

Firepool Masterplan

Consultation Statement

March 2023

Version	Purpose	Date
1	For Corporate Scrutiny Committee	21/10/2022
2	For publishing with consultation	18/11/2022
3	For publishing with Full Council agenda	16/03/2023

Firepool Masterplan

Consultation Statement

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Introduction

Firepool is a major regeneration area within Taunton town centre, for which there have been development aspirations for many years. The adopted Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (TCAAP, adopted 2008) allocates the site for development. There have been various proposals for development of the site, including Outline Planning Permission being granted for a retail-led scheme in 2019 (permission now expired). However, circumstances have changed and the Council itself is now taking a more proactive role in the development of the site, taking it forward and investing in the future of the town centre. The Council has two distinct roles in relation to the site: as developer / landowner / asset holder; and as Local Planning Authority. In this context, the Council has produced a new Firepool Masterplan in order to:

- a) provide the Council as Local Planning Authority – with an up to date, evidenced and justified planning policy context for regard to be had to as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications, and
- b) provide the Council as developer / landowner / asset holder – with greater certainty about what might constitute appropriate development proposals for the site going forward.

The Masterplan has been produced by the Council's Firepool team and their consultants in the Council's role as developer. This follows updates and refinements in response to full public consultation which took place from 21 November 2022 to 2 January 2023, and informal consultation and engagement with key internal and external technical stakeholders and review by the Quality Review Panel. Officers of the Local Planning Authority have been engaged along the way and are now recommending that the Masterplan is adopted as a material planning consideration in the preparation of pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes.

The Masterplan provides guidance on how development may come forward on the site considering the changes in circumstances which have occurred since the relevant policies of the development plan were adopted. It illustrates the aspirations of the Council with regards to the site, which in places go beyond or are otherwise different to the requirements set out by adopted planning policies. In doing so, the Masterplan does not seek to alter existing or set new policy but seeks to provide a well-rounded and updated plan for the site which responds to the changed circumstances, and for this to become a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications for the site.

The Masterplan deals with the context, layout, development content, design principles and parameter plans for the site as well as appropriate justifications (particularly where departing from adopted policy). It does not replace the need for planning permission and does not pre-determine any future planning applications, but it does provide a framework for the general co-ordination of development of the site and is intended to become a material consideration in the determination of such planning applications.

This Consultation Statement explains how the Council has undertaken public consultation to inform the development of the Masterplan. The report covers:

- Which bodies and persons were invited to make comments;
- How those bodies and persons were invited to make comment;
- The material that was subject to consultation;
- A summary of the responses received; and
- A summary of how the responses influenced the development of the Plan.
- A summary of the developer-led consultation undertaken previously.

This report is written from the perspective of the Council as Local Planning Authority. A Developer response to certain specific comments received during consultation can be found as an appendix to their submitted Developer Statement.

The Council has an adopted [Statement of Community Involvement](#) (SCI). The SCI outlines that the Council is committed to effective community engagement, and seeks to use a wide range of methods for involving the community in the plan making process. SWT's Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in November 2019. In relation to plan preparation, it primarily relates to the preparation of Development Plan Documents (DPDs), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Neighbourhood Plans. As the Masterplan is not intended to be a DPD or SPD and is therefore not formally required by any legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions, there are no mandatory steps, methods or bodies for consultation to comply with. However, the Draft Masterplan consultation was designed to comply with the SCI in the interests of good practice.

The Draft Masterplan was supported by a Draft SEA Environmental Report and Draft Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Appropriate Assessment which do have specific consultation requirements. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 set out consultation procedures for SEA Environmental Reports in Regulation 13. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 set out consultation procedures for HRA Appropriate Assessment of plans in Regulation 105. Consultation undertaken on these elements complied with the requirements of these regulations.

Consultation Summary

In November 2022, the Council published a Draft Firepool Masterplan for public consultation. Consultation ran from 21st November 2022 through to 2nd January 2023 (six weeks).

The Plan was also subject to early engagement with key community and technical stakeholders, which informed the proposals within the consultation draft, as well as post-consultation engagement with specific consultees to clarify responses and ways forward.

The documents available to comment on as part of this consultation included the following:

- Draft Firepool Masterplan,
- Non-Technical Summary document,
- Draft SEA Environmental Report,
- Draft HRA Appropriate Assessment,
- Equalities Impact Assessment,
- Draft Consultation Statement.

The Draft Masterplan was also supported by the following background evidence documents, though comments were not explicitly being sought on these:

- Heritage Assessment,
- TVIA,
- Parking Strategy,
- Cycle Assessment,
- Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy,
- Office and Retail Market Update,
- Ecology Survey,
- Viability Appraisal,

The Draft Masterplan itself was a 188 page long PDF document. The SEA Environmental Report and HRA Appropriate Assessment as well as supporting evidence documents are also long and detailed documents. By their nature, these documents included a lot of technical information, though diagrams, maps, illustrations and photographs were used and jargon avoided as much as possible in order to make it as accessible as possible considering their nature and purpose. The Draft Masterplan document summarises the supporting evidence in a more accessible way, however it remains necessarily a long document. As such, a Non-Technical Summary document was produced to help present the most key points in a short (19 page) accessible way. Furthermore, the Commonplace consultation hub was designed in such a way as to summarise all information in a short and accessible way where the public and stakeholders can get into the level of detail they want to.

Purpose of the consultation

Consultation did not seek to open up conversations of whether or not the site should be redeveloped (this principle has already been set by existing adopted policy). Rather, it sought to gauge public opinion on *how* the site would best be redeveloped and whether the proposals met their expectations as well as seek inputs from technical stakeholders.

The Masterplan explicitly deviates away from adopted planning policy in a number of places. Consulting the public on this is therefore of increased importance. Furthermore, the NPPF, PPG and National Design Guide are clear on the need for plan making, and Masterplans / Design Guides to be influenced and informed by consultation with local communities.

As such, the purpose of the consultation can be distilled down as follows:

- To seek views of the public with a view to being able to demonstrate broad public support for and benefit of the plans;
- To provide additional justification for the Masterplan and future development to depart from adopted TCAAP policy where appropriate;
- To ensure the Masterplan is technically robust and has taken account of key issues appropriately;
- To comply with the Council's SCI and national policy and guidance on public engagement and consultation;
- To comply with legal requirements (e.g. in relation to SEA and HRA);
- To raise awareness of the Council's aspirations with regards to the development of the key regeneration site in Taunton;
- To clearly demarcate the role of the Council as LPA and as developer and show transparency in the decision-making process; and
- To ensure immediate neighbours of the site and those most likely to be affected are aware of the plans and how other proposals for the site link with the Masterplan.

Who we consulted

A list of Specific Consultation Bodies, General Consultation Bodies, and other organisations and groups the Council seeks to involve in plan-making is included in the SCI. As a non-statutory plan, there is no statutory list of bodies and organisations that the Council is required to consult in its preparation of the Masterplan. However, all of those on this list were included in this exercise.

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations) set out that Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England are statutory consultees in relation to the Draft SEA Environmental Report. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitat Regulations) set out that Natural England are statutory consultees in relation to the Draft HRA Appropriate Assessment. Anyone was able to comment on these documents, but these bodies were specifically being invited to respond to them.

The Council is committed to ensuring that local groups, organisations and individuals are provided with the opportunity to be involved in the preparation of planning policy documents.

The Council has a database of consultees, who have either commented upon, or expressed an interest in being involved with the development of local plans. This database is used to keep individuals, companies and organisations informed on the production of the Local Plan and other planning policy documents. New consultees are added to the consultation database via e-mail or letter to the Planning Policy and Implementation Team requesting inclusion on to the database. The General Data Protection Regulations are followed to ensure that personal data is only required and retained where proportionate and necessary, is only gathered where explicit consent has been provided, is kept securely and is not disclosed to others. All bodies and persons identified within this database were emailed with notification of the consultation.

Close neighbours of the site were identified and written to with letters posted on 18th November 2022, a few days before the consultation was due to begin.

How we consulted

Consultation on the Draft Masterplan ran from 21st November 2022 through to 2nd January 2023 (six weeks). During this time, a variety of methods were employed as follows.

Responses to the consultation could be made:

- Via the Council's [consultation portal surveys](#);
- By email to strategy@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk;
- By post to Planning Policy and Implementation team, Somerset West and Taunton Council, Deane House, Belvedere Rd, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 1HE.

To publicise the consultation, the Council:

- Emailed notification of the consultation to all bodies and persons identified within the consultation database;
- Wrote to close neighbours of the site;
- Made the consultation documents available for inspection at the following locations:
 - Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1HE (Monday – Friday, 8.30am to 5pm)
 - Taunton Library and Priorswood Library (Library opening times are available at: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/libraries/our-libraries/>)
- Published the documents on the Council's consultation portal at <https://firepool.commonplace.is/>. The Council's Consultation webpage at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/consultations/> and Firepool Masterplan webpage at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/planning-policy/firepool-masterplan/> also contained information directing people to the consultation portal where the documents were hosted.
- Published a press release via the Council's website and social media posts raising interest, communicating the consultation and encouraging participation.
- Hosted an online public presentation and Q&A session via Zoom for the general public (Monday 28th November 2022 @ 7:30pm).
- Hosted an online public presentation and Q&A session via Zoom for businesses (Monday 12th December 2022 @ 5pm).
- Hosted two in person drop-in sessions at Deane House (Tuesday 6th December 2022 @ 5pm - 9pm and Thursday 8th December 2022 @ 12noon - 5pm) with different timeslots to attract different groups.
- Hosted permanent display boards at Deane House, in a unit at the newly completed Coal Orchard development and in a prominent public location on site boundaries.

Previous Consultation

The Council held a public information session on 4th and 5th November 2019. However, this consultation was undertaken in the Council's capacity as developer/landowner/asset holder and was pre-involvement of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in relation to proposals which had not been informed by engagement with key stakeholders or endorsed by the LPA. The consultation was designed to keep members of the public informed as a revised proposal was being worked through to bring the site forward. It involved presentation of "work in progress" for the site across multiple display boards, which were hosted at Deane House. Following the event, the display boards were uploaded to the Council website as a PDF presentation for all to see at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/2121/firepool-consultation.pdf>.

In total, 230 people attended the sessions and a total of 38 written and online comments were received. Comments received were generally positive, and the overwhelming response was a desire to see the site delivered as soon as possible. A summary of responses to the developer-led consultation can be found together with a series of Frequently Asked Questions at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/media/2120/firepool-public-information-summary-of-comments.pdf>.

Draft Masterplan Consultation

The Draft Masterplan was subject to a six-week consultation from 21 November to 2 January 2023 using a variety of engagement methods. Through these various engagement methods, the Draft Masterplan could be further refined. This section of the report details each of these methods:

Emails

Emailed notification of the consultation was sent to all bodies and persons identified within the consultation database on Friday 29th July 2022. A screenshot of the email is shown below:

From: Strategy
Sent: 21 November 2022 11:04
To: Strategy <strategy@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk>
Subject: Somerset West and Taunton Council - Draft Firepool Masterplan public consultation

Dear consultee,

Draft Firepool Masterplan public consultation

Somerset West and Taunton Council has prepared a new Draft Firepool Masterplan for public consultation. The Draft Masterplan proposes an ambitious mixed-use scheme comprising of new homes and a leisure quarter organised around a high quality public realm, designed to support revitalisation and regeneration of Taunton town centre.

The Council is both developer and Local Planning Authority in relation to the site. These roles are distinct and independent, however, the delivery of sustainable development on this key town centre site is of great importance in both roles. The Council as developer has produced the Draft Masterplan, and as Local Planning Authority has approved the Draft Masterplan for public consultation.

Following consultation and any appropriate amendments, the Local Planning Authority intends to adopt the final version of the Masterplan as a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications for the site.

We want to hear your thoughts!

We know that the Firepool site is of great importance to the local community and to the future of the town centre. As such we want to hear your thoughts!

We are seeking the views of the public, local communities, technical stakeholders and the development industry on this draft Masterplan from Monday 21st November until Monday 2nd January 2023.

To have your say and get involved:

- Go to <https://firepool.commonplace.is> or scan the QR code below to view easily accessible information and respond to the proposals online



- View hard copies of the Draft Masterplan and supporting documents at:
 - o the Council Offices, Deane House, Belvedere Rd, Taunton, TA 1HE (8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday and closed on bank holidays)
 - o Taunton Library, Paul Street, Taunton, TA1 3XZ
 - o Priorswood Library, Eastwick Road Taunton TA2 7HDLibrary opening times are available at: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/libraries/our-libraries/>
- Attend one of our consultation events:
 - o **Monday 28th November 2022 @ 7:30pm** - online public presentation and Q&A session.
 - o **Tuesday 6th December 2022 @ 5pm - 9pm** - in person drop-in session at the Council Offices, Deane House, Belvedere Rd, Taunton, TA 1HE.
 - o **Thursday 8th December 2022 @ 12noon - 5pm** - in person drop-in session at the Council Offices, Deane House, Belvedere Rd, Taunton, TA 1HE.
 - o **Monday 12th December 2022 @ 5pm** - online presentation and Q&A session focused for local businesses.

Details of how to join the virtual events are available on the consultation hub.

Responding to the consultation

We encourage you to respond to the consultation online at <https://firepool.commonplace.is>. This will generally be the easiest way to view the Draft Masterplan and its proposals, enabling you to get into only the level of detail you want to, and respond to survey questions.

If you only have a few minutes you can choose to read just the Executive Summary and fill out a Quick Survey. If you want to get into a bit more detail then you can do so, with more detailed surveys associated. You can also view the main Draft Masterplan document and supporting evidence including the Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment and Draft Habitat Regulations Assessment documents.

Alternatively you can:

- Email responses to Strategy@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk or
- Write to us at the following address:
Planning Policy and Implementation Team,
Somerset West and Taunton Council,
Deane House,
Belvedere Rd,
Taunton,
Somerset,
TA1 1HE.

You can also keep an eye on the Council's social media outlets, and respond directly through comments there: [@swtouncil](https://twitter.com/swtouncil)

You have been contacted about this consultation because you are listed on our planning consultation database. Please let us know if you wish to be removed from this database, or if your details have changed.

Please pass this communication on to anyone else you think might be interested.

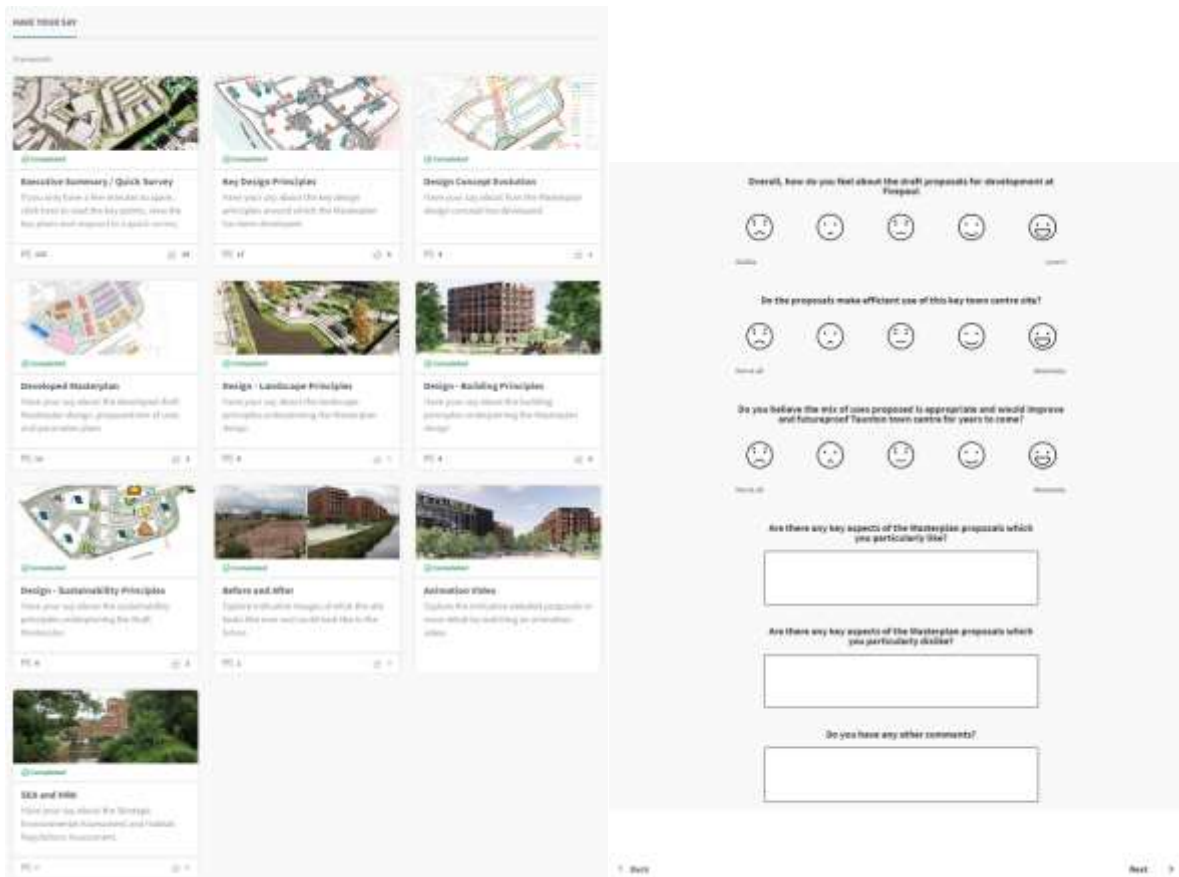
A total of 19 responses were received via email.

