

parish clerk

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 November 2023 15:44
To: parishclerk@melbournpc.co.uk
Subject: Objection to Cala Homes Proposal at Land off Water Lane, Melbourn.

Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Melbourn Parish Council,

I am writing to you as Melbourn resident living on Water Lane near the junction with Back Lane to strongly object to the Cala Homes proposal for 100no. residential houses on land off Water Lane, Melbourn. The public consultation for this proposal has been advertised on your website (link below). I attended the public consultation and continue to strongly object.

<https://melbournparishcouncil.gov.uk/events/cala-homes-consultation-7-november-2023-all-saints-community-hall/>

I am seeking the support of Melbourn Parish Council to both (1) support and (2) convey my objection to this proposed development.

I object to this development for the following reasons:

- **Access, traffic and air pollution**

The proposed access for the development is Water Lane. I strongly object to this strategy and I am deeply concerned because this will result in a significant increase in the number of vehicles utilising Water Lane, Back Lane and Beechwood Avenue. The Melbourn Parish Council website data hosts traffic count data for Beechwood Avenue. This shows that in 2020 the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) count was 1014 vehicles. The Line Transport "Transport and access appraisal" Technical Note dated 13 December 2021, uploaded to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Portal, supporting the proposed development states that the "proposed development could generate approximately 60 vehicle movements in the peak hours, with 500 vehicle movements (two-way) throughout the day".

Consolidating this estimated data, this document is suggesting 560 vehicle movements every day from the proposed development. Hypothetically, splitting the movements 50/50 between Back Lane and Beechwood Avenue, this becomes 280 movements per road. Using the 1014 ADT figure recorded for Beechwood Avenue, this is a 27.6% increase in traffic movements through Beechwood Avenue. The Beechwood Avenue data recorded an average gap between vehicles of 100.37 seconds, reducing this by nearly a third resulting in a vehicle every minute. The same applies for the proportion of Water Lane and Back Lane prior to the Saxon Way access of the light industrial area, via Back Lane.

As you are probably already aware, the Back Lane to / from Beechwood Avenue connection via Water Lane is frequently used as a 'rat run' and this principle will be compounded by the addition of 100 houses at the southern end of Water Lane.

Furthermore, all three roads: Beechwood Avenue, Water Lane and Back Lane are utilised by residents for on street car parking. Therefore, this increase of vehicle movements will be via single width of carriageway throughout this area leading to increased queueing and wait times. This on street parking is all 'downstream' from the proposed development, so if 60 vehicle movements are expected during peak times, this will likely result in queueing on Water Lane, Back Lane and Beechwood Avenue.

The Back Lane data recorded by the Melbourn Parish Council shows a higher ADT because the equipment was placed at the western end of Back Lane, i.e. capturing the movements of vehicles only entering and exiting the light industrial area, not proceeding all the way to Water Lane in the east. However, it is clear from the data that the speed limit (which was 30mph at the time, but has recently been decreased to 20mph in 2023) that the majority of drivers exceed the speed limit. The data shows that 73.38% of drivers exceeded the 30mph speed limit, with maximum speed limits recorded between 55mph up to and including 70mph! It is clear that there is no respect or consideration given to the speed limits and this proposed development will compound these problems.

With the increases in vehicle movements this will result in increased air pollution. According to the Friends of the Earth website, South Cambridgeshire air quality is already past the World Health Organisation health limits for NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} annual concentrations. Overall, increasing the number of vehicle movements by more than a third at the eastern end of Back Lane and Beechwood Avenue will result in a significant increase in air pollution to existing residents in these areas, which includes myself and my family. This is not acceptable and I am deeply concerned about this.

Whilst I object to the principle of the site - nevertheless there clearly are alternatives better located and more appropriately designed access options to the site. For example, notable recent residential developments in Melbourn are connected to New Road, e.g. in the south east of Melbourn. Another route could be via London Way (past Norburys). These two options divert the 560 daily vehicle movements onto larger roads, with capacity, no on-street parking, footways (e.g. Back Lane is frequently used for walking, but has no footway along the majority of the road thus pedestrians are unsafe) and clear connectivity to the wider strategic road network i.e. the A505 and the A10 respectively, thus with destinations including Royston, Cambridge, London, Stansted etc.

The Office for National Statistics data (for up to 2016, therefore likely to underestimate) outlines that over 43% of households have 1 car, and over 30% have 2 or more. With this access strategy, the number of vehicle movements and the number of vehicles in question, this proposal is essentially turning Melbourn Back Lane into a duplicate High Street.

