

Littleborough Neighbourhood Plan

Questionnaire Consultation:

Report and Analysis

Dec 2015

Prepared by PPS Planning Manchester

on behalf of Littleborough Neighbourhood Forum



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1. Introduction

This report provides an independent analysis of the responses received to a Questionnaire prepared by the Littleborough Neighbourhood Forum. The purpose of the Questionnaire was to establish views from local residents, businesses, landowners and organisations on how Littleborough should develop as a town over the next 10-15 years. The analysis will provide evidence about local issues, local needs and the aspirations of the local community. This will help the Forum review its objectives for the Plan, identify what further information or evidence is needed and decide what planning policies it wants to pursue through the Neighbourhood Plan. Local consultation and engagement is a statutory part of the plan preparation process.

The introductory sections provide some information about the Plan (Section 2) and the preparation process (Section 3). Section 4 summarises how the Questionnaire was publicised and made available and Section 5 explains the structure of the questionnaire and the nature of the questions. Section 6 summarises the level of response to the questionnaire and Section 7 provides a detailed analysis of the results, question by question.

The Appendix includes a table which sets out (against each Question) the main issues for the Plan arising from the analysis, and the information or evidence needed to address those issues and to formulate plan policies.

2. About the Plan

The Littleborough Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan') is produced by the Neighbourhood Forum under the Localism Act 2011 and the associated Regulations. The Neighbourhood Plan is a community led framework to guide the future use and development of land including changes of use and the management of land and buildings. It comprises written policies and a proposals map. The Plan can:

- set planning policies to determine decisions on planning applications (these include policies which set out requirements for certain types of development and policies which allocate a site for a particular use or uses); and
- grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.

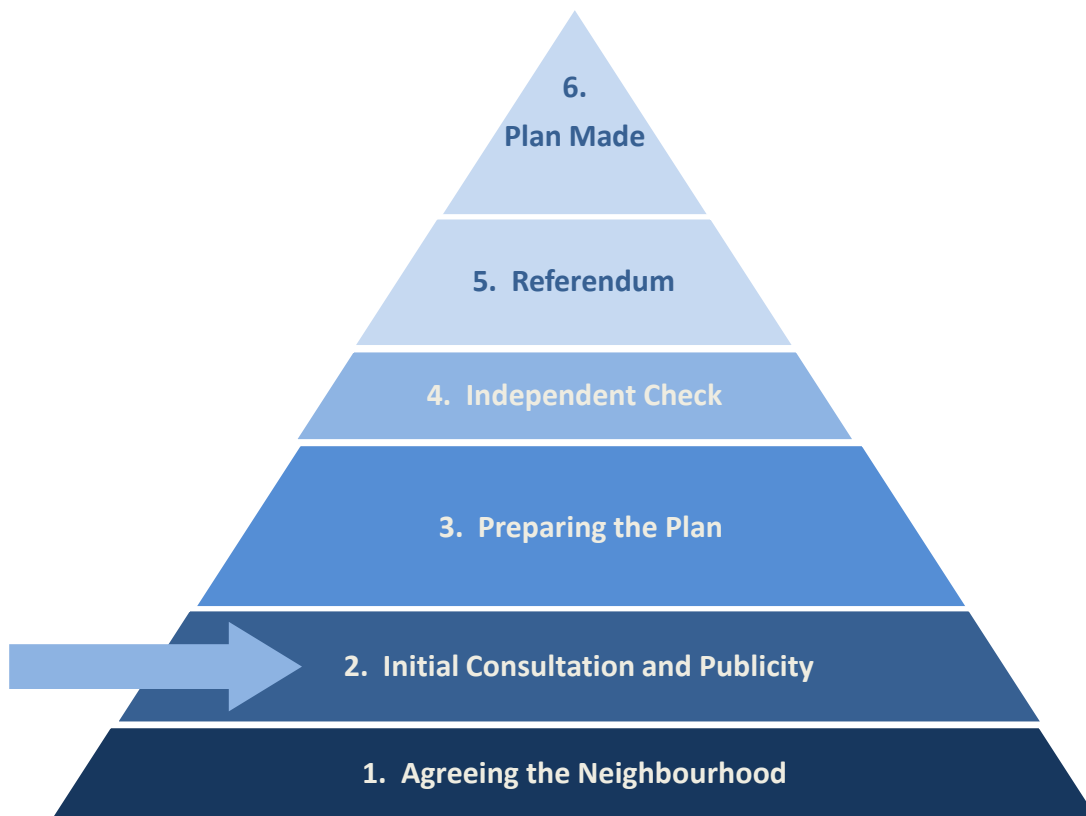
The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area and it must conform to national planning policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. In particular, the Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Council's Local Plan 'Core Strategy' which has been prepared but not yet approved. It is vital that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible in order to guide and complement the Neighbourhood Plan. Once the Core Strategy is adopted the Neighbourhood Plan will need to reflect its policies but also add further 'local' detail and show how the strategic policies of the Rochdale Core

Strategy should be applied to meet Littleborough’s needs and aspirations. Within the above framework, it is for the community decide what issues the Neighbourhood Plan should deal with. It need not deal with every topic or issue; it can just deal with those matters that are important to Littleborough.

Once prepared, the Plan must be publicised to allow consultation over a 6 week period. The Forum must then review the Plan before submitting it to the local planning authority (i.e, Rochdale Council) who must publicise it for a further 6 weeks before an independent check is carried out by an ‘independent examiner’ appointed by government. If certain ‘basic conditions’ are met, the Plan can go to a local ‘Referendum’ for approval. If 50% or more support the Plan it can be declared ‘made’ and becomes part of the statutory Local Plan and a basis for the determination of all planning applications and appeals. The plan preparation involves a lot of work and statutory procedures and therefore it is not likely to be made until mid 2018.

3. The Plan Process

For more details about the Plan, its timetable and current progress, check the [Forum website](#) and [Rochdale Council website](#). The diagram below shows the key stages in the preparation of the plan and the arrow indicates the current stage.



4. Publicity and Consultation on the Questionnaire

Legislation requires the Forum to carry out a formal public consultation on the Plan for a minimum period of 6 weeks before submitting it to Government for independent examination and referendum. However, the Forum has chosen to go beyond the minimum requirements for community consultation required by law by carrying out detailed publicity and consultation in the early stages. The Forum considered this essential to:

- notify the community and local businesses that a plan is being prepared;
- explain how the community and businesses can get involved and engage in the process;
- identify what the local community thinks before the plan is prepared;
- define the aims of the Plan and the key issues which the Plan would address; and
- gather evidence about other opinions and features of life in the Neighbourhood Area.

Following the Neighbourhood Area Designation and the establishment of the Forum, initial publicity was carried locally and on-line using leaflets, press publicity, the Forum website etc. to out to inform residents and interested parties that the Forum was beginning work on the Neighbourhood Plan and to explain the role of the plan and the process it must follow.

The Forum was keen to gather public opinion on key topics in order to review key issues and priorities, identify further information needs and to guide policy preparation. A detailed Questionnaire was considered the best way to proceed.

The questionnaire was the subject of local press publicity before being made available in both paper form and on the Forum's website in December 2014.

- 7,000 copies of the questionnaire were delivered to each Littleborough household on 12th December 2014;
- Completed questionnaires could be posted at any of 10 locations around the town;
- The questionnaire could be completed on line at the Forum website;
- Background information and help on completing the questionnaire was available on the Forum website;
- The Questionnaire was promoted on Rochdale Council web site and on the 'Rochdale Online' and 'Littleborough Local' websites.
- Some 34 organisations, agencies and businesses likely to have an interest in the Plan were consulted by letter.
- Publicity was carried out in the local press (i.e. Rochdale Observer and the Manchester Evening News).

The closing date for the questionnaire was initially set for the 22nd of December but due to concerns about the potential lack of focus with Christmas approaching and to allow organisations more time to respond, the closing date was extended until 9th January 2015.

5. The Questionnaire Questions

Littleborough residents, businesses, landowners and relevant organisations and agencies have been consulted on previously on planning policy documents affecting the Borough and the Pennines Township; first on the Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan and more recently on the Rochdale Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document. Consultation has also taken place on the Council's Pennine Township strategies and action plans. Therefore, many of the views and issues raised through those consultations have influenced the range of questions and answer options set out in the Questionnaire.

The questionnaire has sought to test out past and current opinions and to explore these further in order to establish the key issues and priorities for the next 10-15 years, and to guide the preparation of Plan policies.

The questionnaire comprised 22 questions relating to housing, employment, the town centre, tourism, transport and other infrastructure, community facilities and the environment. It is therefore very broad in scope but focuses on those land-use matters that the Plan must restrict itself to.

It was inevitable that the responses will bring out issues, views and ideas that the Plan itself cannot deal with but these can be addressed outside the Plan with the Council and other agencies. These will not be reported in detail in this report however.

Against each question, there were up to 8 possible answers that respondents could tick. The questionnaire also allowed respondents to explain their answers or expand on them or to include options not listed in the possible answers.

Initial help in setting the range of matters the questionnaire could explore was provided by planning consultancy 'PPS Planning - Manchester'. The final questions were set by the Forum Committee.

'Background information relating to individual questions' was made available on the Forum web site to provide help on completing the optional answers and to explain the relevance and significance of the questions.

6. Responses to the Questions

Asking residents and organisations to answer 22 questions, each with up to 2-8 sub-questions or options to tick, was an ambitious project. However, it was considered important to ensure the questionnaire dealt with a full range of issues and possible approaches for tackling those issues. The Forum recognised that all respondents were unlikely to answer every question. Indeed the questionnaire states that respondents need only complete those parts that they have a clear view on. It was considered important that respondents spent time on the questions that concern them rather than complete some questions without due consideration.

The total number of responses received was 350 (114 in paper form and 236 via the website). (Approximately 30 were disallowed due to a lack of essential information.) Considering the number of questions (145 in all, across 22 subjects), the response was extremely encouraging. None of the 34 organisations and statutory consultees contacted responded specifically to the questions, but they welcomed the opportunity to respond later in the process when draft policies and proposals are prepared and to advise on relevant policy areas.

Significantly, nearly all questions were completed by over 300 respondents and only 2 questions received between 100 and 200 responses. Some respondents have either left a question or option blank as they neither agreed nor disagreed with the possible answer choices.

7. The Analysis

The analysis is based on data supplied by the Forum, collated from the web site questionnaire and the paper questionnaire delivered to households. The Analysis deals with each question in turn and sets out the responses in statistical form. Under each question below, a bar chart is included to provide a pictorial representation of the way respondents answered. Each chart shows the actual numbers of respondents who either supported the answer option, didn't support the option, or didn't have a view.

The analysis summarises (in italic text) responses against each question's answer option and also summarises the supporting or explanatory comments received. Some individual comments are not reported if they are unclear or not relevant to the question. In some cases valid or shared comments have been reported against a more relevant question.

The percentages are based on the number of responses to the questions' answer choices as a proportion of the total of 350 responses. It should be noted that the answer choices are not for necessarily mutually exclusive and therefore some respondents will choose more than one answer option against a question; therefore percentages will not add up to 100%.

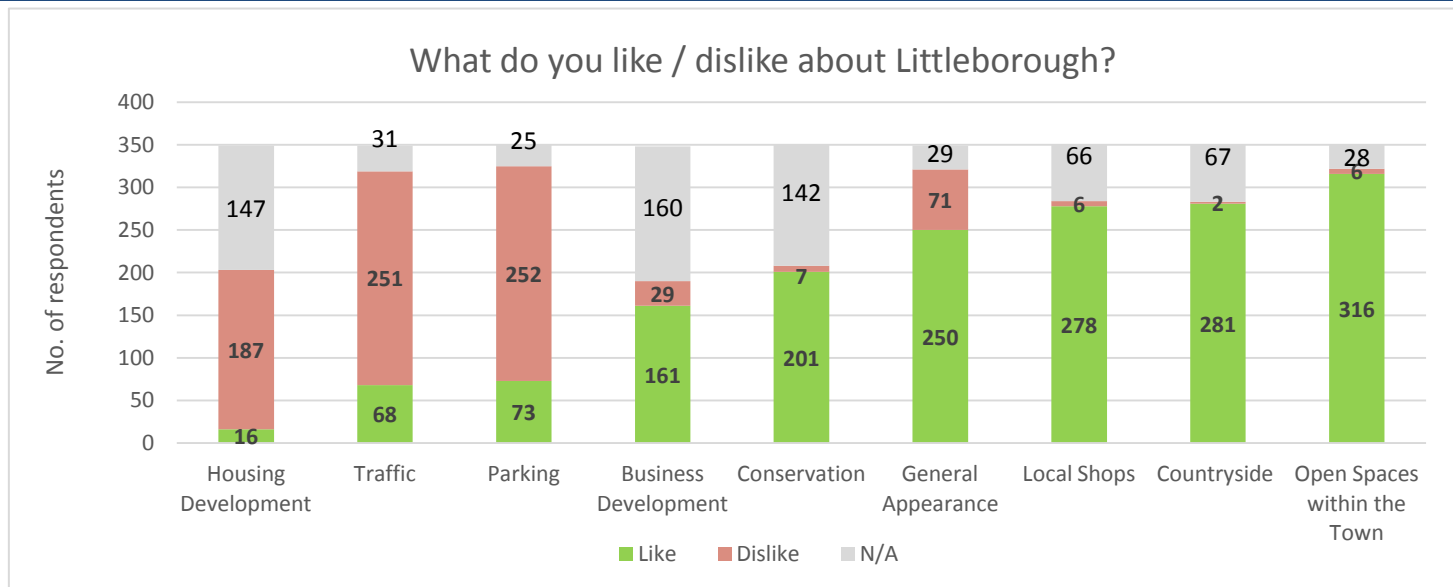
At the end of the analysis on each particular question, there is a 'Conclusion/Summary' box (in normal text) which provides an independent view of the responses to each question overall and a commentary on their significance in terms of progressing the neighbourhood plan i.e., the key issues raised, further information requirements and possible approaches which the plan should explore.

These are all summarised in the Appendix.

The next stage is to decide which matters should and can be pursued by the plan. Some matters can be addressed through borough-wide planning policies and some could be addressed outside the plan process. The plan must deal with land-use related matters and include policies and proposals that can be implemented within the Plan period. It is also vitally important that there is real evidence to justify the Plan's policies as well as evidence of public support for a particular policy approach. Therefore work on expanding the evidence base in key areas must now be a priority.

Analysis of the Responses

1. What do you like or dislike about Littleborough?



Housing development

Graph / pie chart

53% expressed dissatisfaction with housing development although it is clear that this dissatisfaction is largely due to concerns about the quality, type, location or impact of recent housing developments which were felt not to reflect local character and identity. Some felt that housing choice was poor and that affordability was becoming a problem. Some felt that no more housing is needed or that services and infrastructure would be unable to cope, especially roads and schools. Many respondents, including those who supported some new housing were keen that services (e.g. schools, doctors, buses and public transport etc.) should be expanded, that traffic and parking issues should be addressed and that housing should be of a scale that would not harm local character. There were conflicting views about what type of housing should be built (some wanted larger homes and others wanted smaller, more affordable homes). (See responses to Questions 4, 5 and 6)

Business development

45% liked the current mix of local businesses and some commented that maintaining job opportunities is important and essential to avoid Littleborough becoming a dormitory town and more commuting to jobs outside Littleborough. Some commented that the focus should be on small businesses appropriate to the area. (See also Questions 13 – 15).