Commonplace Consultation Platform

Officers met with the Commonplace team in October to begin setting up a new Commonplace Consultation Hub, using the license provided by Somerset County Council, and coordinating tasks through October and November before the portal was to be launched. A new page was set up at <https://firepool.commonplace.is/> to provide a clear and distinct page and URL dedicated to Firepool. This URL was included in all consultation materials, notification emails and the press release. A QR code was also created for inclusion on consultation materials. This was populated with ten "Have Your Say" tiles which separated the consultation material out into discrete topics for people to engage with. Most of these tiles had survey questions

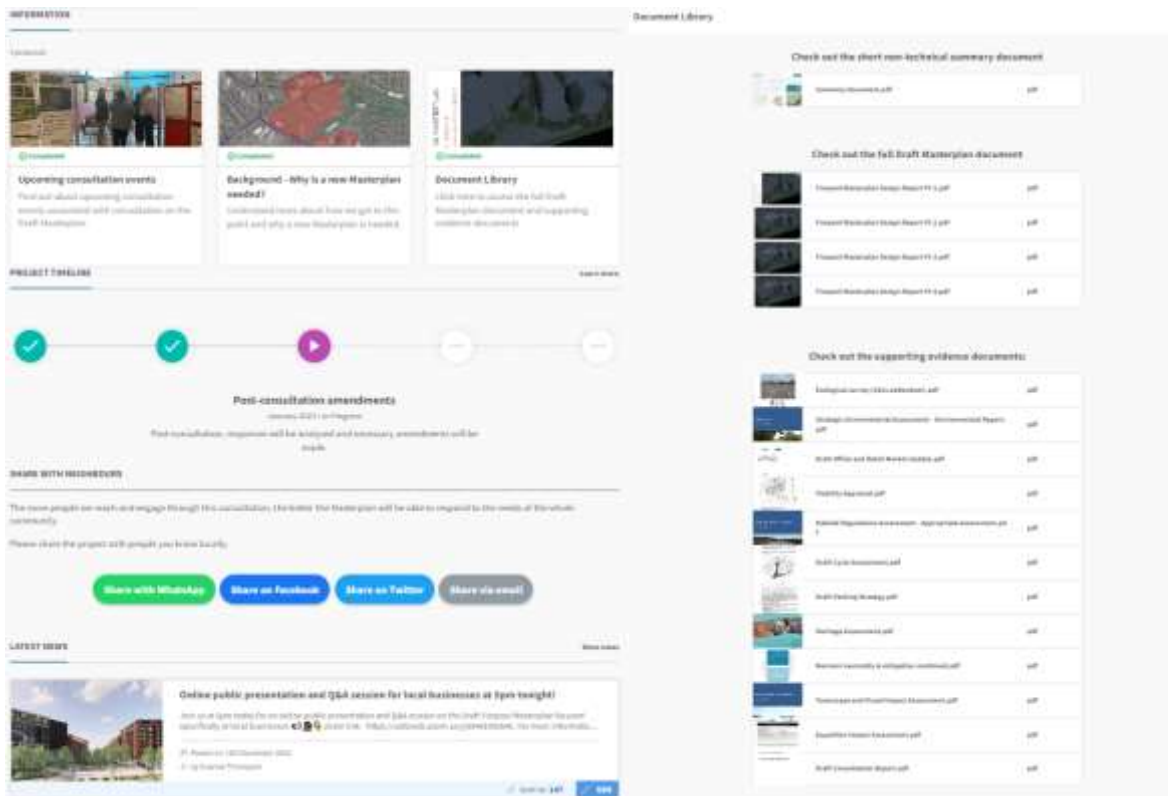
attached to them, but people could choose to respond to one question, all questions or none of them:

- Executive Summary / Quick Survey
- Key Design Principles
- Design Concept Evolution
- Developed Masterplan
- Design – Landscape Principles
- Design – Building Principles
- Design – Sustainability Principles
- Before and After
- Animation Video
- SEA and HRA

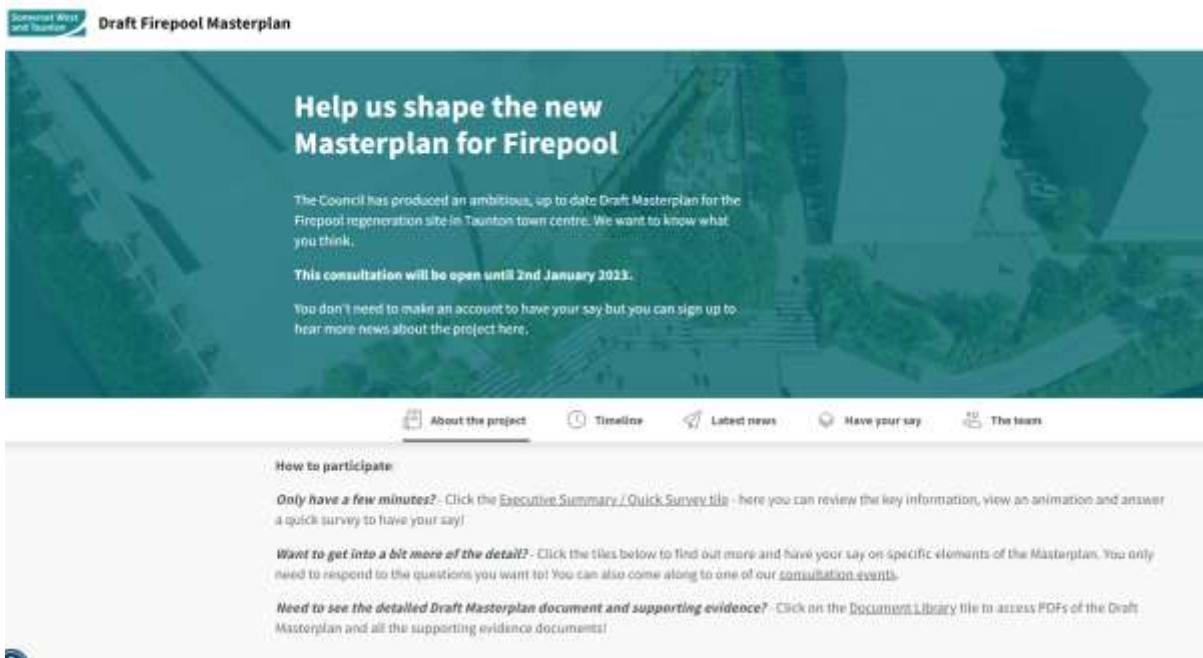


These tiles were supplemented with three “Information” tiles:

- Upcoming consultation events
- Background – Why is a new Masterplan needed?
- Document Library (where the actual Masterplan document as well as non-technical summary document and evidence documents could be accessed).



By summarising the Masterplan contents down and splitting up into manageable topics it was hoped that this would enable people to get into the level of detail which they wished to. A short introduction to the page set out the key ways to participate:



People had the option to share the consultation page with other people they know via embedded sharing buttons, and a latest news section was used to promote the consultation events during the consultation on the day of the events.

When the consultation was launched, Commonplace notified anyone that was already signed up to Commonplace updates in the vicinity (via other Commonplace projects, as per their terms and conditions of signing up for such notifications). When news posts were published in the latest news section, these automatically went out to anyone signed up to keep in touch about the project, further helping to promote the consultation and spread the word.

SWT Website

A new webpage was set up on the Council's website at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/planning-policy/firepool-masterplan/>. The website sits within the Planning Policy webpages of the Council's website and was easily linked to from the [Planning Policy homepage](#) and the general [consultations webpage](#). The link to the webpage was published on the consultation materials, in the consultation notification emails as well as the press release. The website explained that the Council was seeking views from the public, local communities, technical stakeholders and the development industry on a draft Masterplan. It then set out the details of the consultation, how to engage, and the broad purpose of the Draft Masterplan.

Consultation events

During the consultation period, a mixture of in-person and virtual events were held:

- **28th November 2022** – online public presentation and Q&A session hosted on Zoom. Details of how to attend this virtual session were posted on social media and in Commonplace news posts. This event was attended by 15 people. Slido was used to manage questions and officers from the LPA and from the developer team answered these “live” as they came in, depending on the topic of the question.
- **6th December 2022** – in-person drop-in session hosted at Deane House Council Offices 5pm-9pm. This session was chosen to be outside of standard working hours to provide opportunity for those working in the day to attend. The timing of this session was deliberately planned to coincide with a meeting of Full Council which was hoped might drive extra footfall for the exhibition. This event was attended by 15 people.
- **9th December 2022** – in-person drop-in session hosted at Deane House Council Offices 12noon-5pm. This session was chosen to be an afternoon slot which might pick up a range of different groups to the evening session. The date of this session was deliberately planned to coincide with a planning appeal taking place at the council offices which was hoped might drive extra footfall for the exhibition. This event was attended by 18 people.
- **12th December 2022** – online public presentation and Q&A session focused specifically on local businesses hosted on Zoom. Details of how to attend this virtual session were posted on social media and in Commonplace news posts as well as promoted by Taunton Chamber of Commerce. This event was attended by 2 business representatives.

Social Media

A social media campaign was launched on the first day of the consultation across the Council's social media platforms. This was followed up by further posts promoting the consultation and consultation events.

- 21st November 2022 – launching the consultation.
 - Facebook [@SWTCouncil](#) – 16 likes, 12 comments, 4 shares.
 - Twitter [@SWTCouncil](#) – 4 retweets, 2 likes.
- 28th November 2022 – reminding people about the consultation and the online public presentation and Q&A session that evening.
 - Facebook [@SWTCouncil](#) – 5 likes, 4 comments, 7 shares.
 - Twitter [@SWTCouncil](#) – 2 retweets, 3 likes.
- 6th December 2022 – reminding people about the consultation and the in-person drop-in sessions planned at Deane House for that evening and the afternoon of the 9th December.
 - Facebook [@SWTCouncil](#) – 6 likes, 0 comments, 2 shares
 - Twitter [@SWTCouncil](#) – 4 retweets, 3 likes.
- 12th December 2022 – reminding people about the consultation and the online public presentation and Q&A session focused specifically at businesses that evening.
 - Facebook [@SWTCouncil](#) – 4 likes, 0 comments, 1 share.
 - Twitter [@SWTCouncil](#) – 2 retweets, 2 likes.
- 23rd December 2022 – reminding people that there were just two weeks to go to respond to the consultation.
 - Facebook [@SWTCouncil](#) – 8 likes, 4 comments, 4 shares.
 - Twitter [@SWTCouncil](#) – 3 retweets, 2 likes.
- 2nd January 2023 – reminding people that this was the last day to respond to the consultation.
 - Facebook [@SWTCouncil](#) – 14 likes, 0 comments, 6 shares.
 - Twitter [@SWTCouncil](#) – 2 retweets, 1 likes.

Press Release

A press release was published on our website at <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/news/firepool-masterplan-public-consultation-launched/> on 21st November 2022 and sent to all regional media.

Articles in media outlets

The consultation was picked up by media outlets who ran related articles including:

- Somerset Live (03/11/2022 – prior to consultation beginning) - <https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/new-masterplan-deliver-firepool-regeneration-7779490>
- Somerset County Gazette (21/11/2022) - <https://www.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/news/23138936.public-consultation-draft-firepool-masterplan/>
- Somerset Live (07/12/2022) - <https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/firepool-regeneration-site-work-taunton-7902249>
- Somerset County Gazette (23/12/2022) - <https://www.somersetcountygazette.co.uk/news/23210187.public-consultation-firepool-draft-masterplan/>
- Cllr Mike Rigby (Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation) was also interviewed by BBC Radio Somerset as part of a morning news show on the day that consultation was launched.

Taunton Chamber of Commerce

In advance of consultation starting officers engaged with Taunton Chamber of Commerce to ask that they ensure details of the consultation and also the business-focused online engagement session on 12th December were forwarded directly to their members. Taunton Chamber confirmed that this took place.

Level of response

Overall, there were 251 responses to the consultation. As set out in the table below, of the 251 responses, 19 were submitted by email, 0 by post, 212 using the available tiles on Commonplace and 20 via social media. While this summarises the formal responses, it is important to note the many other responses and comments received through the consultation events hosted by SWT officers, summarised in the following section.

Method	Number of respondents
Email	19
Post	0
Commonplace	212
Social Media	20

Summary of Responses Received

This section summarises the responses received through the Council's consultation portal, by email/post, via social media and within the consultation events.

Commonplace Survey

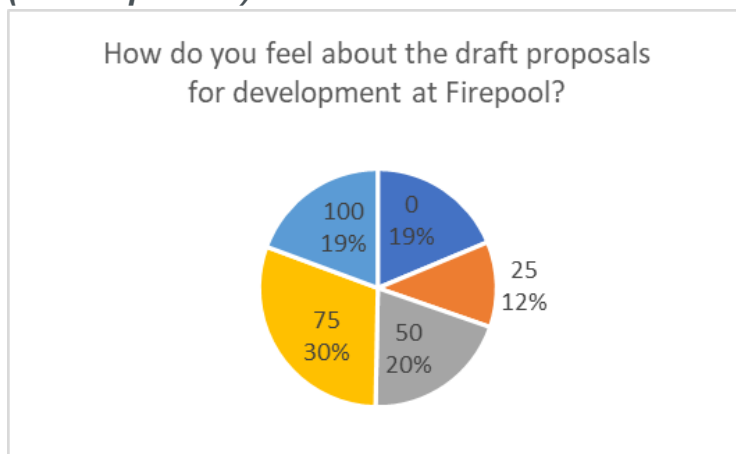
A total of 161 respondents answered survey questions, providing 212 comments and a further 37 'agreements' to other people's comments. The portal had survey questions associated with each of the following tiles:

- Executive Summary / Quick Survey
- Key Design Principles
- Design Concept Evolution
- Developed Masterplan
- Design – Landscape Principles
- Design – Building Principles
- Design – Sustainability Principles
- Before and After
- SEA and HRA

The section below sets out a summary of the responses to each question:

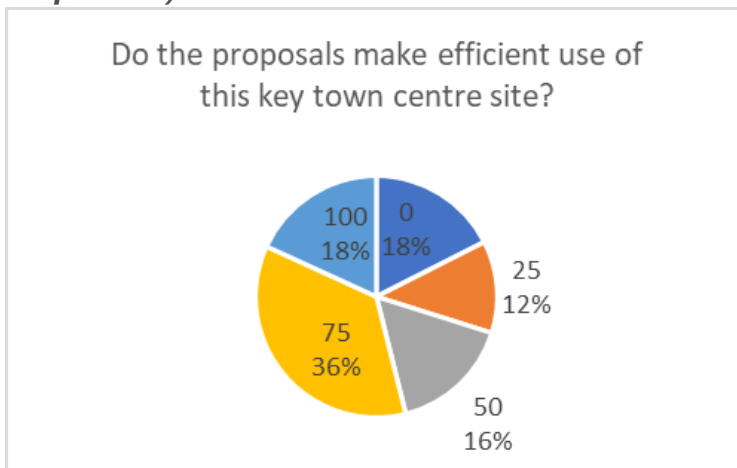
Executive Summary / Quick Survey

**Q - How do you feel about the draft proposals for development at Firepool?
(155 responses)**



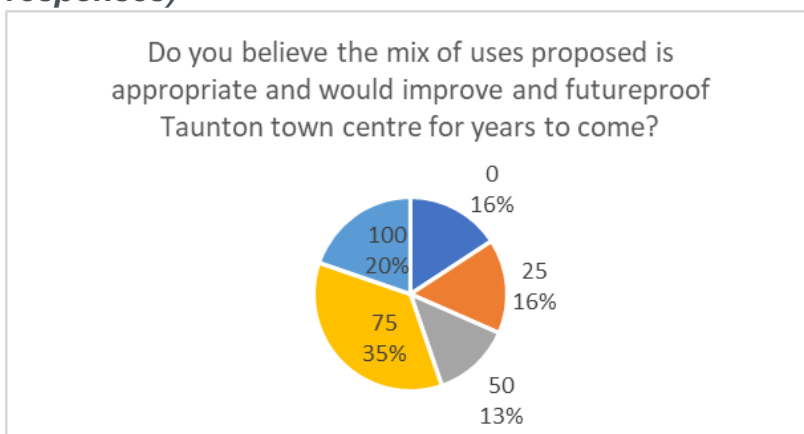
Out of 155 respondents, 30% felt the development scored 75/100 or 'liked' the development; 20% scored the development 50/100 or didn't 'love it' or 'dislike it'. Similarly, 19% of respondents said 'love it' to the draft proposals, and 19% said 'dislike it' about the draft proposals. 12% of respondents scored the development 25/100 or were not keen on the proposals.

Q – Do the proposals make efficient use of this key town centre site? (154 responses)



Out of 154 respondents, 36% of respondents scored the development 75/100 in terms how the proposals make efficient use of the site. This was followed by 18% who agreed the development absolutely made efficient use of the town centre site and 18% thought the development did not at all make efficient use of the town centre site. 16% thought the proposals neither absolutely or not at all made efficient use of the site. 12% scored 25/100 in terms of whether the proposals made efficient use of the site.

Q – Do you believe the mix of uses proposed is appropriate and would improve and futureproof Taunton town centre for years to come? (152 responses)



Out of 152 respondents, 35% scored 75/100 in terms of whether the proposals would improve/futureproof the town centre. 20% thought the proposals absolutely would improve and futureproof the town centre; 16% thought the proposals would 'not at all' improve/futureproof the town centre and 16% scored the development 25/100. 13% thought the development would neither absolutely futureproof the town centre or not at all improve and futureproof the town centre.

Q – Are there any key aspects of the Masterplan proposals which you particularly like? (103 responses)

Positive

- Green open spaces, water feature, public space, tree lined walkways, play space, places for wildlife and places to sit x20
- New community facilities including cinema/venue/leisure facilities close to town centre x17
- Focus on walking and cycling provision, particularly along the river x15
- Boulevard connecting to station x10
- Making good use of the riverside / retaining access to the river/canal x10
- Nice to see progress x9
- Mix of uses/businesses x7
- Like it all x6
- Provision of housing, more people living in the town centre x6
- Emphasis on walkability/public transport x6
- Zero carbon vision / sustainable design x5
- In principle the proposals seem good x2
- Layout seems reasonable
- Re-purposing of GWR building
- Hotel may bring people to the town centre
- Secure cycle storage in the cycle hub
- Opportunities for outdoor eateries which Taunton lacks
- Amphitheatre looks a great idea
- Hopefully creating jobs for residents of Taunton
- Having a nursery on site is a great idea as it is in a convenient location to ensure sustainable trip chaining.
- Enhances and complements the existing assets notably the cricket ground and brewhouse theatre.
- Focus on apartments
- Energy centre for heat distribution - should be definite rather than potential
- Adaptability of the proposals
- Like the architecture
- Doesn't appear cramped or overbearing

Negative

- No / nothing / none x10
- Looks ugly x4
- Duplicates leisure facilities already in the town, must not be at expense of existing community facilities x3
- Canoe club or how it is used (including parking) has not been thought about x2
- Lack of parking will make people avoid using these amenities / cause concerns x2
- Housing provides short term economic gain but does not sustain the town in the long run
- No consideration of the amenity of local residents
- Local residents never consulted
- Too many hidden areas - not good at night if walking/cycling alone

- Don't need the 400 homes that will be crammed in.
- Don't need more shops that will stand empty.
- Environmental impact on river and surrounding area.
- Do leisure buildings need to be so high, blocking views from station entrance?
- Plan makes the site look like a science fiction set or been designed using Minecraft.
- The proposal is not contemporary with the heritage of the wider built environment.

