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Agent number:

Representor number:

Representation number:



Greater Cambridge Local Plan Issues and Options 2020 Consultation

Response Form

This form has two parts to complete (please use black ink):

Part A – Your Details

Part B – Your Response

If you need any further information or assistance in completing this form please contact the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Policy Team on: 01954 713183 or Localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org

All comments must be received by 5pm on Monday 24 February 2020.

Data Protection

We will treat your data in accordance with our [Privacy Notices](#). Information will be used by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council solely in relation to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Issues and Options 2020. Please note that all responses will be available for public inspection and cannot be treated as confidential. Comments, including names, are published on our website. **By submitting this response form you are agreeing to these conditions.**

The Council is not allowed to automatically notify you of future consultations unless you 'opt-in'.

Do you wish to be kept informed about future stages of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan?

Please tick: Yes No

Part A – Your Details

Please note that we cannot formally register your comments without your details.

Note: If you wish to make quick comments without providing your details, at this early stage in the plan making process you can do so directly on the website, providing just an email contact if you would like to be kept informed of further stages in the process, at www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/local-plan

Name:	The Landowners	Agent's name:	Lisa Skinner
Name of organisation: (if applicable)		Name of Agent's organisation: (if applicable)	████████████████████ ████████████████
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Postcode:		Postcode:	██████████
Email:		Email:	
Tel:		Tel:	

Signature:	Date:
If you are submitting the form electronically, no signature is required.	

Part B – Your Response

Document details:	
Which document are you commenting on? (please tick)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greater Cambridge Local Plan Issues and Options 2020 <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability Appraisal of Issues and Options <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat Regulation Assessment Scoping Report
Question / Paragraph / Figure (Please state)	

Comments:
Please provide your response to the Issues and Options question, or views on the section of the other document you are commenting on. Where the question suggests options for the answers please start with indicating your choice (continue on separate A4 sheets(s) if necessary). Please use a separate response form for each question you are responding to.
See submitted statement.

Summary of Comments:
If your comments are longer than 100 words, please summarise the main issues raised.
See submitted statement.

Completed response forms must be received by 5pm on Monday 24 February 2020.

Email: Localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org or post it to:

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Policy Team
c/o South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB23 6EA



Phase 2

Greater Cambridge Local Plan – The First Conversation

Issues and Options 2020 Consultation

Representations in response to:

Regulation 18 stage of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Land to the west of Station Road, Meldreth, SG8 6ND

On Behalf of

The landowners

February 2020

Our Ref: C20010

Phase 2 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT LIMITED

Quality Assurance

Site Name: Land to the west of Station Road, Meldreth, SG8 6ND

Client name: The Landowners

Type of Report: Local Plan Representations

Prepared by: Lisa Skinner

Signed

Date: February 2020

Reviewed by: Lindsay Trevillian

Signed

Date: February 2020



Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	The Site and Surrounding area	2
3	Planning Policy	5
4	Response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP)	9
5	Conclusions	25

Appendices

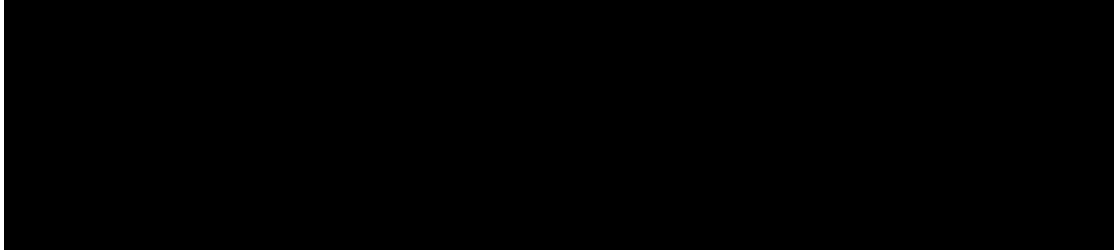
Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan

Appendix 2 – Inset maps from the adopted Local Plan for Meldreth and Melbourn

Appendix 3 – Site Photographs

1 Introduction

- 1.1 These representations have been prepared on behalf of the five landowners, (the “owners”) detailed below:



in respect of Land to the west of Station Road, Meldreth, SG8 6ND, (the “Site”), that is clearly shown as indicated on the red line plan attached to Appendix 1 to this report. This site was put forward for consideration to the Call for Sites in March 2019 as a potential housing allocation with some employment use.

- 1.2 This Report provides our clients response to the Regulation 18 stage of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, Issues and Options of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. This was published for consultation between Monday 13th January to 5pm on Monday 24 February 2020. We provide responses to the matters of principal interest to our clients interest.

2 The Site and Surrounding area

2.1 Meldreth village is situated approximately four miles to the north-east of the market town of Royston and 10 miles to the south-west of Cambridge. It is well served by transportation infrastructure having its own railway station (on the Cambridge to Kings Cross line) with regular services that serve Meldreth and the adjoining village of Melbourn. There is also easy access to the A10.

2.2 Meldreth has a good range of facilities according to the village history web site including a Village Hall, community room for the elderly, pre-school, primary school, Meldreth Manor and Orchard Manor, church, pub and train station. In addition, the following facilities are available:

Retail services

- a post office/shop
- a butcher
- two farm shops
- a take-away restaurant
- a hairdressers

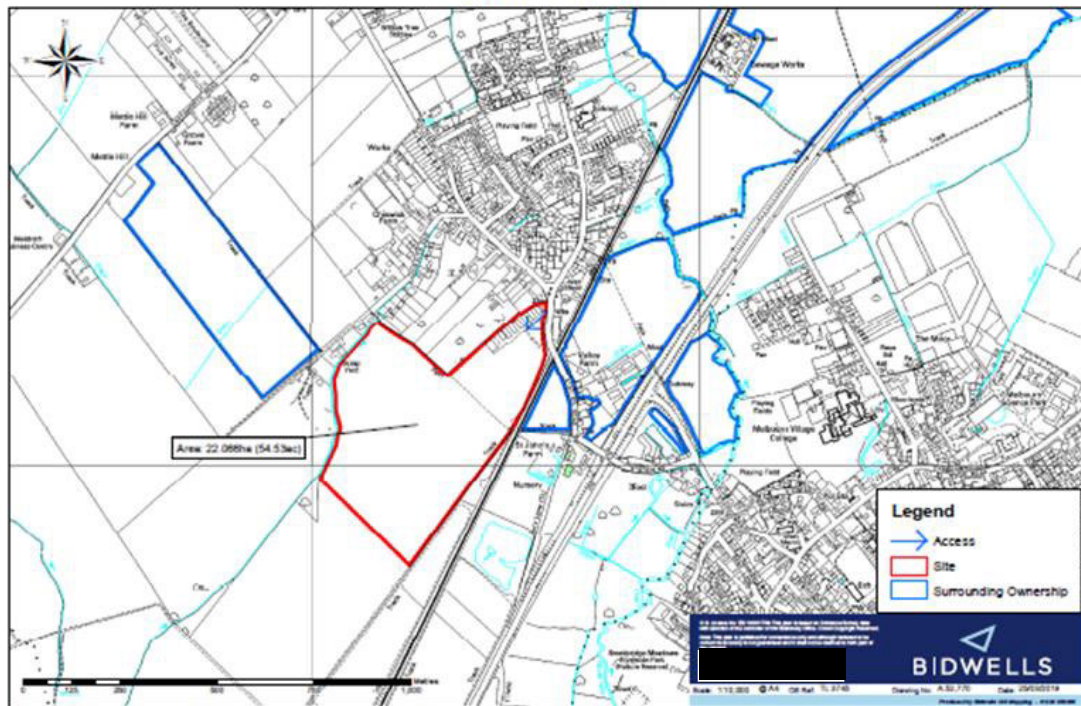
Leisure facilities

- recreation ground with children's playground and football pitch
- two tennis courts
- bowls green
- croquet lawn
- petanque pistes
- local nature reserve

2.3 Melbourn nearby also has a good range of facilities and services including a doctor's surgery, a primary and secondary school, local supermarket, butcher, village store, 2 pubs, 2 restaurants, 1 take-away, 2 petrol stations, café, dentist, pharmacy and building society. In terms of sports and social facilities, the village offers a wide range of sports and social clubs including bowls, football, judo, tennis, swimming and squash. There is a large village recreation ground with a cricket pitch, an allotments association, 3 active churches and a community hall.

