

7th March 2025

Call for Sites Submission Update – Land to the west of Cambridge Road, Melbourn

Introduction

These representations have been prepared by Vistry Group in response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Call for Sites March 2025 and should be read in conjunction with those previously submitted in respect of this site to the 2019 Call for Sites, the Issues & Options Consultation 2020 and the First Proposals Preferred Options Consultation 2021. The site was considered under site reference 474/475 (HELAA 40489/40490).

Previous representations were prepared by Bidwells on behalf of Countryside Properties (UK) Limited which is now a part of the Vistry Group.

Vistry Group formed in January 2020 following the successful acquisition of Linden Homes, Galliford Try and Bovis Homes Group PLC. Countryside Properties was acquired in 2022.

Vistry Group are the UK's leading provider of affordable mixed tenure homes and has a strong reputation for design-led housebuilding with associated uses which stand the test of time. We do this through our unique approach to building homes, by working with a range of partners, both public and private, who know what homes are needed most and where. This strategy maximises the number of homes, including quality affordable homes, that we can build every year.

At Vistry Group our purpose as a responsible developer is to work in partnership to deliver sustainable homes, communities and social value, leaving a lasting legacy of places people love.

Cambridge has long been identified as a key location for growth. In the 2024, the Labour party allocated £10million of funding to enable the Cambridge Growth Company to develop an ambitious plan for the housing, transport, water and wider infrastructure Cambridge needs to realise its full

potential. It also announced further growth ambitions for housing across the UK, as well as significant planning reforms, relating to housing targets and Green Belt policy.

As a result of these changes, the local housing need for Greater Cambridge has increased meaning more dwellings will be required for Greater Cambridge than the current Local Plan requirement.

As such, Vistry Group believe that to meet the Government's growth aspirations in a sustainable way, further allocations will be necessary within the Greater Cambridge local plan, which should consider the need for allocations close to the city and allow for a proportion of housing and growth at existing villages. Sustainable development in rural areas plays a crucial role in ensuring the vitality of villages and in supporting existing rural services and facilities.

Land to the west of Cambridge Road, Melbourn

Vistry Group have previously made submissions for two development options for the site at Melbourn, a Phase 1 option (to deliver up to 160 homes) and a Phase 1 and 2 option (to deliver up to 300 homes across both phases).

The Phase 1 land has been identified as an allocation in the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan for a mixed use development for approximately 120 homes and 2.5 hectares of employment uses (HELAA Reference: 40490).

Vistry Group wholly agree with the draft allocation as the site is in a sustainable location, it is deliverable and available. Whilst Vistry Group do support the mixed use allocation, should the Local Planning Authority determine that there is a preference for the final allocation to be a wholly residential scheme, given the increase in housing need for the area, Vistry would fully support this approach and consider that a proposal for a residential-only scheme is suitable in this sustainable location and deliverable.

A residential-only scheme on the Phase 1 option would deliver approximately 160 residential units, including 40% affordable housing, landscaping, vehicular and pedestrian access and formal and informal open space, delivering tangible benefits as outlined in previous representations.

The Phase 2 option, which lies to the north-west of the draft allocation site, was also submitted for consideration as part of the Issues and Options 2020 consultation and remains available for development as a suitable and deliverable site. Given the need to deliver additional housing throughout the district, the proposals for the Phase 2 development could deliver up to a further 140 dwellings, including 40% affordable housing, landscaping, vehicular and pedestrian access and formal and informal open space, including pedestrian and cycle links to the Melbourn Science Park, which will greatly assist in delivering further growth to meet housing need.

Our representation to the Preferred Options Consultation 2021 – Land to the west of Cambridge Road, Melbourn set out our response to the HELAA assessment which, for the most part, reached a favourable conclusion. Those matters rated amber in the assessment were addressed with additional technical information and evidence. These responses, along with the relevant supporting documentation, and the proposed draft allocation clearly demonstrate the site's suitability and deliverability.

Vistry Group therefore invites Greater Cambridge to recognise the site at Melbourn as a suitable location for growth and allocate it within the emerging Greater Cambridge Plan.