Other

- Existing paths in surrounding area beyond site boundaries are poor and need to be improved.
- What percentage is social housing
- What percentage is for over 55s
- Cinema needs to serve general audiences not just limited world/art screenings.
- Venue needs to be like the NEC as an exhibition hall capable of accommodating and securing big acts and stop people needing to go to Bristol or Birmingham.
- Need chain restaurants that we don't already have, plus an independent Persian restaurant.
- The Pumping Station needs to be made into something useful, not left to rot - railway themed restaurant or museum?
- Solar panels must be on all roofs, heat pumps for all homes.
- Splash pool instead of duplicating existing facilities.
- Points each side of the river to attach ropes for canoe club slalom and polo would be good.
- Just get it done
- Need community sporting facilities e.g. 3G pitch
- Need other retail
- Take inspiration from Wapping Wharf - shops, residences, businesses.
- Need a good bus service as well.
- Avoid too much surface level parking which creates ugly retail park look - go multi-storey with ability of residents to lease a space.
- Use vegetation to avoid a concrete jungle
- Town centre's future is social.
- East Reach is crying out for trees to make it more appealing like this.
- Be brave and innovative but also beautiful in designing buildings - take a more intimate, less factory vibe for design.
- Will rain water be used to flush toilets, washing machines, dishwashers?
- Could push to 8 storeys, 6 is very conservative.
- There HAS to be entertainment options for ALL ages. Need somewhere for teens to go.
- Multi-use swimming pool would also be excellent
- Please consider those of us with disabilities
- More details needed on the leisure facilities
- Much depends on the style and materials used in buildings being complementary to the town's best

- I think it would be absolutely fantastic to have a bridge/pedestrian link linking this development with the station and the river. It would make it a lot easier to travel via foot and bike into town for so many people.

Q – Are there any key aspects of the Masterplan proposals which you particularly dislike? (106 responses)

Negative

- Proposed buildings are ugly etc. (included following terms: awful, dismal, overbearing, blocky, dark, characterless, anywheresville, drab, bleak, sterilised, uninspiring, soulless inner city blocks, antisocial, prison-blocks, ghettos of the future, re-purposed communist warehouses, look like car parks) x29
- Not enough consideration for users of the river / canoe kayak club has been forgotten / not simply a "boat house", a boat store alone doesn't meet needs x16
- Too much residential x 11
- Insufficient car parking, particularly when events and/or cricket are on, leads to further social issues and antisocial parking x 9
- Reproviding existing out of date facilities e.g. cinema, bowling x8
- All of it x5
- Out of character with the area x5
- Buildings too high x 5
- Too urban with expanses of hard concrete landscaping x3
- Pedestrians, cyclists, scooters and cars need separate provision x3
- Concrete jungle x3
- Need a mix of architectural styles x3
- Retail uses must be limited to protect town centre x2
- Better lighting/durable surfaces/safety railings/overlooking needed along river walkway x 2
- Not enough has been made of the heritage and features around the lock gates and weir x2
- Will cause more traffic congestion in an already heavily traffic area - lower air quality x 2
- Amenity of local residents not considered x 2.
- Too office based x 2
- Not enough open space x2
- Potentially still too much parking x 2
- Building design not in keeping with nicer styles around town
- Lack of information given
- Flat roofs cause future problems, prefer pitched roofs
- Little focus on creating long term skilled jobs
- Little focus on providing public services e.g. dentist, child play, facilities for teenagers
- Park & Ride stops running too early
- New Unitary Authority may have other financial priorities
- Buildings too close to the river
- No mention of EV charge points
- How well will the beautifully manicured green spaces be kept in reality, and at what cost?

- Provide more employment opportunity on the site e.g. small "high tech" workshops / digital, climate and carbon futures hub, green and blue recovery themes - centre of excellence. Other employment sites being sidelined but demand does exist (e.g. shown at Westpark).
- Concern that the venue is based on securing private/grant funding as should be integral to the plan.
- Yes
- Mention of possible mooring for house boats and more boating movements - could significantly alter the character of the river and be obstructive to free movement along the river as would narrow it in places especially for the rowing club.
- More use of the river will be affected by silt build up, increase litter in river, impact on wildlife including nesting swans, affect water quality, fish stocks and bird life.
- Weirs provide a good river level, but with drought conditions predicted to get worse its vital to protect water levels and flow to keep the river healthy.
- Should be focused on bars and restaurants
- The view of the river is desirable and should be accessible for all to enjoy its benefits not blocked out by large blocks of flats.
- The blocks overlooking the river will have lovely views but the buildings set in will be dark.
- Removal of established trees and replacements will take years to grow.
- The lack of an independent cinema e.g. Bridgwater
- Square looks like a paradise for skating and skateboards.
- Concern at long term success of public realm due to maintenance and management liabilities.
- Insufficient garden space.
- No mention of public toilet facilities which are essential.
- No litter or dog bins shown.
- Far too many buildings
- Reflects too much the historical town layout - be more radical.
- Could dilute efforts to recreate a vibrant town centre.
- Student accommodation right next to a retirement complex
- No mention of social housing, should have good proportion x 2
- Amphitheatre is unimpressive, should be a landmark space not just some steps.
- Restaurant uses haven't capitalised on the riverside aspect and appear in the shade on the video.
- All needs to be well lit at night to feel safe
- Boulevard has potential to bypass and impact businesses on Station Road.
- Concern that plans are uncostered and just another vision.

Positive

- No x6
- Need an entertainment venue large enough to attract musicians, bands, comedians etc. x2
- Secure cycle storage
- Pleased there is very little retail provision which would erode the struggling high street
- Cinema

Other

- The art gallery should be near the castle not in a new part of town
- An early emphasis on local character in these indicative images would go a long way to ensuring it actually happens in the final designs.
- Design should complement the river
- One or two gable ends and mansard roofs could make a difference.
- Agree there is no office demand in Taunton but there are other employment uses to consider.
- Opportunity to provide something new e.g. ice rink or decent concert venue - only the council can do this as it may be a loss leader financially
- It appears that the use of the Taunton Canoe Club has been misunderstood. It is not simply a storage facility for boats, but also provides changing rooms, shower facilities and meeting room in a location with carparking facilities and riverside access.
- What are the green balloons? Will they pass the test of time?
- Section for Amenity and Sport Facilities (section 4) fails to acknowledge the existence of Taunton Canoe Club
- Please can we have entertainment currently not available in Taunton or the closer surrounding areas. Let's have something unique to Taunton.
- Would prefer wharf style buildings e.g. Wapping Wharf
- The lock area could have more green space , picnic facilities, coffee shop and an education centre for local children to be aware of the canal and railways history to the town . Learn how the gates open etc. This would link nicely with the walk through to Children's Wood . The area currently has one picnic table which is well used . I know some of this area is owned by the Canal and River trust but the council own the old canal car park which is surrounded by trees already. This car park area would be perfect to enhance the whole lock area and would bring an end and start point for tourist to the canal.
- If the council are going to supply housing and flats with no parking are they going to make it compulsory that people living in these homes can't own a car ? Because if there is no clause they will be parking in the surrounding area. The lack of parking and over development of areas cause stress which leads to aggressive behaviour.
- As you arrive from the elevated station crossing . A panoramic view of the river the churches the cricket ground should be enjoyed by all and not blocked out with large buildings that do not enhance the area.
- Opportunity to use this area already centred towards the Cricket club as leisure and recreation - boats on the river, boat taxi service, river side cafes and open spaces, educational areas, to enjoy this beautiful area. Make the area attractive to tourists to gain tourism and increase spending in our current town centre. Increase the focus on leisure to support current shopping areas and attract tourists. Support the amphitheatre with leisure pursuits such as cycling, boating, kayaking, skiing, walking, fishing, photography, creative play situations and educational settings, involve relatives, foster friendships, promotes exercise, improves work ethic, creativity and problem solving.
- Areas with a "natural" feel designed with wildlife in mind have been shown to be much better for people's mental health and happiness.
- The density of the flats would be alleviated if the buildings had more interesting facades.

- Need visitor parking spaces
- Would have liked some emphasis on encouraging innovative, cutting edge business use to choose Taunton as their hub. Digital, climate and carbon futures hub, green and blue recovery themes - centre of excellence. Needs to exemplify and symbolise the garden town credentials, this would be an ideal location - in the river corridor. Taunton could demonstrate leadership in this sector, based at this site, creating future momentum and attracting interest and investment.
- Local blue\green heritage with the canal nearby.
- Public art is crucial and a regular diet of events needs to be planned to ensure success and management of public realm. Castle Green demonstrates that where an attractive public open space is not managed and utilised that it can be wasted and degrade.
- Could parking requirements be reduced further (considering BSIP and Connecting our Garden Communities proposals)?
- Consider crazy golf/boom battle bar/climbing wall instead of cinema?
- The future of towns is communal meeting areas where people can park to get there and have a selection of coffee shops and cafe/restaurants with a common outside seating area. A selection of small independent shops could feed off the people meeting there.

Q – Do you have any other comments? (79 responses)

- Taunton Canoe Club reprovision/connection to river (x16)
 - Clarify the meaning of 'reprovision': what will happen to the boathouse? (x3)
 - Opportunity for more than just 'reprovision' considering the history, importance and community associated with it. Needs to be an affordable building but allow development in future.
 - Allowing existing club to develop to accommodate increased interest in wild swimming and paddleboarding. Facilities to support this would be appropriate such as parking, public toilets and landing stages, meeting rooms, changing rooms with showers, boat store. (x2)
 - Involvement of TCC in discussions/plans, state how they will be involved. (x7)
 - Important local facility for town with over 300 members, needs recognition. (x4)
- Greater use/links with the river (boat restaurants, jetty's to support activities, riverside vegetation). (x5)
 - A large waterside kids playground situated on or based around the walking/cycling path. (x1)
 - River is a great asset and development should make the most of it with places to eat next to or floating cafes, drink, relax, access the water inc. gardens should be beside the river. (x4)
- Provision of a stadium or venue space as Brewhouse is too small (x8)
 - Entertainment venue for all year events including live music and concerns needed, creating a centre for the south west/Taunton and Brewhouse is too small currently (x8)
- 'Blocky' buildings reflection of 60s-80's, dislike of red brick and dark colours. (x14)

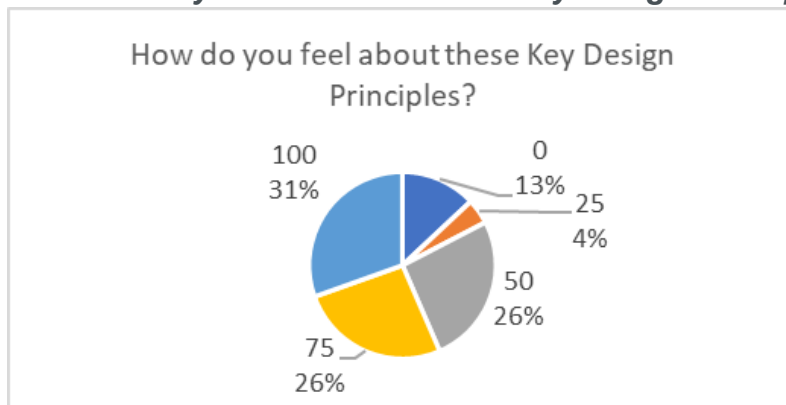
- Dislike of red brick/building materials, consider mixed colours and decorative brick work (x2)
- Buildings are dark, ugly, appear depressing in poor weather, improve look/feel. (x4)
- Need to look at the buildings in the town centre to identify which ones are loved and which ones become an eye sore – greater use of materials in keeping with heritage. (x3)
- Emphasis on public space/environment is worthwhile but the design suggests this could go to waste i.e. trees won't make up for ugly, overbearing streetscape. (x1)
- Avoid repeating mistakes of Viridor Building/Lock House/Trenchard Way which are overbearing, dull, clumsy and have aged badly. (x1)
- Designs need to respect Taunton's built heritage and show/reflect 'character areas'. (x1)
- Council should use examples from elsewhere and use named examples of streets/buildings that Taunton should emulate to allow standards for decision-makers to aspire to. (x1)
- Embed new development into neighbouring areas. (x1)
- Need for focus on small businesses and independents on site/ other uses ideas
 - Focus the commercial on local or independent businesses as people want experience over shopping for products such as food stalls, bars, entertainment to create atmosphere. (x2)
- Viability/need for cinema
 - Viability of cinema seems questionable as existing Odeon isn't very busy with streaming services available instead.
- Affordability of homes (encourage families)
 - How many of the properties will be affordable/ social housing? (x2)
- Need to prioritise walking/cycling access from station to town through site in a direct way and for those with mobility difficulties. There were many comments that walking, and cycling should be made a real priority and link in beyond the site. (x8)
 - Considerations...
 - Will skateboarding and cycling be provided for because uses are likely?
 - Include Station Road on map signs, directional posts and other signage to signal to people in new development of the existing businesses.
 - Will it be safe at night?
 - Maintenance of site/green spaces?
 - Speed limits should be limited to 20mph on site.
 - Sufficient cycle parking?
 - Policy should ensure there aren't two spaces per house to discourage driving.
 - Planning for cycling/pedestrians should be really embraced.
- Public Transport Connections
 - Needs to be affordable, reliable public transport and park and ride.

- Lack of open space and trees/plants/vegetation/ Area around Firepool lock to be reconsidered, this should be a park/asset point and link to Childrens Wood. Crammed in.
 - Extent of trees/planting needs to be maintained throughout delivery.
 - Plan does not make use of the 'garden town' status - Firepool Lock could be a nice amenity if landscaped with a park area or form part of a Children's trail linking with Children's Wood and feature boards about the history of the area.
 - Proposals are cramped with too many buildings and not enough green space for leisure activities.
 - Pedestrianised areas for shopping and eating in the summer are needed.
 - Adding trees/hedges.
- Tall buildings and light concerns
 - Multiple taller buildings that look close together will limit light.
 - Concerns on heights of buildings, should be height limits to fit with the location.
- Consider emergency vehicle access/flood risk.
 - Consider access for emergency services and width of roads with parked cars. (x3)
 - Ensure plan links with Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Improvements Scheme - consider implications of high numbers of people gathered at Amphitheatre given close proximity to river.
- Wanting to draw big brand shops into Taunton.
 - Indoor activities such as ice skating, something that is not in the area including big brand shops and retailers to make Taunton a town and draw people in. (x3)
- Car Parking/Congestion/Emergency Vehicle Access
 - Reinforce connection with Trenchard Way to reduce congestion around Morrisons (residents should use this way rather than Priory Bridge Road).
 - More houses and car park needed to support access the town. (x2)
 - What about visitor parking? Parking for dwellings?
- Building Standards/ Environmental concerns
 - Will there be solar panels on south facing units? What other energy incentives are there on site?
 - Will there be EV charging points? (x2)
 - What are the clothes drying arrangements for households?
 - Protection for wildlife around this area of River Tone.
- Missing uses on site/additional suggestions
 - Objective in the report about 'attracting young people to work in the town', however, there is little to offer in this scheme other than the 'Innovation Centre' and a few jobs at the cinema.
 - Visitors centre for PEACE including a library such as WeTheCurious Bristol centre. Somerset Eco-group are keen to get involved with this.
 - New purpose built centre to meet social/health needs of young people (replace former Tangier youth centre).
 - Community hub - for local groups, choir, yoga.

- Need for public art and spaces for arts/culture similar to the new pop up art gallery.
- Site should be used for academic/educational purposes - University of Lincoln demonstrates use of regeneration site (canal side setting close to railway) can provide educational/economic driver.
- Phosphates
- Development will be held up by phosphates, will the boat be missed again?

Key Design Principles

Q – How do you feel about these Key Design Principles? (23 responses)



Out of 23 respondents, 31% fully supported the key design principles, 26% somewhat supported them, 26% neither supported them or did not support them, 13% did not/disliked the key design principles and 4% somewhat disliked them.

Q – Why do you feel this way? Are there any missing or that you don't agree with? (16 responses)

Mixed support for green/open space...

- Support for concept/ideas for green space (x1)
- Hard to know how principles will be interpreted/seem generic: soft green edges to river and active green corridor not mentioned. (x1)
- Substantive green space has not been proposed within development e.g. landscaping around Firepool lock could create a new park. (x1)
- Needs more open spaces (x1)

Taunton Canoe Club related comments...

- Paddleboarding/canoeing are popular so landing jetties so water can be accessed easily/freely needed. (x1)
- Consider needs of all visitors who need to drive/park in the area i.e. those who kayak/canoe need to drive to carry their boat (can't use public transport). What are the plans for re-provision of the boat house? (x1)

Mixed responses on sustainability...

- Support for strong sustainability focus. (x1)
- Focusing the development around modern interpretations of "carbon"/"sustainability" will ruin the site. (x1)

- Very positive, recognition for the need to make it a zero carbon/sustainable/green project. (x1)

Uses on buildings on site...

- No need for cinema/bowling alley, considered Hankridge is not well used. (x1)
- Town shops need more support and a greater independent-focus. (x1)

Comments on building designs/heights...

- Too much emphasis on concrete for a Garden Town (x1)
- Building heights should be limited/reduced/don't gel with image being promoted (x2)
- Existing residents losing views of Quantocks (x1)
- No mention of how building designs and styles would complement the area. (x1)
- Support for focus on smaller housing needs, spacing. (x1)

Comments on building standards...

- Ensure Passivhaus certified buildings. (x1)
- Eco factors are good but forget hydro/district heating may be irrelevant with Passivhaus targets. (x1)
- Design for the circular economy. (x1)
- Housing should be future-proofed for climate change and be 100% social housing: rents/house prices continue to rise beyond the salaries of majority of residents and many private landlords won't rent to families or allow children in properties. Likely to have *"luxury' investment property built for pension funds and wealthy pensioners and Taunton families will be excluded from establishing a stable home and family life in the town"*. (x1)

Mixed responses on how masterplan prioritises walking/cycling/sustainable transport...

- Many pictures of cars parked outside proposed residences but little evidence for walking and cycling, car ownership should be discouraged, considering the central location, in favour of active travel. (x2)
- Support for link to the river and focus on walking/cycling/other transport means. (x4)
- Development will create a parking nightmare and add to the problem from recent Firepool developments. (x1)
- Positive recognition for encouraging public transport use and pedestrianised access (x1)

Other comments relating to principles/masterplan...

- Reference to history/heritage/conservation is not relevant and likely to diminish what needs to be a dynamic focal point for an unexciting town. (x1)
- Principles are stated but not used in Masterplan. (x1)

Q – Do the Masterplan proposals effectively respond to the Key Design Principles identified? (10 responses)

- Yes = 4, well thought out focus on community/environment.

