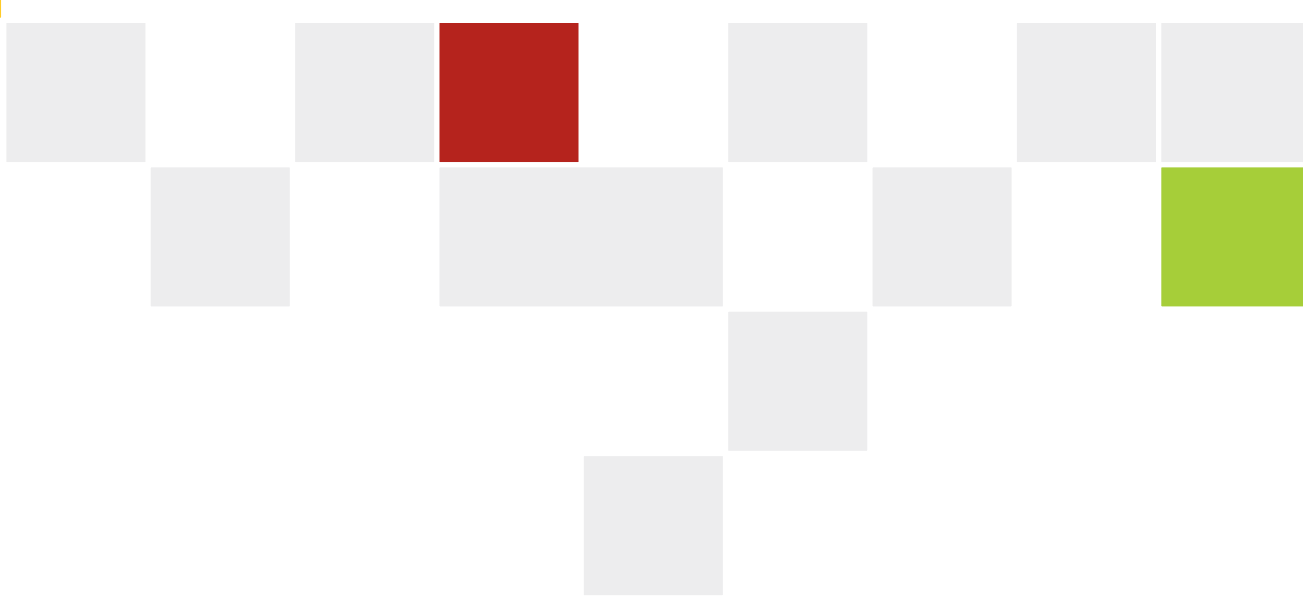


# Land East Side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn

Representations to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Consultation

(Regulation 18)



# Boyer

## Greater Cambridge Local Plan Regulation 18

### Representations on behalf of Wates Developments Ltd.

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. These representations have been prepared by Boyer on behalf of Wates Developments, in response to the Greater Cambridge emerging Local Plan (Regulation 18). At this stage of the emerging Local Plan there are no draft policies, rather these representations respond to the overall strategy and vision for the next stage of the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.2. These representations make specific reference to Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn (see attached Site Location Plan at Appendix 1). This is being promoted for future development and these representations relate to the overall strategy proposed in this emerging Local Plan and the development potential of this site.
- 1.3. The representations reflect the chronological order of the sections and sequence of questions included within the consultation document.

#### 2. **Section 2.2.2 Tell us about employment and housing site options**

*Q2. Please submit any sites for employment and housing you wish to suggest for allocation in the Local Plan. Please use the site submission form that can be found on our website, and provide as much information and supporting evidence as possible.*

- 2.1. In response to Question 2, a separate form is submitted providing further information on Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn and its ability to accommodate residential development.
- 2.2. The site represents a sustainable location for residential development, which will provide much needed market and affordable housing to this part of South Cambridgeshire. The site is proposed to accommodate circa. 400 dwellings and does not have any constraints that would prevent this scale of development from being delivered. The site is available now and work is ongoing to inform a comprehensive development proposal for the site which can be shared with the Councils when appropriate.
- 2.3. Melbourn is identified as a 2<sup>nd</sup> tier settlement within South Cambridgeshire's adopted Local Plan (2018), and benefits from a number of facilities and services including, but not limited to, a primary and secondary school, food store, public houses and employment opportunities.
- 2.4. In addition to being located in proximity to these facilities, Land East side of Cambridge Road also lies within close proximity to Melbourn Science Park, which includes 9 business units providing employment for a number of companies engaged in pharmaceuticals, biochemistry and mechanical engineering. The park also offers additional facilities including a restaurant, tennis courts and conference facilities. This highlights the site's access to employment opportunities in key knowledge-intensive industries, and its ability to contribute to South Cambridgeshire's important role in retaining itself as a world leader in research and knowledge based industry.