2.4 Our clients have two land holdings that have been submitted to the Council as part of the call for sites in March 2019. The site subject to this report is referred to as land to the west of Station Road and the second site, land to the east of Station Road is subject to a separate representation. The Site the subject of these representation is clearly shown in the following extract:

Land at Meldreth



- 2.5 The adjoining land identified in blue on the above drawing is also within the ownership of the landowners. The land identified within the red line or a combination of the blue land is capable of being brought forward in full or part to support either of the main submissions that form part of the consultation process.
- 2.6 The site comprises approximately 22ha of land that is currently used for agricultural purposes with several former agricultural buildings converted to commercial uses along the northern boundary of the site. The site therefore comprises a mix of brownfield land used for commercial purposes with a large area of hardstanding and greenfield land formed by the agricultural fields. The surrounding landscape is typically of low value, the western parcel being generally flat and contained by the railway to the south east.
- 2.7 The site adjoins the existing settlement boundary and is located near to the station entrance. It is well connected to nearby footpath and cycleways that link to the settlement of Melbourn. It is outside of the Sewage TW odour zone, located in Flood Zone 1, is not within or adjacent to any local wildlife site and is located outside of the Green Belt. Development of this Site would therefore form a logical extension to the village.,
- 2.8 The site lends itself readily to housing, public open space to serve Meldreth and potentially a small office start-up business park, as considered appropriate. There is capacity to accommodate up to 400 dwellings, associated amenity space and approximately 0.5 ha for employment use to accommodate current on-site demand. The proposed development would provide the opportunity to remove the old commercial units, provide a range of house types (market and affordable), improve transport links to the train station, include improved

access to the site via Station Road and links to the wider area of Meldreth and Melbourn through footpath and cycle links. There is also sufficient land to increase biodiversity within the developed site and surrounding land to serve Meldreth. There is an existing access to the site, no physical or environmental constraints that would prevent development coming forward or known abnormal costs. Utilities are already available on site and development could be delivered within the next 5 years.

- 2.9 There are a variety of combined shared services between the villages of Meldreth and Melbourn. The range of services and sustainable location of the Site lead it to being entirely suitable for a mixed-use development.
- 2.10 The benefits to the area of the proposed development include improved access and footpaths increasing safety in close proximity to the train station, amenity space to serve the residential area and wider community, provision of employment space and a mixture of residential housing types.

3 Planning Policy

3.1 South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and Cambridge City Council have Local Plans that were adopted in 2018 and each Plan includes a policy that makes a commitment to an early review. This forms part of the commitment to the City Deal agreement with the Government established in 2013. The Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) the subject of this consultation is the first stage in this commitment to a single Local Plan to cover “Greater Cambridge”. The timetable anticipates a submission to the Secretary of State for examination by the end of Summer 2022 with adoption planned for Summer 2023. The Plan will cover the period up to 2040.

3.2 The existing policy framework for the Site currently encompasses the following documents:

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan adopted in 2018 that covers the period from 2011 to 2031;
and

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Existing Planning Policy - South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (SCDCLP)

3.3 The adopted Local Plan acknowledges that South Cambridgeshire is a mainly rural district but is significantly influenced by the city itself. Sustainable development and a comprehensive approach to encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of travel are seen as critical for the future.

3.4 Within the Local Plan, the strategy for the rural area classifies the villages into 4 groupings that aims to direct housing to the most sustainable locations. The villages were classified following a review of the services and facilities, education, public transport and employment available at each settlement.

3.5 In relation to the site the subject of these representations, Meldreth is currently classified as a Group Village under policy S/10 where there are some services and facilities allowing only some of the basic day-to-day requirements of their residents to be met without the need to travel outside the village. The policy currently allows proposals up to 8 dwellings on sites and up to 15 dwellings on brownfield sites within the development framework for the village.

3.6 Other key policies from the adopted Local Plan that are relevant to the site are as follows:

3.7 Policy S/6 sets out the development strategy to 2031 in relation to the need for jobs and homes with the following order of preference for development:

a. On the edge of Cambridge;

b. At new settlements;

c. In the rural area at Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres.

3.8 Point 4 of the policy states:

“Development in the rural area will be limited, with allocations for jobs and housing focused on Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, and rural settlement policies providing for windfall development for different categories of village consistent with the level of local service provision and quality of public transport access to Cambridge or a market town.”

3.9 Policy TI/2 refers to Planning for Sustainable Travel. Development must be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, and promote sustainable travel appropriate to its location. Reference to walking and cycling between home and nearby centres of attraction, and to bus stops or railway stations, to provide real travel choice for some or all of the journey, in accordance with Policy HQ/1.

Environmental Matters

3.10 In late 2018, SCDC declared a ‘Climate Emergency’ and backed a motion of support for a transition to zero carbon by 2050 in the next Local Plan. However, the need to reduce carbon and address climate change is generally growing in public awareness. Whilst the policies for implementing zero carbon by 2050 are not yet fully detailed, it is clear that the Council is moving forward on its commitment to be a leader in the transition to zero carbon.

The National Planning Policy Framework

3.11 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published in March 2012, and subsequently updated in 2018 and 2019. This sets out the Government’s planning policies and how they are to be applied. The NPPF stresses the main purpose of the planning system is to help achieve sustainable development and sets out three dimensions to sustainable development: an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective.

3.12 There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and local authorities are expected to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area and local plans are expected to meet objectively assessed needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change. In particular, paragraph 80 of the NPPF confirms that, “significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.”

3.13 The NPPF sets out the required approach to Plan-making in paragraphs 15 – 37. Each Planning Authority should set out the strategic policies for the area in the Local Plan including the homes and jobs needed in the area. Crucially, Local Plans should:

- be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable.
- be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;
- contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;
- be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and
- serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).

3.14 Paragraph 31 seeks to ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up to date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area.

[Soundness of the Plan](#)

3.15 Paragraph 35 of the NPPF states that during a Local Plan examination, an independent inspector will determine the soundness of that Plan in accordance with the four tests listed below:

- a) **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- b) **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- c) **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
- d) **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework.

3.16 In preparing these representations we have had full regard to the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) policies on the soundness of emerging Local Plans. Our representations on the specific policies are made with reference to these tests.

4 Response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP)

4.1 We have reviewed the GCLP and respond as follows:

Question 1. How do you think we should involve our communities and stakeholders in developing the Plan?

4.2 We agree that it is essential to reach out to wider groups in the consultation process and ensure that stakeholders are fully aware of the approach to development within the area. Development is often viewed as having a negative impact by existing communities, and it is essential that the positive aspects of growth are appropriately presented.

Question 2. 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.

4.3 We have already submitted two sites for consideration and stated there is flexibility within our clients ownership regarding the land identified within the red line and other land highlighted in blue.

Question 3. Please submit any sites for green space and wildlife habitats you wish to suggest for consideration through 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.

4.4 No comment.

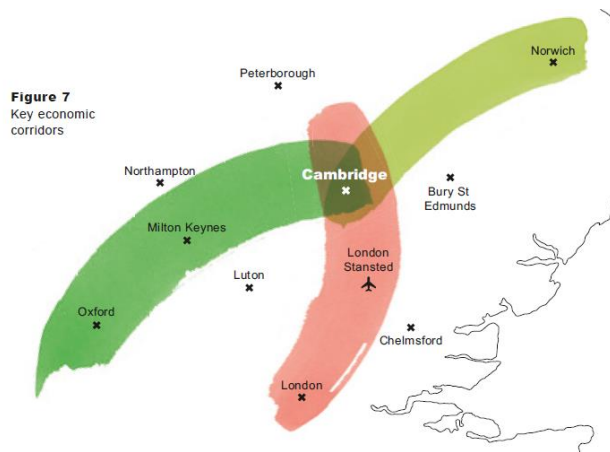
Question 4 Do you agree that planning to 2040 is an appropriate date in the future to plan for?

4.5 The councils are anticipating adoption in 2023. Having regard to the current timescales and work required prior to adoption , this would only leave 17 years up to 2040 for the plan period. The climate change strategy also refers to net zero by 2050, 10 years beyond the plan period. Paragraph 22 of the NPPF states a Local Plan should cover a minimum period of 15 years from adoption.

4.6 There are also significant areas of growth identified in the Plan including the Oxford/Cambridge Arc. This scale and nature of development is of a strategic nature and the plan period may not be sufficient to ensure delivery within this timeframe. There is already an acknowledgement that if the level of growth continues at current levels, a review of housing/employment numbers would need to take place during the plan period. If a longer plan period is not considered appropriate, it is essential that the Plan is flexible to change and allow further allocations of land to meet the needs identified. If this does not occur, the level of growth will either be restricted or led by appeal.

Question 5 Do you think we have identified the right cross-boundary issues and initiatives that affect ourselves and neighbouring areas?

- 4.7 The Greater Cambridge Local Plan aims to create key economic corridors that will be impact the planned growth. This is shown in Figure 7 that identifies the key economic corridors, namely The Oxford-Cambridge Arc, London-Stansted-Cambridge and the Cambridge-Norwich tech corridor as shown in the following extract:



- 4.8 The impact of this anticipated growth would extend well beyond the immediate adjoining authorities boundaries. The Government has endorsed the Commission’s report, Partnering for Prosperity: a new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc which includes an ambition for up to one million high-quality new homes by 2050. It has also committed to completing the East West Rail link and an Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, and to achieving sustainable growth in the Arc while improving the environment for future generations.
- 4.9 We agree that the right cross boundary issues have been highlighted but the engagement with all the relevant stakeholders goes well beyond working with neighbouring authorities. This needs to be considered as part of the wider impact on the area.