- No = 5, (1) not enough green space, (2) open spaces should not be paved as this will not improve biodiversity e.g. amphi-theatre, which won't encourage biodiversity and may increase surface run off, (3) buildings will block views of church towers to residents living north of station, (4) need to increase use of riverside inc. amenity, recreation, education, ecology and social events, (4) undertake analysis of proposed plot uses in terms of car usage and at what time of day to establish which can be made car free i.e. Taunton Canoe Club. *"The masterplan proposals will impede the future success of the club if members/families cannot access a clubhouse and the 2km stretch of sheltered water. Whether its for the river access, equipment store, social meeting room or changing facilities, its all vital for Taunton Canoe Club to continue to grow."* (5) Do we need more houses? Will Taunton become a dormitory town? Taunton needs to attract business to employ local people not houses for people who don't work here.)
- Additional comment = 1 (work is required to develop/maintain waterways such as dredging.)

Design Concept Evolution

Q – Do you have any comments about the context appraisal or associated supporting evidence documents? (4 responses)

- Developer must provide evidence of consultation with organisations on the cricket club side of the river and action taken to address comments/consultation from previous development submission. (x1)
- (TVIA) para E22/Viewpoint 2b: Height of the buildings should ensure views are protected as this is an important characteristic that entices visitors, not just for people getting off the train but for all those passing through on the train and living in the vicinity of/beyond the station. (x1)
- The justification in TVIA para E28 is worrying for Taunton to retain its unique character. (x1)
- TVIA failed to include Taunton Canoe Club as an existing building giving use and purpose to the South Firepool area i.e., 4.6.3/4.6.4/4.6.5 list the buildings as just Viridor and Waters Edge. Disagree with 'lack of use or purpose' stated in the report in support of Taunton Canoe Club. Similarly, in terms of the Parking Assessment, no mention of car park in front of Viridor and how it used throughout the day/evening to load/unload boats. (x1)
- Puzzled by detour route for cyclists which shows an indirect route to station - are cyclists not using the same route as pedestrians? (x1)

Q - Do you have any comments about the way that the design concept has developed? (4 responses)

- Taunton Canoe Club have had no contact or engagement prior to publication of this plan. As such, the design has failed to consider the requirements of the club. (x1)
- Seems to be insufficient parking and a reliance upon P&R but this is at the opposite end of town. (x1)
- Designs seem to consider views of the church towers within the site but not from surrounding areas which will be compromised. (x1)

- How will raising levels within the Firepool site impact on surrounding areas south of the river? (x1)

Developed Masterplan

Q - Do the Masterplan proposals effectively respond to the Key Design Principles identified? (9 responses)

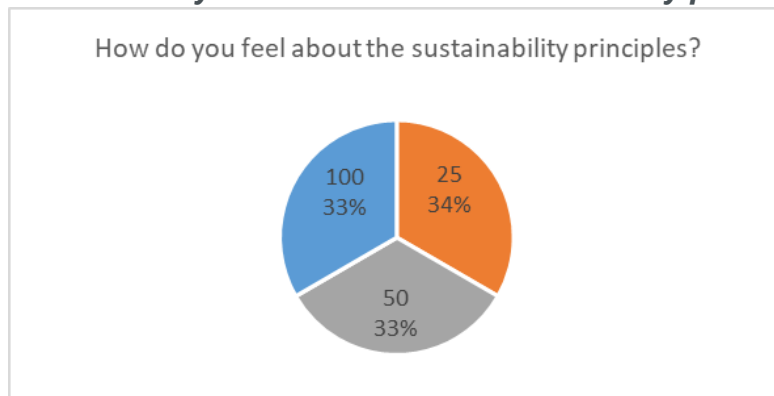
- No/not really (x2)
- Yes (x1)
- Proposals seem better than the former proposed retail park. Welcome the emerging digital innovation centre. (x1)
- Pleased a street connection to PBR is shown - future link can be created to retail core via Morrisons site (reliance on riverside path as the sole connection is not sufficient, lacks active frontage and not viable to support ground level commercial use). (x1)
- Support for bus route between station and retail core avoiding congestion and multiple traffic signals. (x1)
- Concerns that buildings are orientated 90 degrees to riverbank rather than aligned parallel - development needs to create a strong build frontage to the river. (x1)
- More restaurants and places to eat along the river needed. (x1)
- Detail on relocation of existing 'boat house' needs to be included in the plan. (x1)
- Path/cycling improvements within the site do not add real value as routes are already established. Improving lighting and surfacing to other areas outside development curtilage would be beneficial. (x1)
- Lack of parking for general public access or clarity on public transport routes (outside those provided for Block 3) will add more loading to Morrisons. (x1)
- Site is over-designed/filled with sterile, generic-looking buildings which could represent any boringly-designed 'modern' town. (x1)
- Does Taunton need more dormitory town houses for residents who will work outside Taunton? (x1)
- Idea of cinema/hotel are ludicrous (considering previous cinema on Station Road closed in 1970s and ease of watching films at home). Stats from Heron Gate cinema should be obtained. (x1)
- For hotel, surrounding hotels have opened/closed many times and GW Hotel exists nearby, is a 3rd needed? Is it likely to be financially viable and enhance the the area as another tall building? (x1)
- Development will feature lots of glass/concrete. (x1)
- Consider how amphitheatre might be used on a day-to-day basis to justify it as a useful open space. (x1)
- Affordable homes, eco features need to remain when development is built out. (x1)
- Ensure there is as much planting and water as possible e.g. green roofs and planting up the side of buildings. (x1)

Q – Do you have any further comments about the draft developed masterplan or parameter plans? (8 responses)

- Plan is focused on housing/entertainment with minimal importance given to business/employment.
- Given proximity to station and emphasis on links to station, development will likely be a 'bedroom community' with inhabitants travelling out of Taunton for employment. Greater emphasis on 'trip end' uses such as offices and greater emphasis on other allocated sites. (x2)
- Housing with gardens is not appropriate - creates lower densities (housing should provide commercial uses at street level) and apartments are preferred. (x1)
- Support for hotel - currently limited options for places to stay for people travelling without a car within reach of the station (i.e. Shrewsbury Premier Inn example). Land swap with Obridge Premier Inn? (x1)
- Taunton town centre needs a cinema - car trip to Hankridge is not an inviting evening out. Need to put right the planning issues created in the 1970s where key facilities were moved outside the town centre to Hankridge/Blackbrook. (x1)
- Land could be used better than offices, conference centre and one restaurant. (x1)
- Plans do not support claims for community, business continuity, transport access and existing recreational uses. (x1)
- Plan follows what most developers do which is to cram as much as possible for greatest financial return by building upwards. It would be nice to get the feeling of more space in the development. (x1)
- Consider capacity of services (schools/gp) that will be used by extra dwellings. More emphasis needed on active travel routes beyond development boundaries. (x1)
- Mixed reveiws on multi-purpose venue...Multi-purpose venue is essential for cultural development and economic growth in Taunton and shouldn't just be seen as a 'maybe'.
- Multi-purpose venue does not offer valid regeneration for the town centre and distracts footfall away from the town centre.

Sustainability Principles

Q – How do you feel about the sustainability principles? (6 responses)



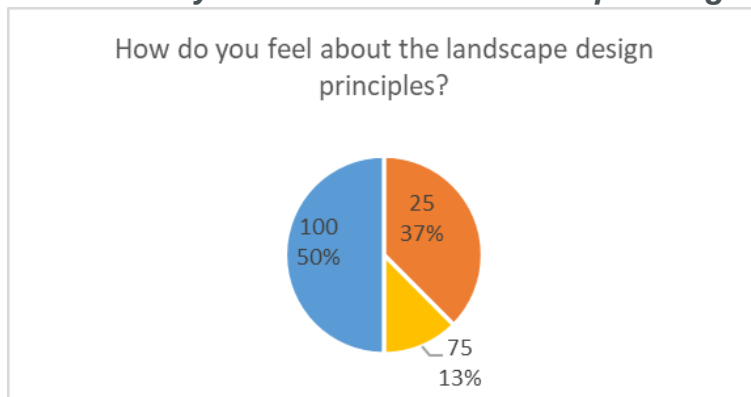
Only 6 respondents answered the question regarding how they feel about the sustainability principles. 1/3 fully supported them, 1/3 neither fully supported them or did not support them, and 1/3 somewhat did not support them.

Q – Do you have any particular comments about the sustainability principles? (5 responses)

- Large proportion of residential gardens are north-facing, will lack sun (x2). (SAME COMMENT LIKELY)
- Need for weatherproof covering of the Cycle Hub to ensure cycling is attractive. (x1)
- Green space appears to be taken up for parking of which such provision does not discourage car use (being near to station and town centre). (x1)
- More green space/trees and less provision for parking required to meet carbon neutrality by 2030. (x1)
- How will removal of river water for heat pump impact on wildlife? (x1)
- Consider commuter cyclists journeys - old cycle path from station to town centre was much more direct than the proposed path. Associated cycle parking also needs to be near the destinations. While one central cycle hub is a good idea, smaller hubs closer to shops/facilities may be better. (x1)
- Greater commitment to circularity - consider environmental impacts of insulation and opt for those that are less polluting i.e. wood fibre. (x1)
- Passivhaus (x1)

Landscape Principles

Q – How do you feel about the landscape design principles? (8 responses)



Only 8 respondents answered the question regarding how they felt about the landscape design principles. 50% loved the principles, 13% liked/somewhat loved the principles, and 37% somewhat disliked them.

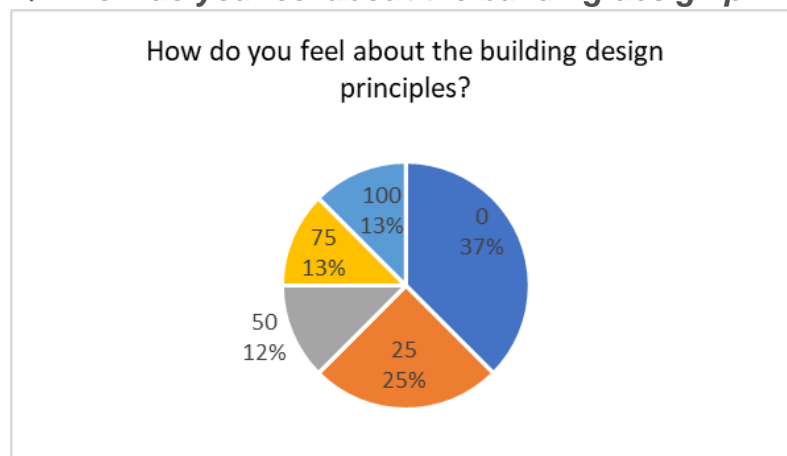
Q – Do you have any particular comments about the landscape design principles? (6 responses)

- Few trees/plants and too much paving/hardscaping, which contradicts with climate emergencies and fails to provide enough shade (x2). One comment in support for use of planting and water. (x1)
- Material use for hardscaping needs to avoid slab pavings which sink and loosen. (x1)

- Consider how the landscaping will be maintained and by who (x2)
- Consider access to river front/northern boulevard for those with mobility difficulties (x2)
- Scheme is based around the architecture with little character and focus on square boxes more suited to an industrial site rather than a county town. (x1)
- Feeling as though too much is being squeezed in. (x1)
- Shared use paths are dangerous. (x1)
- Lack of litter bins shown, needed for site use. (x1)
- Path south of the river/behind Cricket Ground is not shown to be widened, which will be needed with increased walking and cycling from the development. (x1)
- Dislike for tall buildings at eastern edge. (x1)

Building Principles

Q – How do you feel about the building design principles? (8 responses)



Only 8 respondents answered the question, the largest proportion at 37% disliked the building design principles, 25% somewhat disliked them, similarly, 13% either loved the principles or somewhat loved/liked the principles and finally, 12% neither disliked or loved the principles.

Q – Do you have any particular comments about the building design principles? (6 responses)

- Architecture is a reflection of one of the ugliest architectural periods of the last 60 years. The designs are cheap, utilitarian and brutalist slums of the future. Comment on 'uglyness' of the buildings and trying to appease support by using words such as 'classic' and 'local' materials to mask the brutalist building styles (x2)
- Designs appear samey, boring and 'boxey', similar to Virador building. (x1)
- Images show openness and space, reality is the site will feel claustrophobic/industrial with high rise buildings close together and little light, more suited to a larger site. (x1)
- Buildings need to blend in with buildings already in the town centre and be sympathetic. (x1)

- While green building methods need to be used, they should also be aesthetically pleasing. Designs need to be less ambitious and pleasing to the eye, not just for profit. Too much glass and concrete (x1)
- Stepped area for outdoor seating already exists within Taunton and cannot be used most of the year, need sheletered seating. (x1)
- 8 storeys is too high, no more than 6 was previously stated. (x1)
- More trees needed. (x1)
- Solar panels need to be part of the construction not just roofs at ideal pitch. (x1)
- Support for smaller residential house designs. (x1)
- Need to recognise difficulty of zero carbon using brick, instead timber should be considered. (x1)

Before and After

Q – Do you have any particular comments in relation to the above? (2 responses)

- Buildings need to be to passivehouse standards (more eco-friendly) x 1
- Buildings should be less 'blocky' and need to create a community x 1
- More green spaces rather than more buildings x 1

SEA and HRA

Q – Do you have any particular comments in relation to the Draft SEA Environmental Report?

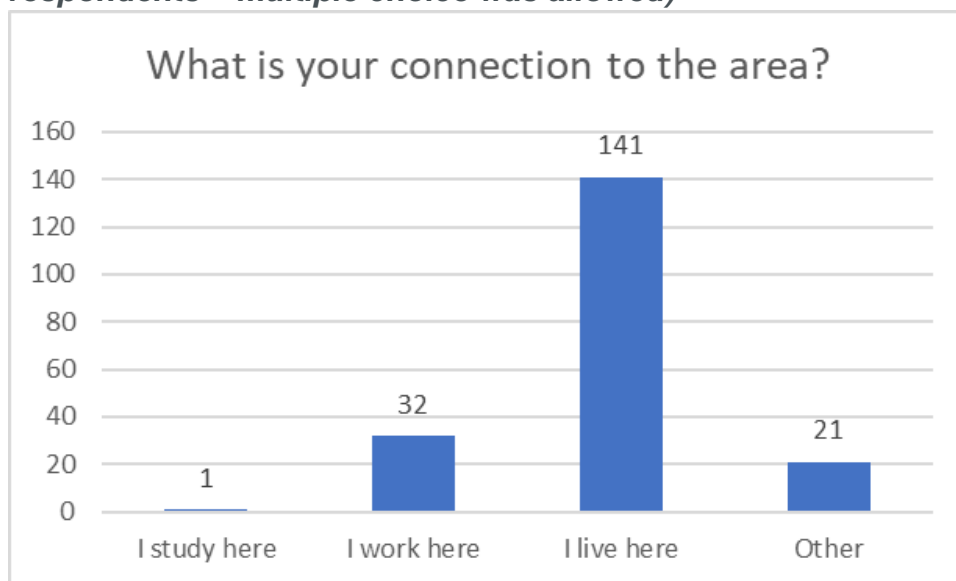
No comments received

Q – Do you have any particular comments in relation to the Draft HRA Appropriate Assessment?

No comments received

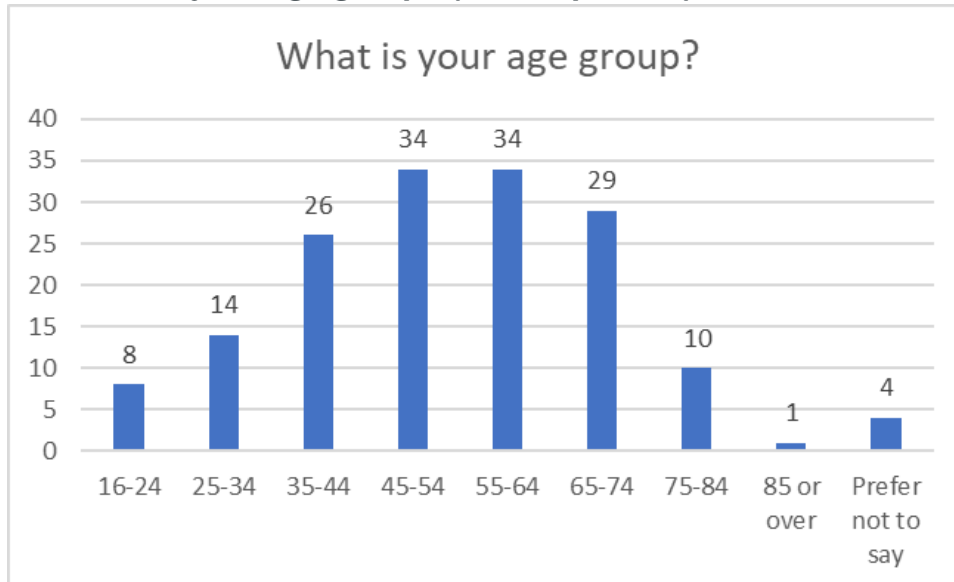
Demographics

Q – What is your connection to the area? (195 responses provided by 158 respondents – multiple choice was allowed)



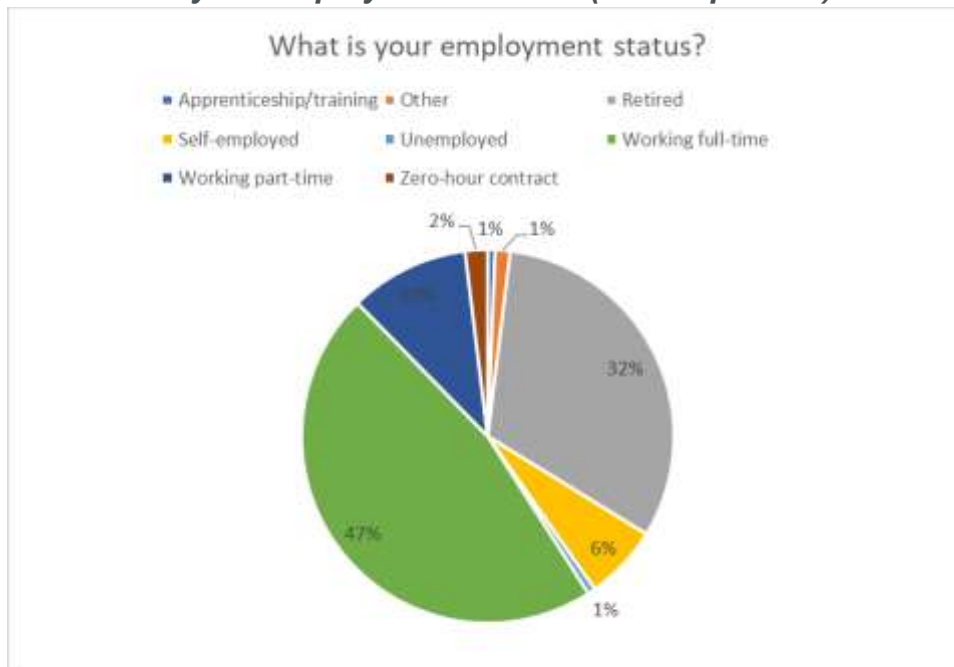
Other responses include: Somerset West and Taunton resident (4), from Taunton (2), regular visitor of Taunton (1), member of Taunton Canoe Club (9), shop and socialise in Taunton (1), share a property with someone in Taunton (2), live near Taunton (1), thinking of moving to Taunton (1).