Parking	<i>72% of respondents thought on-street parking was a problem in terms of environmental and visual impact, obstructing traffic flows, highway and pedestrian safety etc. - especially in the town centre and surrounding streets. The need for more off street parking for those visiting the town centre and other key locations e.g., Hollingworth Lake was mentioned. The old gasworks site off Hare Hill Road was suggested as a possible car park. (see also Questions 9, 10 and 17)</i>
General appearance	<i>71% liked the general scale and appearance of the town. Some felt more could be done to improve some areas and to ensure that new development is more in keeping with local character and identity. There was recognition that Littleborough is seen as an increasingly desirable area to live due to its location, character, the quality of the built environment and it's built and natural heritage.</i>
Traffic	<i>Traffic was the biggest 'dislike' receiving the highest percentage of 71%. Comments indicate that town centre and peak hour congestion needed addressing. Comments called for improved public transport facilities, especially improved train frequency for commuters and visitors, and also better off street parking facilities to ease congestion in the centre. There was a general view that traffic management measures need some review.</i>
Conservation	<i>80% valued the towns built and natural heritage but some wished to see more done to preserve and enhance heritage assets.</i>
Open spaces within the town	<i>90% valued its open spaces but a significant number acknowledged that quality should continue to be improved.</i>
Countryside	<i>99% valued the surrounding countryside. However, some felt it has and will continue to be spoilt by wind turbines. Landscape improvements and management has improved in recent years e.g., around Hollingworth Lake. However, some felt there was too much focus on Hollingworth Lake and that other areas could be focussed on e.g. Calderbrook for recreation and wildlife conservation.</i>
Local shops	<i>80% liked its 'local' shops and many would like to see more independent shops. Some called for control over fast food outlets and cafes. (see also responses to Question 8)</i>
Conclusion / Summary	<p>In terms of dislikes, parking, traffic and open space received the largest number of responses This clearly shows concerns about the availability of parking, the impact of traffic and the quality of urban open spaces. In terms of likes, the highest number of responses identified Littleborough's attractive appearance and setting.</p> <p>In summary:</p>

The quality of the environment and the general appearance and character of Littleborough is vitally important to people.

Of particular value to Littleborough residents are:

- its accessible countryside,
- its open spaces, its built heritage and character and general appearance, and
- its local shopping centre.

Asked what people disliked, the overwhelming response was:

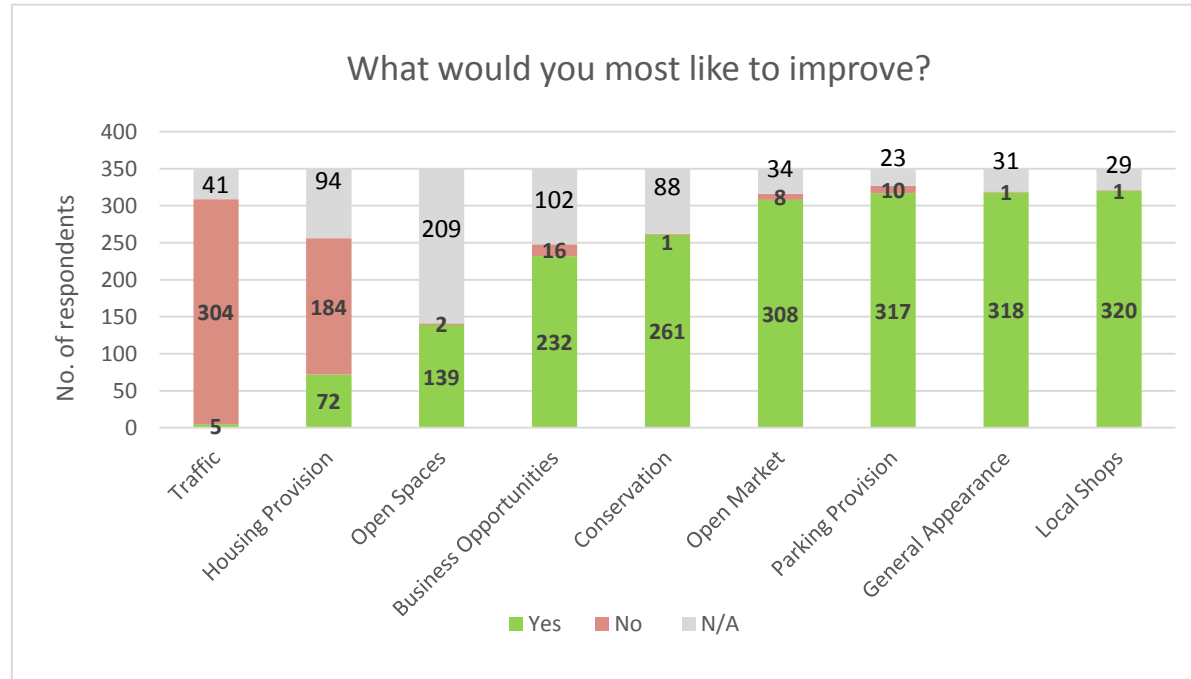
- lack of suitable parking provision,
- lack of housing choice,
- traffic at peak times, and
- the impact of recent housing growth in terms of traffic and visual impact.

What people were concerned about in future was:

- concern about the ability of services and infrastructure (e.g. schools, roads) to cope with significant new housing
- concern about housing growth on local character,
- concern about further loss of employment opportunities and commuting, and
- young people leaving the town for jobs and affordable housing

(See also Question 4)

2. What would you improve in Littleborough?



Housing

Only 20% thought it was necessary to expand or improve housing provision. (See housing questions 4, 5 and 6 for a more complete analysis.)

Business Opportunities

66% wished to see more focus on jobs, i.e., the protection of employment and the creation of new businesses opportunities / jobs. Some suggested that more tourist attractions, events, and businesses to support visitors (e.g., cafe's restaurants and specialist shops) would assist the local economy.

Parking provision

90% wanted to see more parking provision, especially off street parking. Residents should have free or preferential parking (i.e., more areas of residents-only parking).

Open Market

88% wanted a permanent market in a central area. Such a space would provide scope for 'events' also.

Traffic

87% wished to see better traffic management improvements to roads and footpaths, public transport improvements, better walking routes and increased parking in order to tackle congestion and conflict between residents, commuter and visitor traffic. Some though the priority for parking should be visitors and tourists, not commuters.

Conservation

74% wanted to see more initiatives on conservation in the town. Shop fronts, advertising and signage should better reflect local character and architectural style.

Open spaces

Whilst 39% wanted to see more open spaces and improvements to open space, only 2 of the 141 respondents disagreed. Many wanted to see more focus on the recreational potential areas of open spaces and countryside and some commented that areas of countryside other than around Hollingworth Lake should be explored e.g., links to strategic routes e.g., Pennine Bridleway should be improved.

Local Shops

91% wanted to see improvements to local shops. More local /independent and specialist shops were supported in order to retain an attractive character to the centre and create interest. However, some felt that shops aimed at attracting visitors should not be at the expense of local shops with affordable goods. More dining opportunities will improve the visitor offer. A permanent open market should be established. Some shops have a tacky appearance and shop fronts should be more sympathetic to buildings and local character. Controls should be introduced to control shop fronts, advertising and signage, shutters etc..

General appearance

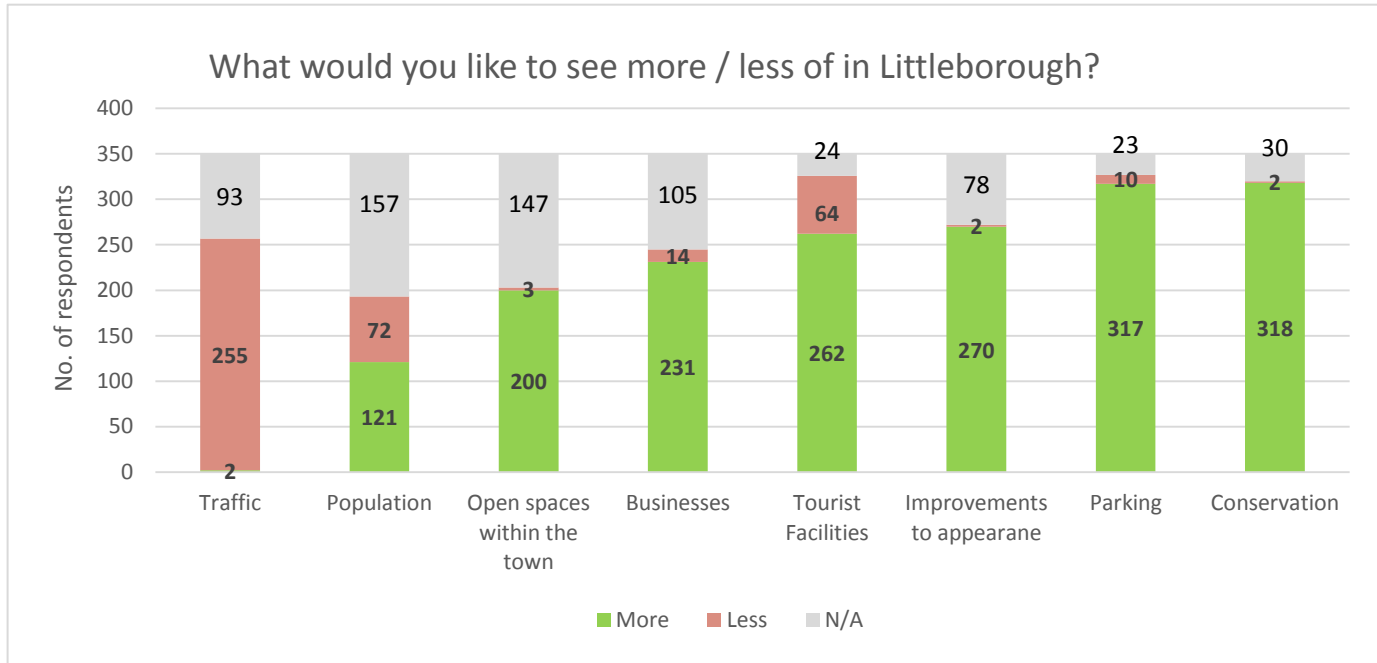
Despite a general satisfaction with the appearance of the town and its setting, 90% said improvements were needed in order to maintain its quality and character, and attract business and visitors. Traditional materials should be used more in new buildings. Key local buildings and their settings should be improved. The square and station area should be improved.

Conclusion / Summary

Respondents felt the key focus for improvements in Littleborough should include:

- more businesses/jobs and tourism;
- better parking provision and traffic management;
- improvements to key public open spaces;
- better, more varied countryside recreational opportunities;
- more local shops, improvements to shopping streets and a market; and
- Improvements to building design and conservation of key areas/buildings.

3. What do you want Littleborough to have in the future?



Population growth

34% wanted to plan for population growth but many were concerned that infrastructure and services were inadequate or could not be improved. Whilst a significant percentage acknowledge that Littleborough's population will grow, the responses to Question 2 show that the provision of more houses in the future is an issue of concern.

Businesses growth

66% wanted business growth and more jobs.

Parking facilities

90% wanted more / better parking. A suggestion was to use the old gasworks site on Harehill Road as a possible car park.

Improvements to appearance

77% wanted improvements to run down or underused areas, e.g., industrial sites and sites along the canal, the town centre and conservation area, shopping frontages, open spaces, and Hollingworth Lake.

Traffic Improvements

73% wanted solutions to existing and future additional commuter and through traffic on A58.

More Conservation

90% wanted to do more to conserve the best of the area and to enhance the quality of new development (e.g., by using more traditional architecture and materials).

Open spaces within the town

57% wanted to see more and better quality open space.

Tourism facilities

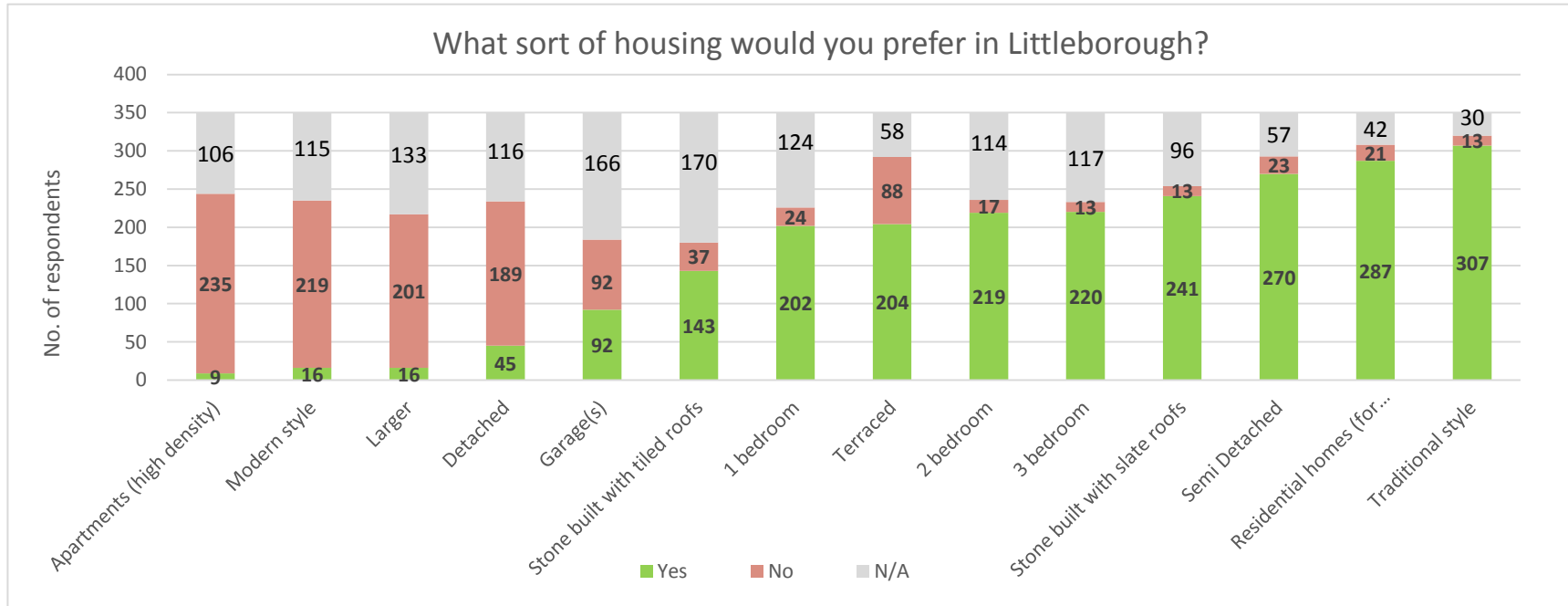
74% were keen to see improved tourist facilities, including parking and toilet facilities. Some wanted to see a new swimming pool to cater for residents and visitors.

