

Matter C, 23a

Site Allocation: VC LM1, South of School Lane and East of Burnthouse Lane, Little Melton

a) Has the site been allocated previously or is it a new allocation?

VC LM1 is a new allocation for the VCHAP.

b) Does the site have planning permission and/or are there current applications under consideration?

The site does not have planning permission and there are no applications currently under consideration on this site.

c) What is the land currently used for, what is the ownership position and is the site currently being promoted by a developer? Are there any site occupiers/leaseholders who would be affected, if so how?

Current land use: VC LM1 is a greenfield site however there is also a Grade II listed barn within the boundaries of the site

Ownership position: The site is in sole ownership

Promotion by developer: Unknown

Impact on site occupiers/ leaseholders: The site is vacant

d) Is the site sustainably located in relation to village services and facilities? Where is the nearest (a) primary school (b) convenience shop (c) village hall (d) recreation ground (e) other key facilities? How accessible are these for walkers and cyclists, in the case of walkers for example by continuous footways?

Yes, the site is sustainably located in relation to village services and facilities. The table below summarises the connectivity of the site to the identified services and facilities.

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FACILITY	LOCATION	SETTLEMENT
Primary school	School Lane	Little Melton
Local shop	School Lane	Little Melton
Village hall	Mill Road	Little Melton
Recreation ground	Mill Road	Little Melton
Other (bus stop)	School Lane	Little Melton
Other (public house)	School Lane	Little Melton

There is a pedestrian footpath along School Lane, which continues off the junction from Braymeadow Lane. The newly developed Sinclair Close has pedestrian footpaths, as does Mill Road which has one pathway that intermittently switches sides. The site is connected to all of the above services and facilities by these footways.

e) Would the landscape and other physical impacts of the housing allocation be acceptable? Would it be acceptable in relation to the character and appearance of the area? How does it relate to the existing built-up area of the settlement? Are there any other significant constraints?

The site is located in a central area within the village and has a strong relationship to the existing built form of the settlement. To the north, the site is well contained within the wider landscape due to the proximity of the site to existing development. The section of the site to the south, closest to Burnthouse Lane, is more open within wider views and the policy recognises a need to reinforce and retain the existing rural approach to the village along Burnthouse Lane, as well as the sense of separation between Little Melton and Hethersett.

Within the site boundaries is a Grade II listed barn. This heritage asset has been the subject of discussions with the Council's own heritage officer, as well as Historic England, and the site-specific policy requirements (including the submitted schedule of potential modifications) reflect the sensitivity of the setting of this heritage asset. An area of open space around the barn is required and, as the access road between the two distinct sections of the site will need to pass in front of the barn, this will need to be sympathetic to the listed building and its setting. Development of VC LM1 will be expected to include proposals for the renovation and repair of the barn to secure its long-term future, as set out in the site-specific policy requirements.

The ecological features within the site are also noted as requiring consideration through the planning, design and application process. In particular, the barn is noted as having the potential for bat roosts and the site is also within an amber zone for great crested newts.

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The site-specific policy requires the protection and retention of established ecological features on the site, and the applicant will be required to submit all appropriate ecological surveys as part of the planning application process.

Assessments of the landscape and townscape impact, as well as the potential heritage impact of development, are included within the following evidence base documents:

Site assessment ([B.1A](#))

Landscape Visual Appraisal ([B.5.1](#))

Historic Impact Assessment ([B.4.1](#))

List of Additional Modifications and Potential Main Modifications Arising from the Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) and the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment NaFRA2 Addendum (May 2025) ([A.6.2](#))

f) Is the access and site acceptable in highway terms?

Yes. The Highways Authority confirmed that due to local road network constraints, access to this site is only achievable via School Road. This is reflected in the policy requirements, alongside improvements to the existing footpath along the site frontage.

g) Is the estimate of site capacity justified?

Yes. The site density reflects the sensitivities of the site, including the presence of a Grade II listed building within the boundaries of the site. Discussions with Historic England highlighted the importance of avoiding development that would impact on both the listed building and its setting. The site numbers have also been influenced by the need to protect on-site biodiversity features, as well as retaining an opportunity to provide a small car park for the school should this be required at the time of the planning application.

Appendix 1 of the Topic Paper sets out the site density ([B.11.1](#)).

h) Are the site-specific requirements for development of the site justified, consistent with national policy and would they be effective?

Yes. The site-specific policy requirements are supported by the evidence base for the Plan and have been informed by discussions with key technical consultees (such as Historic England and the Highways Authority). The policy requirements are justified by the

evidence, are consistent with national policy and the Council considers that they will be effective.

i) Would development of the site be viable, including the delivery of policy compliant affordable housing?

The Council has produced a Viability Appraisal as part of the evidence base for the Plan, (B.6.1), and considers that the site is viable, and will deliver a policy compliant quantum of affordable housing.

The site owner has not submitted Delivery Statements for the site, however through the production of the evidence base to support the VCHAP the Council is not aware of any constraints that would impact on the deliverability of the site in accordance with requirements of the site-specific policy.

j) Overall, is the site deliverable within the plan period? When is development likely to commence? Has the landowner/developer confirmed this?

Yes, the Council considers that the site is deliverable within the Plan period however the site owner has not submitted Delivery Statements to confirm the timescales for delivery of the site. The site promoter has, however, confirmed the continued support of the site owner for the inclusion of the site within the VCHAP, as well as an ongoing intention to develop the site in accordance with the requirements of the policy.

Settlement Limit: Little Melton and Great Melton

a) Are the settlement limits proposed suitable and justified given their policy function?

Yes, the settlement limit for Little Melton is suitable and justified. The settlement limit has been drawn around the main built-up area of the village, primarily along School Lane, Mill Road and Green Lane. The VCHAP settlement limit includes the 2015 Local Plan allocation but continues to exclude the allotments which run between Great Melton Road and Mill Road.

The settlement limit has also been amended to include recent developments at All Saints Close and School Lane (north of-), as well as a further development south of School Lane and east of Burnthouse Lane (Sinclair Close). A site to the north of Great Melton Road has been incorporated into the settlement limits and offers an opportunity for small-scale development in the future.

The settlement limit focuses limited future infill development to the most sustainable location in the cluster.

There are no significant areas of existing development that are not included in the settlement limits.

b) Where changes to settlement limits are proposed, are these:

(i) Justified by development on the ground? or

(ii) Where potentially allowing further development, that development would be in a suitable location relative to services and facilities, would not harm the character and appearance of the area and would not have any other adverse planning effect?

The changes to the settlement limits can be justified under both conditions (i and ii). The settlement limit has been amended to include new development at All Saints Close, School Lane and Burnthouse Lane. A small site north of Great Melton Road has also been included. The site is surrounded by existing residential development but access is achievable via open space from Limes Close. The site takes the opportunity to fill a gap in the existing built form.

c) Should any other settlement limits be included in the plan to reflect other hamlets or existing areas of development in the cluster?

No. There are no other hamlets or existing areas of development that are of a significant enough scale to justify a settlement limit. Great Melton consists of isolated and dispersed development that has limited access to local services and facilities and as such is not considered appropriate for a settlement limit.