We believe there should be more allocations proposed within this area including the allocation of a number of small sites under 1 ha to allow the plan to be in accordance with NPPF paragraph 69.

We question some of the findings of the HELAA assessment process in particular site 40461.

This site was dismissed as it scored one RED result in the matrix which related to landscape. The comments received were as follows:

“Development throughout this site would have a significant adverse impact to the existing settlement character, an encroachment into the landscape, permanent and removal an existing paddock upon the edge of the existing settlement. Development would also cause a creep of development towards the A10 joining Meldreth to the Industrial/Agricultural site on the other side of the A10. This creep may create precedent for further development which may further diminish the separation between Meldreth and Melbourn. Development has the potential to change the character of the edge of the village and extend its urban edge up to A10 and beyond.”

We disagree with this assessment and would like to make the following points:

Firstly, the site has been incorrectly referred to as a paddock, it is a vacant area of scrubland land with no current use.

The area between the trainline and the A10 already forms a distinct separation gap between Meldreth and Melbourn. We believe this creates a defined landscape gap between the two settlements. Site 40461 relates more closely to Melbourn, by nature of the character of the area. The development of a small number of homes (circa 8 dwellings) will not diminish the separation between both settlements. The site is screened on all sides and not visible from the wider landscape from any direction. There are no views into the site from the A10, to the north, and the site is surrounded by mature vegetation which screens the site from all public view points.

The owner of the site encourages the Shared Planning Service to undertake a site visit to fully appreciate its context and character and to amend the HELAA assessment.

This site, due to its size, will make a positive contribution to the smaller sites of under 1 ha needing to be identified to meet the NPPF paragraph 69 guidance.