Conclusion / Summary

Not surprisingly, the responses to this question mirror the answers to Questions 1 and 2. The highest percentages of respondents wanted to see improvements to parking facilities and traffic problems, but all other choices were strongly supported, with the exception of population growth. Whilst some population growth was seen as inevitable, large scale growth was not seen as desirable. There appeared to be concern that even moderate growth would not be sustainable without significant improvements to infrastructure and services.

Questions 1-3 sought to identify what really matters to people in Littleborough. The three questions: what residents liked and disliked, and what would inevitably show a similar pattern of responses. Whilst the percentages on certain matters did not exactly correspond across the three questions, they do show a clear, consistent direction. Other questions seek to bring out more detail on what specifically is needed and how improvements can be tackled and planned for.

4. What sort of housing would you prefer in Littleborough?



Traditional style

87% supported new housing of traditional style and materials.

Modern style

5% would be happy to see more modern housing design.

Terraced

58% supported more terraced housing to meet demand and to reflect local character whilst 25% felt there was enough terraced housing in Littleborough and that more semi or detached family homes were needed.

Semi detached

77% supported some semi-detached housing for families.

Detached

13% supported more detached housing for families.

Stone built with slate roofs

69% would like to see new housing built of stone with slate roofs. A significant number commented that the greater use of stone walls and slate roofs in new housing would reinforce local character and that the Town Design Statement seeks to promote this.

Brick built with tiled roofs

40% would support the use of traditional brick in the right places.

1 bedroom

57% of respondents supported more 1 bedroom homes.

2 bedroom	<i>62% supported more 2 bedroom homes. Some commented that these are necessary to meet demand from small households and young people trying to get on the housing ladder.</i>
3 bedroom	<i>63% would prefer new homes to be 3 bedroom which are in shorter supply than terraced housing.</i>
Larger (4 bed+)	<i>Only 5% wished to see 4 bedroom or larger homes. However a few commented that 4+ bedroom houses with garages gardens are necessary to provide choice for families.</i>
Apartments	<i>Only 3% preferred to see apartments although some commented that apartments may be a solution for over 55's to provide supported living for elderly people, and for young professional people who wish to commute. The importance of apartments being located on the right site and of a high standard of design (e.g., stone and slate) was stressed.</i>
Homes for the elderly	<i>82% thought there was a need for residential accommodation for the elderly but views differed on what type. Sheltered housing and supported living were preferred over residential homes.</i>
Garage(s)	<i>26% thought it important for garages to be provided with new housing.</i>
Conclusion / Summary	<p>Introductory Note:</p> <p>It is important that before drawing any conclusions on the responses to Questions 4, 5 and 6, it is important to note what policies in the Council's Core Strategy say on how much housing and what type of housing should be planned for across the borough.</p> <p>Policy C1 of the Core Strategy states, "We will provide sufficient land to deliver at least 400 net additional dwellings per year up to 2028. The majority of new homes are to be delivered in the south of the Borough. In the north of the Borough the Council will "deliver an overall scale and density of development that reflects the accessibility and character of the Pennine fringe. We will consider the sustainable development of greenfield sites within the urban area where it is demonstrated that: a. the development would have limited adverse impact on green infrastructure or amenity value in and around the site; and b. green infrastructure is, wherever possible, incorporated into the scheme.</p> <p>Policy C3 states that," In the north of the borough there will be a focus on providing a range of higher value housing to attract and retain residents. To do this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support lower density development if it delivers higher value dwellings of a type and size that are currently in short supply across the borough; and b. Limit higher density development (50 dwellings per hectare and above) to sites in the centre of Littleborough, close to transport interchanges, and along the canal corridor."

In terms of affordable housing, Policy C4 seeks affordable housing on all developments of 15 dwellings or more.

Whilst the above policies provide a clear indication that the scale of housing should be limited to what is appropriate to Littleborough's character, there is no clear guidance on the actual number of new homes required, or the desired mix of house types and tenures. Housing growth in Littleborough is necessary because the local population is increasing and the number of households being formed is increasing. Also, there is demand from outside Littleborough because it is seen as a desirable place to live. Littleborough's capacity to accommodate new housing is limited by a tight green belt boundary and the density of urban development which limits the number of available brownfield sites. Therefore housing numbers will inevitably be modest although that is not to say even a modest number of homes will have an impact on local roads and local facilities. The Neighbourhood Plan may not be able to dictate numbers and house types to any great extent but it could influence housing mix based on evidence of local housing need and it could also influence location by identifying sites or circumstances where housing would be appropriate, or not.

Summary of Responses:

It should be noted that the Question asks for people's preference but the answers are clearly not mutually exclusive (i.e., they do not indicate support for just one type over another) and therefore a number of types may be supported by a respondent.

A significant number commented that they did not want to see any housing growth as this would harm the semi-rural/village character of Littleborough and because the road, physical infrastructure and services are inadequate. However, the overwhelming majority of respondents acknowledge that some housing growth is necessary and that some older housing should be replaced. It was also acknowledged that even modest housing growth will require some improvements to local services (i.e., extra school places, open space, closer hospital or day surgery clinics) and physical infrastructure (e.g. sewer and drainage improvements).

High percentages of those who supported some new housing, thought a range of housing is needed (from 1 bedroom to 3 bedrooms). At present, evidence exists to show that demand exceeds supply for 1 and 2 bedroom housing, flats and bungalows and the responses bear this out. Respondents also appear concerned that 2 and 3 bed semi or detached family homes are becoming unaffordable for local residents. Affordable market housing was considered vital to meet demand from small households and young people trying to get on the housing ladder. There was a concern that because 2 and 3 bedroom properties were not affordable to young families and younger people, they may need to move away from Littleborough.

Whilst there much less support for larger (4+ bed) detached, some commented that Littleborough needs more high quality or higher value housing to balance the supply with small terraced housing and to bring higher income households, investment and quality development into the town.

A significant number of respondents commented that there was a need for over 55's accommodation (apartments and housing) and assisted living accommodation for the elderly (but not necessarily 'residential homes').

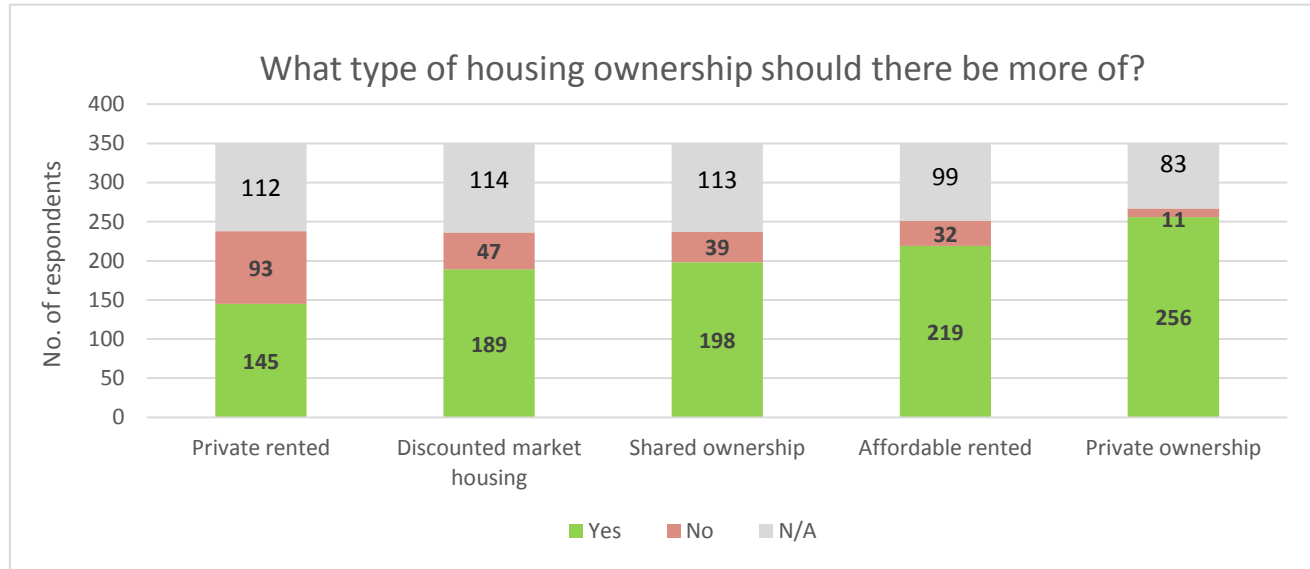
This suggests that in terms of house size, new building should generally comprise a mixture and that new housing needs to be accessible and affordable to meet new households and existing residents in Littleborough.

There was significant support for houses to be built with garages and sufficient parking in order to keep cars off the road.

A significant percentage wished to see new housing of a more traditional and local design using local materials. Some commented that the use of stone walls and slate roofs to reinforce local character should be a priority in accordance with the Town Design Statement.

There was concern over further housebuilding on certain sites, e.g., Hollingworth Road and Rakewood.

5. What sort of housing ownership would you prefer in Littleborough?



Shared ownership

56% would like to see shared ownership schemes are provided through housing associations. (A typical shared ownership scheme is where you buy a share of your home (25% to 75% of the home's value) and pay rent on the remaining share. You'll need to take out a mortgage to pay for your share of the home's purchase price.)

Discounted market housing

54% would like to see discounted market housing provided. (This is where properties are offered for sale to eligible purchasers at a discounted price of the full market value. For example, a £100,000 house with a 25% discount would be offered to eligible applicants for £75,000. This is not a shared ownership scheme and even though there is a discount on the sale price, the purchaser still owns 100% of the property. When you want to sell the property, you must do so on the same terms, which means you must sell it with the same level of discount you received and to someone who meets the criteria for affordable housing.)

Affordable rented

82% thought there should be more affordable rented properties. (This is a new more flexible form of social housing. Affordable rented homes can be made available to tenants at up to a maximum of 80% of market rent and allocated in the same way as social housing is at present. Landlords will have the freedom to offer Affordable Rent properties on flexible tenancies tailored to the housing needs of individual households.)

Private ownership

73% were keen to ensure new housing is built for private ownership (including shared ownership and discounted market housing).

Private rented

41% felt private rented properties (housing or flats rented from a private landlord) would continue to be needed in the future.

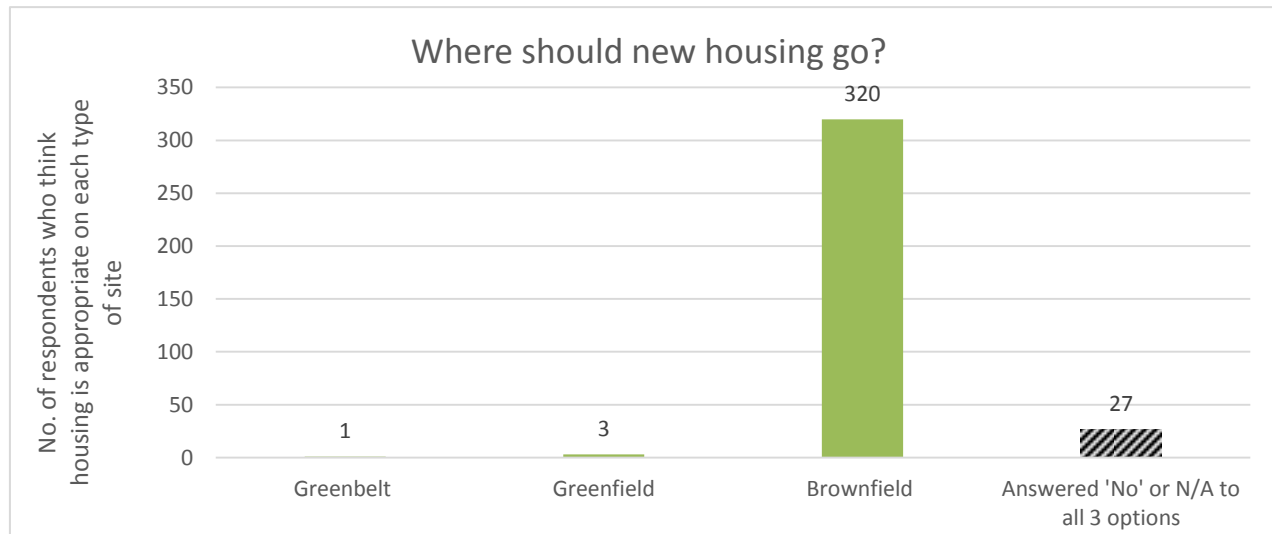
Conclusion / Summary

It is clear that respondents felt there was a need for a mix of housing ownership in order to meet the different of those looking for a future home. A key concern appears to be affordability and the need to ensure that home seekers get on the housing ladder.

Future Housing Need in the Borough has been assessed by Rochdale Council as part of its evidence base for the Local Plan. A Strategic Market Housing Assessment (SHMA) has been prepared to identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period. This addresses the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes).

However, the SMA does not provide a detailed breakdown for Littleborough and so there is limited information about what balance of housing ownership / tenure should be sought.

6. Where should any new housing go?



Brownfield sites (previously

91% of respondents thought new housing development should be restricted to 'brownfield' sites (i.e., areas of

developed)

land which have previously been developed, such as sites with existing vacant or partially demolished buildings and also cleared sites, which have not yet returned to a 'natural' state. (Brownfield sites may in some instances include buildings may be converted and reused, for instance where the building could be easily adapted or where there is a desire to conserve a building for its heritage or cultural importance.)

Some commented that there would be sufficient previously developed land to avoid having to use 'greenfield' sites and some felt that the redevelopment of too many previously developed sites for housing could overload the capacity of existing infrastructure. The need to ensure that not all 'brownfield' are developed for housing in order to create opportunities for employment and other use was also mentioned. There was also concern about the development of sites which may be contaminated.

Greenfield sites

Nearly all respondents objected to development on 'greenfield' sites.

Green Belt sites

74% did not wish to see new housing in the green belt, although few commented that 'brownfield' (previously developed) sites in the green belt might be acceptable, for example, to secure the future of existing rural buildings of character. One commented that individual dwellings may be acceptable to support the farming industry or existing rural businesses.

Conclusion / Summary

It is clear that there is a strong desire to protect the green belt from housing development, not just to maintain the specific functions of green belt, but also to avoid pressure on agriculture, rural enterprises and tourism and the natural rural environment. The comments reflect government and Core Strategy policy on green belt (Policy G4) and the need to focus development within the urban area and on previously developed sites.

However, some pressure for housing is likely on previously developed sites in the green belt, e.g., former mill sites. Some previously developed sites in the green belt contain unsightly or unused buildings where housing conversion or redevelopment might not undermine the function of the green belt and where development could contribute to landscape and recreational improvements. The Neighbourhood Plan could consider which previously developed green belt sites it may wish to identify as suitable and what requirements development should satisfy.

