

Melton Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Project Plan

Mission Statement

“To focus on sustainable development in Melton, making sure it is appropriate to our vision, done in the right places and in the right timescale. Enhancing our strengths as a village AND a key service centre; supporting and improving the current infrastructure. Ensuring that new developments are sensitive to our housing needs and unique rural and historical attributes and our conservation area as well as protecting and improving the quality of life of our residents and their future.”

Vision

A strong and empowered village where all residents feel they are involved positively in the planning process which directly affects them.

Key Objectives

1. Build and develop positively for our future
2. Protect and Preserve our unique rural, riverside and historical assets and heritage
3. Maintain our identity as a village and our strengths as a community

1. Terms of Reference

Melton Parish Council ('MPC') has formally agreed that it wishes to prepare and submit a Neighbourhood Plan ('NP') in accordance with the new planning guidelines. It was agreed that this was a unique opportunity for Melton to gain some statutory protection with regards to how the village is developed and to empower the community to feel that they are a very real part of the process. It has therefore set up a Working Group ('NPWG') to draft the NP and carry out the relevant consultations.

The NPWG is governed and managed directly by the MPC Planning Committee although major decisions will eventually have to go back to Full Council for approval.

The Finance Committee of MPC has already approved £6,000 of funding to support the initial staged of the NP and we also have a substantial grant from the Community Development Foundation of £6,800.

In November 2014 Navigus Planning (consultant) started working with us to DRAFT our plan and start the process towards final approval and ref

Order of Governance

Melton Parish Council, Chairman Cllr Bryony Abbott
Melton Planning Committee, Chairman Cllr Geof Butterwick
Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, Chairman, Cllr Buffy Barrington

Members:

- **Cllr Buffy Barrington**
- **Cllr Geof Butterwick**
- **Cllr Jane Hilson**
- **Cllr Webb**
- **Cllr Andrew Corston**
- **Cllr Jeremy Bale**
- **Ms Sue Bale**
- **Mr David Whittington**
- **Ms Elizabeth Whittington**
- **Ms Maggie Bye**
- **Ms Mary George**
- **Ms Karen Colbear**
- **Mr Adrian Craddock**
- **Ms Fiona White**
- **Mr David Hopkins**
- **Mr Richard Litchfield**
- **Ms Jo Ellis**
- **Mr John Pitchford**
- **Claire McBurney**
- **Jill Dale**
- **John West**
- **Pat West**

- **Richard Knowles**
- **Diane Comish**

The working group comprises a range of people from the Parish Council as well as volunteer residents of Melton with a mixture of experience and interest focus points. Most of the volunteers were recruited at a public meeting earlier in 2012. Other members may be co-opted as the process advances.

The overall role of the NPWG will be to:

- Obtain SCDC approval for our formal submission to do a NP, which will cover everything within the Melton Parish Boundary (see map).
- Research and identify sources of funding required to complete the work on the NP.
- Work out a rough timeline for the development of this plan, bearing in mind it will probably take at least 18 months of work to get to the final stage.
- Carry out such consultation, analysis, detailed survey work, etc., as may be required to provide the **evidence** supporting each element of the NP, including a series of consultations with Melton residents in a variety of formats incl. questionnaire, public meetings etc.
- Use the resources we have already, especially the Village Plan.
- Work closely with other relevant working groups under the aegis of the MPC i.e. Affordable Housing Working Group
- Write the NP in final draft form for approval by MPC and a Planning Consultant prior to submission to SCDC for scrutiny in accordance with sustainability, conformity etc.
- Once approved by SCDC, and all public consultation has been completed, liaise with them to arrange the referendum. It is a requirement of the process that the referendum is put to all households in the village and accepted by 51% of votes actually cast.
- Upon approval by the referendum, submit the NP for adoption.

It is imperative that we work closely with SCDC and their NP team at all points in this process.

2. Budget

MPC have already set aside £6,000 for the NP for this financial year.

We have recently also been granted £6,800 from the Community Development Foundation as well as Direct Support from a team at Planning Aid.

