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Our Ref: 208097

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019

Dear Sir or Madam,

**RE: Greater Cambridge Call for Sites: Land off Water Lane, Melbourn, Cambridgeshire**

I am writing on behalf of CALA Homes to submit a Call for Sites and Broad Locations Response Form 2019 for the joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan. CALA Homes is submitting land off Water Lane, Melbourn for consideration as a potential development site for housing (together with associated landscaping and open space).

CALA Homes has entered in an option agreement with the landowner of the site, Venetia Wedd, who supports the submission of this land through this consultation exercise. The site is free from any heritage or environmental constraints, and is located outside the Cambridge Green Belt. It is a suitable site that is commensurate with the size and scale of Melbourn and its existing services and facilities. Equally importantly it is a deliverable site in a location with a strong market and the housebuilder CALA Homes has a strong track record of housing delivery across the UK, and specifically within South Cambridgeshire.

In order to support this submission, in addition to this covering letter, I have enclosed the following documents:

- a completed 'Call for Sites and Broad Locations' response form;
- Site location plan;
- Aerial photograph of site;
- Utilities constraints plan;
- Technical note – access design and highway adoption process; and
- Confirmation from landowner of support for submission of site.

The consultation is a unique opportunity for the Greater Cambridge Planning Service to consider the suitability of potential development sites throughout Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and my client welcomes the opportunity to submit this 8.09-hectare site on the southern edge of Melbourn for consideration in this 'Call for Sites and Broad Locations' consultation exercise.

The recently adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan focused most of its planned development in allocations to the north and west of Cambridge in a series of large new or expanded settlements including



Bourn Airfield, Cambourne, Northstowe, and Waterbeach. In contrast there was very little proposed new growth in the villages to the south and east and Cambridge. Interestingly, and over the same period of time, there has been considerable job growth and economic development to the south of Cambridge, and it is therefore considered that the new Joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan should seek to rebalance the distribution of growth and focus more development to the south of Cambridge, particularly in sustainable large villages such as Melbourn, which already have a good range of shops, services, and facilities.

The need for additional housing is particularly important as the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Independent Economic Review notes that *'Growth in employment has not been matched by corresponding house-building, or development in infrastructure. Consequently, house prices have soared and journey times have increased as congestion has intensified.... We are rapidly approaching the point where even high-value businesses may decide that being based in Cambridge is no longer attractive. If nothing is done, the damage to society from the continuing drift away of less well-paid workers may become irreparable'*.

## Site Description

The site is located to the south of Melbourn off Water Lane. It covers an area of approximately 8.09 hectares and is well-related to the existing village. The rectangular parcel of land is located to the south of the Saxon Way employment area and can be served off Water Lane. It is proposed that Water Lane will be upgraded to provide vehicular access to the site and a technical note is enclosed explaining the access design and highway adoption process is enclosed to support this submission.

The site has clearly defined defensible boundaries and given the presence of the nearby Saxon Way employment area will not have an adverse effect on the residential amenity of nearby residential properties. The south and western boundaries of the site border open countryside, while the northern boundary of the site is bounded by an employment area. To the east, there is a recently constructed new housing development and burial ground. The local topography screens the site from long-range view from the south.

The site is capable of delivering up to 100 dwellings of the existing access together with open space to serve the new and wider local community. It is proposed that the scheme would deliver significant levels of landscaping on its boundaries – this will provide a much gentler transition between the open countryside and the built-form of Melbourn than is currently the case, and help screen the proposed new development from the open countryside beyond.

A Utilities Constraints Plan accompanies this submission and confirms that there are no utilities constraints that would prejudice the site's potential to come forward for development.

## Access Arrangements

The access arrangements have been discussed and confirmed as being acceptable by Cambridgeshire County Council. The proposal includes a change in priority at the Water Lane/Greengage Rise junction (to the north of the site), and this enables footpaths to be provided on both sides of the carriageway, as advised by Cambridgeshire County Council. The design also reflects the anticipated change in major and minor flows

as a direct result of any potential development at the site being submitted as part of this 'Call for Sites and Broad Locations' consultation exercise. Further details are contained in the supporting Technical Note.

Pedestrian linkages can be provided from the site to the main facilities via the proposed new access. Summerhouse Lane, a bridleway, which links to Water Lane, and runs along the eastern site boundary provides access to the open countryside. The south and western boundaries of the site border open countryside whilst the eastern boundary of the site is bordered by a cemetery and a parcel of land which has recently been granted planning consent for the erection of 64 new residential dwellings, with a village green providing public open space, connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, remodelled and landscaped access to the cemetery, and an extensive landscaping screen to form a soft village edge.

### **Melbourn – A Sustainable Location for Growth**

Melbourn is identified in the current South Cambridgeshire Local Plan as a Minor Rural Centre (Policy S/9). These are described as *'having a lower level of services, facilities, and employment than Rural Centres, but a greater level than most other villages in South Cambridgeshire, and often perform a role in terms of providing services and facilities for a small rural hinterland'*. The current policy permits *'Residential development and redevelopment up to an indicative maximum scheme size of 30 dwellings...within the development frameworks of Minor Rural Centres'*. It is, however considered that the current policies are too restrictive and should be relaxed in the emerging Local Plan if the required level of housing is to be successfully delivered.

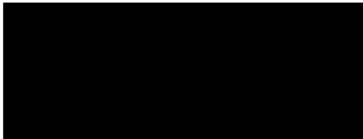
Melbourn is a large sustainable village with an excellent range of shops, services, and facilities. These include a small Coop supermarket, a Premier convenience store, two public houses, a restaurant, a butchers, a veterinary surgery, a secondary school, a primary school, a village hall and community hub with café and meeting point, places of worship, takeaways, and other services and facilities.

In addition, Melbourn is very well-served by public transport. Meldreth railway station is located just 1 kilometre north of the village provides regular half-hourly services between London King's Cross and Cambridge/Cambridge North, as well as some additional destinations in peak times. These trains also provide a journey time of just 4 minutes to the nearby market town of Royston, just over the county boundary in Hertfordshire to the south, and a journey time of approximately 16 minutes to Cambridge. There is also a regular bus service, linking the village with Royston and Cambridge.

In light of the above, it is therefore considered that land off Water Lane, Melbourn is an excellent location for development. The site's access issue has been successfully agreed and the Technical Note enclosed with the submission was confirmed as being acceptable by Cambridgeshire County Council by virtue of an email of 27<sup>h</sup> March 2018.

I trust that the above information is helpful. However, if you require any additional information or require clarification on any element of the enclosed submission, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



**William Nichols**  
**Senior Associate Director**  
**Strutt & Parker**

Enc: Completed 'Call for Sites and Broad Locations' response form;  
Site location plan;  
Aerial photograph of site;  
Utilities constraints plan;  
Technical note – access design and highway adoption process; and  
Confirmation from landowner of support for submission of site.

Cc: Alexandra Deol, Paul McCann, Phillip Wright (CALA Homes), David Fletcher and Guy Jenkinson (Strutt & Parker)