

## Executive Summary

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community of Melton Parish. In summary these challenges are:

**Traffic** – the volume of traffic using Woods Lane/Wilford Bridge Road especially.

**Infrastructure** – recognising that the infrastructure in Melton has not kept pace with its growth over time and that there is a need to ensure new growth is appropriately supported by new infrastructure.

**Environment** – protecting the sensitive environment around Melton, in particular the Deben Estuary.

**Movement by non-car modes** – the associated need to enhance movement by non-car modes, particularly walking and cycling.

**Vitality of Melton village** – seeking to retain and improve the vitality of the village, particularly in terms of its shops and services.

**Air quality** – recognising that this is an issue in Melton as a result of the heavy traffic.

**Community activities** – the need to provide for more, especially for young people and families.

**Commercial activity** – recognising the value of the existing businesses in the parish and trying to provide for their needs in order to ensure their ongoing presence, along with the employment and value they bring to the local economy.

### The Vision for Melton

‘In 2029 the parish of Melton remains a unique place, with its village and important historical and community assets sitting within a sensitive but well protected natural environment. There continues to be a clear separation of the village from Greater Woodbridge. The character of each of the distinct parts of Melton’s built-up area has been retained. Infrastructure and traffic issues, particularly along the A1152 and Woods Lane, have been managed in conjunction with new development so that no further pressure is put on already very busy key roads and densely built areas. Improvements have been made to pedestrian and cyclepaths so that there are genuine alternatives to the private car for getting around Melton. Small and sensitive development of local commercial and retail businesses have been encouraged, which sit appropriately in the context of Melton’s village environment. Employment areas at Wilford Bridge, Deben Mill and off Melton Road are thriving. The community facilities serving Melton have been protected and improved, particularly at the Playing Fields on Melton Road where the new Village Hall has provided a focus for community activities. In addition, new allotments, a community orchard and a community farm have provided a range of quality green spaces that have supported the growing population and galvanised Melton’s community spirit. Now a large number of groups and events are able to draw the community together and provide activities for both young and old.’

## **Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan**

1. **Objective One:** 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.
2. **Objective Two:** 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.
3. **Objective Three:** Protect and enhance the unique environment and heritage, particularly the rural, riverside and historical assets of Melton and its streetscape.
4. **Objective Four:** 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'.
5. **Objective Five:** Protect and enhance the strengths of Melton as a community, in particular through the retention and provision of community infrastructure.
6. **Objective Six:** Protect Melton's business base and seek to ensure that it can grow and thrive.

## **Policies:**

### **POLICY MEL1: PHYSICAL LIMITS BOUNDARIES**

Development in the Melton neighbourhood plan area shall be focused within the physical limits boundaries as identified in the plan. Development proposals will be supported within the physical limits boundary subject to compliance with other policies in the development plan, particularly:

- Strategic Policy SP19 of the Local Plan in respect of the Woodbridge Town physical limits and the Melton Village physical limits; and
- Strategic Policy SP26 of the Local Plan in respect of the strategy for Woodbridge, incorporating the built-up areas within the Melton neighbourhood plan area; and
- Strategic Policy SP26 of the Local Plan in respect of the strategy for Key and Local Service Centres;
- Strategic Policy SP28 of the Local Plan in respect of the Melton Park physical limits.

Development proposals outside the physical limits boundary will not be permitted unless:

- They relate to the site allocated in Policy MEL21; or
- they are in accordance with Local Plan Strategic Policy SP29 and Policy DM3; or
- they relate to necessary utilities infrastructure and where no reasonable alternative location is available.

#### **POLICY MEL2: DEDICATED ACCESS FOR CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS**

Proposals to provide dedicated and improved access for cyclists and pedestrians, including disabled users and, in particular, users of mobility scooters, will be encouraged.

In particular, the following will be strongly supported:

- provision of a dedicated footpath/cyclepath along the north side of Woods Lane eastwards from the junction with Bredfield Road to the junction with Hall Farm Road; and
- provision of a dedicated pedestrian/cycle crossing point of Woods Lane, just to the east of the junction with Bredfield Road; and
- provision of dedicated footpaths/cyclepaths along the south and north sides of Wilford Bridge Road from the junction with Melton Road to Melton Railway Station and then from Melton Railway Station to the Wilford Bridge; and
- a dedicated crossing point where the footway/cyclepath along Woods Lane/Wilford Bridge Road switches from the north side to the south side; and
- traffic calming measures to be provided in The Street (B1438); and
- traffic calming measures to be provided in Station Road with associated provision of safe pedestrian access to and from St Andrews Church; and
- Melton Neighbourhood Plan Submission Stage Consultation (Regulation 16)
- provision of dedicated pedestrian/cycle crossing points of Melton Road near the junction with the northern end of Turnpike Lane and for those crossing from Hackney Road, Hackney Terrace and Green Man Way.

