-eight English County and Unitary local authority areas for average relative tranquillity, with first ranked being the most tranquil, and last ranked the least.
- 7.1.6 One valuable aspect of the rich, natural environment of the Borough is its dark skies. There are two astronomical societies in the Borough which consider

dark skies to be a valuable asset for residents and an important aspect of tranquillity. National planning policy requires local planning authorities to encourage good design in order to limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. Sources of light pollution can include advertisements and floodlighting of buildings and sports facilities.

## Policy EN1 – Landscape

The character of Melton Borough’s landscape and countryside will be ~~conserved and, where possible, enhanced and protected~~ by:

I. Ensuring new development is sensitive to its landscape setting and ~~that it seeks, where possible, to enhance~~ enhances the distinctive qualities of the landscape character ~~areas type~~ (as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment); and

II. Requiring new developments to respect existing landscape character and features. Proposals will be supported where they do not ~~have an unacceptable adversely effect upon affect~~ important landscape features including:

1. Distinctive topography;
2. Important trees, hedges and other vegetation features;
3. Important ponds, watercourses & other water areas;
4. Important views, approaches and settings.

In addition, new developments will be supported where they:

5. Do not ~~have an unacceptable adversely effect upon affect~~ an area’s sense of place and local distinctiveness; and

6. Do not ~~have an unacceptable adversely effect upon affect~~ areas of tranquillity, including those benefiting from dark skies, unless proposals can ~~demonstrate how it is intended to contribute towards minimizing light pollution be adequately mitigated through the use of buffering.~~

In order to mitigate potential harm to the built form at the settlement fringe and its relationship to the landscape, proposals ~~will be required to respond should~~ have due regard to design guidance in the individual assessments of settlement fringe sensitivity in the ‘Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study’ ~~or any subsequent evidence document.~~

Neighbourhood Plans will be encouraged to use evidence provided in the ‘Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study’ to inform site allocations and design guidance, to ensure that the Borough’s landscape will be ~~enhanced and protected~~ conserved and where possible, enhanced.

## 7.2 Biodiversity

- 7.2.1 The rural nature of the area means that there is an extensive habitat for wildlife in the Borough. The Local Plan seeks to maintain and improve the natural environment and ensure that development proposals minimise negative impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains where possible. An updated Biodiversity and Geo-diversity Study (2015; 2016) of the Borough identified the designated habitats and geological sites in the Borough.
- 7.2.2 The Study surveyed the suitable site options for development in and around Melton Mowbray and the ten largest villages and identified notable areas where significant habitats are present. This has been taken into account in selecting land allocations and will shape the future design of development, to ensure that it will retain important habitats and mitigate any potential harm within the final development. Wildlife corridors and Biodiversity Enhancement Sites, which could provide opportunities for biodiversity offsetting in the new Sustainable Neighbourhoods around Melton Mowbray, as well as potential Local Wildlife Sites which are worthy of designation, are also identified. Of note is that Melton Country Park is identified as a potential Local Wildlife Site in its entirety.
- 7.2.3 There are no designated sites located within either of the Melton Mowbray Sustainable Neighbourhoods or any of the small sites. The River Eye SSSI is the only designated site located adjacent to the South Sustainable Neighbourhood. A protection zone will be established between the River Eye SSSI and any future development in the South Sustainable Neighbourhood in accordance with Policy SS4.
- 7.2.4 A small number of non-statutory designated Local Wildlife Sites are located within the North Sustainable Neighbourhood and are assessed as having declined in quality to varying degrees since they were originally designated. In all circumstances, this is considered to be due to natural vegetation succession processes coupled with lack of management. These would benefit from management in order to enhance or restore them to their qualifying conservation status.

### Policy EN2 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The Borough Council will seek to achieve net gains for nature and proactively seek habitat creation as part of new development proposals. It will protect and enhance biodiversity, ecological networks and geological conservation interests throughout the Borough and beyond its boundaries, by supporting proposals which:

- A) protect, extend or strengthen the Borough's most ecologically sensitive areas, including the River Wreake Valley;

- B) contribute to the provision of coherent wildlife networks;
- C) create new habitat;
- D) re-naturalise rivers and streams wherever possible through the removal of hard engineered structures such as reinforced banks, weirs and culverts;
- E) promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats as listed in the UK Priority Habitat Species List and Leicestershire Local Biodiversity Action Plan; and
- F) promote the use of fencing which incorporates holes for wildlife.

Provided they do not harm:

- G) existing, potential or proposed internationally important sites, such as Rutland Water Special Protection Area/Ramsar either individually or cumulatively in association with other plans or projects; ~~namely Rutland Water Spa/Ramsar;~~
- H) nationally important sites;
- I) Local Wildlife Sites (including candidate and potential), Local Geological Sites, including ancient woodlands, ancient and veteran trees, hedgerows and existing corridors such as disused railways, that allow movement of wildlife between sites;
- J) river corridors;
- K) biodiversity and geo-diversity designations identified in a Neighbourhood Plan; and
- L) priority habitats & species identified in the UK Priority Habitat Species List and Local Biodiversity Action Plans and the Melton Biodiversity and Geodiversity Study, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no alternative site available and there are clear and convincing benefits of the development that clearly outweigh the nature conservation or scientific interest of the site. In this case, adequate mitigation measures or, exceptionally, compensatory measures will be required at a level equivalent to the biodiversity value of the habitat lost. Such proposals must be accompanied by ecological surveys and an assessment of the impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity.

Proposals for allocated sites should be informed by the site survey results and the recommendations for mitigation and enhancement in the Biodiversity and Geo-diversity Study.

The Borough Council will support the need for the appropriate management and maintenance of existing and created habitats through the use of planning conditions, planning obligations and management agreement.

## 7.3 Green Infrastructure

7.3.1 Green infrastructure refers to all types of open space that communities use, ranging from formal parks and playing fields to areas for informal recreation and wildlife habitats. It has benefits for improving health and well-being, as well as enhancing the physical environment and providing sites for nature conservation.

7.3.2 In the past, open spaces were often planned to meet a single purpose, such as sport or flood protection. However, today it is recognised that open spaces can frequently combine several functions including:

- Informal recreation and relaxation
- Children's play
- Outdoor sports provision
- Countryside access and tourism
- Conserving wildlife habitats and creating wildlife corridors
- Protecting landscapes
- Managing water resources and flooding. River corridors identified as functional floodplains are an excellent linkage of Green Infrastructure and can provide storage during a flood event.
- Producing useful products, such as timber, bio-crops and local food
- Countering the 'heat island' effect of urban areas.

7.3.3 This combination of uses will help develop green infrastructure as a "multi-purpose" network of open space across the Borough.

7.3.4 The Borough has a wide range of green infrastructure assets, including the Grantham Canal, the Rivers Wreake and Eye, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, country parks, nature reserves and local wildlife sites.

7.3.5 There is also a comprehensive network of public rights of way including six promoted routes, the most notable being the Jubilee Way. A number of dismantled railway corridors also provide some access, along with the opportunity for further improvement.

7.3.6 As Melton Borough grows, it is important that its green infrastructure is maintained and extended to meet people's needs as well as supporting other objectives including nature conservation, tourism and the use and enjoyment of the countryside.

7.3.7 A sub-regional Green Infrastructure Strategy (6Cs GI Strategy) has been prepared for the Three Cities and Three Counties Growth Point. This has been supplemented with the Melton Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011. This proposes Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridors, including the Wreake

Strategic River Corridor. These generally reflect significant wildlife habitat corridors/areas that link at the sub-regional level.

