

Representor ID. 66

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Additional Comment on the Melton Plan

3) Policy SS 2 and 3. Spacial strategy and Allocation for future housing developments

There have been several reiterative attempts in Melton Plans to categorise settlements within the Borough and to assign required numbers of dwellings to some settlements. The Draft Plan 2016 stated there were 76 settlements within the Melton Borough, and now lists 12 as Service Centres, 7 Rural Hubs. and 55 rural settlements. Many villagers in rural settlements have voiced their deep concerns about proposed overdevelopment and lack of supporting infrastructure in their villages, and suggested that the Rural housing allocations should be reduced.

Thorpe Arnold (our Village) is a small hamlet with very little or no services; there are approximately 50 houses in the Parish with 30 centered around the Village, and it should be categorized as a Rural Settlement not a Rural Hub. One MBC document suggested the Village should be a rural hub as it is within 2.5 km of the town centre. Although the housing allocation proposed for our Village has been reduced, a more appropriate lower allocation for our village would be 5 to 10 dwellings with possible future windfall allocations i.e., not the current number of 20, as there are no data showing housing needs of the Village. Some settlements appear to have no allocation although listed as rural hubs e.g., Buckminster and Burton Lazars.

Response 8126322154 to Focussed changes, Councillor M Lusty acting on behalf of Waltham on the Wolds and Thorpe Arnold Parish Council and its' Neighbourhood Planning Group states his support for SS2 and SS3 spatial strategies. Under FC4 Housing allocations - Rep 2 for Thorpe Arnold, he states the Melton plan is not legally compliant nor sound but does not give a reason (unlike Rep1 for Waltham where a reason is given for removing WAL3 site). Thorpe Arnold Village is part of the combined Waltham on the Wolds and Thorpe Arnold (WOTWATA) Parish Council area, but given no opportunity to have a separate Neighbourhood Plan (NP) nor separate referendum. The Final NP has been independently examined, and I and others have challenged this NP under Regulation 16 as it relates to our Village (please see MBC website).

There is an emerging picture of a few NPs (2 being approved for referenda - possibly prematurely), some NPs still undergoing independent examination with other settlements well behind in their NP preparations. Some settlements are starting their NPs now e.g. Gaddesby, with one (Sewstern village similarly sized to Thorpe Arnold) making an application for a new NP.

This very marked fragmentation in Planning makes it very difficult for the MBC Planning Department and Planning Committees in dealing with planning applications within the settlements, and within National Guidelines. Our NP Group and Parish Council seem to think that NPs are legally correct although they have not been subject to a referendum, and cannot be challenged by further applications even though the Melton Plan has not been approved. Conflicting interests are now emerging in other settlements where NPs are well developed: two action groups have recently emerged (Clawson in Action Group and Frisby Residents Action Group) because of planning concerns emerging from NPs. This distinct lack of integration between the Neighbourhood Plans with the current Melton Plan is leading to more future problems if the Melton Plan fails examination.