#### **POLICY MEL3: VIEWS FROM FOOTPATHS, CYCLEPATHS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Development proposals will be expected to be designed so that they do not have a significant impact on short distance views (up to 500m) of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and, in particular, the River Deben, from any footpath, cyclepath or public right of way.

#### **POLICY MEL4: BUS AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PROVISION**

Proposals to provide new bus stops and shelters and improved information along existing bus routes will be supported.

New development proposals that contribute towards improvements in the quality of public and community transport services and/or supporting infrastructure serving the Neighbourhood Plan area will be strongly supported.

#### **POLICY MEL5: MELTON RAILWAY STATION**

Proposals to provide new bicycle racks and provision for cyclists at Melton Railway Station will be strongly supported.

#### **POLICY MEL6: PARKING STANDARDS**

For new residential developments (Use Class C3), the following minimum parking standards shall apply for the provision of off-road parking:

- 1-bed house/flat 1 off-road car parking space
- 2-bed house/flat 2 off-road car parking spaces
- 3-bed house/flat 2 off-road car parking spaces
- 4-bed house/flat 3 off-road car parking spaces
- 5+ bed house/flat 4 off-road car parking spaces

Development that results in the loss of existing off- or on-street parking will generally be refused. The loss of any such spaces will only be permitted if at least the same number of parking spaces can be re-provided in the immediate proximity of where the spaces would be lost.

The provision of unallocated/visitor parking spaces and cycle parking spaces will be in addition to this and are expected to follow the Suffolk Advisory Parking Guidance. All other types of development are expected to follow the Suffolk Advisory Parking Guidance.

#### **POLICY MEL7: LAND OPPOSITE McCOLLS CONVENIENCE STORE, THE STREET**

Proposals for the provision of parking spaces and associated seating and landscaping on land opposite McColls convenience store, The Street, will be strongly supported.

#### **POLICY MEL8: COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

1. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing community facilities will not be supported unless appropriate re-provision is made. Such re-provision will be required to demonstrate that the replacement facility is:

- a. At least of an equivalent scale to the existing facility; and
- b. is in a generally accessible location to the community of Melton within the Neighbourhood Plan area; and
- c. is made available before the closure of the existing facility; and
- d. is of a quality fit for modern use.

2. The requirements above also apply small scale retail facilities (A-Class) which are commercially run unless it can be demonstrated that the unit is no longer viable. To demonstrate this, applicants are required to market the property for at least 12 months through a sustained marketing campaign.

3. Proposals for new and/or improved community facilities will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a. the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of surrounding residents and other activities; and
- b. the proposal would not have significant harmful impacts on the surrounding local environment; and
- c. the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts on the local road network; and
- d. the proposal would provide appropriate car parking facilities; and
- e. the proposal is located within or immediately adjacent to the physical limits boundaries as defined in Policy MEL1

#### **POLICY MEL9: PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AT THE PLAYING FIELDS, MELTON ROAD**

The provision of the following community facilities at the playing fields, Melton Road, will be strongly supported:

Removal of the existing pavilion and development of a new village hall, incorporating:

- a main hall,
- three meeting rooms,
- an ancillary office, kitchen and WCs
- an ancillary café,
- changing room facilities
- appropriate levels of on-site parking provision
- the retention, where possible, of protected trees

Outdoor gym equipment suitable for the needs of people of all ages

#### **POLICY MEL10: PROVISION OF ALLOTMENTS, COMMUNITY ORCHARD AND A COMMUNITY FARM/EDUCATIONAL FACILITY**

The provision of the following community facilities will be strongly supported:

- Further allotment space
- A community orchard
- A new location for 'Pitstop' and its expansion to include a community farm, preferably as part of the land off Wilford Bridge Road (Policy MEL21)

#### **POLICY MEL11: SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS**

The valleys and tributaries of the River Deben, as show on the Proposals Map, are designated as a Special Landscape Area. Development will not be permitted in these areas where it would have a material adverse impact on the qualities of the landscape that make it special. Where development is considered acceptable landscape improvements should be included as an integral part of the development proposal.

### **POLICY MEL12: PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

The following areas shown on the Proposals Map are designated as a Local Green Spaces:

- Playing Fields on Melton Road
- Hall Farm play area
- St Andrew's play area
- Hospital Grove woodland

Proposals for built development on these Local Green Spaces will not be permitted unless:

- the proposal is of a limited nature and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of an identified Local Green Space; or
- the proposal would result in the development of local community infrastructure as required by Policy MEL9.

### **POLICY MEL13: PROTECTION OF TREES AND RURAL CHARACTER**

The area bounded by Woods Lane, Melton Road, Pytches Road and Bredfield Road, as shown on the Proposals Map, retains its rural and wooded character, and separates Melton Village from Woodbridge. Within this area there are parts where no further development will be permitted because of:

- their important contribution to the setting of Woodbridge and Melton, particularly from distant views;
- the need to preserve their natural features;
- their wildlife importance;
- their importance as settings for listed buildings;
- their rural character;
- the need to prevent the coalescence of Woodbridge and Melton Village;
- the need to preserve that part of the area within the designated Conservation Area.

