

# **Greater Cambridge Local Plan – Issues and Options 2020**

## **Representations by Valerie Watson, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

### **Response to Question 2.2.2 – Land South of Cambridge Road, Melbourn**

#### Introduction

This representation is made by Valerie Watson (the owner) who seeks to highlight to the Council that land south of Cambridge Road, Melbourn (outlined in red on the attached plan) is suitable, achievable and available to deliver new affordable and market homes to meet the housing needs of Greater Cambridge.

The site is approximately 24 acres in size and can deliver a new sustainable urban extension to Melbourn and has the capacity to accommodate around 250 new homes, including 40% affordable housing. The site is available immediately and has no major technical constraints. Development of the site can commence immediately after reserved matters consent has been granted and new homes could be delivered within five years.

There is a national importance associated with the growth of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford arc, therefore, a range and choice of deliverable, sustainable sites in Greater Cambridge need to be identified by the Council to ensure homes are delivered to meet the current and future housing needs.

#### Sustainability of the Site

Policy S/6 of the Adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 (LP) states, amongst other things, that the need for more jobs and homes will be met as far as possible within a hierarchy of locations, being a) on the edge of Cambridge, b) at new settlements and c) in the rural area at Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres. The village of Melbourn is identified as a Minor Rural Centre in Policy S/9 of the LP. Therefore, the Greater Cambridge Plan would not be in conflict with the South Cambridgeshire should it allocate this land at Melbourn, South of Cambridge Road.

Melbourn is currently identified as a 'Minor Rural Centre'. There is an abundance of local amenities and public transport links to accommodate sustainable growth. The population grew from 4,414 to 4,689 between 2011 and 2016. Development of the site would be a sustainable method of ensuring the local services, including schools, are supported and can continue to thrive.

There are two bus stops adjacent to the site on Cambridge Road (Opp Portway & Near Portway). These are serviced by the 'A' and 'D' Stagecoach Buses. 'A' buses travel from Royston to Cambridge (via Melbourn) then to St Ives and then Huntingdon. 'D' buses travel from Fenstanton, St Ives to Cambridge and then to Royston via Melbourn.

The site also benefits from proximity to Meldreth train station which is on the Thameslink London-Cambridge Line. The station is situated approximately 1.5 miles north west from the site. Part of the route is via a dedicated public footpath; access by foot and cycle is possible. Journeys by train into Cambridge are half hourly and take 16-18 minutes. Journeys to London's Kings Cross take approximately 1h 10m. There are approximately 36 trains per day running from Meldreth to London Kings Cross.

There are a number of amenities and employment areas within Melbourn, including, Melbourn Science Park – 0.2 miles west; Melbourn Community Hub – 0.5 miles west; Premier (Convenience Store), High Street – 0.6 miles west; Co-Op Food, High Street – 0.6 miles west and; Melbourn Community Health Centre, Orchard Road – 0.6 miles south west. These are also accessible by foot/cycle.

Schooling is within walking distance. Both Melbourn Village College (11-16 Yrs) – 0.6 miles west (Pupils 596 / Capacity 740) and Melbourn Primary School (4-11 Yrs) – 0.7 miles west. A pre-school nursery is located approximately 0.7 miles to the north-west. Again, these schools are walkable by safe pedestrian access.

### Technical Aspects

The site is free from any constraints which would preclude its early delivery.

The site is within Flood Zone 1 which does not pose any restraint to development.

The site is currently used for arable farming resulting in a low biodiversity level. The proposed scheme will seek to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.

In terms of landscape, the existing settlement edge to the west of the site is already visible from the eastern approach to the settlement on Cambridge Road. Therefore, there is already an urban feel to the land along Cambridge Road. Development of the land would be able to include additional tree and foliage planting in its eastern and southern edge in order to provide a filtered countryside boundary.

Vehicular access to the site could be achieved by the introduction of a new junction from Cambridge Road. Furthermore, traffic can access the A10 without the need to travel through the settlement.

The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan indicates that a minimum of 3.2 hectares of open space per 1,000 people as well as children's open space is required on new developments. It is confirmed that this can be included in the masterplan of the site.

### Conclusion

This representation confirms that that the land shown in the attached plan is available immediately for development. It is not constrained and a suitably designed layout/masterplan would enable an appropriate development that would result in sustainable, positive growth of Melbourn, whilst supporting the wider Greater Cambridge housing needs.