- 7.3.8 The countryside in and around Melton Mowbray is recognised by the 6Cs GI Strategy as an Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone, and the Melton Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies it as providing the links between the town, Sustainable Urban Extensions and areas beyond. All large development proposals are expected to contribute to the delivery of the Borough-wide Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 7.3.9 The Woodland Trust's Access to Woodland Standard includes an aspiration that everyone should have a small wood of at least two hectares within 500m of their home and a larger wood of at least 20 hectares within 4km of their home. 'Space for People' (Woodland Trust 2015) states that in Melton, 113 hectares of new woodland creation is needed to meet the standard for access to a wood of 2 hectares, and 140 hectares to meet the standard for access to a wood of 20 hectares. The Council aspires to meet these standards, through particular support for proposals which contribute towards this element of green infrastructure provision.

### Policy EN3 – The Melton Green Infrastructure Network

A strategic approach to the delivery, protection and enhancement of green infrastructure will be taken by the Borough Council working with partners, in order to deliver new assets where deficits have been identified in the green infrastructure strategy and to enhance the following primary green infrastructure areas:

1. Melton North and Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhoods in accordance with Policy C1;
2. Areas of Separation in accordance with Policy EN4;
3. River Wreake and River Eye strategic corridor;
4. Jubilee Way;
5. **Leicestershire Round Footpath**
- ~~5. 6~~ Melton Country Park;
- ~~6. 7~~ Grantham Canal;
- ~~7. 8~~ The Wolds Escarpment;
- ~~8. 9~~ Burrough on the Hill Country Park; and
- ~~9. 10~~ Newark to Market Harborough disused railway line.

New development proposals will be supported where they retain and enhance important green infrastructure elements such as:

- ~~10. 11~~ Watercourses (including ditches) and their riparian zones with buffers (free from development or formal landscaping) extending to a

minimum of 8 metres from the top of the bank (on both banks) of any given watercourse;

- ~~41.~~ 12. Woodland, orchard, mature trees, hedgerows;
- ~~42.~~ 13. Local BAP Habitats and those supporting local BAP priority species and species in the UK Priority Habitat Species List;
- ~~43.~~ 14. Access routes (public rights of way and permitted routes);
- ~~44.~~ 15. Existing public green space including sports pitches in accordance with the Playing Pitch Strategy, allotments and designated Local Green Space;
- ~~45.~~ 16. Areas of geological and archaeological interest;
- ~~46.~~ 17. Green infrastructure identified in the Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study; and
- ~~47.~~ 18. Historic Parkland.

The Council will particularly support proposals which contribute towards:

- ~~48.~~ 19. The 6Cs Green Infrastructure and Strategic Networks and
- ~~49.~~ 20. The Woodland Trust's Access to Woodland Standards.

New or enhanced green infrastructure corridors and assets should be as inclusive as possible and look to make provision for more than one of the following:

- A) access to employment and leisure facilities and to the countryside;
- B) physical activity and well-being opportunities for local residents such as formal sports in accordance with the Playing Pitch Strategy, parks and allotment provision;
- C) provide high quality bridleways, walking and cycling links between the corridor and towns and villages;
- D) educational resources for local residents;
- E) biodiversity opportunities including the provision of tree planting, shrubs and other natural features on all new development sites;
- F) mitigating and adapting to climate change, including through tree planting;
- G) enhancement of landscape character in accordance with Policy EN1;
- H) protection or enhancement of heritage assets and their setting in accordance with Policy EN13; and
- I) opportunities for sustainable leisure and tourism.

Where new development has an adverse impact on green infrastructure corridors or assets, alternative sites and scheme designs that have no or little impact should be considered before mitigation is provided (either on site or off site as appropriate). The need for and benefit of the development will be weighed against the harm caused.

## **7.4 Areas of Separation**

7.4.1 A number of our villages are separated from a neighbouring settlement by only a small area of open countryside which is subject to development pressure. These areas are highly valued locally and are functionally important for maintaining the separation between settlements. The Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity Study and Local Green Space Study assessed a number of areas of landscape within the Borough. It supports the overall principle of preventing coalescence and protecting areas of landscape between settlements. The study assessed a number of areas of landscape and concluded that the following are particularly important in terms of preventing coalescence and protecting important landscape settings and areas of tranquillity:

- between Melton Mowbray and Burton Lazars
- between Melton Mowbray and Thorpe Arnold
- between Melton Mowbray and Asfordby Hill
- between Melton Mowbray and Eye Kettleby
- between Bottesford and Easthorpe
- between Bottesford and Normanton
- between Asfordby and Asfordby Valley
- between Asfordby Hill/Valley and Kirby Bellars
- between Old Dalby and Old Dalby Trading Estate

7.4.2 The study recognises that some development may be acceptable in these areas, provided that the principles of maintaining separation and tranquillity are retained. The study therefore provides guidance for each area. This should be used to inform the masterplanning of future development proposals and the consideration of planning applications in the Areas of Separation identified above. These principles provide advice about how development can be accommodated in these sensitive locations in a way which maintains the sense of separation, and where appropriate landscape settings and areas of tranquillity.

7.4.3 Areas of Separation do not have a defined boundary because their purpose is not to prevent all development within the AoS, but rather to prevent development which would result in coalescence and harm to individual settlement character. They are not landscape designations, but rather areas which are identified as being particularly vulnerable to the effects of development.

## Policy EN4 – Areas of Separation

New development proposals will be required to:

A. Avoid the coalescence of settlements by maintaining the principle of separation between them;

- B. Retain highly tranquil parts of the landscape between settlements; and
- C. Safeguard the individual character of settlements.

New development proposals will be supported where they respect the following areas of separation as identified in the 'Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study' as shown on the Policies Map:

- Melton Mowbray and Burton Lazars
- Melton Mowbray and Thorpe Arnold
- Melton Mowbray and Asfordby Hill
- Melton Mowbray and Eye Kettleby
- Asfordby and Asfordby Valley
- Asfordby Hill/Valley and Kirby Bellars
- Bottesford and Easthorpe
- Bottesford and Normanton
- Old Dalby and Old Dalby Trading Estate

In addition, new development proposals will be supported where they respect any Areas of Separation identified in a Neighbourhood Plan.

## **7.5 Local Green Spaces**

7.5.1 To help protect green spaces which are important to local communities the NPPF has introduced the ability to designate such spaces as Local Green Space (LGS). The NPPF considers that this special protection would not be appropriate for most open space and should only be used under the following conditions:-

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a local significance, for example because of its historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

7.5.2 The Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity Study and Local Green Space Study identified sites worthy of Local Green Space designation which score well against the following criteria:

- Proximity to local community;
- Demonstrably special to the local community (holds particular significance for beauty/heritage significance/wildlife value/recreational value/ tranquillity);

- The green area is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land; and
- Strength of character, condition and quality.

7.5.3 The Study also identifies spaces which may have the potential for Local Green Space designation in future but which have not met the criteria for designation in the Local Plan. These may be appropriate for designation either as part of a Local Plan Review or in a Neighbourhood Plan. The Study provides a management strategy for these spaces in order to make them more robust with regard to the Local Green Space criteria.

## Policy EN5 – Local Green Space

Development proposals will be required to protect designated Local Green Spaces in the Borough.

Proposals should not harm the key features, value and functionality of a Local Green Space such that its character is protected.

Neighbourhood Plans are encouraged to designate additional Local Green Space as evidenced by the Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study ~~or other up to date evidence document Spaces which have the potential for designation in future, subject to enhancement, have been identified in the Study.~~

## 7.6 Settlement Character

7.6.1 In addition to Local Green Space designations there are many open areas of land within or adjoining the general built up area of settlements which make an important contribution to the character of the street scene or the physical environment of the settlement as a whole. These include those spaces which have the potential for Local Green Space designation in future.