Apportioning an access for 100 houses to Water Lane is unacceptable and I strongly object and particularly object to this strategy.

Links to the data quoted above:

<https://melbournparishcouncil.gov.uk/traffic-survey/> - Melbourn Parish Council Traffic Data.

<https://oc2.greatercambridgeplanning.org/form/40274> - Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Portal (see "Supporting evidence" tab).

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/air-pollution> - Friends of the Earth Air pollution map.

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/1659/melbourn-draft-conservation-area-appraisal-2021.pdf> - Greater Cambridge Shared Planning document (PDF)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/householdandresidentcharacteristicsenglandandwales/census2021> - Office for National Statistics - average number of people per household

- **Construction Traffic**

As a resident of Water Lane near the junction with Back Lane, I strongly object to the principle of construction traffic and equipment, including Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), delivery trucks, earth movers, waste trucks, workers vans, vehicles, etc. passing by my house for several years while the proposed development is constructed. Given the connectivity between the A10, the shortest route through the village to Water Lane for larger vehicles, it is very likely that all construction traffic will pass by my house. This will be a significant number of vehicles every day for several years causing significant disruption to the quality of life for my family and I. The disruption will include noise, vibration of my house by HGVs, pollution, many vehicle movements and will rapidly deteriorate an already notably damaged Back Lane road surface. My driveway is connected to Back Lane and deterioration of the Back Lane road will directly affect wear and tear on my car and accessibility to/from my driveway and access into the wider Melbourn village and beyond.

Vehicular access via London Way (past Norburys) is already practicably feasible and currently utilised by farm vehicles. It is simply unacceptable that access is proposed to this site via Water Lane.

- **Loss of Public Right of Way**

The southern end of Water Lane is a public right of way that is regularly used by a significant number of Melbourn residents. Whilst the proposed development states that they seek to put forward an adopted portion of highway connecting into the development, they are not obligated to and may not pursue this. As a result of the development, this public right of way has the potential of being removed and access to green space rural views will be removed for many Melbourn residents.

- **Foul water drainage**

The foul water generated from this proposed development will drain to the village wastewater drainage network. In speaking with local residents, I understand that there is already foul water drainage flooding of human waste due to the recent residential developments connected off New Road. The construction of housing will lead to additional foul water flows and likely cause problems to the foul water drainage pipes in Water Lane and further into the centre of the village (i.e. via gravity where the lower ground lies). Currently, the foul water from the village drains (some of which is pumped) to the Melbourn Sewage Treatment Works (STW). The existing pumping stations in the village are already reportedly at capacity, so adding new flows will result in flooding. Furthermore, the Melbourn STW drains treated effluent to the Mel Brook which is a sensitive receptor. Currently, the STW already overflows into the watercourse. The River Trust data shows that in the year 2022, the Melbourn STW spilled 21 times for a total of 247 hours! If 100 houses are built, this will exacerbate the number of spills and the volume of raw sewage into our rivers and environment.

<https://therivertrust.org/sewage-map> - The River Trust, wastewater overflows - zoom and click to review Melbourn STW statistics.

https://www.meldrethhistory.org.uk/topics/the_river_mel-11/the_river_mel-9 - Meldreth History - River Mel

- **Surface water drainage**

During heavy rain, surface water regularly causes flooding of Water Lane and Back Lane, particularly at the junction between these two roads, and further to the north of Water Lane. Rainwater that does drain down Water Lane likely contributes to existing flooding issues in the village. The development of the houses at the top of Water Lane would be on the higher ground. I.e., above that of the other residents of Water Lane, Back Lane, Beechwood Avenue, the High Street, Chalk Barrow and Greengage Rise. This increase in impermeable area, where now there is only permeable chalk farmland, building on the land will result in an increase of rainwater flowing down Water Lane and exacerbating existing flooding issues in the village. Flooding is already a contentious issue within the village and this development will create additional problems - leading to more flooding of existing residents homes and property.

- **Existing lack of GP Surgery appointments**

Currently, the village GP surgery is overwhelmed with patients and constructing another 100 houses, the vast majority of whose residents will likely seek service from already oversubscribed and overwhelmed Orchard surgery will only lead to longer waiting times, more difficulty in getting an appointment and poorer service for all local residents. Currently, there is not enough support for the GP surgery to manage the demands at the moment. Increasing the number of patients will deteriorate the service for all.

Overall, I strongly object to these housing development proposals and seek support and representation from the Parish Council in this matter.

Look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Kind regards,