However, the Core Strategy allows greenfield development within the urban areas where there is no adverse impact on greenspace, or amenity and where land is suitable for housing. Therefore the Neighbourhood Plan needs to make clear which greenfield urban sites it is important to retain.

Some sites are outside the urban area but not green belt such as the Roch Valley between Littleborough and Rochdale. This open land is protected by Core Strategy Policy G5 except where there is evidence that the development is needed and that 'urban' brownfield and greenfield sites are not available to meet those

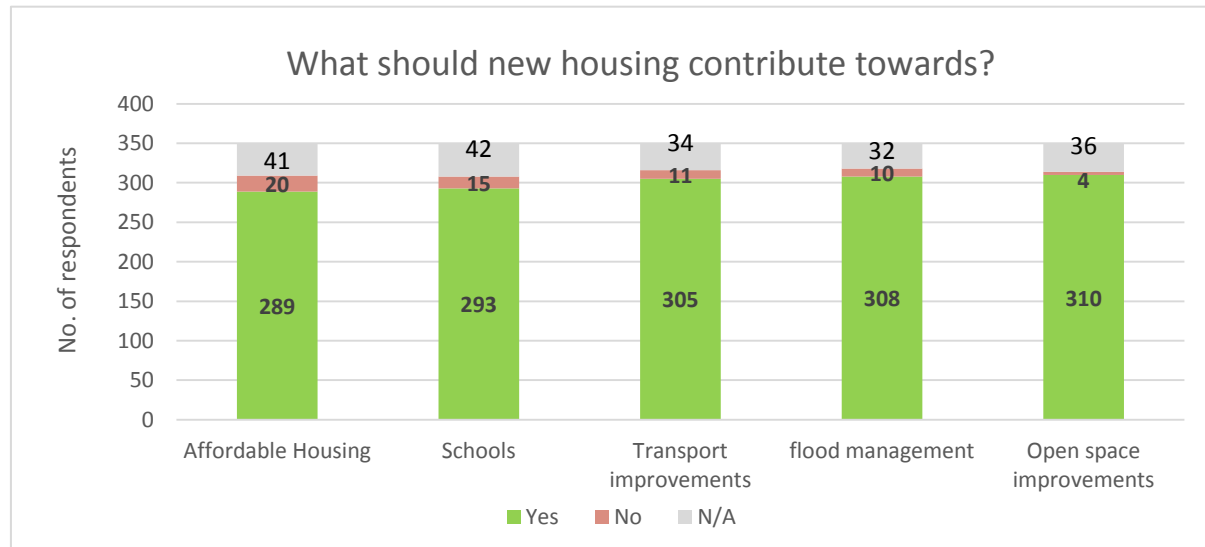
needs, and there would be no unacceptable impact on landscape, green infrastructure etc. The recent proposals for 110 dwellings south of New Road in the Roch Valley which have been strongly opposed by many local residents are likely to be followed by more proposals in other parts of the Roch Valley given the desirability of Littleborough as a housing location.

There was recognition also that not all previously developed sites would be suitable for housing and that the too much focus on using sites for housing could place pressure on roads and infrastructure and reduce opportunities for employment uses.

In conclusion, it is important for the Neighbourhood Plan to anticipate and assess brownfield sites for their potential for housing and other uses, e.g. employment development. Policies could identify sites, or circumstances where previously developed sites, either within the urban area or outside, could be redeveloped or converted for residential use.

The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) identifies sites with potential for housing across the borough. The Assessment identifies 'potential' sites in Littleborough (although 'potential' relates to physical suitability, availability and likely market interest; not necessarily the site's suitability in wider policy terms). The Neighbourhood Plan could use this information to explore the option of including housing allocations (key sites it wishes to see developed or regenerated for housing) or to include policy criteria for assessing applications for new housing development in Littleborough.

7. What infrastructure should new housing have to contribute towards?



Open Space Improvements

88% of respondents identified that new housing development should make a contribution to open space improvements. Marginally more respondents felt that open space was a higher priority than pursuing contributions to the other types of infrastructure (below) although no specific comments were made.

Affordable Housing

Nearly 82% stated that new housing development should make a contribution toward affordable housing provision. This reflects the views expressed in relation to Question 5 that new housing should comprise an element of affordable units for local residents.

Transport Improvements

87% of respondents stated that new housing development should make a contribution to transport improvements. Some respondents mentioned the need for contributions to tackle road congestion and to improve road safety whilst others wished to see developers contribute to improvements to public transport facilities rather than to road improvements aimed at increasing capacity for the car. Some thought improvements to public transport services and facilities were necessary to reduce commuting by car, to connect with Rochdale town centre and to improve connections with other towns and major facilities (e.g. hospital).

Schools

83% stated that new housing development should make a contribution toward provision of schools and education.

Flood Management

Approximately 88% of respondents stated that new housing development should make a contribution to flood management. One resident felt that 'Flood management should be in place anyway', an indication of the view that flood risk and alleviation should be addressed before housing is permitted.

Summary / Conclusion

It is clear from the high response rate and the high percentage of support for all the above categories that people feel developer contributions are important in order to secure all of the above to mitigate the impact of new housing and to ensure sustainable housing growth. All of the above will need early discussion with the Council before considering policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

With regard to contributions for open space, only larger new housing developments would be able to include new areas of open space. Smaller housing schemes should be expected to contribute towards improving the quality of existing open spaces in terms of their natural and recreational value in line with current planning policy. However, the Neighbourhood Plan could identify those areas of open space in need of improvements so that developer contributions can be targeted to reflect local priorities.

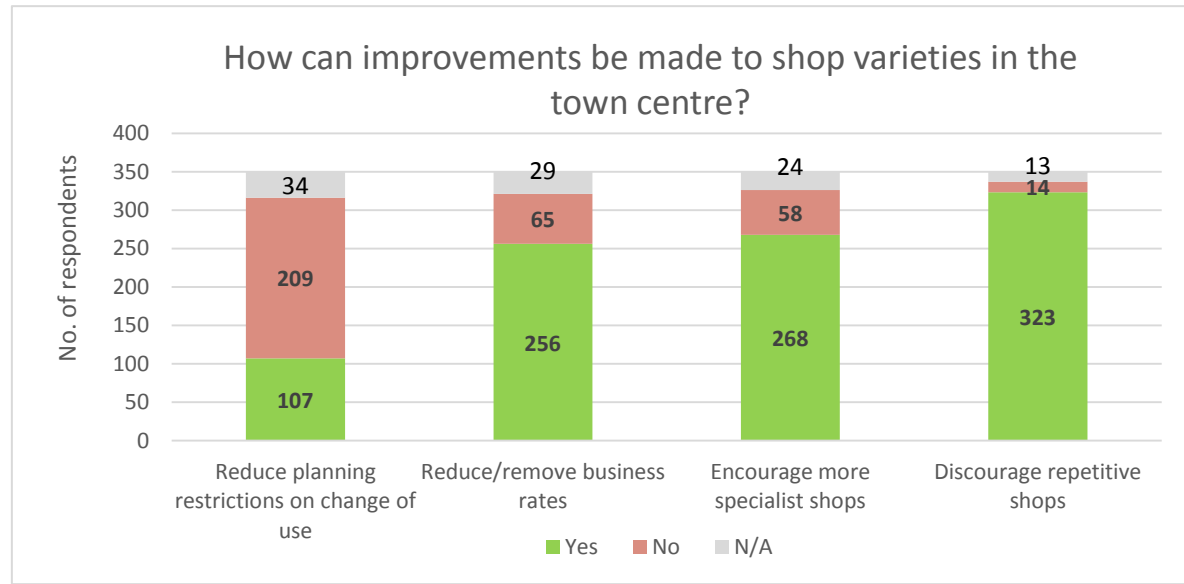
Developer contributions to transport improvements were strongly supported and the comments received raise the issue of how contributions should be split between highway and traffic management improvements and improvements to public transport facilities. Again, the Plan could set out priority projects for contributions which can be linked in some way to new development.

The responses clearly showed some concern about the impact of new housing on school facilities and school places. New housing will clearly have implications for future school places and the co-ordination of planned housing growth and the future school places will require a conversation with the Council.

With regard to flood management, it is noted that whilst the overall planning of flood defenses is not the responsibility of developers, flood risk assessment and some flood alleviation measures are. Through contributions, small developments can collectively contribute to improving flood defenses for the benefit of all residents of Littleborough.

In addition, other types of infrastructure were mentioned by some respondents. Some identified contributions could be required for healthcare provision i.e., doctors and dentists since housing growth will increase pressure on existing healthcare facilities. Respondents also pointed out that some health facilities were too far to reach on public transport and therefore new facilities were needed or public transport services improved. Discussion will be necessary with health agencies and providers.

8. How can improvements be made to shop varieties in town centre?



Reduce planning restrictions on changes of use

Although 59% did not support the removal of planning restrictions for changes of use, 30% supported the principle of removing restrictions where specific uses are sought. Some wished to see more regulation in order to limit the number of hot food takeaways and some other repetitive shops (see below).

Encourage more specialist shops

76% wanted to see more specialist shops. It was felt that specialist shops introduce interest and increase attractiveness for residents and visitors. Responses were vague on what specific specialist shops are sought although specialist 'food' establishments were mentioned, and shops which improve the 'visitor' experience. One commented that there was lack of shops which catered for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Others that wished to encourage more basic shops (e.g. greengrocers) rather than shops selling services or specialist shops aimed at visitors.

Discourage repetitive shops

92% wished to see repetitive shops discouraged, such as hot food takeaways and charity shops and hairdressers. Others wanted to discourage betting shops and pawn shops. There was significant opposition to hot food takeaways as opposed to cafes because of their appearance and concern about litter and antisocial behaviour.

Reduce / remove business rates

73% thought that reduced business rates would attract more business and contribute towards a more viable

and successful shopping centre.

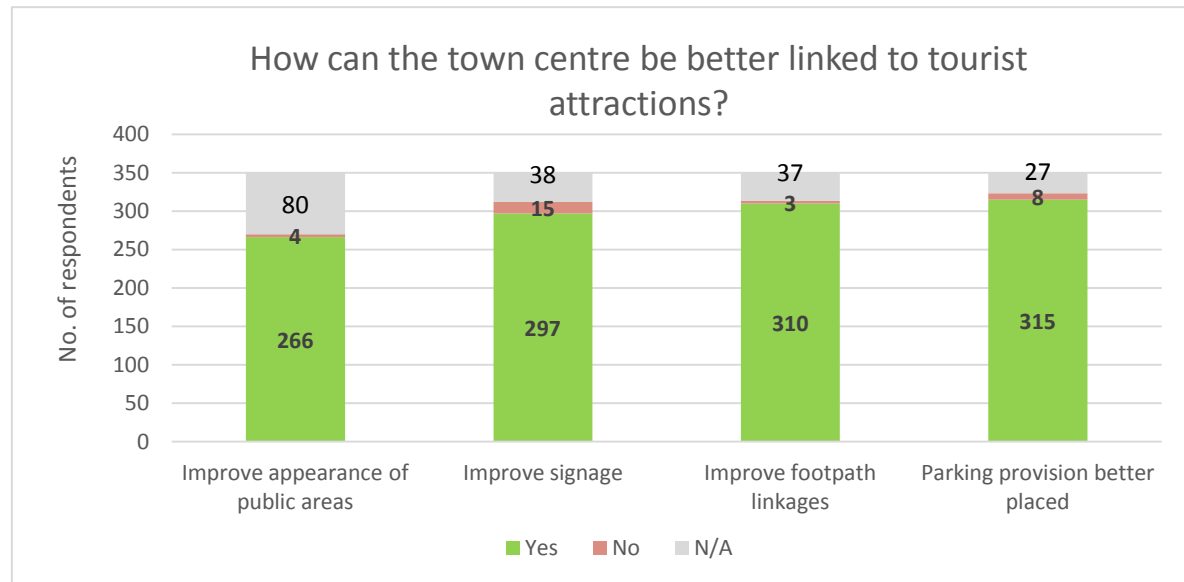
Conclusion / Summary

The Rochdale Core Strategy (Policy E1/L) aims to promote the role of Littleborough town centre as a key service centre and as a centre for Pennine Edge tourism although it expects Rochdale to meet residents' wider shopping needs. Its policies also support a greater variety of shops and businesses, and specialist shops to increase its attractiveness to visitors. The Neighbourhood Plan does not need to duplicate this policy, but it could potentially include more detail.

The responses show that there is a desire to raise the profile of the town centre to increase its attractiveness and usage for both residents and visitors and create a quality shopping experience.

It is clear that residents are proud of their town centre and support a dual role of providing quality local convenience shops and more specialist shops to benefit residents and visitors. However, there is a lack of appreciation that, in planning terms, it is not possible to control changes from one shop type to another where they fall within the governments 'Use Class A1'. A food shop, for example, could change to a hairdressers, clothes shop or charity shop without requiring permission. However, a change from a shop to a cafe, hot food takeaway, or office would require permission. It is possible to a degree for planning policies to encourage or discourage certain changes of use having regard to their impact on adjoining uses and the shopping centre as a whole. The key concern appears to be that within the shopping core, there should not be an overconcentration of non A1 uses, especially where they interrupt the shopping frontage, including hot food takeaways. New borough-wide planning policy has been introduced by Rochdale Council to control hot food takeaways although the Neighbourhood Plan could look at providing more local detail and interpretation.

9. How can the town centre be better linked to tourism attractions?



Improve footpath linkages

88% of respondents thought footpath linkages should be improved. Some footpaths are considered to be badly maintained and in need of improvement although these were not named. One commented that footpath and cycle routes should be segregated from traffic where possible. Linkages to and from Hollingworth Lake and the Ebor gallery area (William Street) were mentioned. Footpath links to Hollingworth Lake could be supplemented by horse drawn vehicles or a special bus services at certain times. Signage of routes is seen to be important also (see below).

Parking provision better placed

89% thought parking provision could be better placed to serve the town centre and tourist facilities. There is a view that parking provision in the town centre is already inadequate and will not be able to service an increase in visitor numbers. One respondent suggested that parking capacity near the station should be increased. A suggestion was made to build a 2 storey car park; this would be unobtrusive as the land is low lying. Few other suggestions were made concerning where car parking should be increased / located.

Improve appearance of public areas

76% thought it was important to improve the appearance of public areas. It was suggested that the area between the rail station and the canal could be a hub for tourists if developed and managed well. This could incorporate cafes, toilets, play areas, bus stop, walking and cycling shop, indoor and outdoor seating. Other public areas were not specifically mentioned in the comments.

Improve signage

85% thought signage should be improved to direct visitors from the centre to attractions and to provide better interpretation. Signage of car parks is important to assist traffic flows. One commented that many tourists are unaware of car parks or places of interest until they are pointed out. Signposting of key routes should be improved, e.g. the route between Hollingworth Lake Visitors' Centre and the town centre via Ealees and the canal.