7.6.2 Neighbourhood Plans are encouraged to identify features within settlements which contribute positively towards settlement character, for example important open space, gateways, approaches, views and elements of the local vernacular which are important to protect and enhance.

7.6.3 ~~The guidance set out in Historic England's Advice Note 3 should be given due consideration for managing change within the settings of heritage assets including historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes.~~

## Policy EN6 – Settlement Character

Development proposals will be supported where they do not harm open areas which:

1. Contribute positively to the individual character of a settlement;
2. Contribute to the setting of historic built form and features;
3. Contribute to the key characteristics and features of conservation areas; and
4. Form a key entrance and/or gateway to a settlement.

Development proposals will also be supported where they do not harm individual features of a settlement which contribute towards settlement character as identified in a Neighbourhood Plan, including non-designated heritage assets.

## **7.7 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision**

7.7.1 Public open space is a key element in the creation of healthy and attractive residential environments. New housing development will increase pressure on existing open space and it is therefore important that extra open space is provided, where appropriate.

7.7.2 The Melton Open Space Assessment Report (2014) assessed all typologies of open space against quantity, quality and accessibility standards and made recommendations for the protection, enhancement and delivery of additional open space in the Borough up to 2036.

7.7.3 In general, there is a good provision and distribution of open space in the Borough, though some deficits in certain types of open space, such as formal parks or local areas for play, can be identified in specific areas.

## **7.8 Allotments**

7.8.1 Allotments can often provide important open spaces and improve the character and appearance of built up areas, as well as helping promote healthy communities and aiding self-sufficiency. However, they can frequently be subject to pressures for development due to their location.

7.8.2 Most allotment sites in the Borough are owned and managed by their respective Parish Council, although the Borough Council owns five allotment sites, managing three of them. The majority of allotment sites in the Borough are operating at 100% capacity with few vacant plots and a waiting list. Currently, over 200 people across the Borough are waiting for a plot.

7.8.3 The Melton Open Space Assessment supports the protection of allotment sites of high quality and value, as key forms of open space provision and the enhancement of those which are currently of low quality. New strategic allotments provision is required where waiting lists indicate a gap, in the outer boundaries of Melton Mowbray, Bottesford and Waltham-on-the Wolds.

7.8.4 Development of allotment sites is not supported unless alternative provision of equivalent quality, quantity and accessibility is provided. For allotment sites which are identified as being of low quality and low value in the Melton Open Space Assessment (2014), development would only be supported if it can be demonstrated that enhancement would not increase the use of these sites.

## **7.9 Natural and Semi-natural Green Space**

7.9.1 The Melton Open Space Assessment encourages all new development sites to include the provision of tree planting, shrubs and other natural features. It supports the enhancement of existing sites and spaces which are currently of low quality and value, where this could increase their use, such as the embankment paths in Melton Mowbray.

7.9.2 The enhancement of high value sites which are currently of low quality is supported: Stathern Road local nature reserve; Wymondham Rough Site of Special Scientific interest SSSI; Cribbs Meadow SSSI and National Nature Reserve; and River Meadow (Lake Terrace) and Dieppe Way/Nottingham Road.

## **7.10 Amenity Green Space**

7.10.1 The Melton Open Space Assessment identifies a need for an additional 7.5ha of amenity green space in central Melton and an additional 0.25ha in west Melton up to 2036 as part of new strategic development. In addition, it recommends the enhancement of existing sites in these areas.

## **7.11 Parks and Gardens**

7.11.1 The Melton Open Space Assessment identifies a need for an additional 2.59ha of parks and gardens in central Melton up to 2036 as part of new strategic development.

## **7.12 Provision for Children and Young People**

7.12.1 The Melton Open Space Assessment supports the provision of an additional 0.44ha of facilities for children and young people in central Melton, 0.1ha of provision in north Melton and 0.38ha of provision in west Melton up to 2036. Provision of new teenage facilities to a minimum of 0.04ha in Buckminster and 0.04ha in Burton & Dalby, such as an outdoor gym, skate park, BMX park or Multi Use Games Area is also supported.

7.12.2 The Fields in Trust recommended minimum standards for equipped play areas are applicable to all new large scale housing developments.

## **7.13 Sports Pitches and Playing Fields**

7.13.1 The opportunity to take part in formal or informal recreation can have significant benefits for our communities' health and well-being, providing the chance for social interaction and exercise.

7.13.2 The Melton Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment and Playing Pitch Strategy provide the evidence to support the protection and/or enhancement of existing facilities and the provision of new facilities.

7.13.3 This work provides an assessment of current facilities, identifies deficits and sets out the requirements to accommodate future growth in the Borough. There is unmet demand for football pitches in the Borough and the assessment concludes that population growth will result in demand for an additional 1 youth pitch, 0.5 adult pitch and three mini-pitches in the Borough. In addition, there is a need to improve and provide further changing accommodation in the Borough.

## **7.14 Indoor Sport and Recreation**

7.14.1 In terms of access to indoor sports halls, much of this is delivered by the secondary school sites, where there is more limited access that is often being used to the workable limit. The school sites do not provide pay and play access during daytime and are only available to sports clubs and community associations in the evening by prior arrangement. Since achieving Academy status, there are no Community Use Agreements in place and there is no guarantee that existing access enjoyed by sports clubs will continue in future.

7.14.2 In the rural area, village halls and other community facilities often provide the space required for recreational activities, such as badminton and keep fit classes. Whilst these are not specifically designed sports halls, they do make a useful contribution towards meeting local demands for physical activity.

7.14.3 The main provision for swimming facilities in the Borough is the Waterfield Leisure Pool, which was refurbished in 2014.

7.14.4 To ensure that access to high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities is maintained, the NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

## 7.15 Future Provision of Sport and Recreation Facilities

7.15.1 Housing development in the Borough is likely to produce an increased demand for sport and recreation facilities. The studies which have been undertaken have informed a number of playing space standards in the Local Plan which residential development will have to provide to meet future needs.

7.15.2 The Council is committed to the delivery of a strategic sports hub, the Melton Sports and Leisure Village (MSLV) at King Edward VII Community Sports Centre. The Melton Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2016-2021 recommends that there is the need for refurbishment of the existing sports hall and a new 6 court sports hall at the MSLV in order to meet the needs of the future population. In addition, Waterfield pool will require replacement by a larger 6 lane pool and new learner pool at MSLV. The Strategy also identifies that a larger fitness suite on the site is a priority investment project.

### Policy EN7 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Where there are identified local deficiencies in the quantity, accessibility and/or quality of open space, sports and recreational facilities, new residential development of 10 dwellings or more will be required to contribute towards their provision and/or enhancement, in accordance with the [table below open space standards paper](#), subject to viability considerations.

Quantity standards and playing pitch requirements are set out below:

<i>Open space typology</i>	<i>Standard (ha/1000 population)</i>
Parks and gardens	1.92
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	1.38
Amenity greenspace	0.77
Provision for children and young people	0.13
Allotments	0.38
<i>Playing pitches</i>	<i>Requirement (ha/1000 population)</i>
Football pitches	0.41

New development proposals will be supported where they protect sports facilities and strategically important sites and key centres as identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

The strategic open space, sport and recreation needs of the Borough up to 2036 will be met by working in partnership with Parish Councils through the development of Neighbourhood Plans, and with other partners, to deliver:

- A. New allotment space as part of new development in Melton Mowbray, Bottesford and Waltham on the Wolds.
- B. Enhancement of the following natural greenspaces: Stathern Road Local Nature Reserve; Wymondham Rough SSSI; Cribbs Meadow SSSI and National Nature Reserve; and River Meadow (Lake Terrace) and Dieppe Way/Nottingham Road.
- C. 7.5ha of amenity greenspace in central Melton and 0.25ha of space in west Melton.
- D. 2.59ha of parks/gardens in central Melton.
- E. 0.44ha of facilities for children and young people in central Melton, 0.1ha of provision in north Melton and 0.38ha of provision in west Melton.
- F. New teenage facilities to a minimum of 0.04ha in Buckminster and 0.04ha in Burton & Dalby.
- G. Redevelopment of King Edward VII community sports centre to the Melton Sports and Leisure Village, a multi-sports hub, in accordance with the Melton Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2016-2021.