- 2.5. The site's position on the edge of Melbourn provides a sustainable location for new development with local public transport connections and pedestrian and cycle links, as well as proximity to nearby local amenities including jobs, services and facilities within the village centre.
- 2.6. With appropriate masterplanning and design, the site is capable of delivering a sensitively designed but comprehensive and well-connected sustainable development that could contribute to the local development needs of Greater Cambridge.
- 2.7. In determining the location of new residential development, the Councils should also afford significant consideration to the location of new and improved infrastructure.
- 2.8. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan confirms the A10 cycleway to Melbourn as a proposed sustainable transport improvement. Moreover, the provision of Cambridge South new station is anticipated to increase capacity along the existing rail line, through settlements such as Meldreth. Such infrastructure would increase the sustainability of existing settlements such as Melbourn, enabling further development to come forward within this location.

### **3. Chapter 3.5: About Greater Cambridge – South Cambridgeshire's Overarching Vision**

- 3.1. We note the consultation document includes the Council's published Business Plan vision, and for South Cambridgeshire we note the overarching vision of: Helping businesses to grow; Building homes that are truly affordable to live in; Being green to our core; and Putting our customers at the centre of everything.
- 3.2. This is welcomed and we feel particularly supportive of the Councils' recognition of the importance of the provision of new housing. Reference to new housing could be expanded in the Local Plan, with a greater focus on the Councils' overall housing need. It should be recognised that the Councils' objective of growing local businesses and economies, and helping village businesses to thrive can be greatly assisted through the allocation of housing development within South Cambridgeshire's villages. Such development can encourage economic spending within local businesses, shops and food outlets and the developments can contribute to infrastructure, whilst also helping to promote the use of walking, cycling and using public transport, as set out within the South Cambridgeshire Business Plan 2019-2024.
- 3.3. It is welcomed that, within the South Cambridgeshire Business Plan, it recognises that, to build vibrant communities, there is a need to work with developers, parish councils and local people, which can also assist in raising the standards of communities.
- 3.4. The Councils should support the provision of new residential development in locations that are in proximity to existing employment areas, this contributes to the Councils' objective of "*helping to ensure people's homes are close to their jobs and can be accessed by walking, cycling and using public transport*".
- 3.5. Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn is located within walking distance of Melbourn Science Park, which provides employment opportunities within key knowledge-intensive industries.

3.6. Proposed residential development on Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn will contribute to ensuring that “*people’s homes are close to their jobs*”, whilst also supporting the vitality of this Science Park, in accordance with Greater Cambridge’s overall vision to retain its position as a world leader in research and knowledge based industry.

3.7. We welcome the recognition to need to build new homes to meet the needs of the future.

## **4. Chapter 3.6: The Wider Region**

### **3.6.5 Working with our neighbouring Local Authorities**

*Q5. Do you think we have identified the right cross-boundary issues and initiatives that affect ourselves and neighbouring areas?*

4.1. We support the Council’s recognition to need to co-operate with Neighbouring Authorities as part of developing a robust Local Plan, and it is welcomed that the Council note the need to collaborate with these Authorities on assessing their housing need. However, it is recognised there are a number of constraints across the neighbouring authorities, and therefore in addition to assessing need there should be an agreed approach to the delivery of the housing requirement (including if there is any unmet need from neighbouring authorities).

4.2. In accordance with the NPPF, it will be important that, to demonstrate effective and ongoing joint working, a Statement of Common Ground is prepared and maintained documenting the cross boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these.

## **5. Section 3.7: Relationship with Neighbourhood Planning**

5.1. The Council’s recognition that Neighbourhood Plans need to conform to the strategic policies of the Local Plan is welcomed. Neighbourhood Plans should not look to prevent growth and should accommodate for housing in accordance with the identification of the settlement within the settlement hierarchy.

5.2. It is for the Councils to take the lead on allocating strategic sites, to ensure that the overall housing need for Greater Cambridge is met, and to “*support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes*” (NPPF; Paragraph 59). The allocation of such strategic sites should be reflected within Neighbourhood Plans accordingly.