Q – What is your age group? (160 responses)



Largest groups (from 35-74) make up 77% of respondents. Under 35s make up 14% and over 74 make up 7%.

Q – What is your employment status? (154 responses)



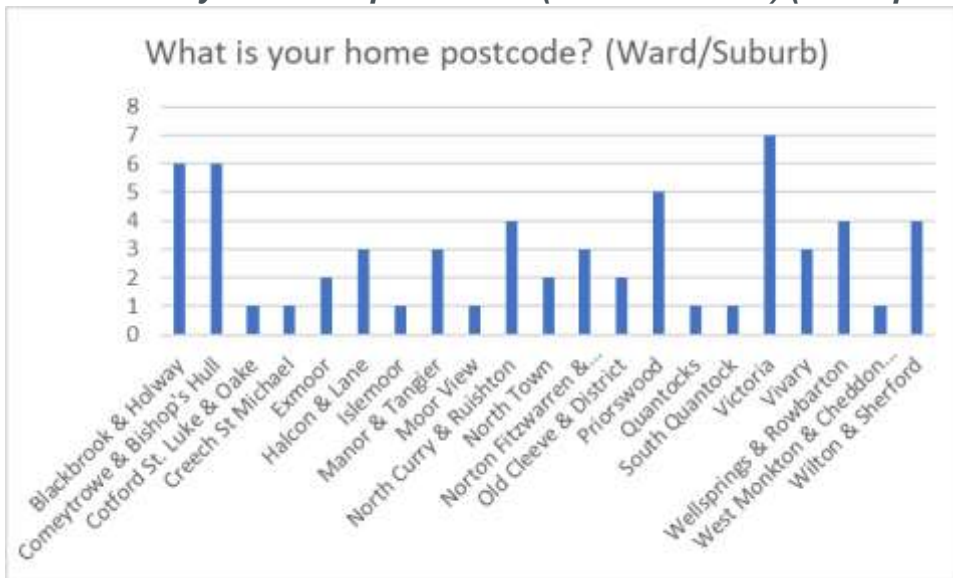
Largest groups are those working full time at 47%, those retired at 32% and those working part time at 10%. Just under a third of respondents are retired and just under two thirds of respondents are either working full time or part time.

Q – Are you answering on behalf of yourself or an organisation? (68 responses)



Other responses include: on behalf of an organisation (3), I am also the secretary (likely to be in relation to Taunton Canoe Club)(3), member of Taunton Canoe Club (3), the people of Taunton (1), business owner of Station Road (1).

Q – What is your home postcode? (Ward / Suburb) (61 responses)



The location of responses/respondents show to be spread across Taunton and the respective wards/suburbs. The highest proportion of comments came from those in Victoria, Blackbrook & Holway and Comeytrowe & Bishops Hull.

Emailed comments

19 emailed comments were received, primarily from organisations as technical stakeholders, but also from individual members of the public. These are broadly summarised in the table below:

Respondent	Summary of comments
Environment Agency	<p>Welcome 10% BNG but encourage higher exemplar levels if practicable and river based BNG assessment. Ecology report did not undertake water vole survey at the optimum time - required before commencement of any work. Maximise opportunities for linking wildlife corridors. Development and lighting should be set back from river bank. Masterplan should recognise the importance of wildlife corridors and connectivity, particularly the River Tone. Consider the Firepool site in relation to the wider landscape for species and habitats considering Tone & Tributaries LWS and several LNRs in close proximity. Section 3.01 needs to be updated in relation to TTC5 and TTC10. FRA needs updating with the planning application reference. As per approved planning applications, temporary flood barriers required until TSFAIS is completed and should not increase flood risk to third parties at any time. Any structures or activities within 8m of the River Tone require a FRAP. Must accommodate EA requirements for weir maintenance. Table 4.4 in SEA Environmental Report (assumptions for SEA Objectives) - references that "An approximate 10m buffer zone from a watercourse should be used in which no works, clearance, storage or run-off should be permitted" (page 34). It should be noted that under an earlier approved planning application there will be an access road, street lighting and the amphitheatre within this area. There must be no increased risk of flooding to third parties through the development south of the river.</p>
ENPA	No comments
Historic England	<p>Not clear that the Heritage Assessment supports the overall massing of the proposals and that the settings of the churches can be respected and harm avoided. Need long sections through the site and longer distance views provided (particularly from Hestercombe). The layout should allow for greater density of built footprint relative to landscaping and reduction in building heights and massing so as to link better with surrounding areas, characters and patterns and enable a locally distinctive architecture reflective of the historic character of the area.</p> <p>Following further engagement and a site visit with HE officers the following additional summarised comments were provided:</p> <p>Block 5 poses the single biggest challenge in terms of creating a potential threat to the setting of the high value churches. Massing and height regime of 5 storeys as configured could well generate a significant impact on the setting of the churches. An ambient height regime of 4 storeys is less likely to be so provocative, and there may well be scope for accommodating discrete higher elements should the more detailed assessment of the heritage significance of the relevant assets support this. Impact could also be usefully mitigated by having an undulated roofscape, and a varied roofline also minimises the potential for impact by any taller elements of development. The creation of the boulevard can have a positive impact on the setting of the churches through the designed view it creates, which could be further enhanced through the creation of glimpses or views from other locations. No objection to the design principles per se but do have anxieties about how some of these have been interpreted and applied in the masterplan. Wholly endorse the key design principles relating to historic environment.</p>
Individual members of the public (2x, anonymised)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agrees with TACC. • Interested to see how this important site has been reimagined by the planners.
Inland Waterways Association	<p>There should be access to the river from the development site for paddleboards, canoes and kayaks. Cycleway should be furthest from the riverside allowing pedestrians to benefit from being close to the riverside. E-bikes and fast cycling should be banned along the riverside. Clarification sought on how routes within site connect with routes along canal/river bund as part of proposed flood defence works. Clarify and confirm that access to the lock is sufficient to ensure lock maintenance including crane access and that</p>

	access to desilt navigation via excavator is sufficient and how these will be secured with the CRT in the long term. Please confirm that new bridge will be built to same profile and air draft as existing Priory Bridge Road bridge to ensure continued navigation.
National Highways	Welcome proposed delivery and futureproofing of sustainable travel opportunities to reduce the reliance on the private car, and therefore the impact on the surrounding highway network. We also welcome the constrained level of onsite parking to encourage travel to and from Firepool by sustainable modes.
Natural England	Concur with conclusions of the Draft SEA and HRA Appropriate Assessment. Conclusion re HRA is providing that all mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any planning permission given. Concur that individual development proposals within the site will likely need to be subject to project level HRA screening and potentially Appropriate Assessment detail develops.
SCC Highways	All development sites must achieve travel demand reduction and modal shift in line with the transport user hierarchy which puts pedestrians first. This principle should be reflected in the Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan required to support adoption of the masterplan and any anticipated application. A Vision and Validate approach is sought to provide a comprehensive and sustainable access strategy for the development, which sets clear travel mode targets, alongside the funding and delivery mechanisms needed for the infrastructure to achieve the targets. The TS must include a detailed walking and cycling audit. Areas identified by the audit as substandard must be addressed and routes designed in line with Inclusive Mobility Guide and LTN1/20. This should build on the Cycle Assessment with a more comprehensive list of local facilities and amenities considered. Suitable off-site cycle routes for all types of cyclists are fundamental and the Masterplan should incorporate these into an Access Strategy, identified using the Propensity to Cycle Tool and new 2021 Census data and reviewing the Taunton LCWIP to consider how development can complement. Consideration of transition from cycle tracks to public highway and cycle priority at signal junctions are important. Surveillance and safety of routes is key to equitable infrastructure provision. Support for central boulevard. Support for improved and futureproofed NCN 3 through the site, request for delivery of this improvement prior to first occupation. Design to be reviewed against LTN1/20 CLoS tool. Unclear who the intended user is for the cycle hub and request strategy for long-term use and funding must be outlined. Support use of the hub for leisure and commercial land users but residential and office users require secure, covered and well-lit cycle parking of the highest quality. Signage to local transport facilities must be provided. If no bus stops provided on-site then applications will need to ensure existing bus stops in close proximity are inclusive to all users and provide technology that supports frequent use. Vehicular access points should move away from traditional bellmouth arrangements to provide continuous footway crossover and priority cycle crossings. Capacity assessment of the Canal Road/A3038 Priory Bridge Road and A3038 Priory Bridge Road/Station Road junctions will be required and pedestrian and cycle movements prioritised over vehicles in any mitigation required as a result. A Fire Statement will be required alongside applications. EV Charging points needs to be delivered in line with the Somerset EV Charging Strategy. Disabled parking must be sensibly located with routes to entrances in line with Inclusive Mobility Guide. The Parking Strategy should be reviewed to take account of emerging direction of parking and transport policy. Satisfied with a car-lite development subject to provision of measures and infrastructure that encourage and establish non-car trips. More information needed regarding strategy for management and enforcement of car-lite parking arrangements. Car clubs must be provided alongside a strategy for funding in initial years of first occupation - one car club space can replace demand for 18 private vehicles. An Events Management Strategy should be submitted to support any application. The FTP for the Masterplan must set out

	travel mode share targets, accompanying soft and hard measures and a thorough Travel Plan monitoring and evaluation programme.
SCC LLFA	Noted that sustainable drainage strategy is integrated into landscape design with a number of features proposed within public realm. Inclusion of rain gardens and other SuDS features welcomed – will provide amenity/biodiversity benefits also. No firm commitment on the features that will be provided at this stage. Expect any strategy to, follow key parameters agreed as part of previous applications but also to reflect current guidance and policy relating to drainage and climate change. Assume either new planning application will be submitted to supersede 38/21/0440 or that the conditions set for that planning application will need to be fully discharged for each phase of the development. Expect to be provided with full details of drainage strategy (and flood management measures) for area south of the River Tone as this was not covered by the previous FRA. Generally support proposals for drainage strategy described conceptually in the consultation. LLFA will review, and provide detailed comments on, the full strategy and detailed design as these applications come forward.
SCC Transport Policy	Fully support need for FTP and full TA. Particular concern regarding Canal Road junction and the impact on Station Road junction and the wider network which assessment should particularly consider. Recommend updating parking strategy to consider changing direction of parking policy. Must address surveillance and safety for walking and cycling routes. Disagree with EqIA and feel the plan does have an impact on some protected characters (in particular sex or gender) and ask for review of this and taking forward of appropriate measures. Concern at lack of green public spaces within the plan which are needed for biodiversity, health and wellbeing and active leisure.
Somerset County Cricket Club	Support delivery of a comprehensive masterplan, level of ambition, and need to change mix of uses. Encouraged by the policy direction. Successful placemaking is key and connected to continuing success of SCCC. Desires of the council and SCCC as landowners need to be aligned to maximise benefits. Hotel and conferencing facilities will be an important future revenue stream for SCCC so need to be considered alongside plans for similar facilities on Firepool. Flexibility of masterplan, particularly the commercial uses will be important. It is possible that SCC Plans could form part of and anchor the Firepool project.
SSDC	General support for the aims, high quality design and need for flex in due to changes in policy and context.
SWT Housing Enabling	The likely viability position is noted. Policy requires 25% of homes to be affordable (25% first homes, 60% social rented, 15% shared ownership) equating to over 100 of the homes on site, with 10% of the overall total designed to fully adapted disabled housing standard Part M4/3 made available for social rent. Demand for affordable homes in Taunton town centre is forecast to continue to increase. Currently over 1800 people are in affordable housing need expressing Taunton as their preference. Options for provision of affordable housing on Firepool should be explore with the Councils Housing Enabling Team, approved Affordable Housing delivery partners and Homes England Affordable Housing Growth team. Several affordable housing development partners have expressed interest in discussing delivery mechanisms to bring forward affordable housing at Firepool. The Council's Affordable Housing SPD should be followed. Type and size of affordable units should reflect distribution of types and sizes in overall development and housing need requirements. Affordable units should be integral to the site, evenly distributed (with practicalities of managing and maintaining considered) and not visually distinguishable. Any affordable apartments should be located within their own self-contained blocks for practicalities of management and maintenance with acceptable number per block to be agreed. Service charges should reflect necessity and be calculated on a per square metre basis.

TACC	Use of the site for higher density housing and cultural uses, with sustainable transport links is supported. Agree that low parking standards are achievable and will enable effective use of the site. Cycle access on the south side of the river needs to be recognised and improved - arrangements in block 1.4 lack legibility and path alongside the cricket ground needs widening. Suggest criteria for designing resident cycle parking are set out now in design principles rather than waiting until later. Question appropriateness of single large centralised cycle parking facility as people like to park their bike close to destination entrance. Security and weather proofing may help drive use of the facility particularly for staff. Small quantities of cycle parking still need distributing across the site close to destinations. How will some of the development be funded? Early clarity needed on maintenance and management. Would like to be consulted on lighting strategy for riverside paths. Note potential safety concern re reversing vehicles and cyclists on the parallel street to the boulevard. Need an active travel signage strategy. Protected crossing required to serve existing and increased demand for crossing from Youngman's Place to County Ground.
Taunton Canoe Club	Not notified of consultation. Some lack of previous awareness of the relevance of the "block 1" area to regeneration plans for Firepool. The TCC is a long established thriving part of the local community using the building's storage, changing rooms and office at least 3 times per week. The inclusion of the space for the canoe club needs to consider how it is used including loading/unloading of canoes from vehicles. The club would like to engage directly with the Council on how best the needs of the club are catered for.
The Castle Hotel	The Multipurpose venue is fundamental and top priority for the vision and plan. It should be a modern, pioneering venue to attract A list acts from around the world. The connectivity of Taunton makes it ideal for such a venue. The venue must give people a reason to visit Taunton and give it a clear and sustainable identity. Request that the hotel is built on a standardised tender process with private money funding the project and would like to be part of this opportunity.
Theatres Trust	The proposed 1,200 capacity venue is significantly larger than the Brewhouse can offer, although there is potential for an uplift in the size and scale of the Brewhouse as an alternative particularly if it is found that a 1,200 capacity venue cannot be supported or viable in Taunton. Recommend that a professional analysis is undertaken by experienced consultants to fully analyse and understand the potential market and audience for a new venue, and how it would be impacted by (or impact on) not just the Brewhouse but existing larger venues within Taunton's wider catchment. The proposed Firepool venue also has further spaces shown and these could compete with rather than complement the Brewhouse's offer. We would encourage that arts and cultural provision within Taunton is looked at more holistically. Strongly encourage the Council to look again at opportunities for the Brewhouse, including recent plans which have been abandoned. Improvements to pedestrian and cycling connectivity would appear to be beneficial to the Brewhouse.
Wessex Water	Wessex Water has strategic infrastructure crossing the Firepool site. The approved plans for the Southern Boulevard do not recognise agreed easements but measures have been conditioned which may lead to a required redesign of the boulevard and amphitheatre area. Request that the presence of existing infrastructure is not ignored and is ensured to be kept operational and serving the significant number of homes upstream. Wessex Water will not be adopting new proposed on-site infrastructure. Sustainability principles should include water efficiency initiatives, minimising use of mains water and incorporating water saving measures and equipment including rainwater harvesting and grey water reuse.

Events and forums comments

The comments and questions received from the consultation events are broadly summarised in the table below.

Event	Summary of comments
<p>28/11/2022 Virtual event</p>	<p>Questions received via Slido:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The master plan you are discussing bears no relation to the images on the consultation website of red residential 'cubes' in big long ranks. So, which is true? • Why put student accommodation right next to a retirement building? • Im assuming that the brick buildings are just a suggestion. Why not reflect the more modern architecture of the other new developments in the town? • Why not have lower-elevation houses at the western end of the site, where it has most impact on the river and lock, and on existing neighbouring buildings? • Is the current non vehicular bridge across from Firepool car park to the southern side of the river remaining non vehicular? • What provision do you have for solar and wind power? • The apartments appear to have a scale and density, plus a regimented straight-line layout, that belongs in an inner city. How dense and rigid is it in reality. • Is the housing plan also to encompass 3 and 4 bed housing? • Reassured that this is not set in stone and that there will be flexibility in the final iteration.
<p>06/12/2022 In-person drop-in event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistency with town house/ residential area height. Says 3 storey on masterplan but images show 4 storey (there was particular concern for this height around the houses facing onto the canal lock area), which was felt that it should be an open area and well promoted and designed rather than peoples gardens. • Concern as eastern area was originally a green space but is now housing. • Style of signature building not preferable and quite 'blocky' (architecture style) with particular reference to the red brick. These comments were mixed as some people felt that they liked the design. • Needs better integration with 'old town' and new town, the designs and building styles are all over the place. • Wanting further understanding for why the bridge had moved (original proposal from parallel to Priory Bridge Road to removing this and focusing on replacing the Coal Orchard bridge). • Architecture should be more contemporary rather than trying to incorporate the Victorian style. • Concern that the development could compete with the town centre space (particular mention given to the retail units on the site and the existing oversupply of retail within Taunton). The

	<p>town centre retail area is considered quite 'patchy' and that there are lots of different areas that don't necessarily work together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More public toilets are needed, comments that there are a lack of them around the town. • Sustainability and meeting net zero is key to the development and design. This was quite highly supported. • Walking and cycling connections from the station to town (mentioned to be needed, concerns for route but also that the idea for improving existing connections is needed). • Ambulance bays, bays for delivery couriers. Need to be practical about parking. Need other sustainable options (people need cars for the night time when there are no sustainable transport services). • Is there a need for new cycle parking e.g. St James area which isn't used? We should modify the existing.
<p>09/12/2022 In-person drop-in event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship with buildings on Canal Terrace and on Priory Bridge Road feels overbearing. • Design should be contemporary like Firepool Lock, not trying to be something that it's not. • Make sure the Venue and the Brewhouse work together. Consider the Gaumont Theatre also. • Good to see taking a brownfield first approach. • Good to see a focus on responding to climate emergency through buildings, cycling, EVs and low parking. • Good to hear that the Masterplan will build in flexibility. • The plans don't show active travel linkage from the site across the lock to the Children's Wood path – they should. • Consider switching the cycle path and footway around along the river to allow pedestrians to be closer to the water. • There is an existing pinchpoint between the boat club and the river on Block 1 which the plans need to ensure they address/improve for pedestrians and cyclists. • Cycle storage (domestic and communal) needs careful design to ensure it encourages cycling as a default – more detail should be included in the key design principles on this. • External active travel connections are missing – especially across to Station Road. • The delivery model will be of great importance as will future stewardship/management to ensure that the scheme delivers proper benefit to the town. • Really impressed. • What will stop future developers disregarding everything in the Masterplan and proposing/delivering their own thing? • Don't go too high in terms of buildings. • Preferred the gable end designs shown previously. • Not so keen on big blocks but recognise the need. • High quality delivery will be key here. • Take a look at the Macmillan Theatre in Bridgwater as inspiration for the venue.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confused what is meant by AOD heights.
12/12/2022 virtual event for businesses	No comments/questions received.