Question 6. Do you agree with the potential big themes for the Local Plan?

- 4.10 We agree with the four big themes set out within this section as follows:
Climate change
Biodiversity and green spaces
Wellbeing and social inclusion
Great places

Question 7 How do you think we should prioritise these big themes? Rank the options below 1-4 (1 – Most Preferred 4 – Least Preferred):

- 4.11 We believe that these themes are inter-related, and it is therefore incorrect to prioritise them. Each proposed development needs to contribute to a comprehensive approach to development not only in the immediate area but the wider context in relation to the visions for Greater Cambridge.

Question 8. How should the Local Plan help us achieve net zero carbon by 2050?

- 4.12 The Local Plan is one of many elements in the overall development process that is required to work effectively to help achieve net zero carbon by 2050. The Local Plan influences new development but it can also ensure that development that would improve existing settlements is considered in a more favourable light. The councils should also lobby Government to take a more proactive approach to development and include higher standards for example within Building Regulations to ensure there is a level playing field for all types of development in councils across the country to avoid the current patch work of standards.
- 4.13 We agree with the approach that in order to achieve net zero carbon by 2050 it is essential to reduce energy usage, promote renewable forms for energy and encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport to reduce the reliance on the use of the private car. We support the pro-active approach of promoting the planting of trees and the use technology such as carbon capture and storage. Proposals that are able to bring land into a more efficient and effective use that capture these elements should be considered favourably in the Local Plan.

Question 9. How do you think we should be reducing our impact on the climate? Have we missed any key actions?

- 4.14 We agree with the approach that aims to:
- Design new communities, infrastructure and buildings to be energy and resource efficient, both in the way they are built and the way they are used over their lifespan.
 - Using renewable and low carbon energy generation.
 - Promoting patterns of development that enable travel by low-carbon modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.
 - Discouraging our communities from using private cars where possible, and other lifestyle choices that affect the climate.
 - Retrofitting existing buildings to be more energy efficient.
 - Considering the role of the plan regarding materials used in the construction process.
 - Investigating how carbon offsetting can be supported through tree planting and other measures.
 - Supporting local and community opportunities for growing food
- 4.15 The councils previous approach has often been large scale significant developments but this does not allow existing areas to improve. The opportunity to support development within existing communities that would improve the impact on climate change should be considered within the Local Plan. The current focus has not allowed the overall benefits to be dispersed amongst the existing community as the councils have focused on the belief that only these significant developments can bring sustainable communities. This ignores the significant

impact that existing development may have and without new development and the potential to change, no improvement for these residents will take place without moving house or travelling to work. There is a need to balance the growth strategy to ensure existing settlements are improved along with the offering from large new developments.

Question 10. Do you think we should require extra climate adaptation and resilience features to new developments?

- 4.16 It is important to ensure that new developments are resilient and can be adapted in the future. There is a balance in relation to what should be carried out now and the ability to adapt as and when it is required in the future. The research and technology are continuing to evolve and the requirements and methods of addressing climate change will alter accordingly. There is also reference to tree and shrub planting that would be resilient to warmer and drier climates. With regard to planting and biodiversity/resilience, clear guidance should be provided as there is often conflicting advice. The impact also needs to be considered in relation to existing species and the potential impact of such a changes.

Question 11. Are there any other things we should be doing to adapt to climate change?

- 4.17 The overall approach to development should be considered with an emphasis on how existing settlements can also be supported and improved. With the current emphasis on large scale, standalone developments, this does not provide the opportunity for improvements to existing settlements.

Question 12. How should the Local Plan help us improve the natural environment?

- 4.18 Page 34 of the GCLP acknowledges that in recent decades biodiversity in the area has been decreasing and states *“The rural area is dominated by agricultural land, which is often not biodiverse, and in urban areas the loss of gardens and increase in urban uses reduces biodiversity.”* In addition, development has often been required to ensure that certain densities of development are met. This can lead to a dense style hard urban environment. Flexibility should be allowed to developments that allow a greener approach to take place including planting and habitat improvements not only on the application site itself but other land with the immediate area. This would allow biodiversity improvements with net gain.
- 4.19 The site the subject of this representation has the opportunity to improve biodiversity in the area. There are several parcels of land that are segregated from the main fields and whilst designated as countryside in the Local Plan, they make little contribution to the wider landscape character. This land is also under the landowners control and could be used to support green infrastructure in relation to creating semi-natural spaces, allotments, additional woodland, scrubland and grassland areas etc to improve biodiversity in the area rather than low-value agricultural fields.

Question 13. How do you think we should improve the green space network?

4.20 The councils need to have a flexible overall approach to green spaces and a wider interpretation of how land can contribute to green spaces and the associated uses that may be public or private areas. At present land is often defined by a line on the proposals map that accompanies a Local Plan, but this can lead to land for example being allocated as “countryside” but in reality, has no real beneficial use in its current state. Opportunities should also be taken to improve public access through pedestrian and cycle networks in existing settlements.

4.21 The current landowners have a variety of land with their ownership that could contribute to a number of community benefits, not just in relation to new housing/employment but using land that has little beneficial use to increase biodiversity and provide additional tree cover. This would allow a pro-active improvement that could take the form of connecting spaces, improving existing pedestrian/cycle routes to support healthy lifestyles and wellbeing.

[Question 14. How do we achieve biodiversity net gain through new developments?](#)

4.22 It is important that the councils balance the level of density of a development and the variety of habitats that could be included within the development site itself. There is also the possibility of providing planning contributions for off-site improvements if there is clear evidence that a public area nearby would benefit from investment to increase the wider biodiversity of a development site or within the wider area.

[Question 15. Do you agree that we should aim to increase tree cover across the area?](#)

4.23 We agree that tree cover should be increased in the area due to the environmental benefits that can be achieved, and the area is known to have a low proportion of woodland compared to the rest of the UK. Whilst the principle of increasing tree cover has a number of environmental benefits, this approach would need to be balanced having regard to the potential changes to the landscape character of an area and other influences such as drainage.

[Question 16. How should the Local Plan help us achieve ‘good growth’ that promotes wellbeing and social inclusion?](#)

4.24 It is essential that the strategy for growth is flexible to allow the promotion of well-being and social inclusion across the Greater Cambridge Area. This is supported by the NPPF that requires Local Plans to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places.

In relation to existing settlements, unless an element of growth is allowed, they will become stagnant with little opportunity to improve the existing services and facilities. Development that would support improvement to existing sustainable locations should therefore be supported. This would require a flexible approach to settlement hierarchy and a step change to the major focus at present on Cambridge itself and the associated pull of the city. Whilst the councils’ current approach has focused on larger scale developments to create new communities, this takes time and ignores the opportunities for improving existing villages and

the specific issues facing residents living in rural communities. Within these areas, the promotion of well-being and social inclusion along with the opportunity to ensure places are safe and accessible so that the fear of crime does not undermine quality of life should also be considered.

- 4.25 The land the subject of these representations would support the approach to development within the GCLP as it would provide the opportunity to provide a range of housing and employment land that would meet the various needs of the community and improve accessibility. There is further land available that would improve the footpath and cycle links between Meldreth and Melbourn and the linkages to the Station. This would improve safety, accessibility and support healthy lifestyles through the provision of greenspaces within the development and improve opportunities to walk and cycle in the area. The key improvements would be access to the station and links for pupils to Melbourn Village College.

Question 17. How do you think our plan could help enable communities to shape new development proposals?

- 4.26 It is essential that a variety of engagement takes place with all stakeholders. New development is often viewed in a negative fashion by the local community. It is important that the positive aspects in particular where local improvements can be made are fully supported in a positive way. Early engagement with the community to understand the issues that are relevant to the area is therefore important. Concerns may relate to infrastructure provision and if the councils have relevant evidence it is often possible to address these concerns early on and ensure timely delivery.

Question 18. How do you think we can make sure that we achieve safe and inclusive communities when planning new development?

- 4.27 The previous approach has focused on major developments on the edge of Cambridge and new settlements. It is essential that a wider approach is considered where improvements can be offered to existing settlements. This should include a range of homes and a wider mix of tenure of dwellings that are adaptable in their lifetime to ensure Greater Cambridge offers a wider range of inclusive homes not solely in new communities. This ensures that existing communities also have the opportunity to be accessible for all with a mixed community.

Question 19. How do you think new developments should support healthy lifestyles?

- 4.28 We support the broad approach outlined in the GCLP. Healthy lifestyles involve a range of issues that extend well beyond the built form. Access to housing education and work are key considerations but the overall quality of the environment is important to ensure physical and mental well-being. The focus should not be dominated by new communities but how existing areas could be improved as well. The councils should also ensure that the overall approach to healthy lifestyles is fit for the future and this for example should consider the impact of the internet on providing health advice etc without the need to travel to facilities. Encouraging walking and cycling as part of daily life by improving the offering should also be considered.

Providing the opportunity for people to grow their own food through the provision of allotments is also a consideration.