## **6. Chapter 4: The Big Themes**

*Q6. Do you agree with the potential big themes for the Local Plan?*

6.1. It is welcomed that the Greater Cambridge Local Plan is said to be centred on sustainable development, and the need to “*plan for homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure (transport, utilities, services and facilities) in the right places, alongside protecting and enhancing the environment*”. We consider that this accords with the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.2. The Greater Cambridge Partnership have set out the following overarching themes that will influence how homes, jobs and infrastructure are planned:

- Climate change
- Biodiversity and green spaces
- Wellbeing and social inclusion
- Great places

6.3. We have discussed each of these in turn below, however it is considered that the provision of new homes and jobs are also recognised as big themes, as these form part of sustainable development, and are therefore interlinked with the 4 big themes.

*Q7. How do you think we should prioritise these big themes? Rank the options below 1-4 (1-Most Preferred 4 – Least Preferred):*

6.4. We do not have a preference to the prioritisation of these big themes, rather that each of these should be considered as important as one another to ensure the consistent delivery of sustainable development within Greater Cambridge. Whilst the Councils should recognise that each of these themes have a role to play in plan-making and decision-making, proposed development should be considered on a site by site basis.

*Q8. How should the Local Plan help us achieve net zero carbon by 2050?*

6.5. The need to recognise and adapt to mitigate the impacts of climate change is agreed and it is supported that the Councils understand a need to encourage low carbon activities and alternatives to private car use. It is considered that this contributes to the overarching theme of encouraging sustainable development.

6.6. It is noted that adopted 2018 Local Plans include policies that respond to climate change, requiring large-scale developments to be exemplars in sustainability standards. Whilst the need to consider climate change when designing development is agreed, a balanced approach should be applied and policies should not be overly restrictive, which could render some development opportunities unviable.

6.7. The proposed residential development on Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn provides a sustainable location for new development with local public transport connections and pedestrian and cycle links. With appropriate masterplanning and design, the site is capable of delivering a sensitively designed scheme that could contribute to the local development needs of Greater Cambridge.

*Q10. Do you think we should require extra climate adaptation and resilience features to new developments?*

*Q11. Are there any other things we should be doing to adapt to climate change?*

6.8. In adapting to climate change it should be noted that new residential development, when designed correctly, can contribute to carbon offsetting through tree planting and other measures, and can encourage existing and new communities to adopt more sustainable methods of travel. This includes walking and cycling through the provision of attractive open spaces and green linkages.

6.9. Moreover, new development, and the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems, can alleviate existing fluvial and pluvial flood issues.

6.10. Wates Group selected The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) as Charity of the Year 2018-2020. Wates Group work in partnership with TCV to help raise funds to create healthier and happier communities for everyone, and transform even more precious green spaces. The partnership fits well with Wates Developments' ethos of sustainability and allows for employees of Wates to volunteer on projects across the country. Wates are currently looking to help the charity plant 15,000 native trees by 2022 as part of a 'Treeathlon'.

6.11. Policies relating to climate change should not be overly prescriptive and should not apply a blanket approach to additional climate adaption on all new developments, as this can render a development unviable.

*Q12. Biodiversity and Green Spaces - How should the Local Plan help us improve the natural environment?*

6.12. It is supported that both Councils have recognised the pressure on the natural environment and want to explore how the next Local Plan can do more to improve the green infrastructure network.

6.13. As set out above, new developments in sustainable locations such as that in Melbourn can enhance the provision of green infrastructure within Greater Cambridge through the provision of linkages as part of a new scheme, adding to and connecting to existing green spaces, therefore contributing to the overall connectivity and enhancing sustainable modes of transport.

*Q14. How do we achieve biodiversity net gain through new developments?*

6.14. It is noted that there is a need for new development to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain, and that The Environmental Bill (2019-2020), currently in Parliament, requires this gain to be 10%. We recognise a need for such a policy within the emerging Local Plan, and would suggest that any policy wording recognises that, where 10% biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved on site, that this is provided through financial contribution, subject to viability. Policies should be worded carefully in this regard, as to not prevent the supply of housing in the absence of a biodiversity net gain.

6.15. It is welcomed that the Councils recognise the benefits of new housing development in terms of providing an opportunity to enhance the existing biodiversity and landscape of an area, through the additional planting of trees and the provision of multi-functional Sustainable Drainage Systems.