Proposals for development must ensure that the design, density, scale and layout of any new development will not prejudice the protection of important trees and open spaces, and they will require additional tree planting and other landscaping where appropriate.

### **POLICY MEL14: RETENTION OF RIVERSIDE QUALITIES**

There will be a presumption against further expansion of riverside development into the areas shown on the Proposals Map.

### **POLICY MEL15: RESIDENTIAL BOATS**

Planning permission for the mooring of 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 will not be granted, and where planning

permission falls to be considered for existing ones it will not be granted where it would result in, or perpetuate, serious visual intrusion.

#### **POLICY MEL16: MELTON CONSERVATION AREA**

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, the District Council will, in the control of development within, or affecting, each Conservation Area, pay special attention to the following matters:

- (i) the building materials used, to ensure that they are consistent with the general character of the area;
- (ii) the form, scale, design and detailing of new buildings, alterations to existing buildings, and the space around buildings (including landscape schemes, roads and fencing), which should be in harmony with, and relate satisfactorily to, their surroundings;
- (iii) other development, including street furniture, road, footpath and other surfaces, lighting and advertisement displays, should be in keeping with the Conservation Area; wherever practicable, electricity, telephone and other cable systems should be placed underground, or in suitably concealed locations;
- (iv) natural features, including trees, should be preserved wherever possible; schemes of landscaping and tree planting will normally be required;
- (v) Supplementary Planning Guidance;
- (vi) the traffic implications arising from the proposed development.

#### **POLICY MEL17: AREAS TO BE PROTECTED FROM DEVELOPMENT**

Development will not normally be permitted where it would materially detract from the character and appearance of:

- those areas identified on the Proposals Map to be protected from development, or further development; and
- other 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.

Outside of the physical limits boundaries of Towns and Villages, the area is defined as Countryside.

#### **POLICY MEL18: CHARACTER AREAS**

All development shall protect the amenity of neighbours, and reflect the scale, mass, height and form of neighbouring properties. Development proposals must demonstrate

how they contribute positively to the features of the respective character areas, as described in the Melton Character Area Assessment.

In particular, development proposals shall:

- retain historic buildings that contribute to the distinctive character and historic and architectural interest of the village; and
- ensure that they do not lead to over-development of a site; and
- avoid the appearance of cramming; and
- have a similar form of development to properties in the immediate surrounding area; (this is particularly the case for applications for two or more dwellings on a site currently or previously occupied by a single property); and
- ensure that new buildings do not adversely affect neighbouring properties by seriously reducing the amount of daylight available through windows or by obstructing the path of direct sunlight or window; and
- ensure that it does not unacceptably reduce the level of existing private amenity space provision for existing residential properties; and
- provide appropriate parking and access arrangements, both for the new development and existing properties where they would be affected; and
- reflect the prevailing boundary treatments.

#### **POLICY MEL19: GENERAL EMPLOYMENT AREAS**

Unless otherwise stated in other policies of this Neighbourhood Plan or the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, on the Industrial Estates identified as General Employment Areas and shown on the Proposals Map, planning permission will normally be granted for Classes B1, B2 and B8 development.

#### **POLICY MEL20: DEBEN MILL**

Land to the north of the Deben Mill, as shown on the Proposals Map, is suitable for development for employment (B1) use only.

A high standard of design, materials and landscaping will be required. The north-eastern part of the site, currently grassland, shall be used as an amenity/water-storage area and remain free of structures. The only exceptions would be part use for open space or parking, but not open storage.

#### **POLICY MEL21: LAND OFF WILFORD BRIDGE ROAD**

Planning permission will be granted for a development on 9.4 hectares of land off Wilford Bridge Road, subject to the following criteria:

- the provision of at least 9,000m<sup>2</sup> of serviced B1 floorspace; and
- ancillary retail to support the B-class commercial development; and
- the provision of approximately 55 dwellings which provides a mix of dwelling sizes (market and affordable) that meets the needs of Local Plan Policy SP3; and
- affordable housing which meets the requirements of Local Plan Policy DM2; and
- community uses, including a public green space for community use, a lake,



communal gardens, allotments/community growing spaces, café, a children's play area and potentially a community farm and After-School and Holiday Club (see policy MEL10); and

- landscaping; and
- access, ensuring that options are explored to avoid a single vehicular access onto the A1152 subject to demonstrating that this would not have a detrimental impact on access for residents adjacent to the development; and
- the provision of a flood risk assessment; and
- the provision of appropriate utilities infrastructure, including drainage, in order to service the development once it is occupied; and
- the retention where possible of protected trees.