One commented that there was some signage clutter and that unnecessary signage could be reduced in some areas, e.g. approaching the town centre from Blackstone Edge.

Conclusion / Summary

Core Strategy E1/L also proposes to promote linkages, through footpaths, bridleways and public realm improvements, with Hollingworth Lake, Watergrove and the Ogden reservoirs and the Rochdale Canal to create a critical mass of visitor attractions. The Questionnaire seeks to explore how linkages could be improved as there is a concern that the town centre does not currently connect well or benefit well from local tourism attractions. No clear proposals have been developed and the Neighbourhood Plan could explore potential.

All of the measures were supported by a high number of respondents.

Better segregated footpath and cycle linkages are clearly seen to be critical to ensure sustainable tourism and travel. The most obvious focus for improvements is routes which connect the centre, the canal and Hollingworth Lake. Surprisingly, no mention was made of improving routes linking the centre with strategic routes to the north e.g. along the canal Pennine Gateway, or into the Roch Valley to the south.

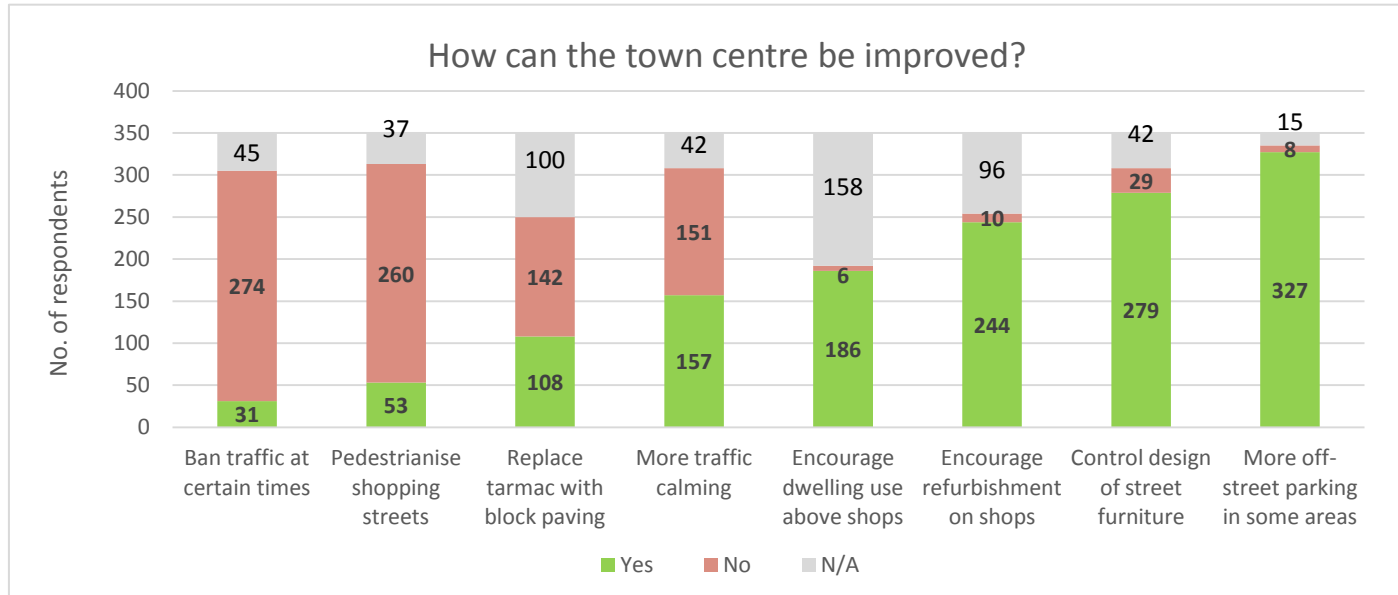
Suitably placed car parks were considered important to encourage visitors to use the centre and other countryside attractions. Opportunities for extra parking capacity should be considered both in and on the edge of the centre, and at the attractions themselves.

Opportunities for improving parking, pedestrian routes, cycle routes and signage need to be considered further and the preparation of 'strategies' would seem sensible in order to identify what is needed and how they can be provided and co-ordinated. Securing improved and new cycle routes linking the town centre and attractions would seem an obvious focus since there is already demand and this will benefit residents, visitors and is consistent with the desire to promote 'sustainable' tourism. New developments could contribute towards improvements as appropriate.

One respondent suggested that a 'brand' for the village would help orientate people around the town and raise civic pride. It may well be worth exploring branding distinct areas to distinguish their function and character e.g. 'Lakeside' (Hollingworth Lake), Durn, Ealees, Roch Valley, Harehill, etc.. Colour coded signage and parking could assist.

It would be useful to further explore the scope for improved linkages but this will require some additional resources which the Forum and the Council may not be able to provide in the short term.

10) How can the town centre be improved?



More traffic calming

Opinion on traffic calming was split with 45% supporting more traffic calming and 43% opposing it.

There were a couple of suggestions for where traffic calming would be appropriate, e.g. along Featherstall Rd/Church St., and Hare Hill Road.

Some disliked road humps and suggested speed restrictions instead e.g. Church Street (20mph) or the use of surfaces other than tarmac to distinguish sections of highway.

Ban traffic at certain times

78% of respondents stated that they did not think banning traffic at certain times would improve the town centre with only 3% of respondents in favour, making this the least popular of the options listed.

Those who supported a partial ban mentioned Hare Hill Road and the exclusion of heavy commercial traffic from shopping streets in the centre.

Some respondents thought banning traffic would harm the viability of local shops and making traffic circulation in the centre difficult, particularly the route north along Hare Hill Road to Shore as other alternative routes are not practicable.

Pedestrianise shopping streets

74% disagreed with the further pedestrianisation of shopping streets.

A number of respondents commented that pedestrianisation would require additional nearby parking and

harm retail businesses. Another commented that access and improved parking for disabled drivers and blue badge holders was necessary.

The use of paving or coloured road surfaces to calm traffic and delineate pedestrian priority.

More off-street parking in some areas

93% wanted to see more off-street parking in the centre, although there was some recognition that opportunities were limited. One respondent suggested that additional off street parking would detract from the character of the town centre. Another suggested that more streets on the edge of the centre should be restricted to residents-only parking only and that existing parking arrangements could be improved, possibly to increase capacity.

Replace tarmac with block paving

79% thought that improvements to highway surfaces (footpaths and roads) would help to improve the look and operation of the town centre. However, the design and colour of block paving would be critical other surface types, e.g. cobbles may be more appropriate.

Encourage dwelling use above shops

69% agreed that residential use above shops in the centre should be encouraged, but no specific comments were made.

Encourage refurbishment of shops

60% agreed that the refurbishment of shops would help to improve the centre, but there were no specific comments on what form this should take, where and how it can be achieved.

Control design of street furniture

53% wanted to see careful control over the design of street furniture in the area possibly reflecting a dissatisfaction with the style of current street furniture (clash of style or not consistent with the character of the buildings/surroundings), or the intrusion of street apparatus e.g. telecommunications boxes etc. and street signage.

'Greening' of the centre i.e. the use of trees, shrubs and flowers was also considered important and would need careful integration with other street improvements.

Summary / Conclusion

Previous consultations have revealed that residents are unhappy with traffic levels, traffic management, the condition of some roads and footpaths, and intrusive on street parking. Residents have also complained that shopping choice and the street environment should be improved.

The responses show that it is clear that whilst people may have big issues with the level of traffic in the town centre, many are loathe to support pedestrianisation or even a partial ban as this could reduce access, harm retail businesses and would necessitate more off-street parking.

Nevertheless, some additional off-street parking was considered necessary to reduce traffic pedestrian conflict and to improve the centre's environment.

The refurbishment of more retail premises was supported, indicating that some premises were considered to be of poor fabric or in need of maintenance. In fact there are few empty properties and the run down appearance of some properties appears due to the tertiary or low level nature of the business use, or the lack of use of upper floors. There is insufficient information at present on the level of occupation of upper floors and their potential for housing or other uses.

Greater control of street furniture is seen as important to reinforce street character and establish continuity of approach. More greening was also seen to be desirable.

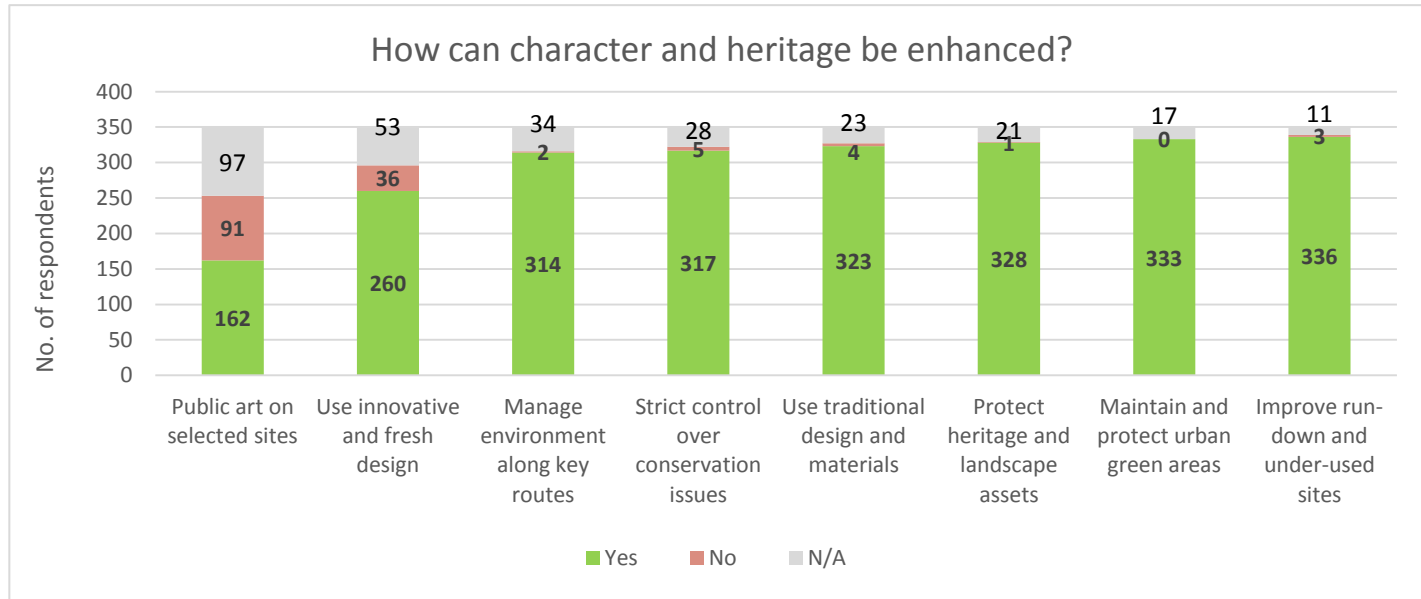
The appearance of retail frontages has much to do with the design of new shop fronts or shop front alterations, together with signage. The Plan provides an opportunity to apply existing design standards more stringently or to introduce new rules which are workable and which will improve frontages over time.

Other suggestions for improving the town centre were:

- New public toilets (especially if it is the intention to attract more visitors).
- A new cinema or theatre.
- More facilities for cyclists e.g. bike, parking and storage, hire etc. in order to encourage greener transport options and reduce the number of cars in shopping areas.

Improvements of the types discussed above will require investment both from the Council and from developers and businesses. Given the limited resources likely to be available within the short to medium term, improvements are likely to be small scale and targeted. However, the Forum could choose to explore a parking and/or traffic management 'strategy' with the Council and it could explore design guidance on shop fronts, signage and street furniture, specific to Littleborough (consistent with the Council's excellent Urban Design Guide and the existing Town Design Statement).

11) How can character and heritage be enhanced?



Strict control over conservation issues

90% supported strict conservation controls in order to maintain the special character of Littleborough and its built heritage. However some qualified the need for strict planning controls by pointing out that if controls were too strict, this would prevent positive change and good innovative modern design.

Use traditional design and materials

92% supported the use of traditional design and materials wherever possible.

Use innovative and fresh design

Despite the strong support for traditional design and the use of traditional materials, 74% also supported 'innovative and fresh design' in new development where it sympathetic to the area and does not undermine 'traditional' character. For example, modern buildings can incorporate stone and slate.

Maintain and protect urban green areas

95% felt that it was important to maintain and protect urban green spaces in order to enhance character and heritage. No particular examples or suggestions were given.

Protect heritage and landscape assets

93% want to protect Littleborough's built heritage (i.e., listed buildings, historical structures and ancient monuments, etc) and its townscape/landscapes features in order to maintain local character. Again, no specific suggestions or examples were given.

Improve run-down and under-

A high percentage (96%) thought run down and underused sites should be targeted for regeneration and

used sites

improvement. No specific sites were mentioned although sites are suggestions under Question 19.

Manage environment along key routes

89% were keen to see more environmental improvements along key routes and corridors, but again no specific routes or corridors were mentioned.

Public art on selected sites

A smaller percentage (46%) supported public art on selected sites. Whilst some thought public art had a value in commemorating historic events and associations and enhancing character, others thought that quality and appropriateness was difficult to guarantee and that money may be better spent on other environmental improvements and landscaping.

Summary / Conclusion

It is perceived by many that the best character and heritage of Littleborough has been and is being eroded. Littleborough's built heritage is important not only to local residents and businesses but to visitors keen to enjoy the area, its historic landscapes, features and countryside. The high level of support for all measures is not surprising as they are all positive and uncontroversial. Whilst there was strong support for strict planning controls to protect buildings and features of heritage value and to ensure the new development enhanced local character, a significant proportion were happy to support innovative a fresh design. However, respondents were keen to see good use of using traditional materials and design features.

Whilst the protection of urban greenspace and areas of heritage value was supported, few suggestions were made on which areas were of highest value or what areas should have priority for improvement.

Similarly, few comments indicated which run down sites should be regenerated and improved, or which key routes should be the focus of improvements, although potential is explored under Question 19.