*Q16. How should the Local Plan help us achieve 'good growth' that promotes wellbeing and social inclusion?*

6.16. The Greater Cambridge Local Plan states that, "*within South Cambridgeshire, there are specific issues facing some of those living in rural communities particularly those with limited access to services and transport.*"

6.17. Such an issue can be addressed through the provision of new medium to large-scale housing developments within rural communities, which can contribute to increased availability of affordable

housing, infrastructure improvements and community facilities. Housing in such locations can increase connectivity of existing communities to improved facilities and services. This should be recognised within future stages of this emerging Local Plan.

- 6.18. It is welcomed that the Councils recognise the benefits that creating new places can make, including making “*it easier to live healthy lifestyles*” through encouraging walking, cycling and exercise and ensuring access to a range of shops, services and facilities.
- 6.19. The Councils should therefore recognise that housing development within smaller settlements, such as Melbourn, should be favoured, as they can contribute to the vitality of the existing communities, through the provision of walking and cycling routes through the existing settlement and its facilities and services.
- 6.20. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan confirms the A10 cycleway to Melbourn as a proposed sustainable transport improvement. In determining the location of new residential development, the Councils should afford significant consideration to the location of such new and improved infrastructure.
- 6.21. Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn lies along this A10 cycle route and is within walking distance of local amenities including jobs, services and facilities within Melbourn’s village centre. Residential development on this site would contribute to the Councils’ aspiration to create new places that make “*it easier to live healthy lifestyles*”, and should therefore be considered as an appropriate location for development, which would accord with National and Local Policy in this regard.
- Q18. How do you think we can make sure that we achieve safe and inclusive communities when planning new development?*
- 6.22. It is agreed that promoting social inclusion is important, and should continue to be a key theme within this emerging Local Plan.
- 6.23. It should be recognised that new housing development, when designed correctly, can promote social inclusion by providing a range of housing types to meet the varied needs of the community. In this regard, it should be recognised that new housing development can enhance social cohesion within existing communities.
- 6.24. Medium-scaled residential development can contribute to the Councils’ housing need by delivering an array of house types to meet the varied housing requirements of the local area. Proposed residential development on Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn offers an opportunity to deliver much needed growth to the settlement, to support local housing need and enhance social cohesion. The site is in a sustainable location, in proximity to services and facilities and is available for development.
- 6.25. The Councils should not dictate a specific housing mix for all new developments across Greater Cambridge. All future policies should allow for sufficient flexibility to enable the housing mix within new schemes to be dictated by the market and robust evidence, in addition to the most recent Strategic Housing Market Availability Assessment.

*Q19. How do you think new developments should support healthy lifestyles?*

- 6.26. It should be recognised that new developments can support healthy lifestyles through the provision of public open space, and access to a range of facilities and services.
- 6.27. Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn is located in close proximity to Melbourn's facilities and services. The site benefits from access to existing pedestrian linkages into the settlement and future improved cycle links. It is considered that development within this location will encourage future occupiers to adopt sustainable modes of transport, including walking, thereby contributing to supporting healthy lifestyles.

*Q21. How should the Local Plan protect our heritage and ensure new development is well-designed?*

- 6.28. It is agreed that developers should engage with the local community as part of the development process and that communities should be involved as part of the decision making process, as advocated by the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 6.29. The Councils should support the provision of well-designed developments, which provide a housing mix that meets the local needs. Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn is capable of delivering a sensitively designed but comprehensive and well-connected sustainable development that could contribute to the local development needs of Greater Cambridge.

## **7. Section 4.5: Jobs**

*Q24. What are we already doing? How important do you think continuing economic growth is for the next Local Plan?*

- 7.1. It is noted that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) (2018) showed that recent employment growth has been faster than previously forecasted.
- 7.2. It is welcomed that the Council recognise the importance of providing sufficient flexibility so that if *"this ambitious economic growth is achieved, it is accompanied by the homes and infrastructure to support it"*.
- 7.3. Whilst it is welcomed that the Councils have suggested a significant increase in housing need for this emerging Local Plan period, over and above the Standardised Methodology, there is evidence to demonstrate that economic growth within the area has already surpassed that which has been forecasted.
- 7.4. To ensure the consistent delivery of homes to support additional un-forecasted economic growth, we recommend that the Councils apply an additional buffer to their current housing need, resulting in a dwelling per annum figure that is beyond the 2,900 dwellings currently proposed.



## 8. Section 4.6: Homes

Q31. *How should the Local Plan help to meet our needs for the amount and types of new homes?*

- 8.1. It is agreed that housing is one of the most important issues in planning, and that if the Councils do not plan for enough homes, this could worsen affordability, limit the local economy and damage social inclusion.
- 8.2. It is considered the Council should allocate a range of sites, across South Cambridgeshire, including within rural settlements such as Melbourn. This will ensure that there is a consistent delivery of housing across Greater Cambridge. Proposed residential development on Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn offers an opportunity to deliver much needed growth to the settlement, to support housing need. The site is in a sustainable location, in proximity to services and facilities. The site is available for development.

