

Dear Planning Policy Team

17th December 2016

MELTON LOCAL PLAN - We have been informed by Bottesford Parish Council that **Mr Jim Worley has confirmed that comments do NOT have to be submitted on the online form and that any comments received by letter instead WILL be accepted and duly considered by MBC.**

It is important that the Melton Local Plan is submitted and subsequently adopted within the time frame, but we feel the following issues need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. We feel that the Plan as it stands falls short as being:-

A) UNSOUND:

1) At no point in the Issues and Option and Emerging options literature was there any mention of the possibility of 427 homes in Bottesford plus 22 in Easthorpe. This huge late increase in numbers has only just been put forward (Policy C1 {a} on Pages 53 - 55) **without any consultation** with the residents and must therefore be classed as unsound.

This increase in numbers now takes in sites which were previously rejected as they did not meet the Emerging Options criteria. **What methodology and justification** has been used in order to enable them to be acceptable now?

2) It has been rumoured that **another 1500 dwellings** could be allocated to Bottesford if there is a shortfall elsewhere. Is this true and if so – **WHY?** Recently a Borough Councillor stated that this proposal had been rejected – but then so had so many others which have now been included so how can we believe this site would be any different?

3) From the Plan it is clear that the village of Bottesford has been allocated far more houses than any of the other villages yet **no Public Consultation event** has been scheduled for Bottesford. How can this failure to provide the residents with an opportunity to ask questions/raise concerns **and be listened to** be classed as being open, transparent or sound?

4) Allocation has apparently been **calculated using existing populations** – but this is **flawed** as no consideration has been given to the efficacy of current local services. Bottesford is already overstretched – the conservation area is being ruined by traffic and parked cars. More dwellings on the scale proposed will seriously exacerbate the problem. The previous figure of a little over 300 could probably be accommodated reasonably near to the centre which would negate the use of more cars (there are already severe traffic control problems in the village centre). Some of the smaller villages nearer to Melton are more capable of absorbing a greater number of dwellings than those allocated to them irrespective of current population. In some instances smaller villages would benefit from more development in order to sustain what few services they have. So-called “unsustainable villages” could well die if more dwellings are not permitted – many villages are in particular need of smaller dwellings for those who wish to downsize in later life. Increasing the numbers in the villages closer to Melton would reduce the need to travel distances by car and would help the economy of Melton.

5) Para 9 on Page 20 (Accessibility and Transport Objectives) advocates a reduction in the need to travel by car but without decent services this cannot happen. Services have not been studied in any detail. The fact that there are bus stops in Bottesford does not mean the village has a decent bus service!!! Currently the services to **Newark, Bingham and Nottingham** are a combination of non-existent and practically non-existent. Furthermore, there is only a **limited day time** service to **Grantham**. Were the operators consulted at all in order to ascertain the true facts? The train service too is limited – mainly 2-hourly and over the years local residents have been putting pressure onto the rail company to ensure that at least some of the trains using the line do in fact stop at Bottesford!

6) Flooding – Bottesford has one of the highest flood risks (if not the highest) in the East Midlands and it would therefore be much more prudent to allocate more dwellings in villages with lower/negligible/no flood risks. To deliberately allocate sites with such high risks cannot be classed as justified or sound.

B) NON-COMPLIANT WITH A DUTY TO CO-OPERATE (Inadequacy of Consultation):

1) The Duty to Co-operate relates to neighbouring authorities, and the plan should consider the effect the Melton plans will have on those authorities – and just as pertinently, the effects of their plans on Melton. Bottesford has already become a commuter village and because of the serious lack of public transport the majority of people travel to work by car. On **Page 13 Para 2.4.2** it states that in Melton there are “*severe delays to journey times when crossing the town of in excess of 5 minutes*”, but it takes a similar time to pass through Bottesford village centre and get onto the very busy A52 even without any further housing. A rush hour **trip to Nottingham can take 2 hours** – we left home at 7:30a.m recently for a 9:30a.m hospital appointment and made it with just 5 minutes to spare! There is a very large scale development already under construction alongside the A52 at West Bridgford which will only make matters worse, as will any others in the pipeline planned by Rushcliffe BC and SKDC. If as claimed, Bottesford relates to Nottingham/Grantham rather than

Melton, then surely dwellings built by all authorities nearer to these towns would help to reduce car travel. If serious consultation has not taken place with these authorities, then again this would also leave the plan unsound.

Yours faithfully

Mr T & Mrs S Woollard