Social media comments

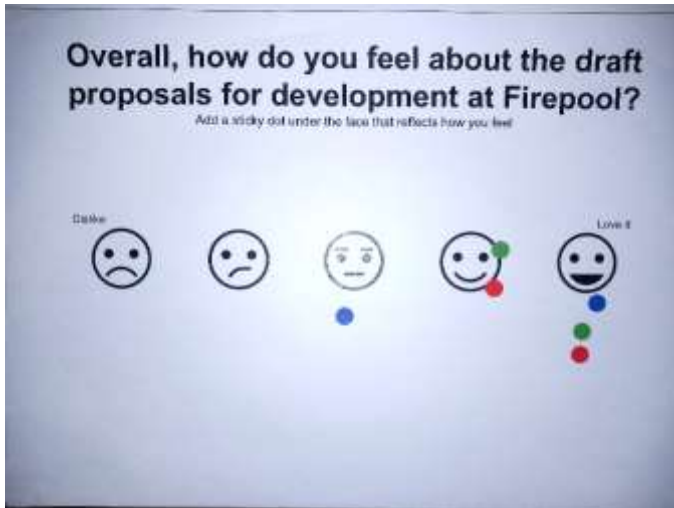
SWT social media post	Summary of comments
21/11/2022	Comments revolved around a debate between members of the public over whether the Council would listen to comments made and concerns that the consultation was just lip-service and there would continue to be no action to actually deliver Firepool.
28/11/2022	Comments revolved around concern about the design of buildings being boxy, loss of the previously identified bridge over the River Tone and presentation within images as well as relief that the draft had room for change.
06/12/2022	None received
12/12/2022	None received
23/12/2022	Comments revolved around the loss of key retail outlets in Taunton in recent years and the need for an improved retail offer in the town generally.
02/01/2023	None received.

Deane House comments sheet

As part of the permanent display boards hosted at Deane House, a comments sheet together with key survey questions were able to be responded as and when people dropped in to view material. This enabled us to capture thoughts in a simple way even when people visited outside the times of the main consultation drop-in sessions. People had the option to answer specific questions (aligned to key questions asked within the Commonplace survey) or leave their own comments.

Q – Overall, how do you feel about the draft proposals for development at Firepool?

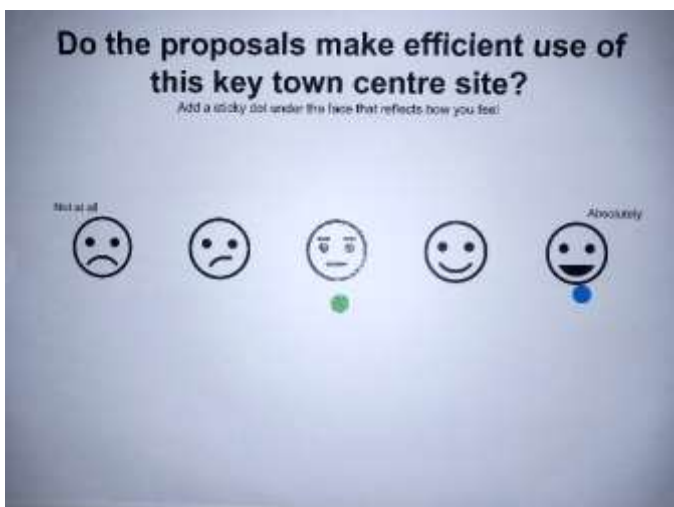
Of the six responses received, three selected “Love it”, two selected “happy”, and one selected “neutral”.



Q – Do you believe the mix of uses proposed is appropriate and would improve and futureproof Taunton town centre for years to come?
Of the two responses received, both selected “Absolutely”.



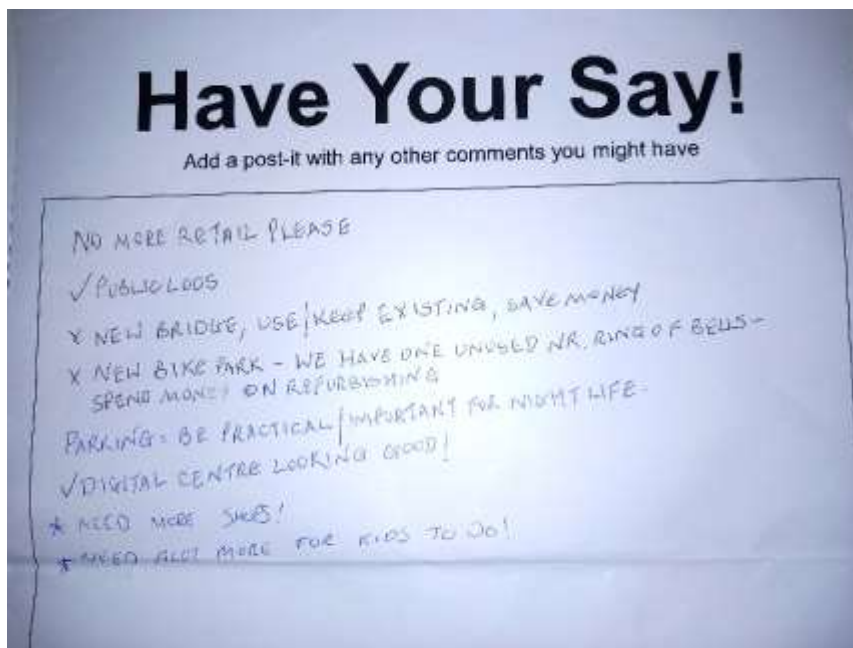
Q – Do the proposals make efficient use of this key town centre site?
Of the two responses received, one selected “Absolutely”, one selected “neutral”.



Q – Have your say!

Comments left in the space provided included:

- No more retail please
- [yes to] Public loos
- [no to] New bridge, use/keep existing, save money
- [no to] New bike park – we have one unused nr. Ring of Bells – spend money on refurbishing
- Parking – be practical / important for night life
- [yes to] Digital centre looking good!
- Need more shops!
- Need a lot more for kids to do!



You said, we did

The comments received through the consultation have directly informed development of the final Masterplan proposed for adoption. LPA officers have worked with officers of the developer team to ensure that all comments received have been considered and applied professional judgement as to whether or not they merit changes. In some cases, this has resulted in specific changes, in others it has resulted in a shift of emphasis. However, not every comment was deemed to require a change to be made.

The table below details some of the main issues raised in consultation representations and the officer response. In some cases, the response has been to make changes to the document, in others the response provides written justification, but no change is deemed to be necessary.

Issue raised	LPA Officer response
Heritage	
<p>Heritage evidence base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not clear evidence supports the overall massing of proposals. - Not clear evidence supports claim that settings of churches are respected and harm avoided. - Change in mix of uses should enable a greater density of built form compared to landscaping and architectural and street design reflective of the historic character of the area. - Not in keeping with character of the area. - Blocking views of the churches - Viewpoint 2b in TVIA an important gateway view of Taunton enticing visitors. Justification that harm is not significant and able to just re-provide another view is worrying. 	<p><i>In response to comments received, further engagement was undertaken with Historic England to understand specific points of issue and options for addressing concerns. As a result it was identified that block 5 (commercial/leisure quarter) posed the greatest concern, with heights above the equivalent of 4 residential storeys and the overall massing of buildings being the main issues. It was acknowledged that the creation of the boulevard could have a positive impact on the setting of the churches through the designed view it creates, and that this could be further enhanced through the creation of glimpses or views from other locations. It was identified that Historic England had no concern with the design principles per se but that these were there were anxieties in how these were being interpreted and applied in the indicative visuals of the specific proposals included within the Masterplan. As a result, further building design principles have been incorporated into the Masterplan, the heights parameters plan has been updated, and it has been recognised that further detailed heritage evidence will be required to support planning applications in relation to block 5 in particular. Whilst the visuals remain included within the Masterplan document, they are clearly identified as indicative only, and the report recommending adoption of the Masterplan explicitly identifies that these elements will hold no weight in the decision making process on future applications. As such, whilst it is recognised that the Masterplan proposals may have a level of heritage impact associated with them, it is considered that the changes made and additional evidence required at application stage provide sufficient hooks within the Masterplan, combined with national and local planning policies to consider at this stage that significant effects can be avoided. Historic</i></p>

	<i>England have advised that on the basis of the changes made to the Masterplan they would not raise any objection to the current SEA conclusions.</i>
<p><u>Building design and character</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trying to be something it's not by reflecting Victorian red bricks and factory/warehouse style. - Be brave and innovative but also beautiful (this isn't the latter). - Too much focus on heritage character of area which may diminish what needs to be a dynamic focal point for an unexciting town. 	<i>It is important that developments respond to their context. The Masterplan includes an extensive context appraisal which picks out relevant character and design features around the site and its vicinity. This does not mean that the design response for buildings within the site must try and re-create or copy the design of surrounding areas, development will need to respond to important aspects of the local context which are important to the character of the area whilst responding to the opportunities which development of the site presents. The Masterplan document includes presentation of the developer team's indicative interpretation of how this could influence building design. However, these visuals are indicative only. More clarity over the indicative nature of these visuals has been provided within the final Masterplan, together with inclusion of an additional key design principle referring to building design needing to be contemporary, providing an appropriately evidenced and balanced response to both the historical character and context of the area and the opportunities provided by the site.</i>
<p><u>Relationship with the Lock and Pump House</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough being made of the space around the lock - could become a really nice destination. - Consider more green space, picnic facilities, coffee shop, education centre re canal and railway - link through from site to Childrens Wood and Pump House, create purpose, encourage tourism. - The Pump House needs to be made into something useful (e.g. themed restaurant or museum?) concern it is being left behind. 	<i>The relationship of development within the site, Firepool Lock and The Pump House is important. This has been identified within the key design principles and context appraisal. The Masterplan layout responds to this through the creation of a key street aligned to enable greater views and appreciation of the Pump House from within the site. However, it was considered that the Draft Masterplan was not sufficiently responding to the opportunities of that might be possible in terms of creating a better "place" around the lock. As such the Masterplan has been updated to provide further information about what the vision for the "Lock View" landscape character area might be and Building Principles for Block 2 have been enhanced to explain important considerations in relation to boundaries of the block including with the Lock and Pump House aspect. The Pump House is outside of the boundary of the Masterplan, in third party ownership. Extant planning permission exists for the conversion and extension of the Pump House into a public house and restaurant (38/12/0204). The Council has an interest in the long term conservation and restoration of the Pump House as a Listed Building, though this interest is separate from the Firepool Masterplan. The Developer Statement includes a response from the Council's Heritage at Risk team in relation to the Pump House.</i>
<u>River / Canal</u>	
<p><u>Maintenance access to Lock</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify and confirm that access to the lock is sufficient to ensure lock maintenance including crane access and that access to 	<i>Engagement with the Canal and Rivers Trust has informed and development of the Masterplan. The final Masterplan has been updated with reference to swept path analysis provided as part of the supporting transport evidence which shows how a mobile maintenance crane can be manoeuvred to the lock with escort vehicle or banksman for these infrequent movements</i>

<p>desilt navigation via excavator is sufficient and how these will be secured with the CRT in the long term.</p>	<p><i>without adversely compromising the low traffic neighbourhood and pedestrian/cyclist priority design intent.</i></p>
<p><u>Use of the river / canal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There should be access to the river from the development site for paddleboards, canoes and kayaks, interest in wild swimming. - Not enough is being done to support people to use the river more. - Concern at mention of house boats and other boating movements which could constrain and obstruct free movements particularly for rowing club and alter character and impact wildlife of the river. 	<p><i>A key part of the existing vision for Taunton is to reorient the town centre so that it no longer turns its back to the river and instead makes the most of it. There are a number of groups already using the river, and aspirations to improve access and activity associated with the river. However it needs to be acknowledged also that there is finite space within the river as well as a balance to be found with the ecological importance of the river, maintenance requirements and flood risk. As such, the Masterplan has been updated to make reference to the existing river access point from the slipway on the south side of the river, which is intended to be retained. However, further access points would require further engagement with the Environment Agency and this is also identified. The Council is separately looking to revisit and refine previous work on waterways strategy for Taunton. Reference to house boats have been removed.</i></p>
<p><u>Taunton Canoe Club</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More information required on canoe club provision on how it can meet the needs of the club. - Community sports club with active membership - were not aware this side of the river was under consideration. - More than just a "boat house" - includes a storage, changing rooms, meeting room, others. Needs to be affordable and have scope for future development of the club. - Vehicular access required to load/unload canoes etc. - What does "reprovision of the boat house" actually mean? - Landing jetties and places to tie up would be useful. - TVIA fails to recognise the boat club building as an existing building giving use and purpose to Firepool south. 	<p><i>Taunton Canoe Club has occupied a building on the south side of the river, within the Firepool site for a number of years. The Firepool site, including the land on which this building is located have been allocated for mixed-use development since 2008 and subject to various planning applications and permissions over the years. The house building would be considered as a community facility and protected by Policy C4 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan. The Masterplan makes reference in the Masterplan proposals to re-provision of the existing boat club, which, subject to detail, would comply with criterion D of this policy. The Masterplan has been updated to explicitly refer to Taunton Canoe Club / Boat House in the context appraisal as an existing community facility. Reference has also been added to the Landscape Principles in relation to the Block 1 area and accommodation of access to the slipway for the Canoe Club. It is understood that the developer team have now met with Taunton Canoe Club to understand the current use of the boat house building and needs of the club, and this understanding will further inform detailed proposals as they are developed.</i></p>

<p>Ecology of the river corridor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water vole surveys not undertaken at optimal time - required before commencement of any work. - Consider the Firepool site in relation to the wider landscape for species and habitats considering Tone & Tributaries LWS and several LNRs in close proximity. - Encourage higher BNG % and river based BNG assessment. 	<p><i>Ecology work to date undertaken in support of the Masterplan and southern boulevard applications has not identified presence of water voles within the site. However, the EA have water vole records for the wider area, and whilst the habitat is not that conducive to their use of the site, they potentially could exist. As a protected species, causing harm to populations or the habitats supporting them is a offence. As such, the developer is recommended to undertake further survey work at the right time of year in the interests of prudence and risk management. The Masterplan has been updated to make reference to this. The Masterplan has also been updated to make improved reference to the ecological importance of the river and associated designations and the need for careful balancing and management of site interfaces with the river and river banks. The Key Design Principles have been strengthened by explicitly stating that on-site Biodiversity Net Gain will have a particular focus on how it can enhance the river corridor outside of the river bank maintenance zone. However, consistent with the approach agreed in relation to the southern boulevard permission (38/22/0176) BNG is currently expected to be targeted at land based improvements using the area habitats assessment rather than the riverine metric.</i></p>
<p>Flood risk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section 3.01 needs to be updated in relation to TTC5 and TTC10. - FRA needs updating with the planning application reference. - How will raising levels impact south of the river? - Table 4.4 in SEA Environmental Report (assumptions for SEA Objectives) - references that "An approximate 10m buffer zone from a watercourse should be used in which no works, clearance, storage or run-off should be permitted" (page 34). It should be noted that under an earlier approved planning application there will be an access road, street lighting and the amphitheatre within this area. 	<p><i>The Masterplan has been updated to further explain the relevance of Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Improvement Strategy projects TTC5 and TTC10 as well as explain that the Flood Risk Assessment which underpinned the Levels and Drainage permission (38/21/0440) relates solely to land north of the river within the boundary of that application. The developer team and their consultants Jubb have provided a further Flood Risk Technical Note which further explains the relevance of approved flood works north of the river and the proposed approach for south of the river (Block 1), subject to detailed FRA to support planning applications. This explains that a similar approach of raising levels within the site will take place for Block 1. The point raised in relation to the SEA has been considered and a change was determined as not being necessary in this case. Further information on this is provided within the SEA Adoption Statement.</i></p>