A budget has been put together to anticipate the following expenses:

- Printing
- Consultation resources and hire of rooms if necessary
- Questionnaire
- Planning Consultant fees (Sustainability Appraisal?)
- Any other professional consultancy necessary
- Independent Examination
- Referendum

This budget will have to have some flexibility as the NP will be somewhat organic in its evolution and there may be expenses we can't anticipate.

The last two expenses should be costs covered by SCDC.

3. Formal Submission to SCDC

A meeting with Hilary Hanslip was held at the beginning of November 2012 at which we will produce our formal submission to do the Melton NP. SCDC advertised our Parish Boundary for its consultation process in May 2013. The six week period after our formal submission is over, however SCDC have a further 4 weeks to make a decision and Woodbridge Town Council have registered an objection to the boundary area as they wish to work on a much larger area including Martlesham and Hasketon.

This is currently under discussion but Melton have made it clear we do not wish to do a joint NP. We have already started the real work in this long process but until the boundary is officially accepted we will have some delays. Until then the NPWG will have much to do in collating information.

4. Communication and Consultation

At all stages of the NP we must ensure that the community it is being written for and to benefit have been included and consulted fully. Each piece of work must have supporting evidence and this means the total participation of those who will finally be asked to accept the NP in a referendum.

There will be many ways to communicate with and involve the community but the NPWG will have to have a basic strategy laid out to ensure we do not miss any opportunities for gathering local opinion.

MPC already makes full use of:

- Melton e-news
- Melton Messenger
- Public Noticeboards
- Local media

The NPWG will also need to consider the following:

- A full questionnaire covering key topics to every resident in the Parish
- A series of public meetings at key stages of the drafting of the NP
- Meetings with key stakeholders, community groups, clubs and organisations
- Interactive workshops and drop-in sessions

5. Contact key stakeholders, meet and consult with local organisations and current groups

MPC already has very good communications with local groups, organisations and local key stakeholders but this is an opportunity to strengthen this.

The NPWG will contact all the above people and organisations it knows of and will also send out a request for people to contact them. A complete list of everyone who invests in, works with and profits from a business relationship with Melton Parish will be drawn up.

Key stakeholders will be as large as a company like Anglian Water and as small as a business like the village shop.

The initial consultation process for this group will take a number of weeks as it will be a large group of diverse people.

6. Identifying Our Assets and Key Features as a Key Service Centre

A full list (stock take) of the areas physical assets will be done by the NPWG.

These assets will include such things as:

- Melton Playing Fields, Pavilion and Tennis Courts
- Lindos Centre

- All footpaths and bridleways
- Village Shop
- St. Andrews Church
- Burness Rooms

Etc.

A full audit of these assets will be extremely useful in the completion of the NP and we will be able to produce a map of all the assets as well as photos, est. value to the community and this in turn will direct us to where any gaps may be.

7. Walking Survey of Village

To follow on from the assets survey and as another way of involving local residents we will copy Rendlesham's idea of having a Walking Survey of the village as this will help us to pick up on things we may have missed initially.

8. Reviewing existing plans and strategies including the emerging LDF and its direct relevance to Melton

Throughout this process we will need to involve a Planning Consultant to help guide us on how our NP will fit in to current policy, especially the emerging LDF.

Some of the background research can be done initially by the NPWG however and we will need to gather as much information as possible on all current strategies and policies at both central and local government levels.

1. The previous Village Plan for Melton (MPC)
2. Local Transport Plan (SCC)
3. LDF (SCDC)
4. Sustainable Community Strategy (SCDC)
5. Strategies and Policies (where relevant) relating to:
 - Housing
 - Education
 - Economy
 - Health
 - Welfare
 - Countryside

- Crime

etc.

9. SWOT analysis

It is imperative that a full analysis is done to look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Melton as a Village and a Key Service Centre.