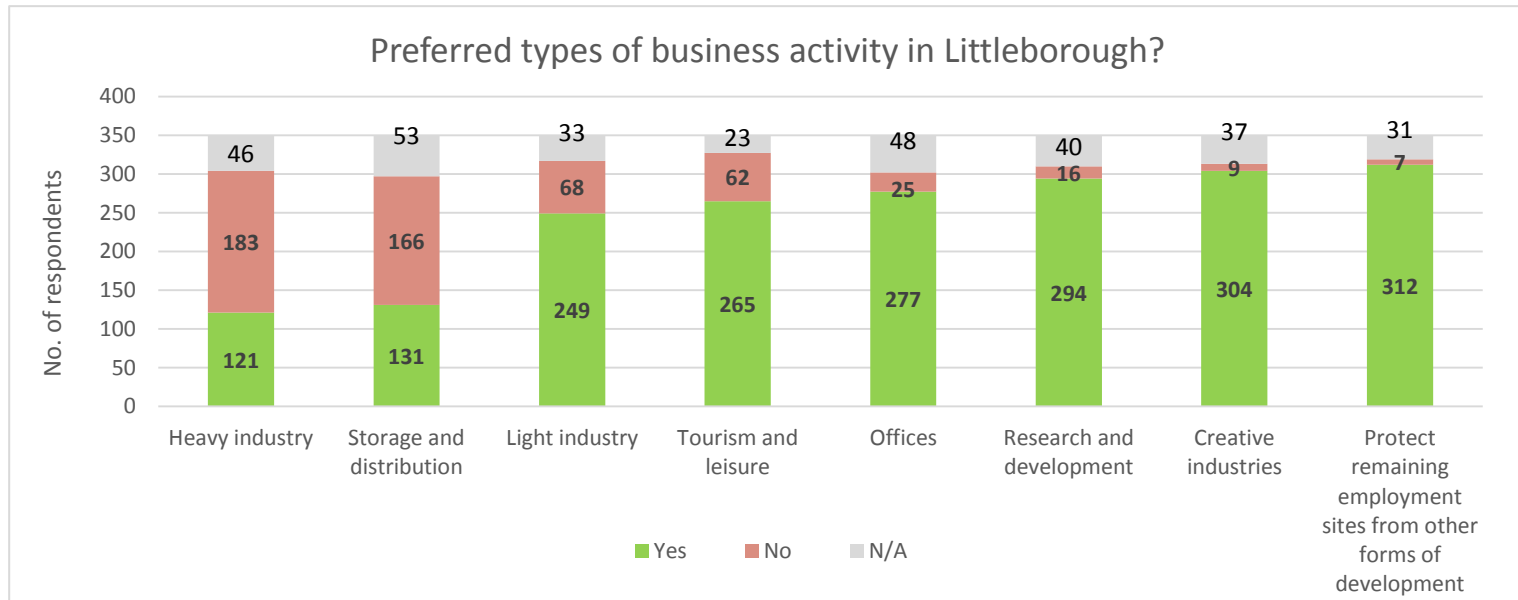
There was lukewarm support for public art as a means of enhancing local character.

The Council's Core Strategy Policy P1 proposes specific measures relating to Littleborough:

- Protecting and enhancing cultural landscapes around Littleborough and Hollingworth Lake;
- Enhancing conservation areas in the town centre and Rock Nook/ Summit.

However, a clearer focus on how the built and natural heritage of Littleborough could be enhanced and how new development should be required to enhance and reinforce local character is needed. Design guidance in the form of the Council's Urban Design Guidance and the Town Design Statement already exists but ideas or opportunities for action could be explored in the Neighbourhood Plan.

12. Preferred types of business activities in Littleborough?



Protect remaining employment sites from other forms of development 89% of respondents wished to see current employment sites protected from housing and other development.

Offices 79% thought office development was appropriate in Littleborough and would increase employment opportunities. Some suggested offices in scale with the surroundings can be attractive if well designed.

Light industry 71% supported light industry in appropriate areas.

Heavy industry 52% did not support more heavy industry (e.g. manufacturing). Whilst some were keen to support existing manufacturing businesses in existing employment zones (separated from the centre and housing) others were concerned that the heavy commercial traffic associated with these industries is unsuitable for Littleborough's roads.

Storage and distribution 47% were opposed to storage and distribution uses. Whilst 37% stated support, it is likely that this relates to existing businesses in current employment zones. Some commented that there was enough storage and distribution and an increase would attract more large vehicles. New business of this type would require large

sites which are not available in Littleborough.

Creative industries

87% supported new 'creative industries' such as advertising, design, media and art based businesses.

Tourism and leisure

75% supported tourism development and investment as this could increase the range and number of jobs available. However, some were concerned about the potential impact of visitors and visitor traffic. Some commented that investment in tourism and leisure and sport facilities benefited the town as well as increasing the range of employment.

Research and development

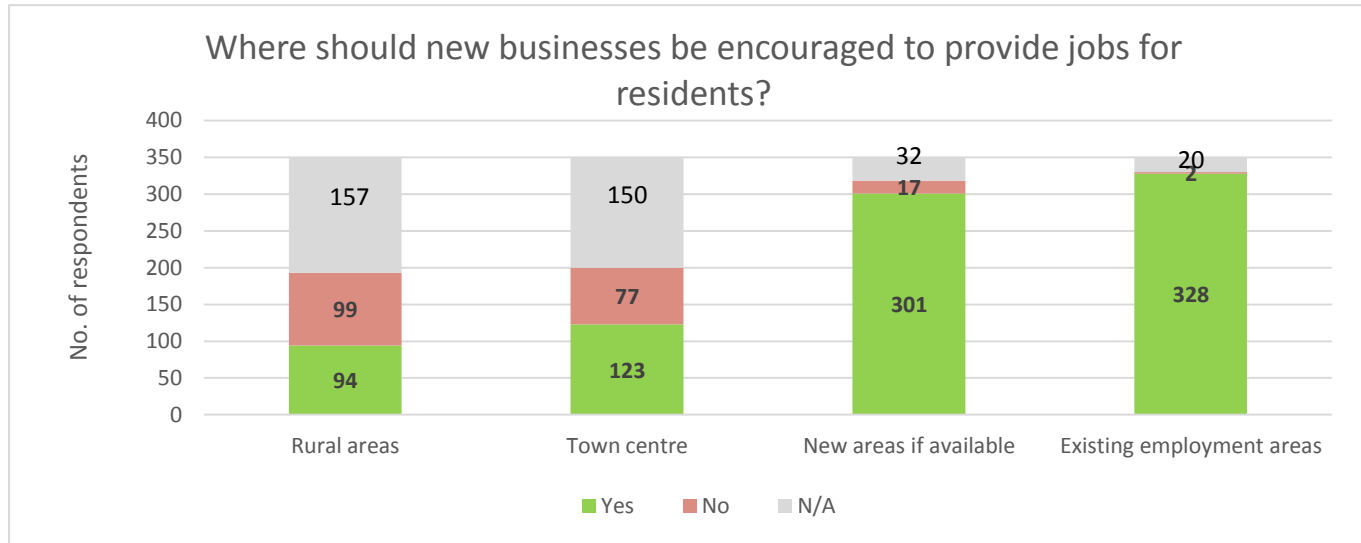
84% supported research and development businesses. There are few such businesses in the Littleborough area and although few commented on this option it assumed that support is based on the potential to attract, professional, better paid jobs.

Conclusion / Summary

The Council's Core Strategy (Policy E2.2) proposes that the scale of employment and commercial development in Littleborough should be appropriate to the accessibility and character of the town does and it not seek to allocate further land for employment uses (Class B1- B8). Some businesses have chosen to locate to better quality and more motorway accessible sites which Littleborough can't offer. Whilst existing planning policies protect existing designated local employment areas, some other employment sites will continue to come under pressure for housing development. This may be desirable where business uses detract from adjoining housing.

It seems clear that respondents were keen to protect existing jobs and existing employment areas. There is a clear view emerging from responses to several questions that there is little desire to see Littleborough become a dormitory town. A strong local employment base is seen as important for the character of the town, its local population and to reduce the need for commuting outside. There was little support for new manufacturing industries and warehousing and distribution because of their physical and traffic impacts. Some commented that the road infrastructure was not adequate to support existing heavy commercial vehicles. These views reflect the approach in the Council's Core Strategy. Respondents seemed keen to expand the current range of employment uses though by encouraging small scale office developments, tourism attractions and small businesses which support tourism, creative industries (which could fit with the town's tourism ambitions), and research and development businesses. Opportunities to do this would appear to be confined to existing buildings which it is desirable to re-use and regenerate. Some commented that small shops and a strong centre are vitally important to retain and generate new jobs.

13. Where should new businesses be encouraged to provide jobs for residents?



Existing employment areas

93% thought most businesses should be based in the main existing employment areas and away from residential and sensitive areas.

Town Centre

35% wanted to see employment focussed in the town centre but thought these should be primarily retail based.

New areas if available

86% thought that opportunities for new business and new employment should be explored outside existing employment areas and the town centre. Some commented that some existing employment uses adjoin housing or sensitive areas and impact negatively on those uses.

Rural Areas

Only 26% thought that some new businesses would be appropriate in rural areas in addition to traditional rural uses. New uses in rural areas should support tourism and agriculture e.g. leisure uses, and tourist facilities such as overnight accommodation. Some commented that strict controls would be needed to ensure rural business benefit those areas as well as provide jobs.

Conclusion / Summary

The majority of respondents want to restrict major industrial uses to existing designated employment areas. However, there is a clear desire to broaden the range of employment uses to provide new jobs in order to prevent over-reliance on, or to replace manufacturing, to attract new skills, and to reflect the tourism and 'eco'-aspirations of the town.

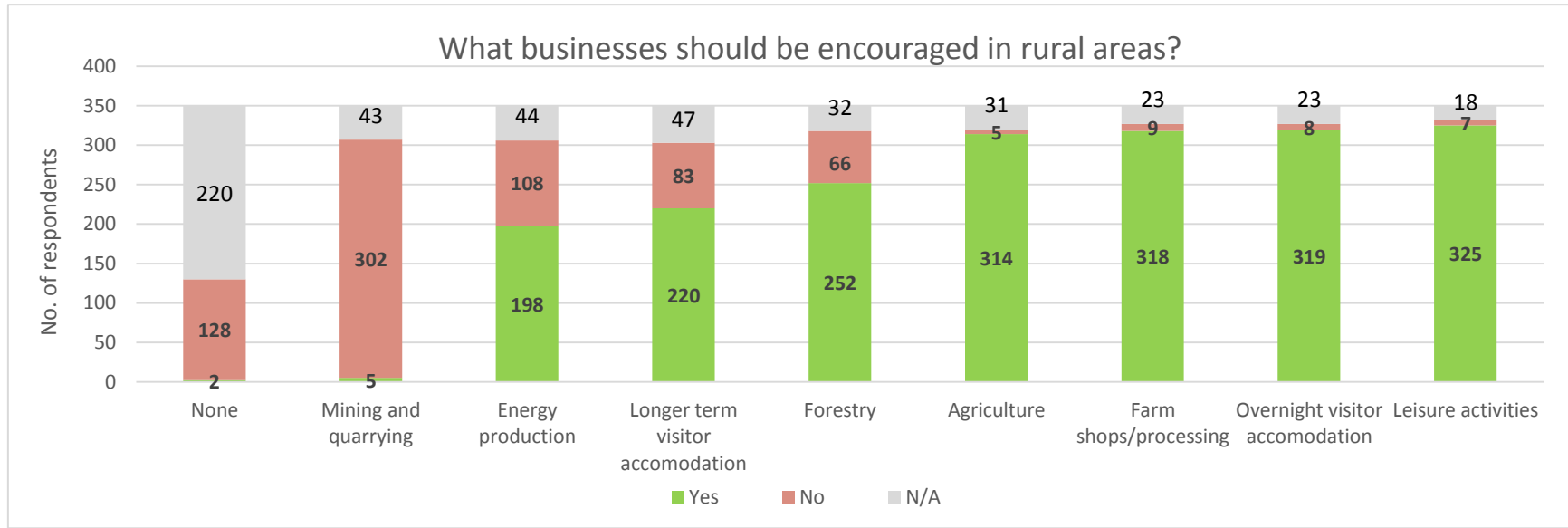
Scope for allocating or defining land for new employment uses is limited and in any event new employment allocations will be contrary to the Core Strategy. Therefore, new appropriate employment / business uses will for the most part need to be restricted to existing employment designations or existing or former industrial buildings. Buildings outside the urban boundary may have potential e.g. for creative industries or research and development but demand is likely to be very limited, there may be conflict with green belt policy and other uses such as housing may be more viable.

In rural areas though, there is a strong desire to restrict rural business to those which support agriculture, leisure and tourism and which help to maintain the rural landscape. Opportunities for overnight accommodation, leisure and sporting activities, and renewable energy developments will require specialist investigation.

Some commented that some existing employment uses are on small or inappropriately located sites and impact negatively on adjoining housing or sensitive areas. An issue for the plan is how to tackle these sites and possibly encourage appropriate alternative uses.

The town centre was seen as a suitable location for new businesses provided they support its retail function and are appropriate to the character of the centre and surrounding housing. The capacity of the centre for job growth seems small although opportunities should be explored office uses, and uses which support the visitor experience.

14. What businesses should be encouraged in rural areas?



Farm shops/processing

90% supported farming activities such as processing local farm products and selling farm produce. Comments acknowledge the need to support local farmers by allowing appropriate farm diversification.

Overnight visitor accommodation

91% wished to see more overnight accommodation in rural areas.

Longer term visitor accommodation

63% wished to encourage visitor accommodation for tourists and businesses, possibly hotels incorporating leisure and conference facilities.

Energy production

56% thought renewable energy should be encouraged e.g. solar and hydro power but some commented that further wind farms and wind turbines could harm the landscape and threaten the peat bogs and wildlife.

Mining and quarrying

Only 1% supported mining and quarrying although no specific reasons were put forward.

Agriculture

89% wished to encourage agriculture. The need to support local farming was acknowledged and farm diversification was encouraged including, renewable energy, tourism and leisure, farm shops, overnight accommodation etc.

Forestry *72% were supportive of forestry as a rural enterprise, a source of bio fuel and a means of enhancing tree cover and the local landscape.*

Leisure activities *93% supported commercial leisure activities in rural areas. However, there was some concern that whilst these would attract visitors and tourists, some activities would be inappropriate due to noise, light and sound pollution.*

None *Only 2 respondents did not support new rural businesses.*

Conclusion / Summary Traditional rural economic activities such as agriculture, mining and forestry are not a major source of employment and the majority of farm holdings within the borough are registered small holdings of less than 20 hectares. Farming therefore tends to be a part time, low income occupation. There is overwhelming support for encouraging more rural business provided they assist farming and help to maintain the local landscape. Forestry and farm diversification (e.g., farm shops) was supported and energy production that does not harm the landscape was also supported. Commercial tourism and leisure business were supported, and specifically all kinds of overnight accommodation. Tourism attractions would attract investment in other business and jobs.

There was concern that rural businesses should not harm the local landscape and the town's setting as this would detract from its tourism potential.