## **7.16 Tackling Climate Change**

7.16.1 There is international consensus that anthropogenic climate change is happening and that it presents a significant risk to society, environmentally, socially and economically. There is now almost 40% more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere than there was before the industrial revolution, a level not experienced for at least the last 800,000 years.

7.16.2 According to the Meteorological Office, global temperature records show that the average temperature of the planet's surface rose by 0.89 °C from 1901 to 2012. Compared with climate change patterns throughout Earth's history, the rate of temperature rise since the Industrial Revolution is extremely high. The first decade of this century has been, by far, the warmest decade on the instrumental record which started in the 1850s. The highest temperature ever recorded (38.5°C) occurred in August 2003 in Kent.

7.16.3 In general, the UK climate is expected to become hotter and drier in the summer and warmer and wetter in the winter. Key expected changes include:

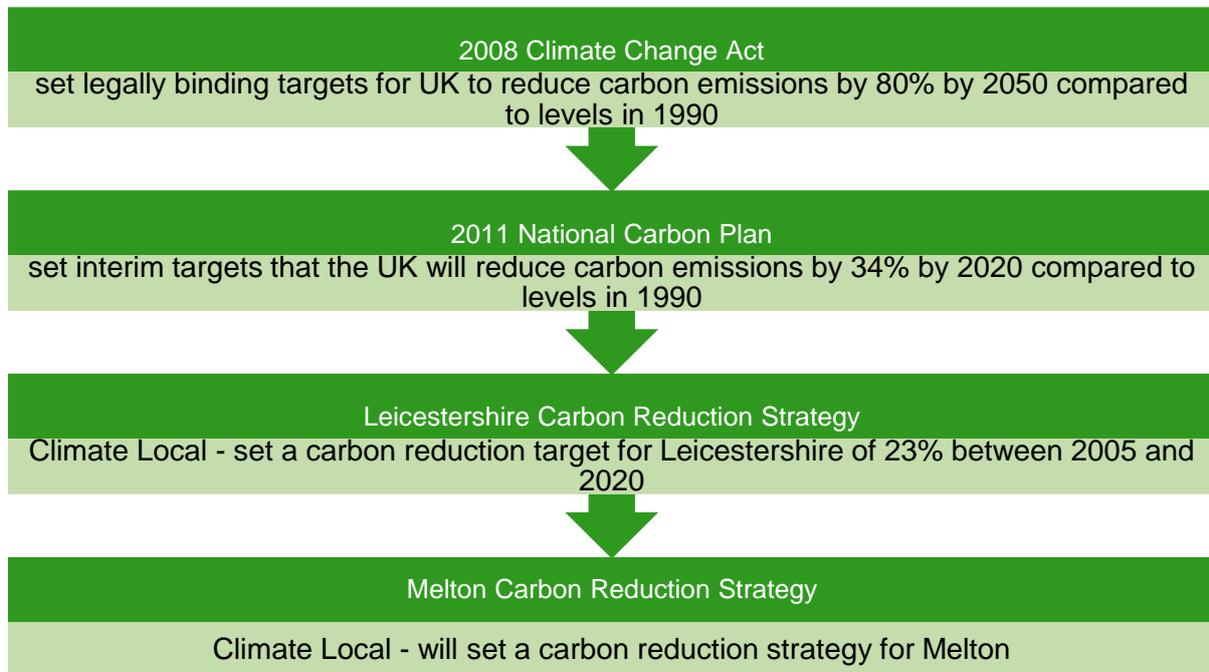
- Average UK annual temperatures may rise by 2 to 3.5 degrees by the 2080s.
- Annual average precipitation across the UK may decrease slightly, by between 0 and 15% by the 2080s. However the seasonal distribution of precipitation will change significantly, with winters becoming wetter and summers drier.
- An increase in the prevalence of extreme weather events. High summer temperatures and dry conditions will become more common. Very cold winters will become increasingly rare and extreme winter

precipitation will be more frequent. The summer heat wave experienced in 2003 is likely to become a normal event by the 2040s and will be considered cool by the 2060s.

### Climate Change Mitigation

7.16.4 The UK Government is actively seeking to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and has set targets in the Climate Change Act 2008 and Carbon Plan 2011 to cut GHG emissions by at least 34% by 2020 and 80% by 2050 below the 1990 baseline. However, the Government recognises that these targets will not be achieved without interventions by local organisations and in particular, local authorities. As such the Local Government Association and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) developed a memorandum of understanding to work closely together to support the reduction in GHG emissions. Part of this agreement includes the replacement of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change with Climate Local, which requires that local authorities publish specific commitments for which they are accountable. Melton Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council have signed up to Climate Local and Melton Borough Council is currently developing a Climate Local Action Plan.

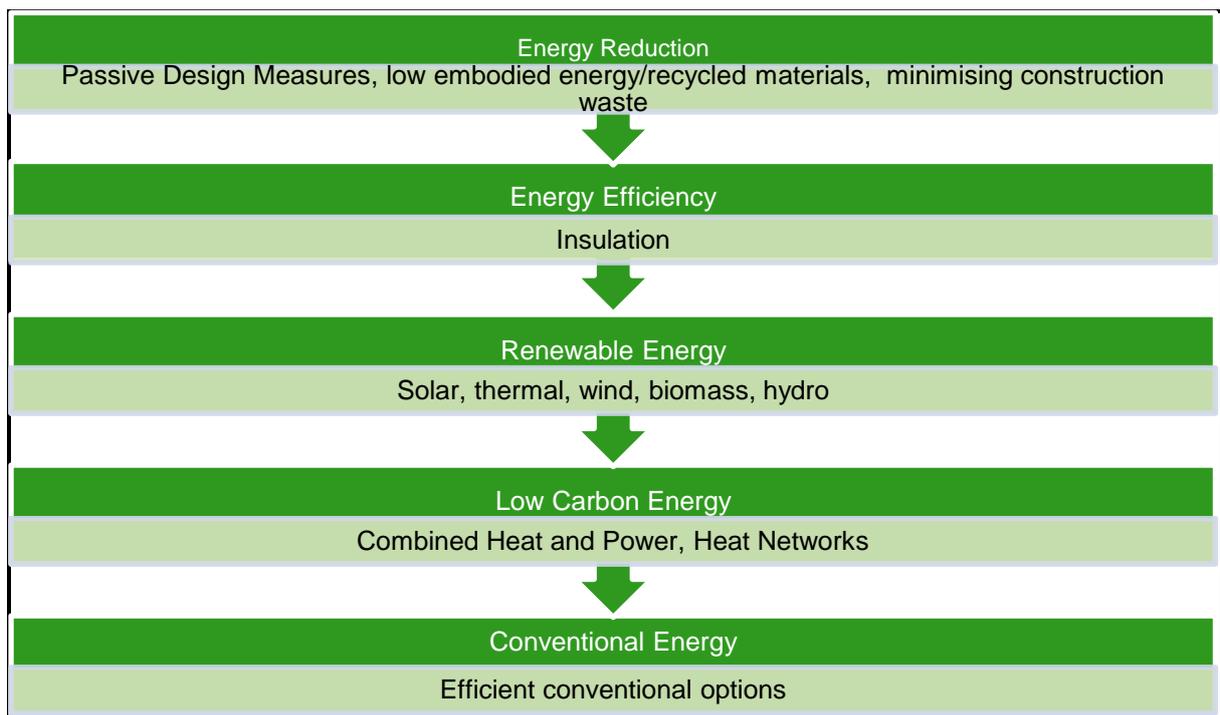
7.16.5 The Carbon Reduction Target for Leicestershire is to reduce emissions by 23% between 2005 and 2020 as measured by the Department of Energy and Climate Change, as shown in Figure 10.



