

**Supplementary Information**  
**Greater Cambridge Local Plan - Call for Sites**  
**LAND AT THE MOOR**



**Introduction**

Sworders is pleased to submit the site 'Land at the Moor, Melbourn' on behalf of our client [REDACTED]

'Land at the Moor' lies at the north of Melbourn Village and is accessed from the Moor. The site currently provides grazing. There is a small ditch running along the northern boundary of the site. There is existing residential development to the west of the site, on the opposite side of the Moor, and to the south of the site. There are allotments to the north of the site.

The attached Call for Sites form provides further basic information about the site, which is being promoted for up to 20 dwellings.

Planning Practice Guidance sets out the factors which should be assessed when assessing the suitability, availability and achievability of sites. This supplementary information demonstrates that the site is suitable, available and achievable, and suggests that, in light of the significant housing growth that the Greater Cambridge Plan will make provision for, the development boundary of Melbourn, a highly sustainable settlement, should be amended.

**Suitability**

Planning Policy

The Government's Planning Practice Guidance on Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment notes that the suitability of the sites should be guided by the development plan, emerging plan policy and national policy.

In the Greater Cambridge City Deal (June 2014), Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council committed to a review of their Local Plans in 2019 to take account of the anticipated acceleration of housing delivery and to objectively assess housing and business needs at that point, and plan accordingly.

The adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 makes provision for 19,500 new homes, with the focus for development firstly being on the edge of Cambridge, then in new settlements, and then in the rural centres, which includes Melbourn.

Policy S/9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan categorises Melbourn as a Minor Rural Centre.



The Plan notes that:

*'Minor rural centres have a lower level of services, facilities and employment than rural centres, but a greater level than most other villages in South Cambridgeshire.'*

Melbourn has shops, services, a doctors' surgery, a primary school and Melbourn village college, which provides education for children up to the age of 16. The town centre lies 600m to the south of the site, and the college lies some 400m to the south of the site, both within walking distance. Meldreth train station, which provides a regular service to Cambridge and London Kings Cross/London St Pancras lies only 1 mile away by road. There is a safe, pedestrian route from the site to the station.

The site therefore lies in a highly sustainable location, in a village with a good range of shops, services and community facilities, which should be a focus for future growth in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

There were several applications at Land at the Moor for residential development in the late 1970s and 1980s; all of those applications were only refused for one reason, that it lay outside the development framework boundary. The most recent planning application was in 1988. Since that time, the Government's agenda to boost the supply of housing and to provide 300,000 homes per year by the mid 2020's has marked a step change in housing provision, and means that Local Plans need to plan proactively for new homes, and to find solutions to deliver new homes.

The development framework boundary of Melbourn lies immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the site, and to part of the southern boundary of the site.

If this development boundary were to be amended to include Land at The Moor, the sole reason for previous refusals would disappear.

Policy H/8 of the adopted Plan states that developments in Minor Rural Centres will achieve a net density of 30 dwellings per hectare, but that this may vary where justified by the character of the locality and the scale of the development. The proposed development would bring forward a slightly lower density of development, but this would be appropriate to the settlement pattern in the area.

It is envisaged that a policy compliant mix of housing types would be provided, reflecting the requirements of Policy H/9 – Housing Mix.

Policy H/12 sets out the requirement that on sites of 11 or more dwellings, 40% affordable housing will be provided on site. We confirm that our client would be deliver policy compliant affordable housing provision, subject to viability testing.

We note that the Melbourn Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated in 2016, and that the designated area covers our client's site. No consultations have yet taken place on a draft Plan and we are not aware of any proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan for the site.



### Site Suitability

The Planning Practice Guidance notes that, in addition to the above considerations, the following factors should be assessed; a site's suitability for development now or in the future – physical limitations or problems such as access, infrastructure, ground conditions, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution or contamination; potential impacts including the effect upon landscapes including landscape features, nature and heritage conservation; and appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed.

There are no environmental or landscape designations on the site, and no heritage assets on or adjacent to the site. The site is level, and lies entirely within Flood Zone 1, the area at least of risk of flooding. No public rights of way cross the site. There are no Tree Preservation Orders on the site. In summary, there are no significant constraints to development of the site.

The guidance also notes that environmental/amenity impacts experienced by would be occupiers and neighbouring areas should be assessed. The existing dwellings on the west side of Moor Lane currently look across into the site. Any masterplan for the site would take account of the existing occupiers' amenity, and would ensure that planting along the street frontage would soften the impact of any new development.

### **Availability**

We confirm that that the site is in the sole ownership of [REDACTED]. We are not aware of any ransom strips or potential constraints to delivery. The landowner has expressed his intention to promote the land for development through this Local Plan process; please see attached a letter confirming this. There are no unimplemented permissions on the site.

### **Achievability**

The proposed policy compliant, residential development of this site is considered to be viable and is achievable in the short term (0-5 years).

### **Summary**

Land at the Moor is suitable, available and achievable. The site lies in a highly sustainable location, within walking distance of Melbourn, a Minor Rural centre, which offers a range of shops and services, as well as public transport provision. The site has no planning or environmental constraints, and is deliverable in the short term.

In the context of the significant increase in housing growth associated with the Government's growth agenda, the Greater Cambridgeshire City Deal, and the use of the standard methodology to identify objectively assessed housing need, we submit that Land at the Moor, Melbourn should be considered for allocation in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.