Q32. *Do you think we should plan for a higher number of homes than the minimum required by government, to provide flexibility to support the growing economy?*

- 8.3. It is welcomed that the Councils recognise that the Standard OAN Methodology does not account for changing economic circumstances or other factors, and therefore higher that higher figures can be considered.
- 8.4. This is particularly relevant to Greater Cambridge, in light of the Councils' existing commitment to "doubling the economic output of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough areas over the forthcoming 25 years". Moreover, as set out above, this increase in GDV has already been higher than forecasted.
- 8.5. It is noted that the Greater Cambridge Local Plan has suggested a significant increase in housing, over and above the Standardised Methodology, to account for this increase in economic growth, as illustrated below.

	Adopted Local Plan (2018)	OAN Standardised Methodology	Economic Growth based on CPIER
Dwellings (Per Annum)	1,675	1,800	2,900

- 8.6. The provision of an additional 1,100 dwellings per annum on top of the standard methodology is strongly supported.
- 8.7. It is unclear, however, in calculating this additional housing need to support economic growth whether the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) has allowed for any flexibility should this economic growth surpass that which has been forecasted.
- 8.8. As set out above, there is evidence to demonstrate that economic growth within the area has already surpassed that which has been forecasted and, as a result, demand for housing within Greater Cambridge has been "exceptionally high and housebuilding has not kept up".
- 8.9. We would therefore suggest that, in calculating a housing need per annum, the Councils should allow for an additional buffer to ensure the consistent delivery of homes to support additional, un-

forecasted economic growth, which will also ensure that affordability issues within Greater Cambridge do not exacerbate.

- 8.10. It is noted that the Councils' adopted Local Plans (2018) have allocated a large number of dwellings within major sites on the edge of Cambridge. This spatial strategy is not disputed and it is noted that such sites have the potential to deliver housing beyond the existing adopted Local Plan period.
- 8.11. In recognising the lag times associated with the delivery of such large-scale developments, it is considered that these major allocations should be supplemented with small to medium scale sites which can also contribute to the consistent delivery of housing. Such sites should be located within the smaller settlements to contribute to their vitality and viability and to ensure that the more rural communities do not become stagnant.
- 8.12. Land East side of Cambridge Road, Melbourn offers an opportunity to deliver a cohesive scheme in a sustainable location, which could contribute to the Councils' overall housing need in the short to medium-term. Proposed residential development of this site would accord with the Councils' recognition of needing to provide market and affordable housing to meet the varied needs of the community, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework.

*Q33. What kind of housing do you think we should provide?*

- 8.13. The emerging Local Plan states that the Councils "*must plan for the needs of people with disabilities as well as specialist housing, through setting the right standards of provision.*"
- 8.14. This is noted and it is welcomed that the Councils are seeking to provide inclusive communities, as advocated by the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 8.15. As set out above, however, it is important that housing mix should be flexible, informed by relevant need assessments but also taking into account market information and viability. We would object to the inclusion of a stringent policy that seeks to provide a definitive housing mix on all developments across the Greater Cambridge area, not only would this represent a blanket approach and one which we would consider to be an unsound policy.

*Q35. How should we ensure a high standard of housing is built in our area?*

- 8.16. It is noted that the adopted Local Plans (2018) require for housing developments to meet National Space Standards. It should be noted however, that such a requirement can impact on a scheme's viability, particularly if a scheme is needing to meet other requirements, for instance significant financial contributions and methods of contributing to the provision of renewable energy.
- 8.17. We consider that a flexible approach should be applied, reviewing proposals on a case by case basis. It should also be noted that the NPPF (Footnote 46) is clear that the national described space standards can be adopted where the need for internal space standards can be justified. Should the Councils continue to wish to adopt to such a policy then there would need to be clear evidence to justify this requirement is still needed to be applied to developments across Greater Cambridge.

## 9. Section 4.7: Infrastructure

9.1. It is agreed that the provision of infrastructure, at the right time, is important to ensure sustainable growth within Greater Cambridge. The Councils have adopted a proactive approach to infrastructure delivery to date and recognised the importance of infrastructure delivery when allocating strategic sites. Such an approach is welcomed, and it is considered that the Councils should continue to adopt this proactive approach in this emerging Local Plan period.