**Figure 10: Derivation of Melton Borough's Carbon Reduction Strategy**

7.16.6 The Department of Energy and Climate Change's (DECC) carbon dioxide emissions estimates 2014 show that total emissions in Melton Borough reduced by 12.4% between 2005 and 2012, which compares to a reduction of 14% nationally. In addition, the 2012 per capita emissions in Melton were 8 tonnes compared to 7 tonnes nationally. These differences are likely due to the rural nature of the Borough where opportunities to use sustainable modes of transport are generally fewer than in more urban areas. This emphasises the importance of a spatial strategy which concentrates growth around Melton Mowbray where existing sustainable transport infrastructure can be utilised and expanded (Chapter 4).

7.16.7 The Local Plan needs to ensure that the use and development of land will contribute to climate change mitigation and that new developments should be designed to be energy efficient and to maximise the generation of renewable and low carbon energy. The energy hierarchy (see Figure 11) is the recognised approach to reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Its implementation can also be important in meeting wider policy goals, such as reducing fuel poverty which is important in Melton where 18-32% of households were identified as being in fuel poverty in 2012 (DECC 2014).



**Figure 11: The Energy Hierarchy**

### **Climate Change Adaptation**

7.16.8 The planning system can help in addressing concerns about the effects of climate change (adaptation) by supporting design solutions that take account

of flood risk, water efficiency and delivering green and blue infrastructure to aid cooling.

7.16.9 Whilst new development in the Borough provides an opportunity for the introduction of such sustainable schemes, these opportunities will need to be balanced with retaining the Borough's unique built heritage and natural character, along with the viability of development.

### **Trees and Woodland**

7.16.10 Trees and woods play an important role in helping combat climate change, through both mitigation and adaptation. Trees can sequester carbon from the atmosphere and can be used as a sustainable source of fuel and building materials. Trees can also help in adaptation, by shading of buildings during the summer months and by cooling the atmosphere by evapotranspiration.

## **EN8 – Climate Change**

All new development proposals will be required to demonstrate how the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change has been considered, **subject to considerations of viability**, in terms of:

- Sustainable design and construction in accordance with Policy EN9 – ensuring energy efficient and low carbon development.
- Provision of green infrastructure in accordance with Policy EN3 – the Melton Green Infrastructure Network.
- Provision of renewable and/or low carbon energy production, including decentralised energy and/or heat networks in accordance with Policy EN10 – energy generation from renewable sources.
- Flood risk in accordance with Policy EN11 – minimising the risk of flooding and policy EN12 – sustainable urban drainage systems.
- Providing opportunities for sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policy IN1 – delivering infrastructure to support new development.

### **7.17 Adaptation of Existing Buildings and Heritage Assets**

7.17.1 The provision of measures to address climate change in new development will be an important component of the Local Plan. However, the majority of the Borough's dwelling stock is already built. To increase their energy efficiency, it is possible to retrofit older dwellings through measures such as roof insulation, wall cladding or new windows. Beyond improving energy efficiency, it is also possible to retrofit small scale renewables to existing buildings such as solar panels, wind turbines and ground source heat pumps.

7.17.2 Historic buildings can provide good examples of sustainable layouts and construction methods along with the efficient use of energy and local resources; their survival reflects their success and adaptability. Conserving and re-using historic buildings retains their materials and 'embodied energy' which is the energy used in producing the materials and the building's construction.

7.17.3 There are opportunities in most historic buildings to improve energy conservation without causing harm, through measures such as secondary glazing, improved loft insulation using natural materials, low energy lighting and the use of fuel efficient boilers. In some situations renewable energy technologies can also be installed without causing harm to the heritage significance.

7.17.4 Where conflict is unavoidable, the benefits of energy conservation measures should be weighed against the extent of harm to the heritage significance public benefits.

## **7.18 Sustainable Construction Methods**

7.18.1 The construction process for any new development uses a significant amount of resources and generates construction waste and spoil. It is therefore important that as well as designing developments to be sustainable when completed, developments should take account of the principles of sustainable development during the construction process.

7.18.2 This can be done by minimising the adverse effects generated by construction, through the careful management of materials already on site and entering the site, and maximising the reuse of materials or the recycling of materials on site or locally.

7.18.3 New developments should maximise the use of energy efficiency and energy conservation measures in their design, layout and orientation to:

- Reduce the overall demand for energy;
- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions;
- Reduce heat island effects;
- Contribute to health and well-being; and
- Be able to adapt to the affects of climate change.

7.18.4 Water is a precious resource and the impacts of climate change will place pressure on the demands for water and its quality. The Environment Agency's Water Resources Strategy for the Midlands predicts that by 2050, climate change could reduce summer river flows by 50 to 80 per cent. Increasing water efficiency will not only reduce demand for water but also reduce

greenhouse gas emissions associated with water abstraction, treatment, transport, use and disposal.

7.18.5 All **major** development proposals will be expected to be accompanied by a **proportionate** statement of their sustainability. The statement will show how these considerations have been considered and explain what sustainable features are proposed as part of the development. Examples may include renewable energy, water saving measures and green roof systems along with other climate change adaptations. Excellent electronic communication networks can also support sustainable development.

7.18.6 Development proposals will be encouraged which:

1. Incorporate exemplar renewable energy generating technology;
2. Incorporate efficient building design/orientation;
3. Use land efficiently; and
4. Minimise energy demands.

7.18.7 Design flexibility and future proofing will be encouraged for developments to be adaptable over time.

## Policy EN9 – Ensuring Energy Efficient and Low Carbon Development

**Major development proposals will be required to demonstrate how the need to reduce carbon emissions has influenced the design, layout and energy source used, subject to viability. A design and access statement will need to consider the following:**

Development proposals, including refurbishment, will be supported where they demonstrate the following, subject to viability:

1. How effective use has been made of materials that have been reused, recycled, are renewable, locally sourced, have been transported in the most sustainable manner, and have low embodied energy; ~~A site waste management plan which emphasises waste minimisation, re-use and recycling during demolition and construction;~~
2. How the design optimises natural sunlight and solar gain, and prevents overheating including providing non-mechanical means of ventilation and opportunities for cooling from tree planting and landscaping.
3. How heat loss from all elements of the building envelope will be prevented;
4. Water efficient measures to reduce demand on water resources, including through the use of efficient appliances, rainwater recycling, water butts and underground storage tanks, where technically feasible;

~~Development should be phased to ensure sufficient waste water treatment capacity is available before development is complete~~

5. How developments (dwellings and non-dwellings) have considered ~~On-site~~ renewable, low carbon or de-centralised energy provision, including connection to existing networks, where feasible, in accordance with Policy EN10. ~~Where it is not possible to connect to or install a low carbon heat network, a statement must provide evidence that this has been fully explored and is unfeasible.~~

6. Space for a home office in new homes ~~has been considered~~;

7. Space for cycle storage in new homes and employment sites ~~has been considered~~ and, where appropriate showers and changing facilities.