Such an analysis would begin perhaps with some of the following things:

Strengths

History / Conservation Area / Deben Estuary
Good communication links and strong Parish Council

Weaknesses

Through roads with heavy traffic
Large scale empty brownfield plots

Opportunities

Large-scale empty brownfield plots
Desire for further activities for young people

Threats

Woodbridge overspill development
Further impairment of bus and train services

10. Site Proposals Map (based on former consultation)

We will initially re-visit our research and consultation about specific sites for development in Melton, which we did when the LDF was first being looked at.

The results of this consultation exercise will form the DRAFT of our conclusions about this extremely important topic and give us a base for further consultation with the village.

A map will be produced which can be used when we send out a questionnaire and when we have our key consultation events with residents.

11. Confirm our Vision, Mission and Key Objectives and in the light of our research so far

At this point and before we move on to sending out the all important questionnaire we should re-visit our Vision, Mission and Key Objectives and

whether they still stand up to closer inspection after the above work has been done.

This is important as we need to be guided by our research and consultation and not try to frame the NP around what we think we want to see as a working group or as a Parish Council.

Though we would not expect there to be major changes in what we are working towards we always need the flexibility to be able to mould it around what the village community indicates that it wants.

12. Questionnaire to all residents of the Parish

The MPC Working Group for Affordable Housing has already worked closely with Suffolk ACRE to survey the housing needs in Melton and a questionnaire sent out to all residents in 2011 returned a result that 14 Affordable Houses are needed currently.

The NPWG will need to create a further and much wider questionnaire for all residents to clarify other general areas of concern and the current and future needs of the village. A VERY PRELIMINARY draft of this is enclosed but a great deal of work and consultation will need to be done prior to sending out a final document.

13. Draft 1 of Neighbourhood Plan

Having moved through the above actions we should now be ready to put together the first draft of the NP. The intention of any Neighbourhood Plan must be to set out the policies on development and use of land in the designated area.

Policies may allocate specific sites for particular types and scales of development (e.g. residential, employment, mixed use)

Policies may specify particular requirements relating to any of the allocations (e.g. access, landscaping, green space)

Policies may specify sites within the neighbourhood area to be protected or enhanced as environmental assets or areas of landscape character.

Policies may be more generic and apply to future development in the area (e.g. local design, transport, access)

An outline of our Plan might look like the following:

- 1) Plan Process
- 2) The vision we seek to protect and enhance
- 3) Chronology and methodology
- 4) Village Description
 - i) History

- ii) Location
- iii) Character and Key Features
- iv) Population and work patterns
 - (a) Age Range
 - (b) Young People
 - (c) Elderly People
 - (d) Recreation Facilities
 - (e) Schools
 - (f) Businesses
 - (g) Delivery of care in the home
- v) Threats and Opportunities
- vi) Services and Utilities
- vii) Links with neighbouring villages / Woodbridge
- viii) Legacy issues from Village Plan
- 5) Objectives of the Plan
 - i) Approach to development
 - (a) Analysis of need
 1. Affordable Housing
 2. What else?
 - (b) Sites
 - (c) Constraints
 - (d) Replacements, extensions, garden developments
 - (e) Sustainability appraisal
 - (f) Community Right to Build Proposals
 - ii) Design Criteria
 - (a) Current characteristics
 - (b) Conservation Area
 - (c) Listed Buildings
 - (d) Non-listed heritage assets
 - (e) Street scenes
 - (f) Design principals to be followed
 - iii) Wildlife and Landscape conservation
 - (a) Survey results
 - (b) Flora
 - (c) Fauna
 - (d) Bird habitats
 - (e) Treescape / TPO's
 - (f) Planting proposals
 - (g) River Deben and Management
 - (h) Green corridor
 - (i) Footpaths and access arrangements
 - (j) Educational opportunities
 - iv) Transport Links
 - (a) Rail services
 - (b) Bus services
 - (c) Traffic management
 - v) Energy Use and potential schemes
 - (a) Wind turbine
 - (b) Insulation grants

- (c) Other...
- 6) Proposals to improve village communications
 - i) Broadband access?
 - ii) Mobile coverage?
 - 7) Community Consultation process followed
 - 8) Site Proposals Map

14. Check conformity with LDF and current Planning Policy

Having drawn up the first draft of our plan we will need to go back immediately to the Planning Consultant to check conformity with all relevant policies especially the emerging LDF. This will be an on-going process of sustainability but key stages like this one will be particularly important.