<i>Walking, wheeling and cycling</i>	
<p><u>General support</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on walking and cycling provision and emphasis on walkability supported. - Boulevard linkage well supported. 	<p><i>Support for these elements noted. Further information on the proposed transport strategy which prioritises walking and cycling within a wider sustainable transport hierarchy has been added to the Masterplan and a draft Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan have been provided. The LPA has identified that further work towards realising this strategy is required through continued iteration of the TS/FTP post-adoption of the Masterplan. This will need to identify truly ambitious mode shift targets split out by different uses and modes, together with quantified impacts of potential measures and an understanding of how these potential measures relate to the different uses proposed across the site. This will enable detailed applications for specific plots to then be considered appropriately in the context of the wider approach and requirements for the site as a whole.</i></p>
<p><u>Riverside footpath / cycleway design and use</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cycleway should be furthest from the riverside allowing pedestrians to benefit from being close to the riverside. - E-bikes and fast cycling should be banned along the riverside. - Would like to be consulted on lighting strategy for riverside paths. - Riverside path supported - Connection should be delivered prior to first occupation of the site to enable sustainable travel patterns to be established. - Review route design against LTN1/20 Cycling Level of Service tool. 	<p><i>The section of the riverside footpath / cycleway running from Priory Bridge to the bridge within the site already benefits from planning permission (38/22/0176). Therefore, the premise of switching the footway and cycleway around would require a material amendment to an extant planning permission and this is not something that the LPA would be able to insist upon.. It is therefore appropriate for the Masterplan to assume continuation of the same approved arrangement up to the Lock. It would not be possible or appropriate for the Masterplan to seek to ban e-bikes or fast cycling along the riverside. The provision of segregated walking and cycling facilities is in part to help protect users and avoid conflict in areas of higher usage/flow. However, detailed applications will need to consider further how they can manage speeds and potential for conflict. The phasing of delivery of various parcels of the site is not yet known, but the phasing of infrastructure will need to come forward at an appropriately early stage, with the exact trigger to be informed by further work on the Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan. The draft Transport Statement undertakes a brief review of routes internal and external to the site. The LPA has identified that further work is required post-adoption on the site-wide transport statement and framework travel plan to take a fully "Vision and Validate" compliant approach. This would include reviewing these routes more fully against the LTN1/20 CLOS tool.</i></p>
<p><u>Safety</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some concern about lighting and lack of natural surveillance in some areas. - Particularly along the river and around the lock where gardens back on to path. 	<p><i>Safety is a key consideration in the design of walking, wheeling and cycling routes. Failure to appropriately consider safety can lead to acute issues such as collisions and potentially injuries, but also risk of anti-social behaviour and crime which thrives on underutilised public spaces or blind spots from natural surveillance. The perception or fear of incident can be a major blocker to active travel for individuals, and groups with protected characteristics and so is an important equalities consideration. It is therefore important that routes actively seek to design out potential safety issues. The accompanying Equalities Impact Assessment has been</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EqIA requires review particularly re sex/gender and safety of walking and cycling routes. - Surveillance and safety key. Detailed audit of designed routes required to ensure welcoming for all genders and vulnerable people. - Segregation of pedestrians and cyclists is important. - Note potential safety concern re reversing vehicles and cyclists on the parallel street to the boulevard. 	<p><i>updated accordingly. In response to this, the Masterplan has been updated to explicitly refer to the LTN1/20 core design principles of “coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive” and being designed in line with LTN1/20 and Inclusive Mobility Guidance. Other Key Design Principles have been strengthened to reference the importance of designing in improved natural surveillance and designing out potential for anti-social behaviour and perceived safety concerns particularly along the section meeting with Firepool Lock. The landscape and building principles have also been strengthened in this regard, with further focus on boundary considerations within the building principles section highlighting the importance of active and enhance frontages and improved natural surveillance. Active frontages have been identified as facing the Lock area. The Masterplan identifies an intent to continue the lighting strategy agreed as part of the southern boulevard permission along the riverside path up to the Lock. The draft Transport Statement undertakes a brief review of routes internal and external to the site. The LPA has identified that further work is required post-adoption on the site-wide transport statement and framework travel plan to take a fully "Vision and Validate" compliant approach. This would include reviewing these routes more fully against the LTN1/20 CLOS tool. A further Key Design Principle has been added around the design of streets to maximum 20mph speed in line with Manual for Streets and avoiding the potential for anti-social parking. This, in combination with detailed design considerations such as ensuring improved awareness of the presence of cyclists through design features (e.g. changes in surfacing colour / texture to warn each user of potential conflict areas, raised tables to ensure vehicles are moving very slowly and clear sight lines) and appropriate signage will assist in mitigating potential for safety concerns on the street parallel to the boulevard.</i></p>
<p><u>Active travel improvements within the site</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cycle access on the south side of the river (including narrow section between boat club and river) needs to be recognised and improved - Arrangements in block 1.4 lack legibility - Need a signage strategy. - Design to DfT's Inclusive Mobility Guidance 	<p><i>The need for high quality, coherent and legible signage is now identified as a Key Design Principle for future applications to respond to, as is designing in line with Inclusive Mobility Guidance. The draft Transport Statement undertakes a brief review of routes internal and external to the site. The LPA has identified that further work is required post-adoption on the site-wide transport statement and framework travel plan to take a fully "Vision and Validate" compliant approach. This would include reviewing these routes more fully against the LTN1/20 CLOS tool. Detailed applications will need to consider an appropriate response in this location.</i></p>

<p><u>External connections</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarification sought on how routes within site connect with routes along canal/river bund as part of proposed flood defence works. - Path alongside the cricket ground needs widening. - Protected crossing required to serve existing and increased demand for crossing from Youngman's Place to County Ground. - Existing paths in surrounding area beyond site boundaries are poor and need to be improved including with lighting and surfacing. - Reliance upon riverside path into town not sufficient - connection to Priory Bridge Road enables future connection via Morrisons site. - Walking and cycling audit is needed from the site to key local amenities and transport facilities. - Off-site routes should be included in an Access Strategy for the Masterplan. - Use Propensity to Cycle Tool, 2021 Census to identify routes and levels of cycling to be delivered and deliver against LCWIP/CoGCs. 	<p><i>Improvement of external connections was identified by the LPA as a key aspect requiring further work ahead of approving the final Masterplan. The draft Transport Statement undertakes a brief review of routes internal and external to the site. This is supplemented by reference to further work undertaken in support of the Connecting our Garden Communities Plan. The Masterplan now identifies a vision to see key external connections made in line with the routes identified in that plan, identifying external connections in key drawings and within the movement parameters plan as well as excerpt concept drawings of how some of these external connections might be able to be designed to deliver walking and cycling priority. However, detailed applications will need to be informed by wider considerations include modelling where appropriate and the LPA will need to weigh up all material considerations in the determination of future planning applications, including potentially viability. Therefore, it is not possible to clarify exactly what improvements to external routes and connections will be appropriate and proportionate at this stage. The LPA has identified that further work is required post-adoption on the site-wide transport statement and framework travel plan to take a fully "Vision and Validate" compliant approach which identifies truly ambitious mode shift targets split out by different uses and modes, together with quantified impacts of potential measures and an understanding of how these potential measures relate to the different uses proposed across the site. This will enable detailed applications for specific plots to then be considered appropriately in the context of the wider approach and requirements for the site as a whole.</i></p>
<p><u>New cycle bridge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirm that new bridge will be built to same profile and air draft as existing Priory Bridge Road bridge to ensure continued navigation. - Why has the bridge moved from within the site to Coal Orchard? 	<p><i>These comments relate directly to the bridge proposed by the current planning application 38/22/0347 and further consideration will be given to points raised in relation to that application. The draft Transport Statement includes further information on the relationship of the Firepool site and this bridge.</i></p>

<p><u>Cycle parking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suggest criteria for designing resident cycle parking are set out now in design principles rather than waiting until later. - Question appropriateness of single large centralised cycle parking facility as people like to park their bike close to destination entrance. Security and weather proofing may help drive use of the facility particularly for staff. - Small quantities of cycle parking still need distributing across the site close to destinations. - Central cycle parking hub supported by some - Cycle Hub needs to be weatherproof to ensure cycling is attractive. - Unclear who the intended user of the cycle hub is though support the idea for leisure commercial users. - Funding and strategy for long term use of the hub needs outlining. - Residential and office uses require cycle storage for longer periods in secure, covered and well-lit parking of the highest quality close to home/destination. Follow LTN1/20 chapter 12. - Why not refurbish and use existing St James' cycle hub? 	<p><i>The Masterplan has been updated with design principles for cycle parking now being more clearly referenced and split out into residential and non-residential principles within the Key Design Principles. A plan is now provided within the Sustainability Principles identifying the locations of cycle parking across the site and the rationale for the approaches proposed. This identifies a variety of different types of cycle parking for different types of user and plot uses. The intentions regarding the cycle hub as a covered, secure parking facility to serve the commercial/leisure uses, with charging for e-bikes, spaces for alternative cycles and lockers for storage is now set out.</i></p>
<p><i>Transport more widely</i></p>	
<p><u>Sustainable transport and low traffic neighbourhood design</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome proposed delivery and futureproofing of sustainable travel opportunities to reduce reliance on private 	<p><i>New Key Design Principles have been added around the design of streets to maximum 20mph speed in line with Manual for Streets as well as walking and cycling links being designed in line with LTN1/20 and Inclusive Mobility Guidance. A draft Transport Statement has also been provided which sets out the broad transport strategy for the site and begins to assess how this can be delivered. However, further work is identified as being required on the site-wide</i></p>

<p>car, and impact on the surrounding highway network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome constrained level of parking on site. Agree that low parking standards are achievable and will enable effective use of the site. - Speed limits should be limited to 20mph - Move away from traditional bell-mouth junction arrangements to provide continuous footway crossovers and priority cycle crossings. 	<p><i>Transport Statement post-adoption and ahead of the LPA being in a position to consider detailed planning applications. A concept for the pedestrian/cyclist priority improvement of the Canal Road junction which is currently an extremely wide bell-mouth junction has been included within the Masterplan as a vision of what is aimed for in this location subject to modelling and detailed design considerations.</i></p>
<p><u>Junction capacity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity assessment required around both junction of Canal Rd and A3038 Priory Bridge Road, and Station Road and A3038 Priory Bridge Road. 	<p><i>As noted above, the existing Canal Road junction is an extremely wide bell-mouth junction which fails to prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling. In addition to this, the draft Transport Statement and Connecting our Garden Communities Plan identify relevant pedestrian and cyclist movements associated with development on Firepool needing to cross onto Station Road in both directions. However, detailed uses and quantum of movements associated with these junctions may change before any planning application is received. As such, a concept design to improve these junctions for active travel priority has been included as a vision of what is aimed for in this location. However, this is subject to modelling and detailed design considerations, as well as final bus priority proposals for Station Road as set out in the Bus Service Improvement Plan. Further work is identified as being required on the site-wide Transport Statement post-adoption and ahead of the LPA being in a position to consider detailed planning applications.</i></p>
<p><u>Parking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of parking will make people avoid using the facilities here. - Particular concern when events and/or cricket are on. - Constrained parking leads to aggression and other social issues and anti-social parking. - Need visitor parking spaces. - Ambulance bays, bays for delivery couriers. - Need to be practical about parking. 	<p><i>The Firepool site is in a very sustainable location close to a wide range of facilities in the town centre as well as Taunton train station and public transport services. As such, and in light of the Garden Town Vision and declaration of a Climate Emergency it is appropriate to seek a low level of parking on-site facilitated by appropriate measures to enable people to travel by alternative means. Further work on the parking strategy for the site was identified by the LPA as being necessary to support approval of the final Masterplan. A draft Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan, including an updated Parking Strategy have been provided alongside the Masterplan. These documents begin to justify a low parking ratio for the site. However, delivery of a low parking ratio is reliant upon provision of suitable, attractive and deliverable alternative modes and connections. The LPA believes that more work is required on this, including identification of truly ambitious mode shift targets and specific measures needed to achieve these targets. As such further work on the site-wide transport evidence is identified</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some questioning whether parking could go lower still? - Parking Strategy makes no mention of car park by Viridor or how it is used (including by canoe club). - Disabled parking must be sensibly located near building entrances with routes at grade or with dropped kerbs in line with Inclusive Mobility Guide. - Review parking strategy to take account of direction of emerging parking and transport policy. Satisfied with a car-lite development subject to provision of measures and infrastructure that encourage and establish non-car trips. - Will residential spaces be leased upon occupation and issued on a demand basis? - Car club must be provided which may replace the demand for up to 18 private vehicles. 	<p><i>as being necessary post-adoption and ahead of the LPA being in a position to consider detailed planning applications. A further Key Design Principle has been added relating to avoiding the potential for anti-social parking. A plan has been provided in the Sustainability Principles identifying proposed locations for disabled parking spaces and car club spaces. The draft Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan include some high level information in relation to issues and potential measures for consideration in development of an event management plan for the site which will be required to accompany relevant applications for the commercial/leisure uses.</i></p>
<p><u>Public transport</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connections to public transport stops need improving. - Park & Ride stops running too early and is at opposite end of town. - Improvements to existing bus stops within proximity to the site need improving to be inclusive for all users and include relevant technology. 	<p><i>A draft Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan have been provided assessing relevance of public transport and connections to it. Potential further measures to improve access to public transport and associated infrastructure are considered. Further work is identified as being required on the site-wide Transport Statement post-adoption and ahead of the LPA being in a position to consider detailed planning applications.</i></p>
<p><u>Emergency access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to consider emergency access and design of on-site highways in line with UKFRS access requirements - Fire 	<p><i>The draft Transport Statement which has been provided includes vehicle tracking demonstrating fire tender access through the site. Full Fire Statement will be required to accompany planning applications.</i></p>

<p>Statement required to support planning application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concern with narrow roads and parking about access for emergency services. 	
<i>Relationship with Somerset County Cricket Club</i>	
<p><u>Relationship with SCCC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful placemaking is key and connected to continuing success of SCCC. - Desires of the council and SCCC as landowners need to be aligned to maximise benefits. - Hotel and conferencing facilities will be an important future revenue stream for SCCC so need to be considered alongside plans for similar facilities on Firepool. - Flexibility of masterplan, particularly the commercial uses will be important. It is possible that SCCC Plans could form part of and anchor the Firepool project. 	<p><i>The County Ground is allocated separately within the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan for leisure-led mixed use development associated with the enhancement of the cricket ground. As a major destination located immediately south of the Firepool site at the opposite end of the proposed boulevard from the train station, there is a clear relationship between the sites which needs to be considered. The draft Transport Statement considers this relationship from a movement perspective, and external connections from the site towards and beyond the cricket club are identified as aspirations within the Masterplan movement parameters plan. However, an element of these movements is more appropriate for consideration in relation to any development proposals arising from the cricket club. It is understood that SCCC are undertaking a new masterplanning exercise internally to inform future investment and development proposals. The LPA and Firepool developer teams will need to engage in these at the right time to maximise opportunities for alignment. The Masterplan incorporates an element of flexibility to be able to respond to changes in circumstances within reason without needing to fully review and revise the Masterplan.</i></p>
<i>Mix of uses</i>	
<p><u>Support for mix of uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New community and leisure facilities close to town centre is great. - Nursery will encourage linked trips. - Cinema needs to serve general audiences not just world/art screenings. - Consider potential land swap with Premier Inn Obridge? - Putting right previous poor planning decisions which moved things like cinema out of town. 	<p><i>Support for mix of uses noted. The developer team will need to consider specific comments further as detailed proposals evolve.</i></p>

<p><u>Mix of leisure uses identified is not right</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Duplicating out of date leisure facilities already in the town. - People don't go to the cinema or bowling anymore. - Concern over viability/need for cinema. - Other leisure uses are needed e.g. multi-use swimming pool, splash pool, crazy golf, boom battle bar, climbing wall, ice rink. - More details needed on leisure uses. 	<p><i>The Masterplan is intended to guide development only and is not overly prescriptive about the specific leisure uses which should be delivered within the site. Whilst the proposals included within the Masterplan currently include a multi-purpose venue, cinema and bowling these specific uses may vary within reason under the overarching intention of a focus around a commercial/leisure quarter. An additional Key Design Principle has been added referring to the flexibility in this regard and the need to reasonably allow for changing circumstances within these overarching uses. The developer team will need to consider specific comments further as detailed proposals evolve.</i></p>
<p><u>Retail inc. food and beverage</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Needs more retail - Too much retail - it will stand empty - Pleased at limited retail. - Limit retail to protect town centre - Need to attract chain restaurants we don't already have. - Restaurants don't appear to make the most of the waterfront - Should be focused on bars and restaurants and places to eat outside in the summer. 	<p><i>A draft Office and Retail Market Update report accompanied the consultation draft of the Masterplan. However, it was identified by the LPA as requiring further information particularly with regards to demand for food and beverage retail within the site. An updated report has now been provided demonstrating the high level demand for such uses. This report also paints a picture of the vulnerable state of retail more widely within Taunton town centre, and the importance on ensuring that any retail within the site is limited in nature to convenience and food and beverage uses. As such, the Masterplan now incorporates additional Key Design Principles setting out the need for retail uses within the site to be limited in scale with a focus on convenience and food and beverage outlets which avoid detrimental impacts to the primary shopping area whilst making the most of the boulevard and riverfront location. An Economic Impact Report has also been provided which quantifies the benefits to the town centre derived from additional residents living in the town centre.</i></p>
<p><u>Other uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on providing public services on the site e.g. dentist, children's play, facilities for teenagers, community sport 3G - No mention of public conveniences. - Consider including a visitor centre for PEACE (People's Environmental Action for Climate Emergency) as per Full Council discussions in May 2019 and December 2019. 	<p><i>As a large allocated brownfield site in the centre of Taunton it is important for development of the site to make effective use of land and balance the range of development aspirations in the interests of bringing forward a sustainable development in a very accessible location. The Masterplan includes an assessment of community facilities in the local vicinity and summarises the LPA's high level expectations in relation to potential future planning obligations in this regard as well as the developer response. The Masterplan has been updated to include an additional Key Design Principle stating the ambition for the commercial/leisure quarter to consider opportunities to accommodate community uses and usage as detailed proposals develop. A statement on the intended route for delivery of public conveniences within the site has been included within the delivery and implementation chapter.</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider social centre to replace former youth facilities on Tangier and provide community hub for local groups. - Consider use for academic / educational purposes. - Need a lot more for kids to do 	
<p><u>Employment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little focus on creating long term skilled jobs in digital, climate/carbon, blue and green recovery. - Concern that uses do not provide jobs or encourage young people to work in the town as per the objective. - Provide more employment opportunities - Offices may have no demand but demand for other employment uses e.g. small workshops does - e.g. Westpark. - Too office-based - Concern lack of employment here will make this a dormitory community where residents travel out of the area by train to work elsewhere. 	<p><i>A key reason for developing a new Masterplan was an acknowledgement that circumstances have moved on significantly from when the site was allocated for office-led mixed use development in the Town Centre Area Action Plan in 2008. The LPA identified that more work was required to support approval of the final Masterplan in relation to evidencing the appropriate mix and flexibility of uses and to respond to existing employment evidence set out in the Economic Development Needs Assessment (2021). The Office and Retail Market Update report sets out the current demand for office development in Taunton. This is supplemented in the Developer Statement by a limited response to the published Economic Development Needs Assessment and justification for bringing forward alternative uses within this brownfield site in line with the NPPF. The Economic Impacts Report which quantifies the jobs that development of the site might support during construction and in operation as well as the wider economic benefits this may have for the town centre. These economic benefits are expected to be secured via signing up to a Local Labour Agreement and associated Employment Skills Plan for the site as a whole. Whilst the Masterplan includes some limited office development (subject to extant planning permissions in blocks 6 (Innovation Centre) and 3, the Masterplan suggests that the remainder of the site is not currently expected to accommodate office development. However, it does note the flexibility of the Masterplan including the potential for office development to be accommodated within the commercial leisure quarter (block 5) or above ground level retail in block 4 fronting the boulevard should circumstances and demands change. Future planning applications will need to be accompanied by appropriate evidence further justifying the departure from adopted planning policy in this regard.</i></p>
<p><u>Impact on Station Road businesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boulevard has potential to bypass and impact businesses on Station Road. - Signpost and link to Station Road to ensure people are aware of the existing businesses. 	<p><i>The boulevard route already benefits from planning permission (38/21/0436 and 38/22/0176). The intention of the boulevard is clear within the adopted Town Centre Area Action Plan, and the Masterplan now accommodates these planning permissions within the wider masterplan for the site as a whole. The Masterplan now proposes significantly less retail than originally allocated, and key design principles make it clear the limited nature and scale of any retail to be provided within the site. There may potentially be some competition from retail businesses along the boulevard with existing businesses on Station Road. However, the updated Office</i></p>