8. Charging points for electric cars ~~has been considered~~.

~~9. A design and access statement for major development which demonstrates how the need to reduce carbon emissions has influenced the design, layout and energy source used.~~

A site waste management plan which emphasizes waste minimization, re-use and recycling during demolition and construction will be required for major development proposals;

Development should be phased to ensure sufficient waste water treatment capacity is available before development is complete;

The retrofitting of existing buildings so as to maximise opportunities to prevent heat loss from all elements of the building envelope will be supported where it:

- does not harm heritage assets or their significance; and
- protects the character of conservation areas.

## 7.19 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in Melton Borough

7.19.1 The [UK Renewable Energy Strategy \(2009\)](#) indicates that 15% of the UK's energy demand will be met by renewable or low carbon energy sources by 2020. These include commercial and small scale wind, solar photovoltaic, solar thermal, ground source heat, hydroelectric, and biomass renewable technologies. This will also assist in meeting the UK's wider targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol and the Climate Change Act 2008. The latter requires an 80% reduction in UK emissions by 2050 with a 50% reduction having been achieved between 2023 and 2027.

7.19.2 [The Planning for Climate Change Study](#), evidenced by recent planning applications, suggests that Melton Borough has a strong potential to develop renewable energy: solar, wind and biomass energy from crops and waste. Wood obtained from trees which are certified as being managed in an environmentally sustainable way provides a sustainable source of biomass

fuel. Whilst such technologies may be viable, they can have a significant impact on the landscape.

## **7.20 Decentralised Renewable Energy and Large Scale Renewable Energy**

7.20.1 Unlike conventional power sources that rely on large power stations supplying the national grid, renewable energy from biomass, wind or solar power can be developed to supply individual communities and buildings. These may still be connected to the national grid or can operate separately using local power networks.

7.20.2 In the future, community owned decentralised schemes could benefit a whole settlement. For example, Hockerton in Nottinghamshire has bought and installed a 225kw wind turbine, with feed-in tariff profits benefitting shareholders and paying for projects to benefit the local community.

7.20.3 However, it is unlikely that renewable energy alone will meet our energy demand. The Government has signalled its intention to investigate the opportunities which shale gas fracking may offer to provide additional sources of energy in the future. There is a possibility that areas in the Borough,

notably to the North and West, may be considered to have the potential for shale gas production. However, Leicestershire County Council would be the authority responsible for determining such proposals, as the Mineral Planning Authority.

7.20.4 To meet the national requirements for renewable energy production it is likely that, subject to funding availability, there will be continued demand for large scale renewable energy proposals in the Borough, with different types of renewable energy technology having differing impacts.

7.20.5 These large scale renewable proposals, especially wind energy, can have a significant impact upon the character and appearance of an area through impacts upon the landscape and heritage assets, along with effects on the amenity of residents.

7.20.6 In protecting Melton Borough's rural character, national policy also requires that consideration must be given to the need to reduce carbon emissions and support and deliver economic growth through low carbon energy generation.

7.20.7 The Local Plan sets out an approach to supporting and managing these types of development to ensure that adverse impacts are addressed, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts.

7.20.8 The Borough Council has prepared evidence on the impact of wind energy on the landscape. The Melton and Rushcliffe [Landscape Sensitivity Study](#) 2014

indicates the areas which have the most capacity and are the least sensitive for renewable wind energy development. This evidence has been used to inform policy on renewable energy such that it complies with the ministerial statement issued in June 2015 by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which is referenced in the National Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 033 Reference ID: 5-033-150618). This set out new considerations to be applied to proposed wind energy development such that when determining planning applications for wind energy development involving one or more wind turbines, local planning authorities should only grant planning permission if:

- the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a local or neighbourhood plan; and
- following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.

7.20.9 In applying these new considerations, suitable areas for wind energy development will need to have been allocated clearly in a local or neighbourhood plan. Whether a proposal has the backing of the affected local community is a planning judgement for the local planning authority.

7.20.10 The Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study divides the Borough's landscape into 15 Landscape Character Assessment Units and makes a judgment on the landscape sensitivity to different heights of turbine. Sensitivity is judged on a five-point scale as shown in Table 16 below:

<b>Sensitivity level</b>	<b>Definition</b>
High	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
Moderate-High	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
Moderate	Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
Low-Moderate	Few of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
Low	Key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are robust and are less likely to be adversely affected by the type and scale of renewable energy development being assessed.

**Table 16: Sensitivity levels and definitions**

7.20.11 The assessment is applied to all forms of turbines based on the most common horizontal axis three-bladed turbine and cluster sizes, based on bandings that reflect those most likely to be put forward by developers. These are set out in Table 17.

7.20.12 It is considered that Landscape Character Assessment Units (LCUs) judged as being of Low or Low-Moderate sensitivity are suitable for wind energy development for the turbine heights and cluster sizes defined in The Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study.

<b>Height to blade tip</b>
<25m
25 to 50m
51 to 75m
76 to 110m
111 to 150m
<b>Cluster size</b>
Single turbine
Cluster of two or three turbines
Wind farm of four or five turbines
Wind farm of six or seven turbines
Wind farm of eight to ten turbines

**Table 17: Most Common Horizontal Axis and Cluster Size**

7.20.13 It should be noted that the Study is not a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location, such that a site near the boundary of two LCUs needs to consider the assessment for both areas. The table in Policy EN10 which identifies areas suitable for wind energy development must be read in the context of the entire policy and the criteria 1-14 within it.

7.20.14 The layout and design of wind energy development proposals should be informed by both the generic guidance and the detailed guidance for each Landscape Character Unit in the Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study 2014.

7.20.15 In considering the cumulative effects of wind energy development, the guidance for multiple developments in the Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study 2014 should be followed.

### **Policy EN10 – Energy Generation from Renewable and Low Carbon Sources**

Renewable and low carbon energy proposals appropriate for Melton, including biomass power generation, combined heat and power (CHP), hydro, wind, solar and micro generation systems, will be supported and considered in the context of sustainable development and climate change.

Proposals for renewable **and low carbon** energy technology, associated infrastructure and integration of renewable **and low carbon** technology on existing or proposed structures will be assessed both individually and cumulatively on their merits taking account of the following factors;

1. Siting, so as to gain maximum effect from wind/solar/water sources;
  2. The surrounding landscape, townscape and heritage assets;
  3. Residential and visual amenity;
  4. Noise impacts;
  5. Odour impacts;
  6. Designated nature conservation, geo-diversity or biodiversity considerations, including potential impact on ancient woodland and veteran trees;
  7. Ecology;
  8. Aircraft movements and associated activities, including effects on radar, communications and navigational systems;
  9. Electromagnetic transmissions;
  10. High quality agricultural land;
  11. Access for construction, maintenance and de-commissioning;
  12. Not creating demand for bio-energy fuels known to result in net carbon emissions through production methods, transport requirements and/or loss of carbon sinks;
  13. General safety in terms of highways, power lines, icing, visual distraction; and
  14. Transport movements for importation of biomass fuel.
- In the case of proposals for wind energy development involving one or more wind turbines, planning permission will only be granted if:
15. A bond is in place to cover de-commissioning; and
  16. The development site is in an area identified as being suitable for wind turbine development in a Neighbourhood Plan; or
  17. The development site is in an area identified as being of low or low-moderate sensitivity to wind turbine development in the Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study 2014. These areas and acceptable turbine requirements are set out in the ~~following~~ table below. **The landscape character units are indicated on the Policies Map**; and
  18. Following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.