15. Finalise Draft

The final draft of our plan can contain a lot of surrounding information but what it **MUST** contain is our clear statements of policy to development and sites specified on maps where appropriate.

All the policies must show clearly how they are supported by both evidence of need AND by in depth public consultation.

16. Sustainability Appraisal ?

This should have been an on-going process throughout and so at this stage the final appraisal of the plans sustainability in relation to its conformity with other major policies should be a relatively simple task.

17. Final Consultation with Key Stakeholders

Though key stakeholders will have been consulted at earlier stages it is important that they see the final draft of the plan before its submission in order to offer any further advice or help with regards to their various areas of expertise.

The key stakeholders will break down into some of the following categories:

- Businesses
- Landowners
- Schools
- Church
- Social organisations
- etc.

However this is also an opportunity to go back to bigger organisations that have influence and ensure that they are happy with the content and can offer no further input. Such organisations might be:

- SCC
- Police
- Anglian Water
- English Heritage
- Adjoining Parish Councils
- etc.

18. Final Consultation with Parish community

As above, the local residents in Melton Parish will have been involved in the process from the beginning so at this stage there should be no surprises however it is imperative to consult at this final stage before we submit the plan for it's Independent Examination.

This final consultation will need to be achieved through a series of events and over a period of 6 weeks to two months minimum.

19. Submit

The NP can now be submitted to SCDC along with a summary of its key objectives and way to meet them.

SCDC checks the plan and ensures it has been followed in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act – although again this should be a given if we have worked closely with SCDC throughout the process.

Once SCDC are happy with the plan it will go to the Independent Examiner for further inspection.

20. Independent Examination

The NPWG and SCDC will agree together who the Independent Examiner will be. This part of the process will be paid for by SCDC.

The main function of this examination will be to check overall conformity with:

- The strategic content of wider development plans i.e. LDF
- The National Planning Policy Framework
- Any relevant European Directives

- National and international designations i.e. listed buildings, green belts etc.
- Adjoining Neighbourhood Plans

The examiner can recommend that the plan should proceed to a referendum, or proceed with some amendments OR potentially it could be found unsound. Such a report will be issued to the Parish Council and SCDC.

21. Referendum

Once the final draft of the NP is approved by the Independent Examiner it will go to a referendum whereby all residents of the Parish can vote to adopt it. In some circumstances the Independent Examiner may ask that other voters in surrounding communities have their say IF this NP directly affects them.

Assuming the majority of those voting approve then the NP will be adopted but if this does not happen then we would effectively have to consider starting the process again. This is why it is crucial to involve the entire community all the way through the process as well as working closely alongside SCDC and all the relevant planning policies.

This part of the process will be paid for by SCDC.

22. Adoption

Once adopted this NP will become part of SCDC's planning policy for the area alongside the LDF.

At this stage it is important that a number of copies of the final and adopted plan are made available to be seen by the village community as well as sending out copies to the most relevant key stakeholders.

A full copy will also be available on the MPC website.

23. Implementation and Monitoring of the NP

Once adopted the NP will have statutory weight with regards to planning applications and how they are determined in this Parish. Both the LDF (once agreed and adopted) and this NP will have the same weight in any planning decision taken by SCDC.

To some extent the NP will be a tool like the LDF for use when any application is made BUT it will also contain objectives to be met and MPC and its Planning Committee will need to ensure that things are progressed in accordance with such objectives.

Melton Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group would like to acknowledge **Rendlesham Parish Council** for the help and advice they have given us and also **Planning Aid** and our very kind volunteers from this organisation who provide continuing guidance and support.

Last updated: **1st October 2013**