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**Q13) How do you think we should improve the green space network?**

The allocation of land to the rear of Nos. 67-69 High Street, Meldreth would allow for the creation of new green spaces through new green infrastructure provision. The site currently has trees and planting both within the site and to the boundaries. The existing boundary treatments would be retained where possible and enhanced through the development of the site.

An indicative concept master plan (PiP Drawing No. 1-02) has been submitted with this response to the Issues and Options consultation and demonstrates how new housing could be delivered on the site. This would include new landscape planting to the site boundaries, which would provide biodiversity gain, as well as open space provision and a SuDS pond, which would enhance the green infrastructure provision in this part of Meldreth.

Residential-led schemes such as this are critical to the delivery of enhancements to the green-space network, particularly on land that would otherwise have no public access and limited biodiversity value.

**Q14) How do we achieve biodiversity net gain through new developments?**

New developments, such as that on land to the rear of Nos. 67-69 High Street, Meldreth can achieve biodiversity net gain through the inclusion of green corridors, enhanced boundary planting and open space provision. There is the potential for major developments to provide a greater level of enhancement through allotment provision, community woodlands, and woodland walks. Furthermore, SuDS features also have the potential to provide net gains in biodiversity.

In terms of the submitted indicative master plan that relates to land rear of Nos. 67-69 High Street, Meldreth, the proposal would contribute to biodiversity through the rear gardens of new homes and soft landscaping provided within the site. It is also proposed to provide open space within the site as part of the development scheme. The plan as submitted is indicative at this stage and represents an initial design concept. There is scope to amend the layout to include further net gain in biodiversity.

**Q15) Do you agree that we should aim to increase tree cover across the area?**

We would support the increase in tree cover across the area and this could be brought forward through residential-led development such as that proposed at Meldreth with the enhancement of boundary planting. Open spaces should be included within residential developments of an appropriate scale and seek to retain existing mature trees. The scheme at Meldreth would, where possible, endeavour to retain existing mature trees and create a 'parkland' type setting for any development on the site.

**Q18) How can we make sure that we can achieve safe and inclusive communities when planning new development?**

Include a policy that requires new development to have regard to the secured by design principles. This will help to ensure that new developments are well designed to ensure all areas benefit from natural surveillance and avoid alley ways and other areas that are not overlooked and could encourage anti-social behaviour.

The following could be included in residential-led schemes to achieve safe and inclusive communities. Where appropriate these measures will also be incorporated into the proposed Meldreth site.

- The provision of affordable housing. This includes a mix of build to rent, starter homes; and discounted market sales housing as well as the opportunity to incorporate First Homes;
- All homes regardless of the tenure will be constructed to be energy efficient by future residents;
- The provision of a highly sustainable development with good links to existing services and facilities within Meldreth and neighbouring settlements;
- Provision of new areas of formal and informal green space all benefiting from natural surveillance.

**Q31) How should the Local Plan help to meet our needs for the amount and type of new homes?**

Housing schemes should, where appropriate, make provision for housing to meet a range of needs from homes for first time buyers through to later living provisions. It should also include a proportion of affordable housing. The development proposals for Meldreth will provide a range of house types and sizes to provide for the needs of different groups in the community. The indicative master plan would also make provision for a policy compliant level of affordable housing.

**Q32) Do you think we should plan for a higher number of homes than the minimum required by Government, to provide flexibility to support the growing economy?**

Yes.

Based on the Government's standard method for calculating local housing need, there is a requirement to provide 1,800 dwellings per year in Greater Cambridge. This is the minimum number of homes that must be planned for and therefore, the local plan should provide for a higher number of dwellings to maintain growth. This will also help to ensure that affordable housing continues to be provided and existing stocks do not decline. The cost of new homes in the Greater Cambridge area is well above the national average. Therefore, the new local plan will need to address the issue of affordability and ensure that more affordable homes are provided, as well as plan for the right number of homes to maintain growth.

The local housing need figure of 1,800 dwellings per year is the base line and the starting point for the new local plan. The evidence base that underpins the local plan demonstrates that higher levels of housing growth are required.

It is considered that the new local plan should establish a housing requirement that is higher than the minimum number of houses provided by the standard method.

**Q33) What kind of housing do you think we should provide?**

The new local plan should seek to provide a mix of housing in suitable locations. The local plan policies should not be too prescriptive in this regard or specify the precise mix of housing to be provided on sites, but rather should be flexible to allow developments to respond to market demands.

The comments made in response to question 31 are also applicable here and the Meldreth proposals would provide a range of house types and sizes to provide for the needs of different groups in the community.

Planning policies should support small to medium scale builders to bring forward sites of small to medium scale, which can be delivered quickly and make an immediate impact on the delivery and supply of new housing.

**Q35) How should we ensure that a high standard of housing is built in our area?**

In terms of the potential for high-quality development, the Meldreth scheme will be designed to a high standard and the proposed dwellings will be designed to comply with the National Space Standards, as well as providing energy efficiency throughout the development including water saving technology and adaptable dwellings which can take into account modern needs such as working from home.

**Section 5 – Where to Build?**

**Q40) How flexible should the Local Plan be towards development of both jobs and homes on the edge of villages?**

The Local Plan should take a highly flexible approach to the development of jobs and homes on the edge of villages in general and Meldreth in particular. Meldreth is a sustainable location and allocating growth here would meet a number of aspirations of the Local Plan in general, and the four big themes in particular.

The settlement of Meldreth is a highly sustainable location and provides a good range of local services and facilities and includes a post office, convenience store, public house, village hall, veterinary surgery Aurora Meldreth Manor School and Orchard Manor, and a church. Meldreth is also served by bus route 127 (Guilden Morden – Royston). There is also a Railway Station in Meldreth which is operated by Great Northern and Thameslink and provides services to London Kings Cross and Cambridge. From Kings Cross, trains regularly depart to destinations such as Peterborough, Leeds, Durham, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The submitted indicative master plan illustrates how development at Meldreth would, in effect, infill an existing gap and provide for a spacious layout that would reflect the existing pattern of development in this location.

**Q42) Where should we site new development?**

The preferred option for the location of new development is dispersal throughout the villages. Developments such as that on land to the rear of Nos. 67-69 High Street, Meldreth would contribute to the vitality of the community by helping to support existing services and facilities within the village. Small to medium sized sites, such as our client's site at Meldreth, are deliverable and can come forward quickly and early in the plan period.

**Q47) What do you think about growing our villages?**

The comments made in response to question 42 are applicable here. New development in villages such as Meldreth would help to diversify the local community and support the existing services and facilities provided. New development in the villages may also create increased demand for certain services and facilities.

If you have any queries or require any further information, then please do not hesitate to contact me.



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Yours faithfully

**Graeme Free MA MRTPI**

Encl: Response Form  
Indicative Master Plan Drawing No. 1-02