- 4.29 Access to the nature and location of employment is also an important consideration in healthy lifestyles. It is important that a variety of employment exists to ensure a balanced community exists and this is essential to create sustainable communities. Not all employment needs or should be focused on the city centre or the edge of the city. This encourages travel to the city centre with associated air quality and congestion matters.

Question 20. How do you think we should achieve improvements in air quality?

- 4.30 The aim should be to encourage less use of the private car and encourage sustainable forms of transport. Support should be given to growth in a wider variety of areas that could potentially reduce the length of journeys. Higher priorities should be given to support existing settlements that are in sustainable locations where development can offer wider improvements to the community, in particular improving walking, cycling and public transport. The availability of infrastructure to support electric vehicles is also a consideration but the wider sustainability issues of electric vehicles and the availability of electricity need to be addressed first.

Question 21. How should the Local Plan protect our heritage and ensure new development is well-designed?

- 4.31 It is important to clearly identify what has heritage value and the reasons why. Any policies should be positively worded rather than restrictive.

Question 22. How do you think we should protect, enhance and adapt our historic buildings and landscapes?

- 4.32 It is important to clearly identify what has heritage value and the reasons why. Any policies should be positively worded rather than restrictive.

Question 23. How do you think we could ensure that new development is as well-designed as possible?

- 4.33 Design is always subjective and whilst it is important to have guidelines, this should not be so restrictive that it prevents innovation. There is an increasing variety of guidance and advice that in some cases conflicts. Any policies and guidance should be provided in clear and simple manner that acknowledges how technology and innovation may change the way we live and work during the plan period.

Question 24. How important do you think continuing economic growth is for the next Local Plan?

- 4.34 Economic growth is a very important part of the next Local Plan. Whilst there is a focus on the strategic growth corridors and high tech business, it is essential that other types of industry are supported to ensure there is a diverse range of jobs available for local people that support the overall aims of sustainable growth. The Plan should therefore seek to encourage a range

of employment opportunities in the rural area in sustainable locations. This approach to rural diversification is also supported by the NPPF and could decrease commuting.

- 4.35 The villages of Meldreth and Melbourn meet a variety of local needs, as well as providing valuable and varied employment. The land that is the subject of this representation provides the opportunity to ensure employment land is provided within the development that would support local firms and provide suitable affordable buildings for their needs. This would ensure employment retention and avoid businesses leaving the area and potentially increasing commuting out of the area.

Question 25. What kind of business and industrial space do you think is most needed in the area?

- 4.36 The nature of employment space varies across the area and it is important to ensure that a range is available to ensure a wide variety of businesses have the opportunity to flourish in the area including start up and small businesses, and businesses to extend. This would support a prosperous rural economy.

Question 26. Do you think we should be protecting existing business and industrial space?

- 4.37 It is important to protect existing business uses provided this is in an appropriate sustainable location.

Question 27. How should we balance supporting our knowledge-intensive sectors, with creating a wide range of different jobs? What kind of jobs would you like to see created in the area?

- 4.38 In order to support a diverse community and healthy lifestyle it is essential to have a variety of employment opportunities across all sectors. Unless this is carried forward, residents will not perceive that there are equal opportunities across the area with a range of different skills.

Question 28. In providing for a range of employment space, are there particular locations we should be focusing on? Are there specific locations important for different types of business or industry?

- 4.39 Different business sectors require different needs and locations. It is important that this is recognised in the GCLP. A variety of premises should be permitted in different locations and the emphasis should not be solely on new settlements or the edge of Cambridge.

- 4.40 We are pleased that the GCLP acknowledges that there is a range of businesses located at South Cambridgeshire villages, in both small premises and business parks or industrial estates. It is essential that further employment is provided in sustainable locations and adjoining existing residential areas to reduce the pull of the city centre and the edge of the city. This would support healthy lifestyles and reduce the need to travel, and support the councils' net zero carbon aspirations.

Question 29. How flexible should we be about the uses we allow in our city, town, district, local and village centres?

- 4.41 We believe it is important to be flexible in the uses that are allowed to ensure a range of services are available but there needs to be a balance having regard to the impact of the internet on businesses and travel. If facilities are restricted to particular levels in a settlement hierarchy, this can increase travelling. In a rural district it is important to encourage and support access to local services and facilities to meet their day-to-day needs. However, moving forward this needs to be balanced with the changes internet shopping may bring forward.

Question 30. What approach should the next plan take to supporting or managing tourism in Cambridge and the rural area?

- 4.42 We have no comments to make.

Question 31. How should the Local Plan help to meet our needs for the amount and types of new homes?

- 4.43 The evidence within the GCLP demonstrates the higher housing costs and the overall issues of affordability in the area. The Plan seeks to “... *get the right homes in the right places so that everyone has the chance to live settled, healthy lives.*” This however requires a broad and flexible approach to housing across the area. At present the councils’ focus has been on a number of significant expansions Darwin Green and North West Cambridge and new settlements like Northstowe and the new town north of Waterbeach. The larger strategic sites often have a long lead in time due to infrastructure provision and a community feeling takes time to establish. It is essential to ensure a variety of site sizes come forward to ensure delivery across the district.
- 4.44 This would ensure the opportunity for a mix of house types and tenures to come forward. The opportunity to downsize and free up family housing and provide lifetime homes is also an important point and potentially requires a difference approach to densities that will allow smaller units with flexible room sizes that support people in their existing local communities as their life-time requirements change.

Question 32. 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? Please choose from the following options:

- 4.45 We strongly agree that the councils should be planning for a higher number of homes than the minimum required. On page 62 of the GCLP, they have already acknowledged that the demand for new housing in the area has been exceptionally high and housing building has not kept up with demand. The previous focus has been on the Cambridge Southern Fringe developments and new towns such as Northstowe. The key word is reference to “minimum” and the NPPF requires all councils to significantly boost the supply of housing. Only planning for the minimum would appear to be contrary to this guidance. In addition, if the approach continues with large scale developments, these are often delayed in coming forward due to infrastructure provision and funding issues. With the level of growth anticipated it is essential

that sufficient homes are available to create safe and inclusive communities to avoid increases in commuting and the use of the private car.

Question 33. What kind of housing do you think we should provide?

- 4.46 The evidence within the GCLP demonstrates the issues of affordability across the area and it is essential that diverse range of housing is provided. The policies need to ensure that a range of housing and tenures is supported by local planning policy and it does not end up restrictive. There needs to be innovative ways of providing housing that actually leads to delivering rather than written text. There is reference to downsizing to release family homes, the increasing eldering population. With the university and high-tech companies and intended future growth it is essential that a broader view is taken in this respect to ensure equality and diversity is provided within the area for affordable and market housing and a range of tenures for choice.

Question 34. How should we meet the need for additional Gypsy, Traveller and caravan sites?

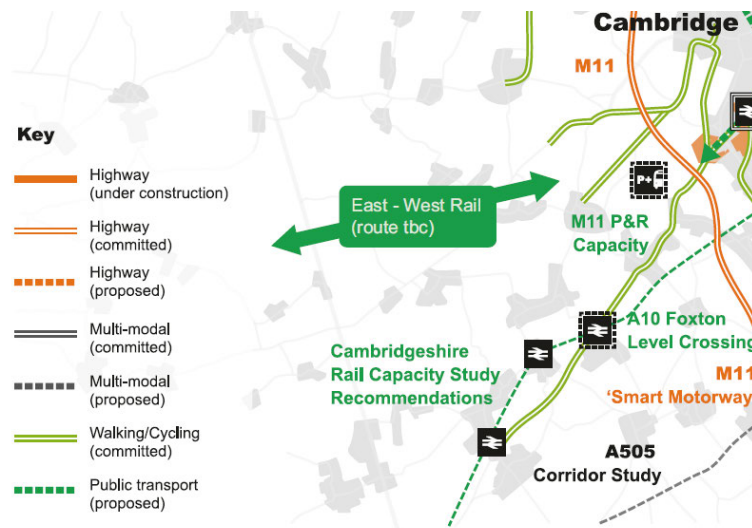
- 4.47 No comments.

Question 35. How should we ensure a high standard of housing is built in our area?

- 4.48 It is essential to ensure that the housing is located in a sustainable location in the first instance. With regard to construction, the policies within the Local Plan should be clear as to the expectations and requirements in respect of the key issues of energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements. However, policies should focus on the outputs that are critical e.g. energy and water usage.