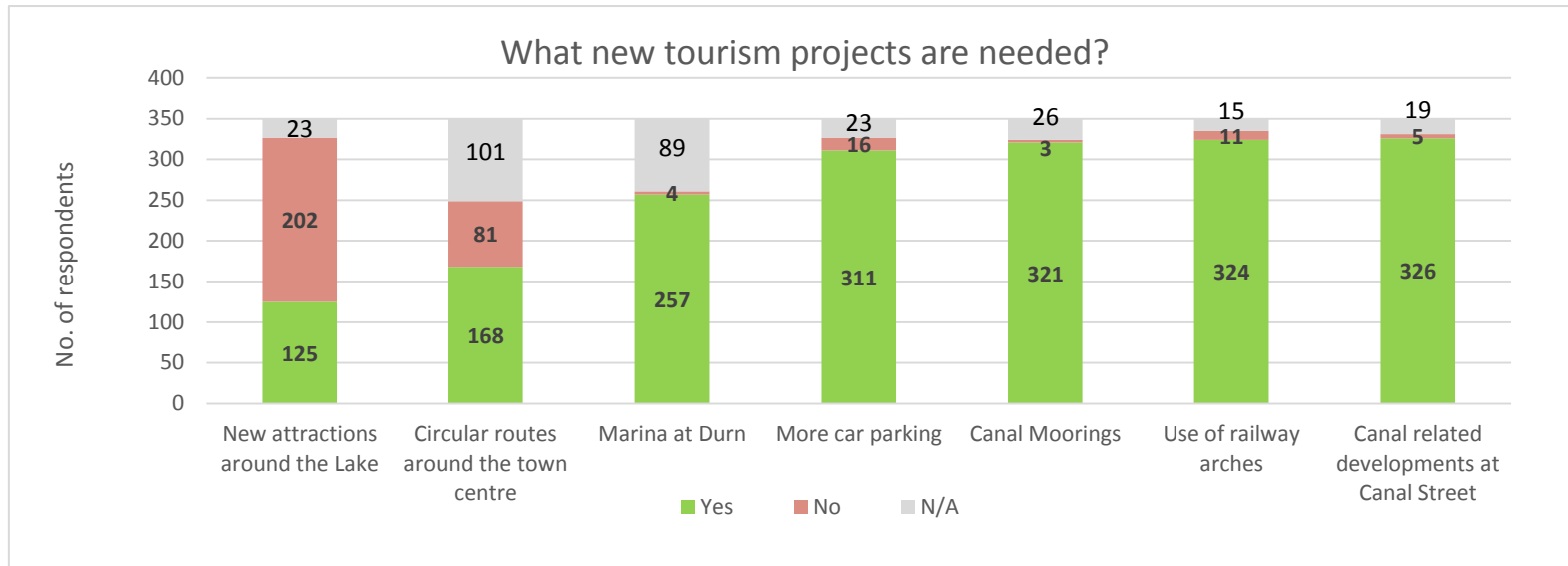
There are clearly opportunities for businesses based on food and drink, tourism and hospitality and leisure, which could utilise assets such as long distance walks (e.g. Pennine Way and Bridleway), biodiversity, cultural heritage and accessible recreational facilities and assets. Other potential could include professional and creative industries and digital, information and communications technology (ICT).

Existing planning policies in the Core Strategy and UDP seek to strengthen and diversify the rural economy and to increase rural employment although there may be an opportunity for the Neighbourhood Plan to include an additional, local level of policy. However, employment and green belt policies particularly will severely limit new built development for business use but there will be opportunities to convert and adapt existing rural buildings e.g. redundant farm buildings and mills. Of course, such buildings will continue to come under pressure for residential uses rather than business uses. The Plan could therefore explore the possibility of identifying areas or large rural buildings where a specific use or range of uses would be permitted.

Whilst more overnight accommodation was considered necessary to support the visitor economy, there is limited information about what specific types of accommodation should be encouraged, and how.

In conclusion, a thriving rural economy can help to maintain the rural landscape and therefore new uses for land and buildings should seek to assist the management of the countryside for its agricultural and landscape value. The Neighbourhood Plan needs to engage with organisations such as Pennine Edge Forest and Pennine Prospects to identify opportunities for creating business that regenerate and enhance the rural landscape.

15. What new tourism projects are needed?



More car parking

89% thought more and better parking was essential to support tourism in the town. The old gas works site off Hare Hill Road was suggested as a potential car park. In response to other questions, it was suggested that additional parking could be provided in and around the station, Canal Street and at Hollingworth Lake.

New attractions round the Lake

57% did not wish to see more attractions around Hollingworth Lake, whilst 36% did. Some respondents felt that the pressure of more visitors and more visitor traffic would harm the character of the area. Some commented that there were sufficient places to eat and drink and additional takeaways should not be permitted.

Of those who supported new attractions, no one made specific suggestions about what type of attractions should be considered except for a dedicated events area for funfairs and festivals and arts and heritage based events.

A significant number felt that accessibility to the lakeside should be improved. Several commented on the need for improved access and parking. Some suggested a bus shuttle from the station, footpath/cycleway improvements.

Circular routes around the town centre

48% thought that circular routes linking the centre with attractions would assist tourism.

Marina at Durn

73% supported a marina at Durn.

Canal moorings

91% wanted to see more canal moorings to support boating on the canal and as the key to improving the tourism potential of the canal.

Use of Railway Arches

92% wished to see the railway arches used and developed as an attraction but thought that more parking nearby would be required.

Canal related developments at Canal St.

93% thought Canal Street was an appropriate area for visitor and leisure activity.

Conclusion / Summary

There is potential to boost visitor numbers and to establish Littleborough as the 'Gateway to the Pennines'. However there needs to be clarity about what the key projects should be. Respondents have made clear that the scale of tourism should not overwhelm the character of Littleborough and harm those assets that makes it attractive to visitors.

Many respondents saw additional car parking as vital to encourage tourism and visitors. However, suggestions were limited to the old gasworks site which many respondents wished to see protected as important urban open space. Other alternatives will need to be explored. The issue of how parking is used was also raised as an issue as there is currently conflict between short term resident parking and longer term visitor and commuter parking.

Opinions were split on whether Hollingworth Lake should be the focus of new visitor attractions. Whilst some felt the area could not withstand more visitor activity without the area being harmed, others thought there was some potential provided attractions were of the right type and access and parking improvements were secured. Respondents in both camps felt that small scale improvements e.g., furniture, toilets, pedestrian routes etc. and improved routes to the town centre to integrate the Lake and the centre were necessary.

There was strong support for progressing other already identified tourism opportunities at Durn and the

Railway Arches.

Circular routes around the town which link key areas of countryside and strategic routes like the Pennine Bridleway have already been identified by the Council. However, the Plan could explore which routes should be prioritised and improved, and how those improvements could be secured.

The need to secure more canal mooring facilities was overwhelmingly supported. The canal is seen as an underused asset due to the limited boat through-traffic and lack of facilities for boaters. The potential at Durn is clear but there may be potential on other stretches of the canal. Moorings can be secured through canalside developments either as part of a development or as a financial contribution. However, scope for securing mooring facilities and increasing boat numbers will be dependent upon securing investment in the waterway itself. The extent of the site at Durn could be reviewed as a marina could extend into the green belt but issues like land assembly, ancillary buildings and vehicular access will need more work.

There is great support for sympathetically developing the Railway Arches to accommodate shops, cafe's and other uses which could add to Littleborough's attraction. Whilst Durn and the Arches have already been identified in the Council's UDP, the Neighbourhood Plan could also identify, update and promote them.

Arts and heritage based tourism opportunities were mentioned as suitable for canalside, lakeside and town centre based sites. 'Arts and crafts and 'water' based themes seem to stand out. 'Water' is an important theme (the Canal, river Roch, Hollingworth Lake and reservoirs) and tourism initiatives that promote and link these attractions could be a focus for the Plan.

Some respondents suggested tourism projects not on the list. These included:

- Rochdale station improvements to incorporate visitor information office and heritage cafe;
- Opportunities at the Canal Bridges and Canal Street;
- Improved links between the town centre and Hollingworth Lake; and
- Better sports facilities for the benefit of visitors and residents.

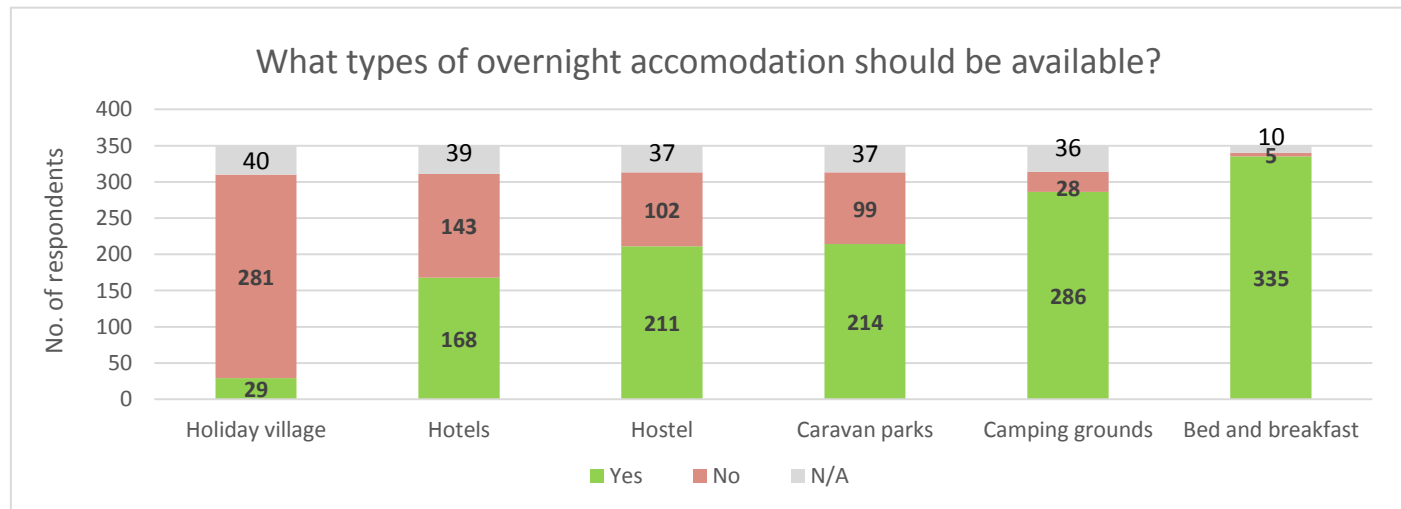
Better links between the centre, the canal and Hollingworth Lake are critical to tourism success and the plan could explore off-road pedestrian and cycle links and facilities along the Hollingworth Road corridor and how developer contributions could be utilised.

No respondents commented on ideas for new waterside development at Hollingworth Lake (e.g. replacement of the existing boathouse and better visitor facilities) or additional car parking at the Lake and Smithybridge, e.g. at the rail station.

The Neighbourhood Plan could include policies to promote and control proposals for new tourism projects but they will need to be based on more information about what is achievable. Further specialist advice would

be helpful to investigate the above opportunities further and to market and promote them. This would also require close working between consultants, the Forum and the Council, and other relevant organisations.

16. What types of overnight accommodation should be available?



Caravan parks

61% of respondents thought caravan parks would provide appropriate accommodation although it is not clear what level of additional accommodation would be supported. 28% disagreed and this could have much to do with concern about the impact of caravans on the rural landscape.

Camping grounds

81% thought camping facilities were appropriate although it is not clear what level of additional demand there is.

Bed and breakfast

95% supported bed and breakfast accommodation, presumably 'in-town' and 'rural'.

Hotels

Opinions were split on whether more hotel accommodation should be encouraged. 48% expressed support and 41% disagreed.

Holiday village

Only 8% supported a holiday village option.

Hostel

60% supported hostel type accommodation. Such accommodation could be linked to an 'activity centre' or an

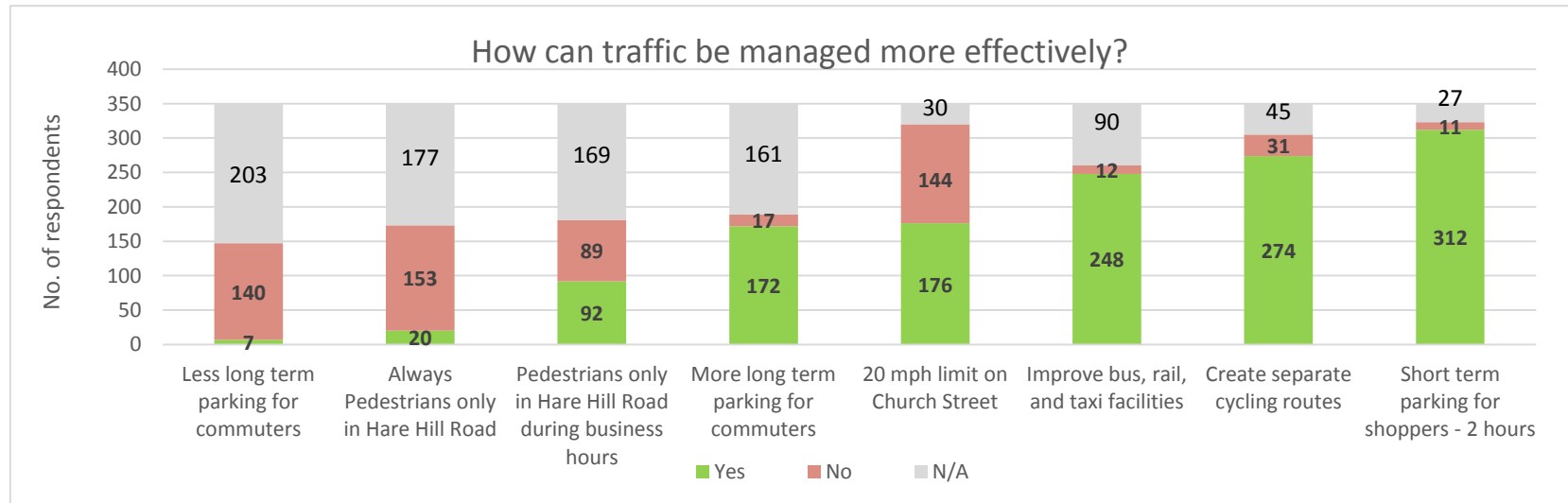
Conclusion / Summary

'outdoor centre'. One suggested the redundant council offices could be trialled as hostel accommodation.

It is important that the choice and quality of overnight accommodation is improved if Littleborough is to be promoted as a key tourism centre, both in its own right and as a kicking off point to the South Pennines. The responses clearly show overall support for more overnight accommodation; the greatest support being for bed and breakfast accommodation and camping accommodation although hostels also received some significant support. Views on hotel accommodation were mixed although the employment benefits were mentioned.

There may be latent demand for more overnight accommodation of various types but demand is difficult to predict. An upturn in tourism numbers (through improved attractions and events) will increase pressure for accommodation whilst an improved choice of accommodation may attract more overnight stays for those wishing to experience existing attractions. Current demand in terms of planning applications appears low. Further specialist research about supply, demand and opportunities would be helpful. With such information, the plan could identify key sites and locations where certain types of accommodation could be encouraged. For example, Rakewood/Hollingworth Lake might have potential for additional caravan/camping facilities, and rural buildings e.g. mills could be used to provide a hostel accommodation and activity centres. The Plan could also have a policy to control changes of use to B & B accommodation in the town.

17. How can traffic be managed more effectively?



Create separate cycling routes

78% supported the creation of more segregated cycling routes. Some commented that more/improved cycle routes are unlikely to have a big impact on tackling traffic problems but that safe, family friendly routes cycle routes are essential for leisure and tourism. Routes linking the town, station, canal and the Lake are important.

