

16 May 2024

South Cambridgeshire District Council
Planning Policy Team
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambridge
CB23 6EA

By email: localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org

Dear Sirs

**Greater Cambridgeshire Call for Sites
May 2024
Land off Royston Road, Melbourn.**

1. This representation is made by SF Planning on behalf of the owners of land at Melbourn as shown on the accompanying plan.
2. This submission is made to the call for sites by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council which has remained open for new sites since the publication of the First Proposals consultation of the greater Cambridge Local Plan. For clarity, this submission does not comment on the First Proposals documents.
3. Our client proposes the site for allocation as a residential or mixed use site. Whilst the full parcel has been included on the plan, the Council may consider that a smaller portion of the site can be allocated.
4. The land is owned jointly by multiple landowners as follows;
 - a) Hazel Mary Frampton of Los Delfines, Glenfield Close, Brockham, Surrey, RH3 7HS.
 - b) The estate of Elizabeth Anne Mendes of Lion Castle Tenantry, St Thomas, Barbados, W.I. Deceased July 2023, probate still awaited, beneficiaries consent to the submission.
 - c) Joelle Rose Marie Dumetz of 4 Southgate Road, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 6BL.

CHELTENHAM 12 ROYAL CRESCENT GL50 3DA T: 01242 231575
GLOUCESTER 9 COLLEGE GREEN GL1 2LX T: 01452 527997
LONDON 19 EASTBOURNE TERRACE W2 6LG T: 020 3763 8005

5. Site Description

- 5.1 Our client's land comprises agricultural fields and a small woodland area spanning approximately 12.5ha.
- 5.2 The site is adjacent to but outside of the development frameworks boundary where development is restricted. However, the site is approximately 200m from a bus stop (connecting to Royston and Cambridge) and around a mile from the train station at Meldreth (providing connections to London and Cambridge), with a number of other shops, services and facilities including pubs, a community centre, churches and a school within walking distance.
- 5.3 Surrounding land uses include employment (to the south and east), residential and agricultural. There are public rights of way crossing and circumnavigating the site.
- 5.4 The site does not fall within any designated ecological areas. There are listed buildings within 500m along the high street (although the site is not considered to impact their setting). There are scheduled monuments at Bowl Barrow in the southern part of the site. The land is located within Flood Zone 1.

6. Suitability of the Site

- 6.1 The site is in close proximity to a wide range of services and facilities, with other services easily accessible by public transport. It is also well related to existing built form.
- 6.2 Development of the site would represent logical growth, consistent with the pattern of growth in this part of Melbourn. There is potential for greening the site in such a way as to provide visual, landscape and ecological enhancements which can be addressed at a later stage to create a well-defined edge of settlement.
- 6.3 The site also has the potential to both assist with and take advantage of proposals for an active travel route via Royston and Melbourn into Cambridge. A business case for this route was published last year; <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/asset-library/Sustainable-Transport/Active-Travel-Projects/Greater-Cambridge-Greenways/Melbourn-OBC-v2-ISSUED-2023-02-17.pdf>
- 6.4 The travel scheme would better connect Melbourn to Cambridge and also to Royston and other surrounding settlements. The redevelopment of the site fits well into this scheme and the site could form part of the route.

- 6.5 The local plan identifies Melbourn as a minor rural centre where small scale growth is considered appropriate. The allocation of the site is capable of being consistent with that depending on the size of the parcel allocated and whether the site involves a mix of uses. There is no obvious reason why the site cannot be incorporated into the boundary if it were allocated and such a move is unlikely to cause harm.
- 6.6 Whilst the emerging local plan already proposes an allocation in Melbourn, this is at the northern end and will be for 120 homes. It appears as though the Council has allocated almost enough dwellings to meet demand but inevitably there may be delays with larger sites. Allocation of this site (or part of it) will ensure that the Council can continue to meet its requirements.
- 6.7 Additionally, we note that the Council has identified Melbourn as being a good location for office development due to excellent transport links. Some commercial development would fit well with surrounding land uses in the eastern part of the site and the proximity of the site to major transport links and the proposed active travel route.
- 6.8 As confirmed, this site has not been submitted to the call for sites previously. However, a site directly opposite has been assessed under reference number 40262 at the following link;
<https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/sites/gcp/files/2021-11/GCLPSDHELAAappendix4cAug21v2Nov21.pdf>
- 6.9 That land was considered unsuitable for housing. A number of concerns were raised, some of which were site specific including the 'strong open rural landscape'. That site is highly visible from the main A roads and is very open. Our client's site would instead be seen in the context of the neighbouring employment sites, away from the A roads, with the woodland providing some concealment if necessary. The proposals would likely involve development in the eastern part of the site which is less susceptible to visual impact concerns. Although the full site has been proposed, the Council may consider part of the site more appropriate to allocate and we ask that full consideration be given to this.
- 6.10 Our client would design the scheme sensitively in any event, with appropriate landscaping and other mitigation, and would avoid the scheduled monument entirely. Therefore, landscape and visual impact and historic conservation should not be considered a barrier at this stage. It is also considered that all other impacts can be adequately mitigated and therefore there are no obvious barriers to allocation.

6.11 Our client is aware of the need to consider capacity for the A10 and A505 and is happy in principle to work with the Council and other developers as necessary to assist with this.

7. Availability and achievability

7.1 The site is within our client's ownership and available for residential development. There is no impediment to its delivery within the next five years.

7.2 The site is of a reasonable size that could be advanced quickly following the grant of permission, and therefore could aid with housing supply in the short to medium term, thereby helping to sustain a five-year housing land supply of deliverable sites.

8. Summary and conclusion

8.1 The Site is ideal for residential or mixed use (residential led) development due to its sustainable location. It is available for development to be achieved in the short to medium term.

8.2 Any potential harm that might be identified can be mitigated and should not act as a barrier at this early stage.

9. Please contact me should you find it helpful to discuss the information included in this submission.

Yours faithfully

Liz Shield **MRTPI**
SF Planning Ltd.