

Matter 3: Overall requirements for housing and employment land and the long-term growth strategy (Policies SS2 and SS6); affordable housing need and policy targets (Policies C4, SS4 and SS5)

Representation by Burton & Dalby Parish Council

Reference: 155/139

3.1 - Housing figure 6,125

1. The Borough Council's approach to development has over-ridden the findings of the HEDNA report, which considered Leicestershire as a whole. HEDNA concluded that Melton Borough has an objectively assessed housing requirement of 170 dpa. Seven years of the plan period have elapsed with no evidence of the rapid growth that the plan proposes. The average number of annual completions between 2011 and 2016 has been less than 150dpa. The Borough Council's uplift to 245dpa is not justified and if achieved it would be much greater than the objectively assessed requirement for the borough, leading to the town and villages becoming dormitories for the region's cities.
2. The inflated growth rate is driven partly by an aspiration for economic growth. Paragraph 6.2.3 of the Draft Plan states that Melton Borough Council is committed to working with the private sector to deliver employment opportunities, but the Plan does not set out a credible means for this delivery.
3. The Employment Land Study, Melton Borough Council M94(e) Final Report/June 2015 does not predict an economic upturn in Melton Borough:

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

"2.34 The employment forecasts are shown in Table 2. As Table 2 indicates, **the Leicester and Leicestershire (HMA) Employment Land Study forecasts a very low level of employment growth for Melton, a 300 jobs net increase over 2010-2031, a 1.3 percent change on 2010. In part this reflects a drop in employment from 2012, which is not fully reversed until 2031.** An employment decrease of this severity and duration is not forecast for any of the other local authority areas of Leicester and Leicestershire.

2.46 This is a far lower rate of growth than is forecast for any other local authority area in Leicester and Leicestershire."

3.3 Policy SS6 – Potential alternative housing sites

4. The list of potential alternative long-term options is not justified. Potential sites should either be assessed against the allocation criteria and if found suitable be shown as Reserve Sites, or should be omitted altogether. There is no evidence-based justification for a list, the existence of which risks any presently unknown sites being overlooked if they should come forward.