	<i>and Retail Market Update demonstrates some demand for additional food and beverage operators and local convenience retail arising from the leisure and residential uses of the site. Appropriate consideration will need to be given as detailed proposals come forward. The need for high quality, coherent and legible signage is now identified as a Key Design Principle.</i>
Venue	
<p>Fundamental importance of the venue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must be modern and pioneering venue to attract A list acts, give people a reason to visit Taunton and give Taunton an identity. - Concern venue is identified as a "maybe" when central to the plan, and is based on securing external funding. - Needs to be a bigger space than the Brewhouse which is too small. 	<i>Comments on the fundamental importance of the venue are noted. The Masterplan makes it clear the conditions under which it might be possible to deliver on the aspiration for a venue. However, the Masterplan also references the need for flexibility around the delivery of the venue as being subject to a viable business case. Potential alternative uses for the venue block within the overarching commercial/leisure use are floated, should the venue not come forward.</i>
<p>Impact of the venue on existing facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request a professional analysis of potential market and audience for a new venue and how it would be impacted by (or on) venues across Taunton and its catchment (including but not limited to the Brewhouse). - Recommend that arts and cultural provision are looked at holistically. - Strongly encourage Council to look again at opportunities for the Brewhouse. - Venue must work alongside Brewhouse. - Consider also the Gaumont Theatre. - Concern at 'white elephant' and would distract footfall from town centre. 	<i>The developer team has identified a venue within the Masterplan based on the aspirations of the Council (as developer) with a market review by consultants IPW referenced within the Masterplan document and summarised within the Developer Statement. The developer team will need to consider specific comments further as detailed proposals evolve and detailed consultation would need to be undertaken with other venues and operators to support any planning application together with consideration of the Council's Cultural Strategy.</i>
Delivery	
<p>Vision vs Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Unitary Authority may have other financial priorities. - What will stop future developers taking a different route altogether? 	<i>The Masterplan has been updated with additional Key Design Principles relating to flexibility of uses. The report recommending adoption of the Masterplan sets out expectations with regards to triggers for review of the Masterplan, but there is intended to be reasonable flexibility to avoid the Masterplan being too prescriptive and constraining on future uses as things develop. If the site is sold or commercial developers have alternative visions for the site then these will</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concern that plans appear uncostered and just another vision. 	<p><i>need to be considered against the triggers for review. If future proposals broadly align with the Masterplan, albeit with changes to some specifics including specific uses, then this might still be supported by the Masterplan. The Developer Statement includes further information about the developer view on delivery options.</i></p>
<p><u>Progress</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nice to see progress on this key site. - Get it done! 	<p><i>Comments are noted. The adoption of the Masterplan is intended to help bring the site forward for appropriate developments and smooth the planning process towards delivery by providing an up to date planning context.</i></p>
<p><u>Social value</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only the Council can deliver the type of development needed here as it may be a loss leader financially. 	<p><i>The developer team will need to consider specific comments further as proposals evolve.</i></p>
<p><i>Water infrastructure</i></p>	
<p><u>Water infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans should recognise agreed easements and ensure existing infrastructure remains operational until suitable alternative provided. - Proposed on-site infrastructure will not be adopted by Wessex Water. - Sustainability principles should include water efficiency initiatives minimising use of mains water and incorporating water saving measures and equipment. 	<p><i>The Masterplan has been updated to make reference to the expected management and maintenance of drainage infrastructure within the site following further engagement with Wessex Water. An additional key design principle has been included referencing the need to incorporate water efficiency measures into the design.</i></p>
<p><i>Housing</i></p>	
<p><u>Support for housing provision</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for housing in the town centre. - Reducing reliance on greenfield sites. - Enable people to live sustainably. 	<p><i>Support for housing provision noted. The existing Town Centre Area Action Plan policy allows for housing provision within the development mix, however, the Masterplan now proposes an increased level of housing at the expense of other uses (primarily retail and office uses). An Economic Impact Report has been provided which helps to quantify the potential economic benefits to the town centre to be derived from increasing the number of people living in the town centre. The Developer Statement provides further justification for increasing housing delivery within this brownfield site in line with the NPPF.</i></p>

<p><u>Objection to so much housing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too much housing, not required. - Better to use the site for leisure, employment uses. - Will create dormitory development of people living here but getting the train to work elsewhere. - Prioritising short term financial gain over long term town sustainability - Consider capacity of existing services (schools, GPs) 	<p><i>Concerns are noted. A careful balance needs to be struck to bring forward viable and sustainable development in this location without compromising the opportunities that a town centre site like this provides. The final Masterplan now includes greater flexibility to accommodate more employment uses should demand levels change in this regard. Furthermore, an Economic Impact Report has been provided which helps to quantify the potential jobs created by the construction and operation of the site and the potential economic benefits to the town centre to be derived from increasing the number of people living in the town centre. The Masterplan and accompanying viability appraisal set out the potential difficulties in bringing forward viable development on the site, and the range of potential planning obligations which may need to be considered to support increased infrastructure capacity. The Masterplan proposes delivery of a primary healthcare facility and pre-school/nursery on-site. However, delivery of these will be subject to commercial discussions on the part of the developer.</i></p>
<p><u>Housing mix</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of mention of social housing. - Should be 100% / good proportion social housing. - What % older persons housing? - Focus on apartments - 25% affordable homes required by policy - 10% adapted disabled units required by policy - Interest from affordable housing development partners. 	<p><i>Policies CP4 and Fp1 set out a requirement for 25% affordable housing to be provided on-site at Firepool. The Masterplan proposals are supported by a high level viability appraisal which shows that the delivery of affordable housing is extremely unlikely to be possible on Firepool for viability reasons. In this respect, the indicative developer proposals are not compliant with either adopted planning policy or the corporate strategy. Irrespective of the adoption of the masterplan, any movement away from a policy compliant position on affordable housing or infrastructure prioritisation will still need to be fully explained, justified and supported by evidence at planning application stage. What the high level viability appraisal supporting the Masterplan does is explain that it is extremely unlikely that policy compliant levels will be able to be achieved alongside the range of other planning policy and corporate policy objectives for the site.</i></p>
<p><u>Student accommodation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student accommodation is right next to retirement complex - badly thought through. 	<p><i>Identification of student accommodation as a potential use of block 3.1 is not definitive – the Masterplan is not intended to be prescriptive in this way. Appropriate considerations will need to be born in mind as detailed proposals develop including appropriateness of detailed uses and design solutions which (amongst other things) respect amenity of both existing and new residents. The Building Principles section of the Masterplan has been updated to refer to boundary considerations which in the case of Block 3.1 refer to the need for careful consideration of the amenity of existing homes in Lock House. However, this is a general point about amenity considerations, not specific to a stereotyped or generalised assumption about students.</i></p>

Sustainability	
<p><u>Zero carbon vision</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Like the zero carbon vision and focus on sustainable design - Rainwater harvesting and greywater reuse? - Design for the circular economy - Large proportion of gardens are north-facing - More green space and trees needed to meet carbon neutrality by 2030. - Consider more sustainable materials such as timber rather than brick, concrete and glass. 	<p><i>The Masterplan identifies a series of Key Design Principles which relate to sustainability and the zero carbon vision for the site including around following the principles set out in the Districtwide Design Guide SPD in this regard, considering whole life embodied carbon of materials, and a new principle around the incorporation of water efficiency measures. A developer response to the Climate Emergency Checklist is included towards the end of the Masterplan alongside specific Sustainability Principles. Further consideration of how development responds to these design principles will be required as detailed proposals develop.</i></p>
<p><u>Energy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should be PVs as standard on all buildings, not just designed to accommodate. - Energy centre should be definite rather than potential - Ensure Passivhaus certified - then probably don't need district heat - How will removal of river water for heat pump affect wildlife and river levels? 	<p><i>The Masterplan identifies opportunities for renewable energy technologies within the site including solar PV and water source heat pump energy centre as options to assist in achieving the zero carbon vision for the site. Whilst planning policy does not explicitly require zero carbon development here, applications will need to respond to the Masterplan and its embedded principles, and at a bare minimum development on the site will likely be required to achieve the Government's forthcoming New Homes Standard and New Buildings Standard, which will likely necessitate a non-gas approach to heating buildings. There will be a range of options that could be taken to achieve these standards, and connection to a heat network provides one option which merits further consideration, not just for this site but as part of a wider project considering opportunities for decarbonisation of heat in Taunton town centre. A report funded in part by the Firepool scheme and in part by the Government's Heat Network Delivery Unit is in the process of being finalised and will be reported separately to the Masterplan in due course. The report identifies a concept for location of a water source heat pump and associated energy centre within block 1 of Firepool, however this is relatively high level in nature and subject to detailed considerations. As part of this, the Environment Agency have raised no initial objection to the premise of water abstraction in this location to serve a water source heat pump, however further engagement with the EA and others would be required to understand possible abstraction / reinjection locations fully as well as any potential impacts and ways of avoiding or mitigating these.</i></p>

<p>Electric Vehicles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No mention of EV charging - Charge points need to be delivered in line with EV Charging Strategy and Part S. 	<p><i>The Masterplan has been updated and accompanying draft Transport Statement and Framework Travel Plan produced with reference to delivering EV charge points in line with the Somerset EV Charging Strategy.</i></p>
<p>Building Design</p>	
<p>Building design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ugly, awful, dismal, overbearing, blocky, dark, characterless, anywheresville, drab, bleak, sterilised, uninspiring, soulless inner city blocks, antisocial, prison-blocks, ghettos of the future, re-purposed communist warehouses, look like car parks - Dislike of red brick and blocky design. - Out of character with area - Too urban - Concrete jungle - Too high - Prefer gable end designs, flat roofs store up greater problems. - Need a mix of architectural styles - Taller buildings limit light for units behind. - Amenity impacts caused by heights and massing of blocks in close proximity to existing homes particularly on Canal Terrace and Priory Bridge Road. - Feels a little cramped in. - Buildings at eastern edge should be lower. - Some positive comments received. 	<p><i>The detailed visual images included within the Masterplan document are indicative only based on a developer interpretation and response to the design principles. These visuals are provided for information only as examples of how the developer team has interpreted the masterplan principles. For clarity, these elements of the document will hold no planning decision making weight. Whilst there were a number of comments explicitly voicing negative views about the detailed design of buildings in the indicative visualisations, there were also supportive comments received. There will be a range of different design responses that may be appropriate for the site which respond to its context and the principles identified within the Masterplan. Future planning applications will need to demonstrate how they are responding to these design principles and will be required to be considered by the Council's Quality Review Panel.</i></p>

Green Infrastructure	
<p><u>Support for green infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots of support for the green/open/public spaces identified including places to sit. - Like the tree-lined walkways 	<p><i>Support for green infrastructure noted. The developer team will need to consider specific comments further as detailed proposals evolve.</i></p>
<p><u>Delivery and maintenance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More info needed on funding, maintenance and management of public realm, particularly that beyond the areas already permitted. - Concern at long term success of public realm due to maintenance and management liabilities. - Consider how the amphitheatre can be used on a day-to-day basis to justify it as a useful open space. - Public art and events help to ensure success and management of public realm. 	<p><i>The Masterplan includes some limited information on potential arrangements for management and maintenance of the public realm. However, it is also honest that at this point in time the delivery of any works beyond that already benefiting from planning permission is as yet unfunded. The delivery model will be key to understanding funding, management and maintenance issues, but this is as yet unknown. The Council is working on stewardship arrangements for the Garden Town, and this may present opportunities for the site in due course. The Public Art Strategy for the site has been developed with a particular intention to drive interest and use of the public realm and ensure its long term success.</i></p>
<p><u>Concerns</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Square looks like a heaven for skaters. - Not enough green space, too much hardscaping, not enough shading. - Lack of open space and trees etc. around the lock should be reconsidered - not making the most of this opportunity. - Concern that generic key design principles not being followed through. - Slab paving sinks and loosens over time causing maintenance and health & safety concerns. - Lack of litter and dog waste bins - Amphitheatre should be more than just some steps. Existing steps in town not used sufficiently, need sheltered seating. 	<p><i>A significant part of the public realm proposals for the site already benefits from planning permission (the southern boulevard, 38/22/0176). The Masterplan accommodates this public realm and identifies design principles for other aspects of public realm around the site. The detailed visual images included within the Masterplan document are indicative only based on a developer interpretation and response to the design principles. These visuals are provided for information only as examples of how the developer team has interpreted the masterplan principles. For clarity, these elements of the document will hold no planning decision making weight. Further design principles eluding to the vision for the Lock View area have been included in the final Masterplan, seeking to maximise opportunities and avoid potential for anti-social behaviour in this location. The developer team will need to consider specific comments further as detailed proposals evolve.</i></p>

<p><u>Play space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to have things for kids and teenagers to do. - Consider large waterside kids playground next to walking/cycling path. 	<p><i>Further commentary has been provided within the Rivers Edge area landscape design principles on points for consideration in the design of play space.</i></p>
<p><i>Other</i></p>	
<p><u>Visual images</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Townhouses by the lock showing as 4 storey in visuals but 3 storey on plans. - What are the green balloons? - What are AOD heights? 	<p><i>The detailed visual images included within the Masterplan document are indicative only based on a developer interpretation and response to the design principles. These visuals are provided for information only as examples of how the developer team has interpreted the masterplan principles. For clarity, these elements of the document will hold no planning decision making weight. The townhouses referred to appear from the angle of the image to be 4 storeys high, however, the developer has suggested that the fourth storey is a roof terrace. The “green balloons” referred to are understood to be trees located beyond the boundaries of the architectural model which has its limitations. Where AOD heights are referred to further definition has been provided and where possible both heights AOD and storey heights are referred to for clarity.</i></p>
<p><u>Responding to comments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What action has the developer taken to address previous consultation comments, particularly south of the river? 	<p><i>Further information has been added to the Masterplan on how various stages of consultation and engagement have informed the Masterplan proposals. A Developer Statement has also been provided including developer responses to key comments made during this consultation.</i></p>

The table above captures a number of changes made in response to comments received. However other changes were also made and the list below captures the key changes in one place:

- Executive Summary updated to reflect final version, intended status as a material planning consideration, clarify indicative nature of detailed scheme and visuals, set out the site-wide work which still needs to be completed and upon satisfactory completion of which the Masterplan's adoption is subject to.
- Various minor textual and plan-based changes throughout to ensure consistency and up to date references.
- Improved policy context in section 1.03 pulling out key aspects of the CNCR Action Plan, DWDG SPD and PRDG SPD relevant to Firepool.
- Identification of how pre-app advice on Block 1 has been taken into account so far, with recognition that other aspects will be dealt with as detail develops.
- Inclusion of additional and expansion of existing Key Design Principles covering a range of issues identified as being appropriate in response to comments received through consultation to address:
 - high quality, coherent and legible signage;
 - natural surveillance and designing out anti-social behaviour and perceived safety concerns around Firepool Lock;
 - design principles for cycle storage;
 - walking, wheeling and cycling route design to align with Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 principles and Inclusive Mobility Guidance;
 - streets designed to 20mph and designing out anti-social parking;
 - mix of uses to enhance the town centre;
 - limited nature of retail on the site;
 - flexibility of uses within the overarching "leisure" use;
 - considering opportunities for community uses;
 - contemporary and appropriately evidenced building design balanced with character and context and opportunities of the site;
 - Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) focus on river corridor;
 - Incorporation of water efficiency measures;
- Reflecting the baseline situation of existing walking and cycling infrastructure and opportunities for relevant external connections as per Connecting our Garden Communities. Explaining the ongoing iteration of work on a transport statement and framework travel plan.
- Identification of Taunton Canoe Club as an existing sports club facility within the site in section 2.07.
- Expansion of context appraisal in relation to river, ecology and biodiversity in section 2.08 to recognise the ecological importance of the river, set out a broad strategy for planting for pollinators and invertebrates, and an intention to focus BNG delivery around the river.
- Recognition in section 3.01 that the Flood Risk Assessment and levels raising permitted as part of 38/21/0440 apply only to the area north of the river, but that a similar approach is anticipated to be required south of the river in Block 1 as set out in the Flood Technical Note.
- Further information on anticipated management and maintenance of sewerage infrastructure within the site following further engagement with Wessex Water.

- Expansion on the heritage element of the site appraisal in section 3.04 to acknowledge the comments of Historic England, and the changes made to the plan and future evidence that will be required to help avoid and mitigate impacts upon the settings of the church towers.
- Reference made to the need for ongoing review and survey on the presence of water voles within the site.
- Reference to the final conclusions of the Habitat Regulations Assessment.
- Inclusion of further information about the strategy for securing maintenance access to Firepool Lock.
- Confirmation of the approach to ensure operation and tie in of riverside cycleway.
- Expansion of retail demand and impact element of the site appraisal in section 3.04 to refer to demand for food and beverage outlets.
- Updating of pedestrian routes and cycling routes plans in section 4.00 and movement parameters plan in section 9.00 to identify external connections in line with Connecting our Garden Communities.
- Updating of plot uses plan in section 4.00 to reflect mixed-use nature of blocks and ensure consistency of blocks across all key strategy diagrams.
- Updating of heights plan in section 4.00 and heights parameters plan in section 9.00 to refer to a range of heights within block 5 which equate to a 4/5 residential storey height, provide other existing building heights for useful context, and supporting annotations to explain indicative nature of these heights and need for further evidence to support heights scale and massing at the application stage, particularly in relation to block 5 and potential impacts upon church towers.
- Inclusion of inset diagrams showing concept visions for external walking and cycling connections developed as part of the Connecting our Garden Communities project which will form the aspiration subject to detailed design, associated modelling and development viability.
- Inclusion of an indicative development schedule of uses.
- Expanded section 5.08 to provide an overarching vision for play space to be provided along the river's edge.
- Expanded section 5.12 to provide an overarching vision for the Lock View space.
- Expanded section 5.14 to make reference to important considerations relating to use of space around the signature building (depending on delivery of the energy centre and associated water source heat pump).
- Reference to Building Principles to be reviewed and roof designs to be considered alongside form of buildings as part of detailed planning applications.
- Inclusion of additional subtitle of "boundary considerations" for each block's Building Principles identifying relevant considerations around amenity, frontages and surveillance.
- Clarification of heights in both storeys and height AOD to avoid misinterpretation of residential and commercial storey heights.
- Clarification of anticipated *suis generis* uses within Block 5 being leisure uses.
- Inclusion of other key cycle routes within the sustainability principles plan.
- Inclusion of further information on sustainable cycle and vehicle parking strategy.

- Explanation of the high level strategy for accommodating public conveniences within the site added to section 10.01.
- Reference to updated outputs of the Office and Retail Market Update and Economic Impact Report added to section 10.01.
- Inclusion of high level consideration of site phasing, to be informed by ongoing site-wide work and discussion about delivery models within the new Council.
- Review of Key Design Principles in section 11.01 expanded with responses to final principles and current proposals.