*Q36. How should the Local Plan ensure the right infrastructure is provided in line with development?*

*Q38. What do you think the priorities are for new infrastructure?*

9.2. It should be recognised that growth and housing allocations within rural communities can also contribute to improved infrastructure within these locations, with the potential provision of walking and cycle routes subsequently contributing to meeting the Councils' aspiration in providing access to new services and facilities for existing residents.

9.3. There will therefore be some areas of growth within Greater Cambridge where there is a necessary key dependence on achieving improvements that satisfy the requirements of the NPPF and minimise impact on communities. Such improvements should be addressed at the Local Plan stage to assist in the delivery of much needed growth to these areas.

9.4. In preparing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to support this emerging Local Plan, we consider that it will be imperative that evidence shows the value of the infrastructure improvements and that viability forms part of the assessment. This will minimise unnecessarily costly infrastructure that will place a burden on CIL and S106 contributions to the detriment of delivering other necessary aspects, such as affordable housing, education and health facilities.

## 10. Section 5: Where to Build?

10.1. To date, the housing growth within Greater Cambridge has been focussed around the edges of the city and within large new settlements, which are intended to provide housing beyond the plan period.

10.2. It is agreed that the most suitable strategy for the next Local Plan will require a careful balance to provide a sustainable and achievable strategy.

### Section 5.2.5: Supporting Villages

*Q40. How flexible should the Local Plan be towards development of both jobs and homes on the edge of villages?*

*Q41. Do you think the Local Plan should be more flexible about the size of developments allowed within village boundaries (frameworks), allowing more homes on sites that become available?*

10.3. The Council should apply a flexible approach to both jobs and homes on the edge of villages, to ensure the consistent provision of housing during the Local Plan period. In accordance with the NPPF, the Council should not apply a blanket approach to protecting the countryside, rather the countryside should be protected on the basis of landscape importance and contribution to the openness of the wider area.

10.4. Development should be supported where it is considered to meet the three strands of sustainability and to this end, settlements such as Melbourn, which are considered to rank highly within the settlement hierarchy, should accommodate development. Development on the outskirts of sustainable settlements should be supported.

### *What are the Choices?*

10.5. The emerging Local Plan identifies the following “options” for pursuing housing growth across Greater Cambridge, including:

- Densification of existing urban areas
- Edge of Cambridge - outside the Green Belt
- Edge of Cambridge - Green Belt
- Dispersal - new settlements
- Dispersal - villages
- Public transport corridors

### Option 1- Densification of existing urban areas

*Q43. What do you think about densification?*

10.6. We consider that a focus on densifying urban areas will result in issues relating to congestion. This in turn could result in issues relating to poor air quality, therefore failing to meet the Councils’ overarching vision of creating great places and encouraging wellbeing.

10.7. Whilst this option may achieve an element of new homes and jobs within urban areas, it is not likely to be sufficient on its own to meet the growing needs across Greater Cambridge.

### Options 2+3 - Edge of Cambridge – Outside the Green Belt / Green Belt

*Q44. + Q45. What do you think about developing around the edge of Cambridge on land outside / in the Green Belt?*

10.8. In focusing growth along the edge of Cambridge, we consider that this could result in stagnant growth within Greater Cambridge’s existing rural communities, resulting in a loss of their vitality and viability.

10.9. This strategy is therefore not considered to contribute to the “big themes” within the emerging Local Plan, including creating great places and promoting wellbeing and social inclusion, as it will result in a concentration of development across Greater Cambridge.

10.10. It is also considered that, by pursuing a growth strategy that seeks to focus development on the outskirts of Cambridge City, this will not assist in contributing to its identity as a compact city, as set out in in the adopted Local Plan (2018) and supported by Historic England.

### Option 4 - Dispersal - New Settlements

*Q46. What do you think about creating planned new settlements?*

10.11. It is recognised that new settlements can provide housing for periods beyond the Local Plan, and due to their scale, they are also able to provide infrastructure improvements for the benefit of existing local communities.

