

Melton Parish Council

**Melton Neighbourhood Plan
2016-2030
Basic Conditions Statement**

December 2016

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Basic Conditions Statement has been produced to explain how the proposed Melton Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations 2015 and how the basic conditions of neighbourhood planning and other considerations as prescribed by Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 have been considered to have been met.
- 1.2 The Statement addresses each of the four 'basic conditions' required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.
- 1.3 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the basic conditions if:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area); and
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

Supporting documents and evidence

- 1.4 The MNP is supported by a Consultation Statement and this Basic Conditions Statement.

Key statements

- 1.5 Melton Parish Council is a qualifying body and entitled to submit a Neighbourhood Plan for its own parish. The MNP expresses policies that relate to the development and use of land only within the neighbourhood area.
- 1.6 The neighbourhood area is contiguous with the parish boundary, as shown in the map accompanying the neighbourhood area designation application.
- 1.7 The MNP covers the period from 2016 to 2030.
- 1.8 No provision for excluded development such as national infrastructure is contained within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.9 The MNP does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. It is solely related to the area of Melton as designated by Suffolk Coastal District Council on 24th December 2013.
- 1.10 There are no other Neighbourhood Development Plans in place for the Melton neighbourhood area.

2 CONFORMITY WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

Introduction

- 2.1 Melton has two built up areas with physical limits boundaries. The southern part of the Neighbourhood Plan area falls within the boundaries of Woodbridge and immediately to the north of this is the area covered by Melton Village.
- 2.2 Woodbridge is one of five market towns in Suffolk Coastal district and as such, is expected to make a significant contribution to new housing provision as required in the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy sets out a strategy for Woodbridge, including this part of Melton, in Policy SP26 (Woodbridge).
- 2.3 Melton Village is a Key Service Centre which are classified in the Core Strategy as, "Settlements which provide an extensive range of specified facilities."
- 2.4 The Neighbourhood Plan implements these strategies.
- 2.5 It is required that the Melton Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) has appropriate regard to national planning policy. This is principally provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.6 The NPPF in sections 183-185 refers to Neighbourhood Development Plans and seeks that those plans have regard to the policies in the NPPF and to be in 'general conformity' with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. This phrasing is explained more clearly by the Localism Act which refers to the 'adopted Development Plan'.
- 2.7 This section demonstrates that the MNP has regard to relevant policies within the NPPF in relation to:
 - Building a strong, competitive economy
 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres
 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy
 - Promoting sustainable transport
 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
 - Requiring good design
 - Promoting healthy communities
 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 2.8 The MNP has six principal objectives. We summarise them in Table 2.1 below and which NPPF goals each objective seeks to address.
- 2.9 Table 2.2 then provides a summary of how each policy in the MNP conforms specifically to the NPPF.

Table 2.1: Assessment of MNP objectives against NPPF goals

MNP Objective	Relevant NPPF goal
1. Ensure that development does not worsen the detrimental impacts of traffic congestion (including air quality and safety) along the main routes in Melton, whilst encouraging safe movement on foot and by bicycle.	Promoting sustainable transport Promoting healthy communities
2. Ensure that development provides for the infrastructure needs of Melton and does not breach the capacity of the parish's infrastructure to properly support the population.	Building a strong, competitive economy Promoting sustainable transport Promoting healthy communities
3. Protect and enhance the unique environment and heritage, particularly the rural, riverside and historical assets of Melton and its streetscape.	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment Conserving and enhancing the historic environment Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
4. Preserve the respective roles and identities of the different built-up areas within the parish, specifically Melton village (including its shops and services) and the northern part of the 'Greater Woodbridge'.	Requiring good design Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
5. Protect and enhance the strengths of Melton as a community, in particular through the retention and provision of community infrastructure.	Promoting healthy communities
6. Protect Melton's business base and seek to ensure that it can grow and thrive.	Building a strong, competitive economy Ensuring the vitality of town centres Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Table 2.2: Assessment of how each policy in the MNP conforms to the NPPF