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

- 4.49 It is essential that appropriate infrastructure is provided in support of new development that will allow the reduction in the number of cars on the road, support more sustainable transport, provide the infrastructure to support new jobs and homes includes schools, health facilities, utilities etc. Emphasis on large scale development. The current emphasis appears to move to an electricity style infrastructure provision and yet there is already an acknowledgement that there is a significant lack of supply. To achieve the aspirations of net zero carbon, the delivery of this basic infrastructure is of fundamental importance. Without this, during the plan period, developers may find it impossible to comply with the adopted policies.
- 4.50 For any development it is critical that infrastructure needs are clearly identified up front. At present there is no certainty and details only unravel during the processing of an application. The councils should consider introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy that would clearly justify any planning contributions up front that may be required.
- 4.51 We fully support the proposed infrastructure commitments as stated on page 79 of the GCLP that will impact Meldreth and Melbourn. This includes a new walking and cycling route that appears to impact our clients' land and the proposed public transport improvements. The details are shown in the following extract:



Extract Figure 22 - Planned Major Transport Projects in Greater

4.52 There is a clear intention to improve the sustainability of both villages and the development the subject of these representations would support this objective further. The new development would improve access to the station from the site and there is the potential to improve connectivity to the station for the occupiers of both villages of Meldreth and Melbourn via improvements to the existing footways and the narrow unlit path and the provision of cycle facilities. A key benefit would also be for pupils attending Melbourn College from Meldreth with an improved footpath link across the current agricultural field.

37. How should we encourage a shift away from car use and towards more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking?

4.53 We fully support the approach that aims to reduce the reliance on the use of the private car. In order to do this it is important to provide easily accessible and quality alternative options. The councils should support development in the rural areas where there are sustainable forms of transport and/or improvements planned. This is important to ensure diversity within the rural district and reduce the pull of the city centre itself. This will provide the potential to improve the situation for existing settlements rather than the existing focus on large scale new development. This would provide a more equal and diverse approach to development in the area.

4.54 The councils have already acknowledged the sustainability of the settlements and further improvements that encourage walking and cycling would further enhancements would provide real transport alternatives to using the car.

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

4.55 The priorities will be determined by the evidence base that comes forward and the nature of development proposed. If the councils focus on moving to a non-fossil fuel economy, the provision of electricity must be a critical part of the Local Plan.

39. Should we look to remove land from the Green Belt if evidence shows it provides a more sustainable development option by reducing travel distances, helping us reduce our climate impacts?

4.56 The previous plans for the Greater Cambridge area have prioritised development firstly within Cambridge, then on the edge of Cambridge, at new settlements close to Cambridge, and at better served villages. This is clearly shown on the following extract on page 76 of the GCLP as follows:

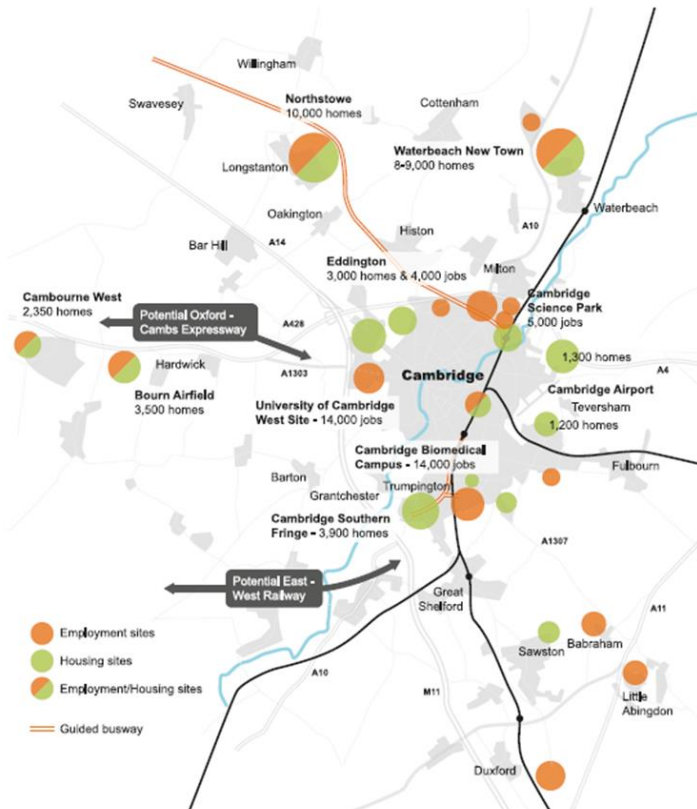


Figure 24
Existing planned growth in the adopted 2018 Local Plans

4.57 There is a clearly defined circle around the city and noticeable development sites on the northern and eastern corridors and smaller scale employment sites to the south east. What is clearly noticeable is the lack of housing and employment sites in the south west of the area.

4.58 We agree that the special qualities of Cambridge and the Green Belt should be protected and options for growth should be considered in areas outside of the designated Green Belt. There should be consideration of improving existing settlements that are in sustainable locations outside of the Green Belt in the first instance. There are other sustainable options that should be considered first including the fact that not everyone wishes to work in the city centre. The current approach within the adopted Local Plan focuses on the city itself. The presence of the growth corridors coming forward, new ways of working and the intention to create an inclusive environment with the District requires a different approach.

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

- 4.59 We believe there should be a “somewhat flexible” approach to development on the edges of the village. The Villages have tight boundaries that have restricted development irrespective of the sustainability of the settlement and the contribution the land makes to the wider village itself. The lines are often drawn in an arbitrary manner without regard to the relationships and contribution a particular piece of and may make to the area as a whole.
- 4.60 We believe the current planning policy is also over restrictive and limits the amount of development on a site. In relation to housing, the number of units is controlled but this impacts the potential mix that could be provided on a site and restricts diversity of supply within a village. This should be encapsulated in relation to design and the character of an area and considered on an individual basis. A more flexible approach for mixed use development villages with a sustainable location should be allowed.

[Is there are particular approach you would like the plan to take for your village?](#)

- 4.61 The development framework boundary for Meldreth and Melbourn are tightly drawn around the existing built up area, (see inset maps 76 and 77 of the adopted Local Plan). Whilst separate settlements, the two villages have a number of linkages that lead to the settlements operating together. There is employment in both villages with Melbourn having a higher level of employment and services but arguably Meldreth has more sustainable transport options with the railway. Melbourn also provides the secondary school. The current local plan differentiates the two villages in relation to the settlement hierarchy with Meldreth at a lower classification despite the main line railway station. We believe the villages should be considered jointly at the higher end of sustainable villages due to the provision and services that are available. In our view this is justified on the physical proximity of the villages, the existing connectivity with the potential to further improve the pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the two.

[41. 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?](#)

- 4.62 This question refers to sites within the village boundary. The key issue in the first instance is where the boundary is drawn. Once set, the boundaries are applied strictly. It is therefore important that boundaries are carefully considered. Once defined, we believe the level of development within the boundary should be highly flexible to allow a variety of development to come forward.

[42. Where should we site new development?](#)

- 4.63 We believe there should be a change in focus of development if the councils are truly committed to safe and inclusive communities. We have ordered our preference for development below:
- 1 Dispersal: Villages
 - 2 Densification of existing urban areas
 - 3 Public Transport Corridors

- 4 Edge of Cambridge: Outside Green Belt
- 5 Dispersal: New Settlements
- 6 Edge of Cambridge: Green Belt

43. What do you think about densification?

- 4.64 The quality of the living environment is key to wellbeing. Whilst densification in itself is not an issue if carried out properly, this could have a significant impact on the heritage and the reasons why Cambridge has many special qualities as a city. In certain areas of the City, this may be appropriate, but it would need to be carefully controlled and with innovative design.

44. What do you think about developing around the edge of Cambridge on land outside the Green Belt?

- 4.65 This would continue the focus on the city and not disperse development.

45. What do you think about developing around the edge of Cambridge in the Green Belt?

- 4.66 The designation and permanence of the Green Belt boundary is key to its success to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The boundaries should only be reviewed in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the councils have fully examined all other reasonable alternatives for meeting the identified need. We do not believe this is necessary at this stage.

46. What do you think about creating planned new settlements?

- 4.67 The councils' approach to development has already included planned new settlements. There is often a significant lead in time and a community is not created by the physical delivery of buildings. It can take time to develop and for a community to form.

47. What do you think about growing our villages?

- 4.68 The councils' previous approach has been to restrict development in the villages. The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas, paragraphs 77 to 78. Of critical importance is paragraph 78 where it states "*Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where there this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.*" The current adopted policy is extremely prescriptive in relation to the defined boundary and does not act in this manner. The councils have accepted that greenfield land would need to be released and we agree with the general development strategy approach to locate development in locations where people can choose to walk or cycle to local services.
- 4.69 To allow development in certain village that are sustainable would help to support existing facilities and provide wider opportunities in these villages and increase diversity. If a reasonable level of development is permitted this would ensure a range of house types, tenures etc and employment that would add to diversity. This would require a different approach to settlement hierarchy than in the current adopted Local Plan. If the councils are intending to be innovative, it is important that is fully taken into account in relation to how

businesses and residents will communicate and use services in the future such as shops, GP surgeries etc.