- 10.12. In our view, however, there is already a focus for large housing growth within new settlements within the adopted Local Plans (2018). It is also noted that the emerging Local Plan confirms that Greater Cambridge is already looking at two major new areas of growth, including North East Cambridge and Cambridge Airport.
- 10.13. Each of these two major sites are anticipated to require phasing, infrastructure and delivery plans and include a range of employment opportunities, open space and a housing tenure and mix compatible with the most recent SHMA. It is also unclear as to whether or not the issues raised relating to the allocation at Cambridge Airport have been rectified, in terms of whether the three options identified are appropriate and to what extent have these alternatives been assessed and considered available.
- 10.14. It is also well-known that such large scale developments often have a significant lag time between submission of any planning application and the first build year.<sup>1</sup>
- 10.15. Rather than focussing primarily on growth with new settlements, it is considered that a combination of both short-term and long-term sites and also large-scaled new settlements in combination with relatively smaller dispersal across the villages should be allocated within the emerging Local Plan. This will ensure the continued supply of housing in Greater Cambridge.

## Options 5 - Dispersal – Villages

*Q47. What do you think about growing our villages?*

- 10.16. We support the need for Great Cambridge to focus their spatial strategy on growing existing villages.
- 10.17. Focussing growth within the villages dispersed across Greater Cambridge would contribute to ensuring the vitality of these existing settlements by increasing economic spending within these areas and providing infrastructure improvements for the benefit of existing residents.
- 10.18. Such a spatial strategy would also support the rural economy by helping businesses to thrive, in accordance with the Council's objective of growing local businesses and economies.
- 10.19. Melbourn benefits from a range of facilities, services and employment and business opportunities, including the Melbourn Science Park. Within the adopted Local Plan, Melbourn has accommodated little development, despite its identification as a 2nd tier settlement. It is considered that residential allocations within Melbourn, specifically Land East side of Cambridge Road, will ensure the vitality of the existing settlement by increasing economic spending and providing infrastructure improvements for the benefit of existing residents.

## Option 6 - Public Transport Corridors

*Q48. What do you think about siting development along transport corridors?*

- 10.20. It is agreed that Greater Cambridge should be focusing the growth of homes and jobs along key public transport hubs, by expanding and intensifying existing settlements. Much of this points to locations and settlements to the west and south of Cambridge.

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<sup>1</sup> Housing Delivery on Strategic Sites (Colin Buchanan; 2005)

- 10.21. This growth should be focused along existing transport infrastructure such as the A10, including in existing settlements such as Melbourn, which does not lie within the Green Belt. Melbourn also lies in proximity to Meldreth train station, which provides frequent services between the settlement and Cambridge City.
- 10.22. It is noted that there are aspirations for a Cambridge South new station, to provide better public transport options to Addenbrooke's hospital. The provision of such infrastructure will result in increased capacity along this rail line, and this should be afforded weight in the determination of the location of new residential development within Greater Cambridge.
- 10.23. Consideration should also be given to proposed transport links, which will increase the accessibility of existing rural settlements, and their capacity to accommodate growth.

### Summary for Spatial Strategy

- 10.24. It is considered that Greater Cambridge should adopt a balanced spatial strategy, focusing the majority of growth within the existing towns and villages, to support their vitality, and supplemented by the large strategic allocations within the new settlements.
- 10.25. It is considered that locating new development along transport corridors is also important, to ensure that new housing allocations are accessible and sustainable.

## **11. Section 6.2: Learning from the adopted 2018 Local Plans**

*Q49. Do you have any views on any specific policies in the two adopted 2018 Local Plans? If so, what are they?*

- 11.1. Melbourn is identified within South Cambridge's adopted Local Plan as a Minor Rural Centre. This is 2<sup>nd</sup> tier in the adopted settlement hierarchy. Policy S/6 of the adopted Local Plan states that "*the need for jobs and homes will be met as far as possible: On the edge of Cambridge; at new settlements; and in the rural area at Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres.*"
- 11.2. Melbourn is located along the A10, which has been identified as a committed walking and cycling route into Cambridge City, and also within walking distance of Meldreth train station, providing frequent links to nearby settlements, including Cambridge City to the north. It is also noted that Cambridge South new station will result in increased capacity along this rail link, further increasing Melbourn's accessibility to public transport.
- 11.3. The settlement also benefits from an array of services and facilities, including but not restricted to:
- Community Health Centre;
  - Public Houses;
  - Several Places of Worship;
  - Primary and Secondary School;
  - Food store; and
  - A number of employment opportunities.
- 11.4. Within the adopted Local Plan, Melbourn has accommodated for little additional allocated growth, with just one allocation H1/e (Land off New Road and rear of Victoria Way), despite its

identification as a Minor Rural Centre (adopted Policy S/9). As such, it is considered that, as part of this emerging Local Plan, Melbourn should be allocated housing growth to support its position within the settlement hierarchy and its existing residents.