No.	Policy title and reference	NPPF ref. (para.)	Commentary
1	MEL1: Physical limits boundaries	55, 109	Defines the built up area boundary to ensure consistency with the need to deliver affordable and open market rural homes and to protect the natural landscape beyond the urban edge.
2	MEL2: Dedicated Access for Cyclists and Pedestrians	29, 30, 35, 41	Seeks to improve access to key facilities within Melton and ensure that non-car users have alternative routes to the existing road network.
3	Policy MEL3: Views from Footpaths, Cyclepaths and Public Rights of Way	126	Seeks to ensure that key views are retained for residents and visitors alike.
4	Policy MEL4: Bus and Community Transport Provision	29, 30, 34, 37	Supports the provision of new bus stops and shelters and improved information along existing bus routes as well as community transport services.
5	Policy MEL5: Melton Railway Station	30	Supports the provision of new bicycle racks specifically for users of Melton Railway Station.
6	Policy MEL6: Parking Standards	39	Recognises the impact of on-street parking and seeks to ensure that new development provides for off-street parking commensurate with the comparatively high levels of car ownership in a rural parish.
7	Policy MEL7: Land Opposite McColls Convenience Store, The Street	39	Supports the provision of parking spaces and associated seating and landscaping on land opposite McColls convenience store, The Street.
8	Policy MEL8: Community Facilities	28, 70, 73, 74, 75	Supports the adequate provision and accessibility of existing and new community facilities.
9	Policy MEL9: Provision of Community Facilities at the playing fields, Melton Road	28, 70, 73	Supports the provision of a wide range of community facilities at the playing fields, Melton Road.
10	Policy MEL10: Provision of Allotments, Community Orchard and a Community Farm/Educational Facility	69, 73	Seeks to ensure that communities can be more self-sufficient in their food needs and can promote greater social cohesion in new neighbourhoods.
11	Policy MEL11: Special Landscape Areas	99, 109, 113	Seeks to protect Special Landscape Areas against adverse impact on the qualities that make them special.
12	Policy MEL12: Protection and Maintenance of Local Green Spaces	76, 77, 78	Makes use of the provision for making a designation and applies the site selection criteria.

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No.	Policy title and reference	NPPF ref. (para.)	Commentary
13	Policy MEL13: Protection of Trees and Rural Character	109	Seeks to preserve the natural features and rural character of specific areas in Melton Village.
14	Policy MEL14: Retention of Riverside Qualities	94, 99	Supports the presumption against further expansion of riverside development.
15	Policy MEL15: Residential Boats	99	Supports the presumption against additional residential boats on the section of the River Deben between Wilford Bridge and the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area in the direction of Sun Wharf at Woodbridge.
16	Policy MEL16: Melton Conservation Area	126, 137	Seeks to protect the character of the Conservation Areas, as shown on the Proposals Map, and to ensure that new buildings, alterations or other development preserve or enhance them.
17	Policy MEL17: Areas to be protected from development	56, 58	Seeks to protect the character and appearance of certain areas, sites, gaps, gardens and spaces which make an important contribution in their undeveloped form to a Town or Village, its setting, character, or the surrounding landscape or townscape.
18	Policy MEL18: Character Areas	58, 59, 60, 126	Seeks to have developments that protect the amenity of neighbours, and reflect the scale, mass, height and form of neighbouring properties.
19	Policy MEL19: General Employment Areas	21	Seeks to grant permission for Classes B1, B2 and B8 development on the Industrial Estates identified as General Employment Areas.
20	Policy MEL20: Deben Mill	21	Allocates a small site for employment (B1) use only.
21	Policy MEL21: Land off Wilford Bridge Road	21, 50, 54, 69, 70	Allocates a site for a mix of uses including residential, B-class commercial and community green space.

3 CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The NPPF states in paragraph 14 that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF and 'should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.'
- 3.2 Table 3.1 below summarises how the objectives and policies in the MNP contribute towards sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF.