In developing proposals for new thermal generating stations, developers should consider the opportunities for CHP and district heating from the very earliest point and it should be adopted as a criterion when considering locations for a project. Renewable **and low carbon** energy proposals which will directly benefit a local community in the medium and long term and/or are targeted at residents experiencing fuel poverty will be particularly supported.

<b>Landscape Character Assessment Unit</b>	<b>Maximum Acceptable Turbine Height (to blade tip) and Cluster Size</b>
LCU1 Vale of Belvoir	<25m as a single turbine or clusters of two/three in larger scale areas
LCU3 Leicestershire Wolds: Dalby to Belvoir Wolds	<25m as a single turbine or clusters of two/three in larger scale areas
LCU5 Leicestershire Wolds: Ragdale to Saltby Woods	<25m as a single turbine in the smaller vales or two/three turbines in elevated areas.
LCU6 Kesteven Uplands: Saltby and Sproxtun Limestone Edge	Up to 75m as clusters of two/three turbines in wooded areas or clusters of four/five in open arable areas
LCU8 High Leicestershire Hills: Great Dalby and Gaddesby Pastoral Farmland	Up to 50m as clusters of four/five turbines and in areas of varied, steeply sloping topography and small field patterns clusters of two/three
LCU9 Leicestershire Wolds: Wreake Valley	<25m as clusters of two/three turbines
LCU 10 Leicestershire Wolds: Eye Valley	<25m as a single turbine in the east of the area and two/three turbines in the west.
LCU11 High Leicestershire Hills: Gaddesby Valley	<25m as clusters of two/three turbines
LCU13 Leicestershire Wolds: Buckminster, Wymondham and Freeby Farmland	Up to 50m as clusters of two/three turbines
LCU14 Leicestershire Wolds: Asfordby Quarry	Up to 50m in clusters of four/five turbines
LCU15 Leicestershire Wolds: Melton Farmland Fringe	Up to 50m as clusters of two/three turbines

## **7.21 Managing Water Resources and Flooding**

7.21.1 The Borough's rivers, lakes and brooks are a valuable asset, supporting wildlife, recreation and tourism, as well as providing water for business, agriculture and households. Water resources require careful management to conserve their quality and value, and, to address flooding issues.

7.21.2 The bodies responsible for water resources and flood risk are increasingly looking at whole river catchments as the best way of integrating the aims of water conservation, wildlife and flood management.

## **7.22 Flood Risk in Melton Borough**

7.22.1 National planning policy requires a risk based sequential approach to flood risk, avoiding high risk areas and steering development to areas at lower risk.

- 7.22.2 As well as managing risk to the development itself, development should not increase flood risk elsewhere and opportunities should be taken to reduce downstream flooding events, for example, by reducing run-off rates.
- 7.22.3 Local Plans are required to follow a “sequential approach” to development whereby sites at risk of flooding can only be allocated for development if there is insufficient land available in areas with lesser or no flood risk. Exceptionally, it may be appropriate to develop land at risk of flooding for sustainability reasons or to avoid economic or social blight in an area.
- 7.22.4 Melton Borough is at flood risk from a variety of sources. Flood history shows the Borough has been subject to flooding from all sources of flooding in the past, most recently in 2007 and 2012 where Melton Mowbray was protected by its defences. Melton Mowbray and Bottesford suffered flooding from canals in 2001, with flooding in Bottesford due to a combination of fluvial and surface water, as well as from the Grantham Canal. Whilst the standard of protection through Melton Mowbray is high, the current condition of many defences in the Borough are classed as ‘fair’ or ‘poor’ suggesting some improvement or remediation may be required in the future if the defence is to provide the desired standard of protection. Developer contributions towards improvement and/or maintenance of flood defence provision may be necessary in order to make development proposals acceptable where defences are deemed unsatisfactory.
- 7.22.5 Melton Borough Council has undertaken a Level 1 and Level 2 [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (2015) to provide evidence to make informed decisions on the Local Plan. This has appraised all potential sources of flooding including Main River, Ordinary Watercourse, sewers, canal, reservoir, surface water and groundwater flooding and makes an assessment of the potential increase in risk due to climate change. It has updated and reviewed historic flooding incidents and mapped the location and extent of the functional floodplain.
- 7.22.6 An SFRA Addendum Report (2016) has updated the climate change mapping for the Borough to take account of new climate change guidance issued by the Environment Agency in February 2016. This shows the potential impacts that climate change may have on river flows and subsequently on flood events in a ‘worse-case scenario’. In the 2015 SFRA, this involved applying a 20% change factor to the 1 in 100 year flows. The new guidance requires that a 50% change factor be applied to 1 in 100 year flows. The consequences of this are that some areas which are currently not at risk of flooding could be in future. New development must therefore be designed to be flood resistant and resilient for future scenarios by, for example raising floor levels or siting the least vulnerable parts of the development in areas most at risk.

7.22.7 As well as assessing the impact of future large-scale developments both within and outside the Borough, the SFRA includes detailed assessments for potential large and small scale site allocations and has informed the assessment of the suitability of sites for allocation and informed site specific policies. These set out the flood risk to the site and provide guidance for site specific flood risk assessments, as well as recommendations on the likely acceptability of different types of sustainable drainage system for managing surface run-off. The SFRA provides a framework for the application of the Sequential Test of sites and, where necessary, the Exception Test.

## **7.23 Flood Risk Assessments**

7.23.1 Flood Risk Assessments (FRA) are required for all development proposals over 1 hectare and those on sites in Flood Zones 2 and 3. The aim of the FRA is to demonstrate that the development is protected to the 1% annual probability event and is safe during the design flood event, including an allowance for climate change. Mitigation measures should only be considered once risk has been minimised as far as possible by planning sequentially across a site. Methods to reduce flood risk include:

1. SuDS;
2. Site layout and design;
3. Modification of ground levels;
4. Localised raised defences with compensatory storage if defences remove storage from the floodplain or flood cell;
5. Raised floor levels in buildings to 600mm above the maximum water level caused by a 1 in a 100 year flood event plus climate change;
6. Improvement of flood defence provision; and
7. Resistance and resilience through flood barriers, wet-proofing and non-return valves.

## **7.24 Sustainable Drainage Systems**

7.24.1 Surface water flooding describes flooding from sewers, drains and ditches that occurs during heavy rainfall in urban areas and includes overland flows originating from groundwater springs. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are used to reduce the risk of flooding caused by surface water drainage by copying the way that water drains in nature, instead of relying solely on traditional piped drainage.

7.24.2 The design, construction and future maintenance of SuDS must be carefully defined and a clear and comprehensive understanding of the existing catchment, hydrological processes and existing drainage arrangements is essential. On 15th April 2015 Leicestershire County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), became a statutory consultee to the planning

process and is responsible for reviewing the surface water drainage systems for all major development applications.

7.24.3 SuDS can enhance green infrastructure and a river or stream corridor through the creation of wet habitats such as floodplain grazing marsh, floodplain meadows, wet woodland and ephemeral and permanent ponds.

### Policy EN11 – Minimising the Risk of Flooding

Melton Borough Council will ensure that development proposals do not increase flood risk and will seek to reduce flood risk to others. The Council will do this by working in partnership with the appropriate agencies (the Environment Agency, Leicestershire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, Internal Drainage Boards, Severn Trent & Anglian Water and the Canal and River Trust), developers and landowners.