- 4.70 We believe development should be provided within the villages to provide a balanced sustainable pattern of development for the future that allows the rural areas to complement the main strategic growth centres that are already committed and planned. The failure to identify growth within other settlements will act as a constraint and will restrict and not support the approach identified to support a thriving rural economy and provide inclusive communities.
- 4.71 We believe that a settlement hierarchy should be developed based on sustainability criteria for the villages. The level of services and facilities available in the villages varies significantly and this will be an important consideration.
- 4.72 In relation to the land the subject of these representations, the settlements should be considered as a combined assessment due to the vast range of services and facilities available. This approach is supported by paragraph 78 of the NPPF where it acknowledges that in a rural situation not all the services need or will be in one settlement. Development in one settlement can clearly support the needs of others. This supports our submissions that a more detailed assessment of services/facilities should be considered in respect of the designation for small settlements in the Plan. It is highly unusual that two villages within such close proximity offer a full range of educational services, preschool, primary schools, special needs schools, secondary school, a range of employment opportunities, new proposed cycle and footpath links and proposed improvements to existing public transport links.
- 4.73 The current adopted Local Plan relies heavily on the larger sites coming forward to deliver housing/employment and this can often be restricted due to the delivery of infrastructure. Smaller site allocations would provide a variety of delivery without such constraints and a broader market offering. It is important however, to ensure that sites are allocated to provide certainty.

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

- 4.74 No comment.

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

- 4.75 The policies have provided a strict hierarchical approach to development that has not supported the growth and vitality of the rural areas. The line drawn that defines whether a site is within the development framework boundary or outside has no regard to the contribution a piece of land contributes to the area. The boundaries have not necessarily been viewed on the ground for effectiveness and yet the impact on the decision process is significant. The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas, paragraphs 77 to 78. Of critical importance is paragraph 78 where it states "Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where there this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may

support services in a village nearby.” This is relevant in the case for Meldreth and Melbourn where there are a range of facilities, but the boundaries are strictly drawn.

- 4.76 Policy S/6 – This policy sets out the hierarchy and preference of order for development on the edge of Cambridge, new settlements and lastly the rural area, rural centres and minor rural centres.
- 4.77 S/9 – This policy classifies Melbourn as a minor rural centre where development up to 30 units would be allowed within the development framework boundary.
- 4.78 S/10 - This policy classifies Meldreth as a group village where development up to 8 dwellings within the framework may be appropriate.
- 4.79 The focus for the classification is based on a review of services and facilities, education, public transport, and employment available at the settlement.

50. What do you think should be in the next Local Plan? Are there issues, ideas or themes that you don't feel we have yet explored?

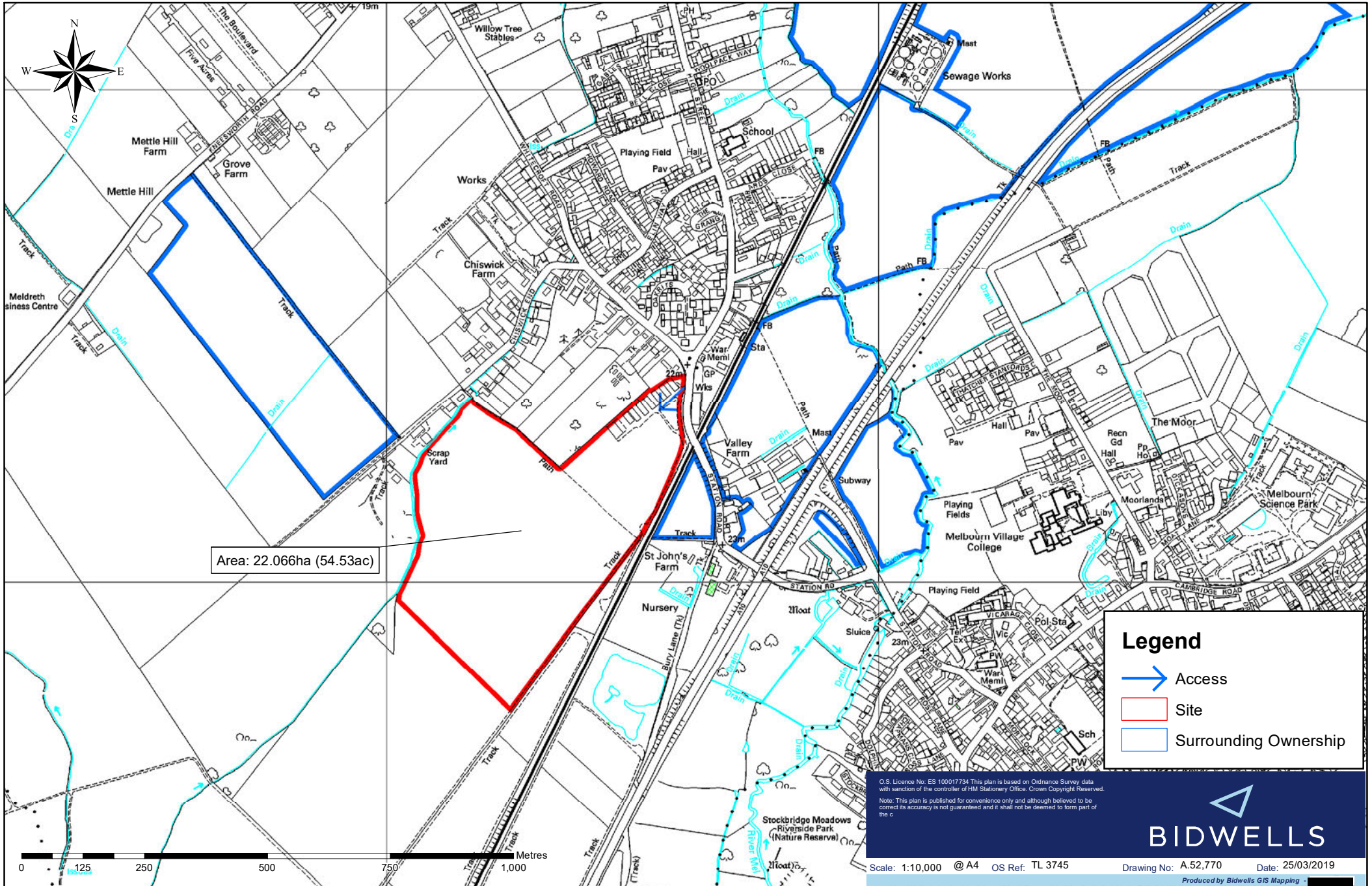
- 4.80 No comments.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The councils have acknowledged that greenfield land will need to be developed to meet the housing and employment needs for the plan period. The previous focus for development has focused on the edge of the city and large-scale new settlements. This has led to a restrictive approach to development with the rural areas irrespective of the level of sustainability of settlements. In respect of the land the subject of these representations, the villages are clearly in sustainable locations and this has been recognised in the assessments undertaken by the councils. The guidance within the NPPF seeks to allow rural areas to prosper and we do not believe this has been the case with the current adopted Local Plan.
- 5.2 There are already commitments to improve public transport to the village as noted in Figure 22 of the GCLP and provide a walking and cycle route. Development of the land subject to this representation would lead to further improvement in sustainability and support new housing and employment in a sustainable location. This connectivity represents a key advantage and opportunity to generate significant environmental and connectivity improvements for the two settlements. This will increase the wellbeing and social inclusion and spread the benefits of growth, helping to create healthy and inclusive communities.
- 5.3 The land subject to these representations is readily deliverable. There are no known technical constraints that would prevent the site from being developed within the first five years of the Plan period.




Appendix 1

Land at Meldreth



Area: 22.066ha (54.53ac)