Table 3.1: Assessment of MNP objectives and policies against sustainable development

Deliver Economic Sustainability	
<i>NPPF Definition – 'Contribute to building a strong, responsive economy'</i>	
MNP Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve the respective roles and identities of the different built-up areas within the parish, specifically Melton village (including its shops and services) and the northern part of the 'Greater Woodbridge'. • Protect Melton's business base and seek to ensure that it can grow and thrive.
MNP Policies	<p>MEL19: GENERAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS</p> <p>MEL20: DEBEN MILL</p> <p>MEL21: LAND OFF WILFORD BRIDGE ROAD</p>
MNP Comments	The MNP seeks to expand the business base and to increase tourism. In particular it places a focus on the expansion of small and medium-sized enterprise businesses (through the allocation of the sites at Deben Mill and off Wilford Bridge Road) and ensuring that their needs are catered for.

Deliver Social Sustainability	
<i>NPPF Definition – 'Support strong vibrant and healthy communities'</i>	
MNP Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that development provides for the infrastructure needs of Melton and does not breach the capacity of the parish's infrastructure to properly support the population. • Protect and enhance the strengths of Melton as a community, in particular through the retention and provision of community infrastructure.
MNP Policies	<p>MEL2: DEDICATED ACCESS FOR CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS</p> <p>MEL4: BUS AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PROVISION</p> <p>MEL5: MELTON RAILWAY STATION</p> <p>MEL6: PARKING STANDARDS</p> <p>MEL7: LAND OPPOSITE McCOLLS CONVENIENCE STORE, THE STREET</p> <p>MEL8: COMMUNITY FACILITIES</p>

	<p>MEL9: PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AT THE PLAYING FIELDS, MELTON ROAD</p> <p>MEL10: PROVISION OF ALLOTMENTS, COMMUNITY ORCHARD AND A COMMUNITY FARM/EDUCATIONAL FACILITY</p> <p>MEL21: LAND OFF WILFORD BRIDGE ROAD</p>
MNP Comments	The MNP seeks to maintain a thriving community within Melton, recognising that the community has certain infrastructure needs (particularly in respect of leisure provision) that must be addressed. This it seeks to achieve by allocating sites for a new community centre, allotments/community orchard/community farm and other green open space. It also seeks to protect existing leisure assets and encourages walking and cycling by identifying specific improvements needed.

Deliver Environmental Sustainability	
<i>NPPF Definition – 'Contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment and mitigate and adapt to climate change'</i>	
MNP Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that development does not worsen the detrimental impacts of traffic congestion (including air quality and safety) along the main routes in Melton, whilst encouraging safe movement on foot and by bicycle. • Protect and enhance the unique environment and heritage, particularly the rural, riverside and historical assets of Melton and its streetscape.
MNP Policies	<p>MEL1: PHYSICAL LIMITS BOUNDARIES</p> <p>MEL3: VIEWS FROM FOOTPATHS, CYCLEPATHS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY</p> <p>MEL11: SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS</p> <p>MEL12: PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL GREEN SPACES</p> <p>MEL13: PROTECTION OF TREES AND RURAL CHARACTER</p> <p>MEL14: RETENTION OF RIVERSIDE QUALITIES</p> <p>MEL15: RESIDENTIAL BOATS</p> <p>MEL16: MELTON CONSERVATION AREA</p> <p>MEL17: AREAS TO BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>MEL18: CHARACTER AREAS</p>
MNP Comments	The MNP seeks to protect the character of Melton by requiring good design of new development and by designating certain spaces as local green spaces of importance to the local community. It places a focus protecting the landscape and limiting activity on the River Deben.

3.3 As demonstrated in Table 3.1, the strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Development Plan are considered to comprise a balance of social, economic and environmental goals.