The Borough Council will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management with the aim of locating development on land with the lowest risk of flooding (Zone 1 **and outside of surface water flood risk**). For development in Flood Zones 2, 3a & 3b, the exception test will be applied in accordance with Table 3 of National Planning Practice Guidance. In addition:

The development of sites in Zone 2 will be permitted where development:

- is resilient to flooding through design and layout which follows a sequential approach and includes hazard free access to sites for pedestrians and vehicles in the event of flooding;
- has floor levels which are above the 1 in 100-year flood level plus an allowance for climate change (in line with the latest climate change guidance), with appropriate freeboard; and
- incorporates appropriate mitigation measures, such as on-site flood defence works and/or a contribution towards or a commitment to undertake such off-site measures as may be necessary.

Development in defended Zone 3a will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that it meets requirements A), B), & C) above, and:

D) it is safe from residual risk of flood defences failing, e.g. overtopping breach and pump failure, and

E) it does not impede flow rates or reduce flood plain storage unless compensatory storage is provided on a level-for-level and volume-for-volume basis.

Development on undefended Zone 3a will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that it meets requirements of A), B), C), E) above and:

F) is appropriate in accordance with Table 3 of the National Planning Practice Guidance, or

G) cannot be located on land at lower risk due to lack of suitable land, where there are exceptional reasons for the development to take place in that location;

Development on the functional floodplain (Zone 3b) will be allowed for water-compatible uses and essential infrastructure only, where no reasonable alternative sites are available and the requirements of A), B), C) and E) above are met.

All planning applications for development in Flood Zones 2 and 3, or which exceed one hectare should be accompanied by a flood risk assessment which should:

- Be informed by the Melton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the best available information covering all sources of flood risk;
- Be proportionate to the degree of flood risk, as well as the scale, nature and location of the development;
- Include a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that the proposed drainage scheme, and site layout and design, will prevent properties from flooding from surface water, allowing for climate change effect and that flood risk elsewhere will not be exacerbated by increased levels of surface water runoff;
- Incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems and considers their ongoing maintenance unless they are demonstrated to be not technically feasible;
- Demonstrate that the development will be safe during its lifetime, does not affect the integrity of existing flood defenses and any necessary flood mitigation measures have been agreed with the relevant body;
- Demonstrate that the adoption, ongoing maintenance and management of any mitigation measures have been considered and any necessary agreements are in place;
- Demonstrate how proposals have taken a positive approach to reducing overall flood risk and have considered the potential to contribute towards solutions for the wider area;
- Demonstrate that the condition of any relevant defences and residual flood risk has been considered.

Where appropriate the Council will require developers to restore watercourses to a more natural state through the removal of hard engineering, such as culverts and bank reinforcement, in order to reduce flood risk and provide local amenity and biodiversity benefits.

Normally no buildings should be constructed within 8 metres of the banks of watercourses, to allow access for maintenance as well as providing an ecological corridor. In addition, proposals should not result in the loss of any existing open water features.

Proposals will need to demonstrate that ~~the there is~~ the capacity ~~of within~~ the foul water sewerage network ~~has been considered~~ or that capacity can be made available prior to the occupation of the development.

Proposals for flood management or other infrastructure offering improvements that lower the risk of flooding will be supported, subject to the proposal not resulting in an increase in flood risk elsewhere.

Proposals for development located adjacent to the Grantham Canal will need to consider the residual risk in the event of overtopping and/or breaches of the embankment due to culvert collapse or animal burrowing.

For allocated sites in areas at risk of flooding, proposals should demonstrate how site-specific flood risk implications identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment have been addressed.

## Policy EN12 – Sustainable Drainage Systems

For major developments, proposals should demonstrate through a surface water drainage strategy that properties will not be at risk from surface water flooding allowing for climate change effects.

Surface water management should be undertaken, wherever practicable through the utilisation of appropriate SuDS techniques which mimic natural drainage patterns, and where appropriate achieve net gains for nature through the creation of ponds and wetlands near watercourses **and the introduction of blue green corridors**. For SuDS techniques which are designed to encourage infiltration, a site-specific infiltration test will be required to ensure that the water table is low enough.

For sites which lie within or close to groundwater protection zones or aquifers, guidance should be sought from the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Where SuDS are not technically feasible, the applicant is required to provide evidence that a connection to a public surface water sewer is necessary.

All developments will be expected to be designed to achieve, where appropriate, a net decrease in surface water run-off rates, including through green infrastructure provision such as the planting of native trees and bushes

and the consideration of using 'green roofs'. All developments on greenfield sites will be expected to achieve greenfield run-off rates.

All developments will be required to manage surface water through keeping to a minimum the creation of non-permeable areas.

For allocated sites, any surface water management strategy should demonstrate how site-specific guidance in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been implemented.

## **7.23 Heritage**

7.23.1 Melton Borough has a rich and varied heritage with 704 historic buildings and 44 designated conservation areas. Melton Borough also has 2 Registered Parks and Gardens at Belvoir Castle and Stapleford Park, and 35 Scheduled Monuments. Not all these are open to the public.

7.23.2 Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for all of the designated conservation areas are completed. These will help us enhance the historic environment and to respond sensitively to proposals for development within Conservation Areas and those affecting listed buildings. In addition, the Melton Borough Landscape and Historic Urban Character Assessment Report (2011) provides an assessment of the historic assets of Melton Mowbray which should be referenced for all development proposals within the town.

7.23.3 Melton Borough contains a wealth of heritage assets which play an important part in the local character and identity of the Borough. Therefore, it is important that both designated and non-designated heritage assets are recognised and protected. Where possible they should be enhanced through the new Melton Borough Local Plan. The Heritage Environment Record (HER) [and any complementary heritage data that may be published alongside Neighbourhood Plans](#) should be referenced in proposals for development in the Borough.

### **Policy EN13 – Heritage Assets**

The NPPF provides national policy for considering proposals which affect a heritage asset. This includes the need to assess the effect of a proposal on the significance of an asset and the need for a balanced judgment about the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Melton Borough has a number of important historic assets. These include Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments (SMs) and non-designated heritage assets (ranging from nationally to locally important heritage features).

The Borough of Melton contains heritage assets that are at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. These will be conserved, protected and where possible enhanced.

The Council will take a positive approach to the conservation of heritage assets and the wider historic environment through:

A) seeking to ensure the protection and enhancement of Heritage Assets including non-designated heritage assets when considering proposals for development affecting their significance and setting. Proposed development should avoid harm to the significance of historic sites, buildings or areas, including their setting.

B) seeking new developments to make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the local area.

C) ensuring that new developments in conservation areas are consistent with the identified special character of those areas, and seeking to identify new conservation areas, where appropriate;

D) seeking to secure the viable and sustainable future of heritage assets through uses that are consistent with the heritage asset and its conservation;

E) allowing sustainable tourism opportunities in Heritage Assets in the Borough where the uses are appropriate and would not undermine the integrity or significance of the heritage asset: and

F) the use of Article 4 directions where appropriate.

[G\) taking account of any local heritage assets listed in Neighbourhood Plans.](#)

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#### **KEY EVIDENCE:**

Melton Borough Landscape and Historic Urban Character Assessment Report, ADAS, 2011

A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Melton Borough, TEP, 2011

Planning for Climate Change Study, IT Power, 2008

UK Renewable Energy Strategy HM Government, 2009

Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study, LUC, 2014

Melton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report and Addendum Report, JBA Consulting, 2015; 2016

Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study, Influence, 2015; 2016

Melton Borough Biodiversity and Geodiversity Study, WYG 2015; 2016

Melton Open Space Assessment, KKP, 2014

Melton Open Space Standards Paper, KKP, 2014

Melton Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment, KKP, 2014

Melton Playing Pitch Strategy, KKP, 2014

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