Legend

-  Access
-  Site
-  Surrounding Ownership

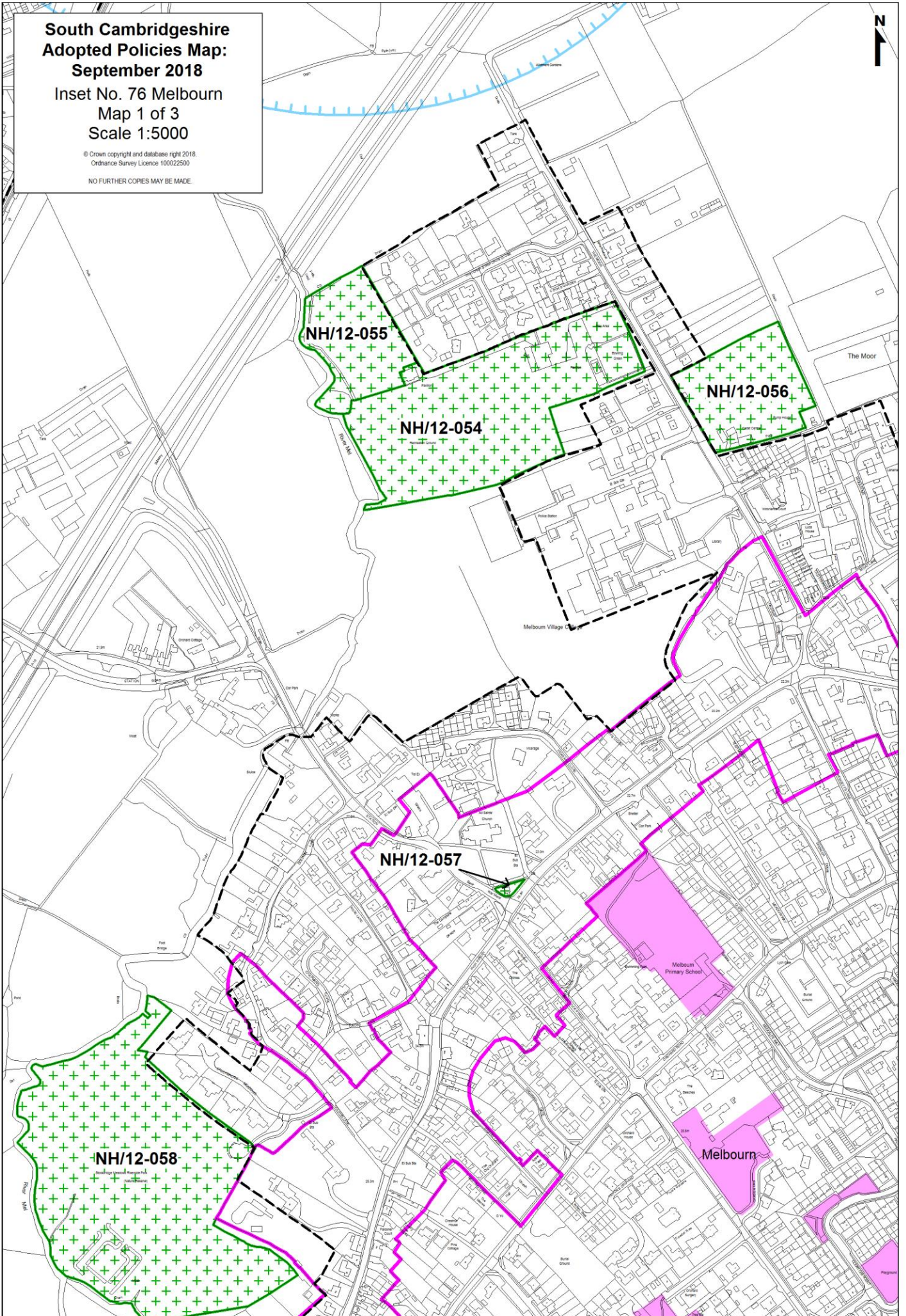
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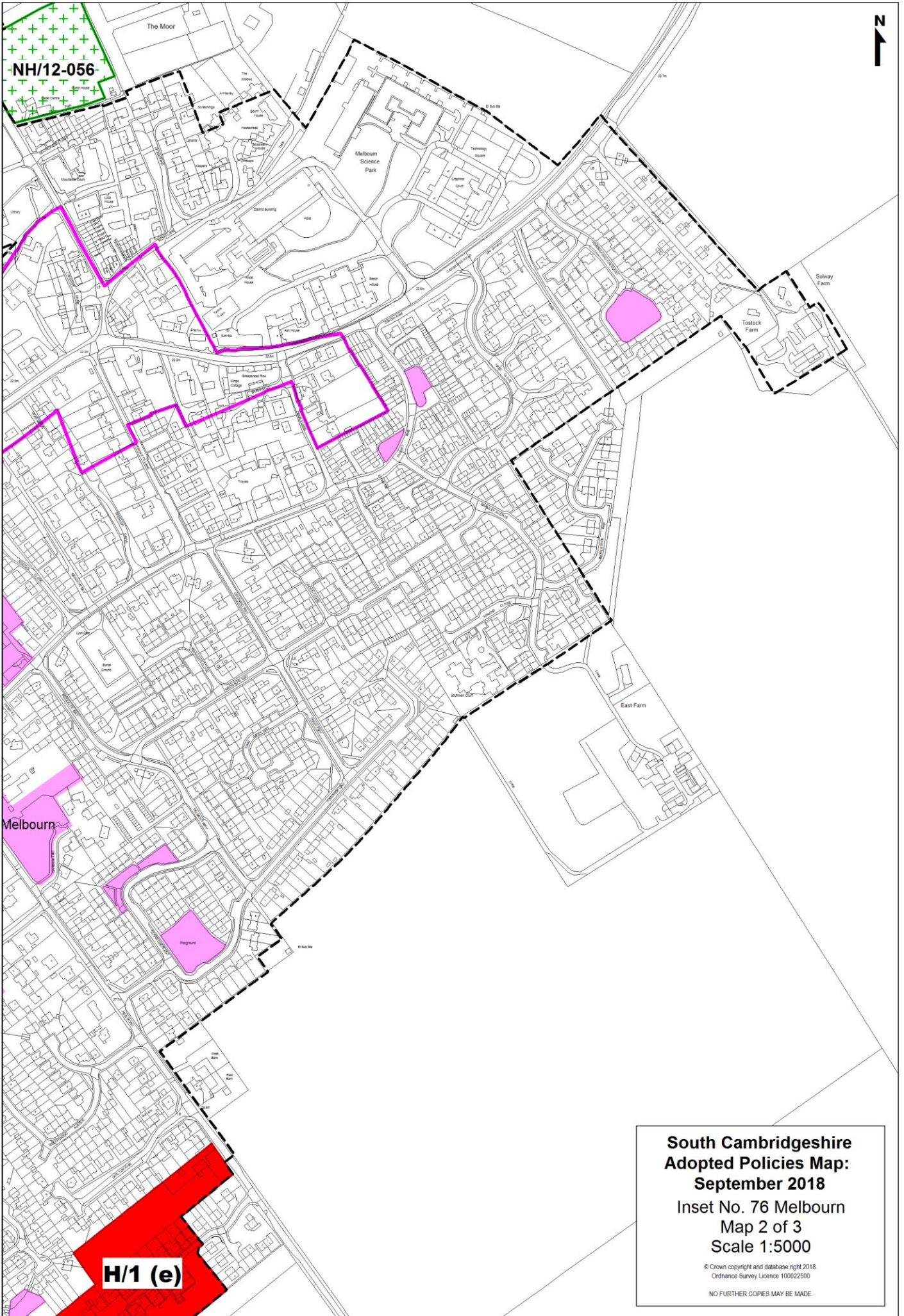


Appendix 2

**South Cambridgeshire
Adopted Policies Map:
September 2018**
Inset No. 76 Melbourn
Map 1 of 3
Scale 1:5000

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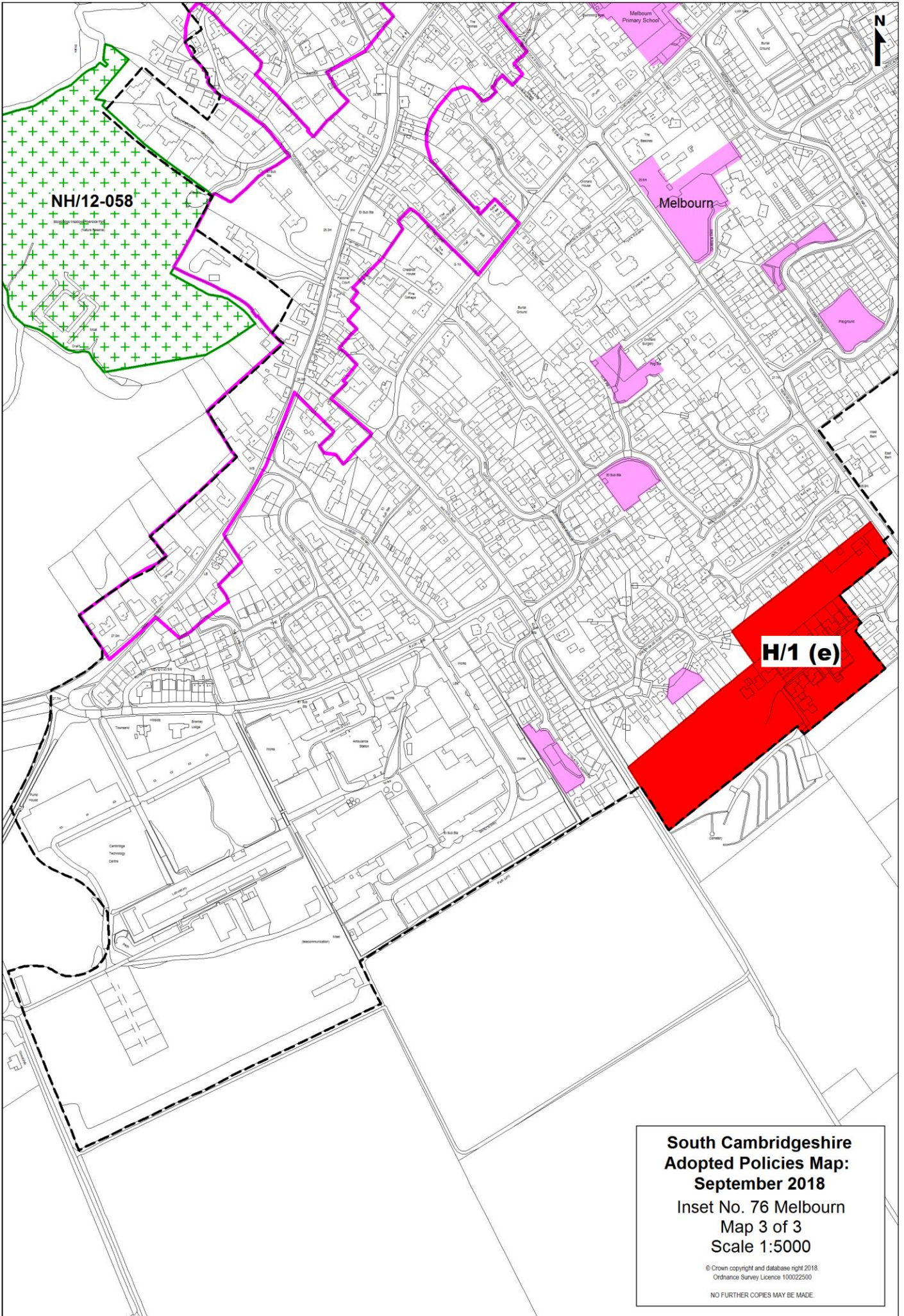
NH/12-056