- 11.5. Land East side of Cambridge Road, located in proximity to the settlement boundary of Melbourn, is a suitable, available and deliverable site, which is able to accommodate residential development to meet the housing needs of Melbourn. The site lies in a sustainable location, in walking distance to the facilities and services within the settlement, together with the strategic road network and also Meldreth train station, which provides direct links with Cambridge train station in the north. This site should be allocated for residential development.

## **12. Evidence Base**

### Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options Report (LUC for Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council) 2019

#### Commentary on Spatial Distribution Options

- 12.1. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scores each of the spatial distribution options against the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives.
- 12.2. In assessing the dispersal of development within the rural settlements, the SA assesses that such a spatial strategy would result in a minor negative effect in respect of land, minerals and water.
- 12.3. Whilst it is not disputed that such a spatial strategy would result in loss of greenfield land and therefore would be likely to have a minor negative effect in respect of land, it is not considered that such a spatial strategy has been properly assessed against the minerals and water objectives.
- 12.4. The SA suggests that there are only some Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Consultation Areas across the villages within Greater Cambridge, and therefore it should not be assumed that such a spatial strategy would likely have a minor negative effect on these areas. Indeed, it is more likely that the distribution of housing across these rural settlements could be comfortably located outside of such areas, therefore resulting in no impact on Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Consultation Areas.
- 12.5. Similarly, it should not be assumed that the adoption of this spatial strategy option would result in a likely minor negative effect on water. As with the Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Consultation Areas, it is likely that the distribution of housing across these rural settlements could be comfortably located outside of the Special Protection Zones, resulting in a negligible effect on water.
- 12.6. At this stage, it is not considered that the SA has sufficient evidence to come to such an assessment with regards to pursuing a spatial strategy relating to development within the villages. It is therefore recommended that the spatial strategy relating to Option 5: Dispersal – villages, is reassessed accordingly.

#### Homes for our future Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019 – 2023

- 12.7. This document sets out the following priorities for “*Building the right homes in the right places that people need and can afford to live in*”, which are as follows:

- Priority 1: Increasing the delivery of homes, including affordable housing, along with sustainable transport and infrastructure, to meet housing need
- Priority 2: Diversifying the housing market and accelerating delivery
- Priority 3: Achieving a high standard of design and quality of new homes and communities
- Priority 4: Improving housing conditions and making best use of existing homes
- Priority 5: Promoting health and wellbeing through housing
- Priority 6: Preventing and tackling homelessness and rough sleeping
- Priority 7: Working with key partners to innovate and maximise resources available

12.8. It is welcomed that the Council confirm that they will be working and engaging with developers to ensure the consistent delivery of housing.

12.9. These seven priorities are agreed, and it should be recognised that new housing development, designed effectively and in the right locations can contribute to meeting these priorities.

12.10. It is also welcomed that this Housing Strategy recognises the need for investment in sustainable transport and infrastructure is critical to securing the delivery of economic and housing growth. The provision of such infrastructure will assist in unlocking growth within South Cambridgeshire's rural villages and towns, to support their existing communities.

12.11. It is agreed that there is an affordability issue within Greater Cambridge with high prices being fuelled by high demand as a result of its economic growth and success. It should be recognised that, in addition to needing to increase the provision of affordable housing within the area, the supply of more market housing will also assist in meeting the current unmet demand, therefore contributing to making housing more affordable within Greater Cambridge.

12.12. It is agreed that housing should be located close to good transport links and that this can contribute to making living more affordable to households. This is considered particularly relevant in terms of allocating housing within the rural settlements, outside of Cambridge City, in places such as Melbourn, which has good access to rail links.

#### Draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority) 2019

12.13. Greater Cambridge's focus on the provision of significant pieces of transport infrastructure is welcomed. Aspirations for a Cambridge South new station, to provide better public transport options to Addenbrooke's hospital, is also welcomed. The anticipation that the provision of such infrastructure will result in an increase of capacity along the rail line is also strongly supported.

12.14. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan also confirms the focus on delivering sustainable transport improvements, including the A10 cycleway to Melbourn and four cross-city cycling schemes. The provision of such infrastructure, connecting existing rural settlements within Greater Cambridge with Cambridge City is strongly supported.

12.15. The Councils should recognise that such infrastructure will encourage a greater level of development within the villages and towns along this rail and cycle link, including within settlements such as Melbourn. The locations of such large pieces of infrastructure should be afforded significant weight in the determination of the Council's spatial strategy for housing growth.



## APPENDIX 1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN

# Land On The East Side Of Cambridge Road Site Location Plan