3.4 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been undertaken to satisfy the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. While there is no statutory requirement to do so, it was considered prudent to

undertake a full SA which takes into consideration the broader economic and social effects of the plan. This was duly undertaken and is provided as part of the supporting documents to the plan.

- 3.5 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been undertaken to ascertain whether the policies within that Plan and the guidance that it provides, are likely to have an adverse effect upon the integrity of any European sites.
- 3.6 The SA and HRA documents have been submitted along with the other documents required at Regulation 16 stage.

4 GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC POLICIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 4.1 The development plan currently consists of the following:
- 2013 Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies
 - 2011 Suffolk Waste Core Strategy
 - 2008 Suffolk Minerals Core Strategy
- 4.2 The policies of relevance are shown in Table 4.1 below, along with a consideration of whether they represent the strategic policies of the development plan. Where they do, consideration is made of whether the MNP is in general conformity with them.
- 4.3 Any policy that is not identified in Table 4.1 is not considered to be relevant to the MNP because the MNP does not have any policies that directly relate to it.
- 4.4 It is confirmed that there are no policies in either the 2008 Suffolk Minerals Local Plan or the 2011 Suffolk Waste Local Plan that the MNP policies have any relevance to.

Table 4.1: Relevant strategic policies in the Suffolk Coastal Development Plan Documents

Local Plan Policy	MNP policy
Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy	
SP3: New Homes	Policy MEL21 establishes important development principles for a new development on land off Wilford Bridge Road.
SP5: Employment land	Policy MEL19 seeks to support B-class employment development on the Industrial Estates identified as General Employment Areas. Policy MEL20 seeks to support only employment (B1) use on land to the north of the Deben Mill Policy MEL21 establishes important development principles for a new development on land off Wilford Bridge Road
SP11: Accessibility	Policy MEL2 seek to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists Policy MEL4 seek to improve access to bus services
SP12: Climate change	Policy MEL10 seeks to encourage local food growing
SP14: Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Policy MEL13 seeks to preserve the natural features and rural character
SP15: Landscape and Townscape	Policy MEL11 seeks to protect Special Landscape Area Policy MEL12 seeks to protect and maintain four important Local Green Spaces Policy MEL13 seeks to preserve the natural features and rural character Policy MEL16 seeks to protect the character of the Conservation Areas Policy MEL18 seeks to protect the amenity of neighbours Policy MEL21 seeks to preserve the natural features and rural character
SP16: Sport and Play	Policy MEL8 seeks to ensure the adequate provision and accessibility of existing and new community facilities Policy MEL9 seeks to provide more community facilities at the playing fields, Melton Road Policy MEL10 seeks to provide allotment space, a community orchard and a community farm Policy MEL12 seeks to protect and maintain four important Local Green Spaces
SP17: Green Space	Policy MEL12 seeks to protect and maintain four important Local Green Spaces Policy MEL13 seeks to preserve the natural features and rural character

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Local Plan Policy	MNP policy
SP18: Infrastructure	Policy MEL8 seeks to ensure the adequate provision and accessibility of existing and new community facilities
SP26: Woodbridge	All of the policies contribute towards addressing the strategic policy framework for Melton, as far as it has a role in addressing the requirements of Policy SP26.
DM2: Affordable Housing on Residential Sites	Policy MEL21 establishes important development principles for a new development of land off Wilford Bridge Road
DM3: Housing in the countryside	Policy MEL1 establishes the physical limits boundary of the town and what uses are suitable outside the boundary
DM4: Housing in clusters in the countryside	Policy MEL11 seeks to protect Special Landscape Area Policy MEL17 seeks to protect the areas identified on the Proposals Map from development
DM10: Protection of employment uses DM12: Expansion and Intensification of Employment Sites	Policy MEL19 seeks to support B-class employment development on the Industrial Estates identified as General Employment Areas.
DM13: Conversion and Re-use of Redundant Buildings in the Countryside DM14: Farm Diversification	Policy MEL1 establishes the physical limits boundary of the town and what uses are suitable outside the boundary
DM15: Agricultural Buildings and Structures	Policy MEL1 establishes the physical limits boundary of the town and what uses are suitable outside the boundary Policy MEL11 seeks to protect Special Landscape Area
DM19: Parking standards	Policy MEL6 sets parking standards Policy MEL7 seeks to provide parking spaces and associated seating and landscaping on land opposite McColls convenience store, The Street
DM21: Design: Aesthetics	Policy MEL13 seeks to preserve the natural features and rural character Policy MEL16 seeks to protect the character of the Conservation Areas Policy MEL17 seeks to protect the areas identified on the Proposals Map from development Policy MEL18 seeks to protect the amenity of neighbours