Melbourn

H/1 (e)

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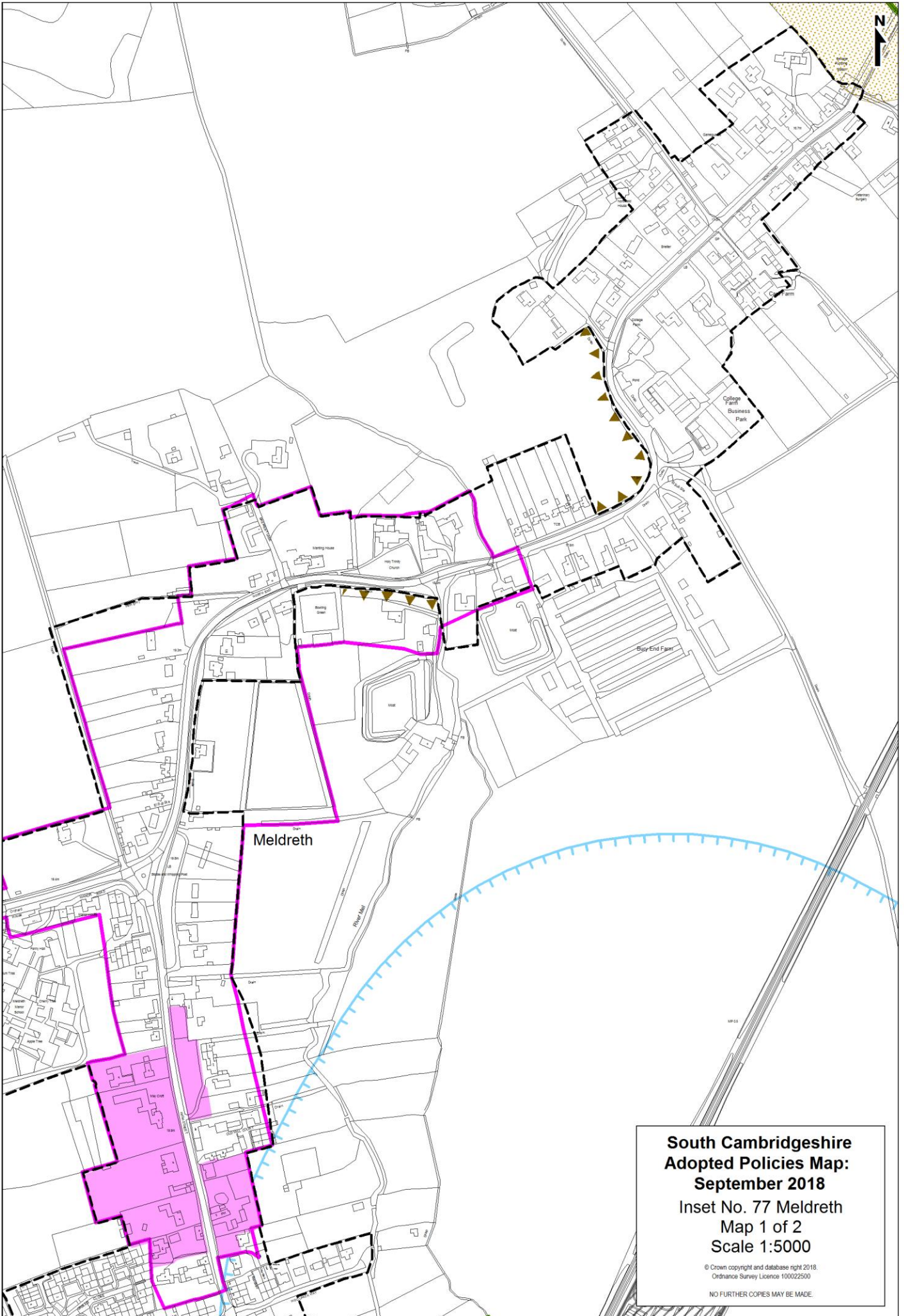
Melbourn

H/1 (e)

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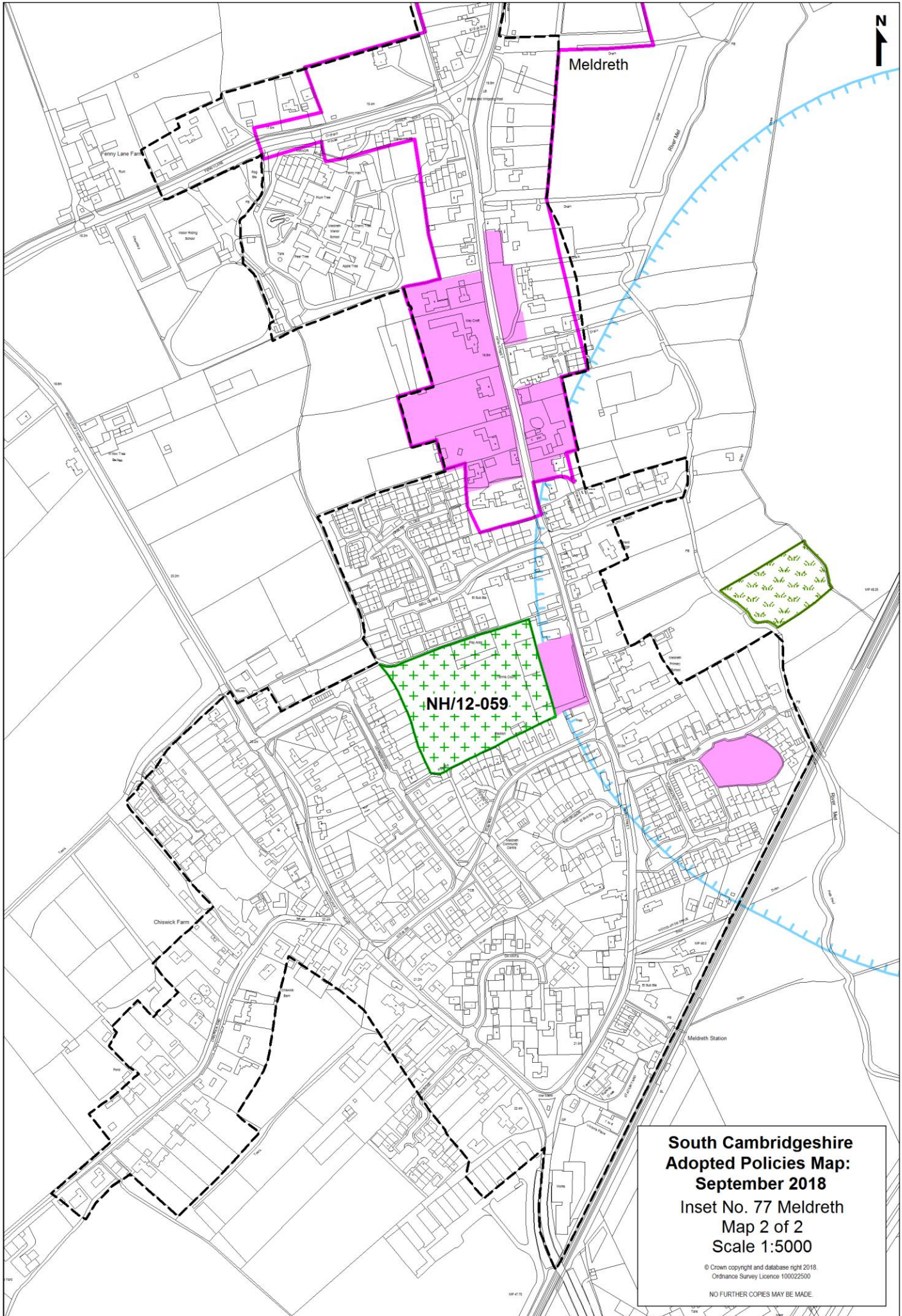
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Meldreth

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Meldreth

NH/12-059

Chiswick Farm

Meldreth Station

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Appendix 3

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Existing commercial buildings on site



2. Subway link under the A10 that links Meldreth and Melbourn



3. View of existing footpath across the field looking from Melbourn towards Meldreth Station





Phase 2

PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
LIMITED