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Local Plan Policy	MNP policy
DM22: Design: Function	Policy MEL18 seeks to protect the amenity of neighbours
DM27: Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Policy MEL13 seeks to preserve the natural features and rural character Policy MEL17 seeks to protect the areas identified on the Proposals Map from development Policy MEL21 establishes important development principles for a new development of land off Wilford Bridge Road
DM30: Key facilities	Policy MEL8 seeks to ensure the adequate provision and accessibility of existing and new community facilities
DM32: Sport and Play	Policy MEL8 seeks to ensure the adequate provision and accessibility of existing and new community facilities Policy MEL9 seeks to provide more community facilities at the playing fields, Melton Road Policy MEL10 seeks to provide allotment space, a community orchard and a community farm
DM33: Allotments	Policy MEL10 seeks to provide allotment space, a community orchard and a community farm

5 DOES NOT BREACH, AND IS COMPATIBLE WITH, EU OBLIGATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 The Neighbourhood Development Plan has regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act.
- 5.2 The Melton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Team took the view early on in the process that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was almost certain to be needed. In addition, undertaking this process would assist in the development of the plan. As such, no formal screening request was made of Suffolk Coastal District Council, rather the process of preparing a full Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was simply commenced. However, in order to fulfil its duty, SCDC undertook a screening process in respect of the need for an SEA and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and this is included in the submission documents.
- 5.3 The SEA process began with a Scoping Report which identified the baseline characteristics of the Neighbourhood Area followed by a full SA that considered reasonable alternatives. Subsequently minor amendments were made to the SA taking into account comments received during the Pre-Submission Consultation (Regulation 14) period.
- 5.4 The SA concluded that the plan policies were unlikely to have significant impacts on the environment.
- 5.5 Through the SA process, these matters were taken into account and considered fully. It was determined that, with the necessary changes made to the Neighbourhood Plan document, development would not have a significant adverse effect on the European designated sites.
- 5.6 Representations from Natural England on the SEA Scoping Process in August 2015 identified that there was the potential for significant effect of the Plan under the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This related to housing development in Melton and the potential adverse effects that the increased population could have on European designated sites including Sandlings Special Protection Area (SPA), Minsmere-Walberswick SPA/Ramsar site and Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths & Marshes Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 5.7 A screening opinion was sought from Suffolk Coastal District Council and in June 2016, this ascertained that an HRA was required.
- 5.8 The Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy Appropriate Assessment¹ was unable to rule out adverse effects on these European sites through increased recreational disturbance as a result of in-combination housing development in the market towns east of Ipswich, including Melton. The Appropriate Assessment identified mitigation measures to address these adverse effects including on-site open space provision (particularly to cater for regular users including dog-walkers) and visitor management and monitoring of recreational pressure on the relevant European sites. Natural England recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan reflect these measures as appropriate.
- 5.9 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was duly carried out and resulted in amendments to a number of policies to ensure that adequate mitigation measures were put in place. As a result of these changes, it was considered that the MNP is unlikely to have a significant effect upon the integrity of any European site.

¹ The Landscape Partnership (2011, modified in 2013) *Appropriate Assessment for Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy and Development Management Policies*, for Suffolk Coastal District Council

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990 are considered to be met by the Melton Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the Melton Neighbourhood Plan complies with Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