20 mph limit on Church Street

Opinions were divided with 50% in support and 41% not. One commented that the new 20 mph on Hare Hill Road area is largely unnecessary due to parking and traffic levels which restrict speed during business hours. Illegal parking and lack of enforcement was an issue on Church Street and Hare Hill Road.

Pedestrians only in Hare Hill Road

58% of respondents did not support the pedestrianisation of Hare Hill Road.

Always

Only 6% were in favour of full pedestrianisation.

During business hours

26% thought pedestrianisation should be limited to business hours.

Short term parking for shoppers - 2 hrs

60% supported more short term parking but 21% disagreed. Some commented that more short term car parking was essential to support traders, although others thought that that more car parking would encourage more car visits to the centre and exacerbate traffic problems.

A suggestion was made that parking discs could be issues to local residents to display arrival times and ensure stays are limited.

Long term parking for commuters

60% supported sufficient long stay parking for commuters as a necessary traffic management measure but 21% disagreed.

More

49% thought more long stay parking should be provided.

Respondents thought long-stay parking was essential to reduce all day commuter parking in side streets. The station car park is considered to be at capacity and some respondents thought provision should be extended if possible around the station area. A suggestion was made that capacity could be increased by a two storey car park. The lack of land suitable for additional parking elsewhere was a concern although part of the former gasworks site of Hare Hill Road was suggested.

Less

Only 2% thought that less long-stay parking for commuters should be provided so that spaces could be used for short term visitors including tourists.

Improve bus, rail, and taxi facilities

71% thought public transport improvements were necessary whilst only 3% disagreed.

Respondents thought improvements to rail services, especially at peak times were vital. More trains need to stop at Littleborough and busier trains should have more carriages.

Bus services to the Lake should be improved. One respondent suggested that a taxibus or shuttle bus (using planned drop offs around the town) could be an effective way of transporting commuters to and from the station as an alternative to commuter parking.

Conclusion / Summary

The town centre and the A58 suffer from congestion at peak times, an issue that led some years ago to the consideration of a A58 by-pass through the Roch Valley. Whilst one respondent enquired about the by-pass, this is no longer considered to be a feasible solution to the problem. Respondents consider that commuting will increase and that the situation will get worse unless there is more investment in public transport alternatives. Improved bus and rail services, including tourist or commuter bus shuttles, should therefore be a priority for Littleborough. Whilst these are beyond the ability of the Plan to secure, the Forum should enter a dialogue with the Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority, the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive, Northern Rail and bus operators in order to explore potential. For example, improved park and ride facilities at Littleborough station is proposed in the Council's Core Strategy but as yet this has not yet materialised. Also whilst there is an intention to increase passenger capacity and line speeds on the Calder Valley railway, it will be important to ensure that this benefits Littleborough and does not reduce stops / capacity at peak times.

Residents feel that traffic congestion and on-street parking create a poor and unsafe environment and discourage visitors. Some road improvements may be appropriate, alongside traffic management measures, but increasing road space for vehicles has the potential to destroy the character and charm of Littleborough's street network. As parking by residents, visitors and commuters was seen to be a problem, there was strong support for more short term and long term off-road parking. There is no clear consensus on which sites might be suitable however.

Respondents comment that Littleborough has many attractive and well used pedestrian routes but that they need improving, extending, and better linked to the town centre and attractions. Cycle routes segregated from the road are supported although there is some doubt about whether these will be used for journeys to work and therefore alleviate road traffic congestion. Such routes are important to improve recreational opportunities, the visitor experience (links to attractions) and to encourage healthy lifestyles. The Neighbourhood Plan could help to identify and promote key routes, in consultation with the Council, Sustrans and developers.

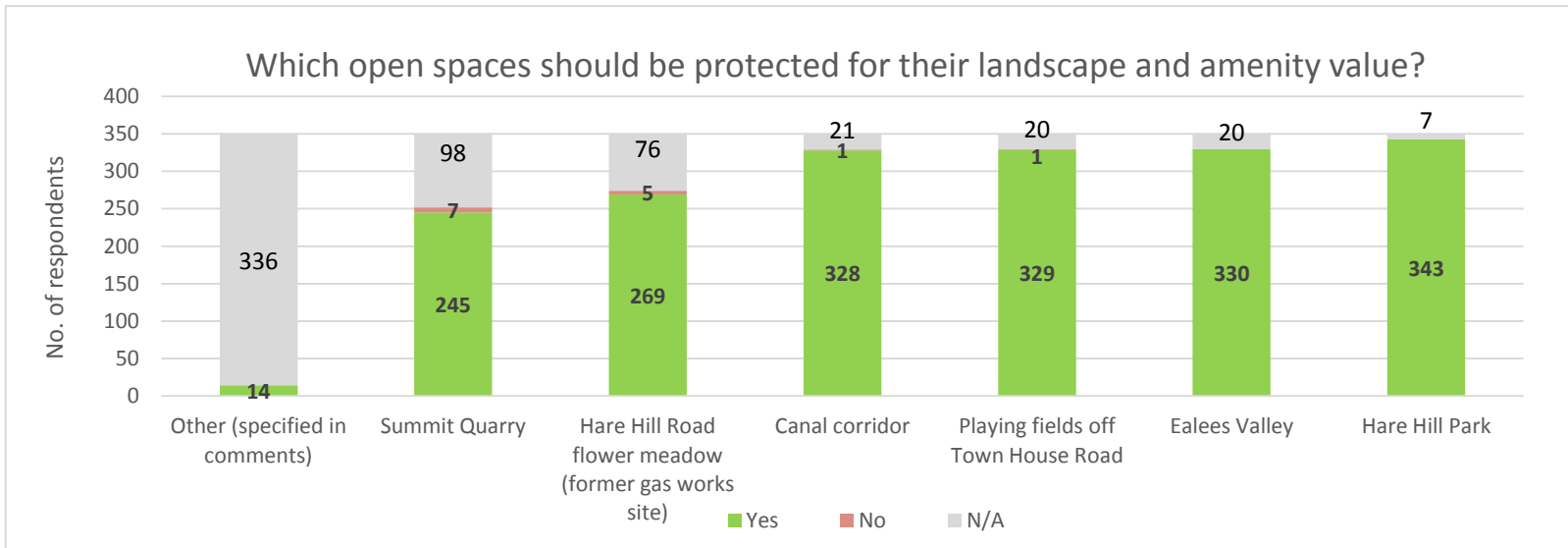
With regard to Church Street, the responses show that a significant proportion supported speed restrictions but some thought that parking and vehicle numbers slowed traffic in any event. The practicalities and benefits should be discussed further with Rochdale Council alongside the issue of pedestrianisation of Hare Hill Road.

Other suggestions to manage traffic included:

- Reduce on street car parking at congestion black spots e.g., Canal Street.
- More effective parking enforcement

In conclusion, the responses suggest that traffic, parking and public transport will be key issues for the Plan to address. It is suggested that early discussions with the Council are carried out to discuss the questionnaire results and in particular, what traffic management options are available, how a strategy for car parking can be prepared and how the public transport improvements can be promoted.

18. Protect open spaces for their landscape and amenity value?



Hare Hill Park

98% agreed Hare Hill Park is a priority open space but requires further investment.

One suggested that a designated dog walking area should be created.

Hare Hill Road flower meadow

77% agreed, although a small number of residents have suggested it may have some potential for car parking.

Playing Fields off Town House Road

94% agreed.

Ealees Valley

94% agreed.

Canal

93% agreed that canalside open space should be protected and enhanced.

Respondents referred to open spaces along the canal with towpath access which could be improved and could incorporate facilities for canal mooring. Between Canal Street and Smithybridge, open spaces could be improved by improvements to surfaces, footpaths and the canal towpath. Such improvements would also encourage greater usage and safety.

Some commented on the need to protect and enhance accessible canal-side open space, for example: adjoining the proposed Akzo Nobel development, and adjoining the canal bridge at Smithybridge Road,

Smithybridge.

Summit Quarry

70% agreed.

Others

42% of respondents identified other sites which ought to be protected:

- *Dearnley playing field/recreation ground*
- *Barkers Wood, Shore*
- *Calderbrook Moor*
- *Shore Moor*
- *Playing fields behind Smithy Bridge Rd.*
- *Roch Valley public sites*
- *Open Space at Rakewood/Hollingworth Lake.*

Conclusion / Summary

In order for the plan to protect open spaces or 'greenspace', it is necessary to first identify which areas are important to local residents or for other reasons. Greenspace can include land that has amenity or visual value, biodiversity value or recreational value, or all of these. In some areas there is a lack of accessible open space for recreation and in others it is the quality of the open space or the level of maintenance that is the problem. The questionnaire therefore sought to discover which areas residents thought should be protected and enhanced.

The Council holds extensive information about greenspace infrastructure in Littleborough. An open space assessment and a Pennines Green Infrastructure Plan (Draft) have been prepared and these identify key open spaces and their value for amenity, recreational and ecological value. A significant number of the open spaces above are protected in the Council's Unitary Development Plan. However, these may be reviewed in a new Development Plan Document once the Core Strategy has been approved or they could be identified for protection through the Neighbourhood Plan.

Protection can ensure that open spaces are not developed for other purposes but some open spaces need improvement as well as protection or need to be more accessible. Improvements and subsequent maintenance is dependent upon investment which in turn is dependent upon funding and priority. Funding can be made available through Council budgets and some limited external contributions, and some funding can come from developer off-site contributions secured through S106 Agreements or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) when new housing is approved. The Forum has the opportunity to work with the Council to agree priorities for investment and the type of improvements required on different sites.

The responses show that there are a number of open spaces that are valued by all Littleborough residents, e.g. Hare Hill Park and there are others that are important locally e.g. Dearnley and Smithybridge playing

fields. Even small open spaces are seen to be important to people where they provide a chain or link along strategic routes (e.g. the canal towpath) or relief within a densely built up area (Harehill Road former gasworks site). Other open spaces are important for their landscape features, wildlife value and for people to appreciate their natural environment. The comments clearly show that there is common ground on which areas should be protected (with perhaps the exception of the former gasworks site off Hare Hill Road where car parking potential has been mentioned in response to questions about traffic and parking). However, the issue of how areas could be enhanced in the future has not been addressed in any detail; neither has the issue of which sites should be priority for improvement given the limited funds likely to be available.

19. Encourage redevelopment of sites underused or unsightly?

Most Suggested Sites

Akzo Nobel

Railway Arches, Canal Street

Rock Nook Mill area. (Some buildings are considered dilapidated and unsafe.)

Durn

Disused petrol station site, Todmorden Road, Summit

Other suggested sites

Littleborough Square / station area

Land opposite Dry Dock Mills

Brown Street

Peel Street

Hare Hill Mill industrial site

Corner of Shore Road, Calderbrook Road

Conclusion / Summary

The above sites include vacant buildings or buildings that have outworn their original function, unused or degraded land. Some are in prominent locations and others are adjacent to residential properties and other sensitive uses. Most sites have some development potential and some are subject to current proposals e.g. the Akzo Nobel site. Others have been identified as having potential but there are issues about viability e.g. Durn Marina, Ealees, and the Railway Arches. The Rochdale Unitary Development Plan includes allocations

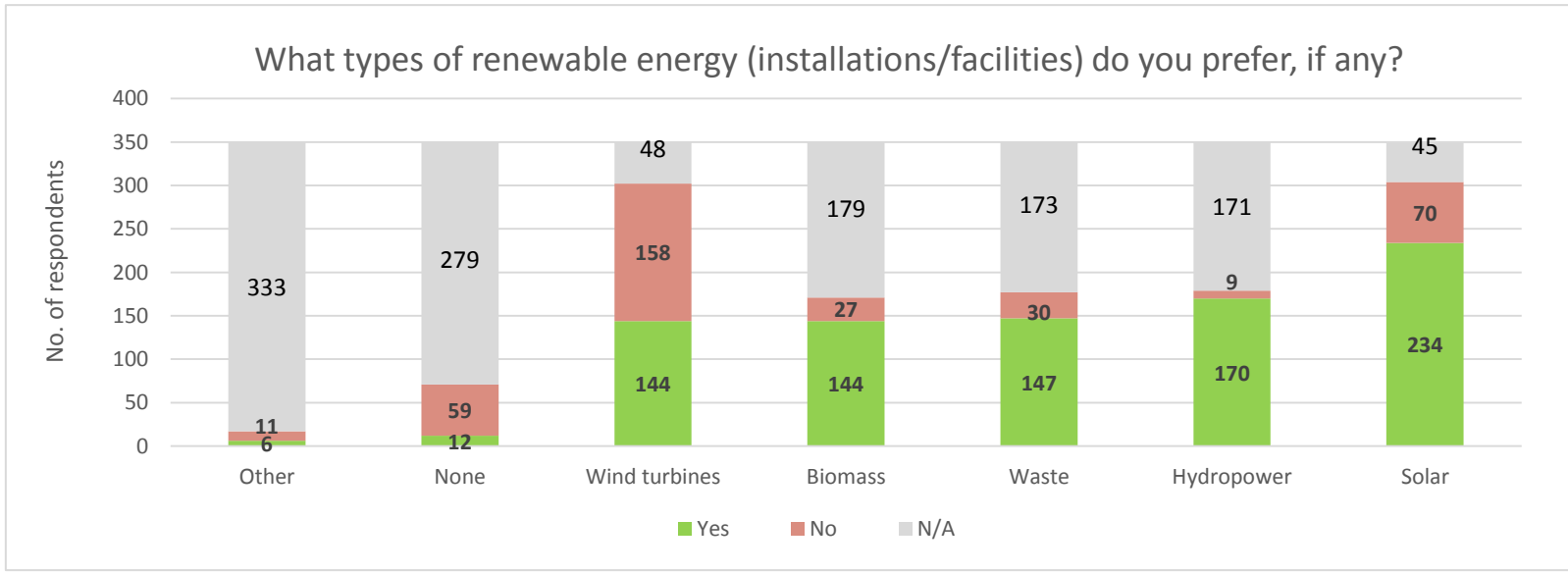
for these sites but this plan will need to be replaced by a new Site Allocations development plan document once the Core Strategy is approved. It would be appropriate to review uses and development principles for these sites either in the Site Allocations Plan or in the Neighbourhood Plan. Joint working with the Council on Development Briefs such as the one prepared for Durn would also help to ensure that only specific uses are permitted and that requirements are set out to guide the form and layout of any development proposals.

Other suggested sites will require further investigation, particularly those that include viable uses or businesses. For example, Hare Hill Mill is a substantial site close to the centre and Hare Hill Park which appears partly underused but which contains some viable employment uses. The site may have potential for redevelopment, at least in part, for housing, more suitable employment uses, leisure and car parking. Some buildings appear to have heritage value and may need to be retained.

Rock Nook Mill is also of heritage value and potential for conversion could be investigated.

Mill sites in the green belt may also have potential for redevelopment and provide an opportunity to remove unsightly buildings and to incorporate landscape improvements e.g. Sladen Mill.

20. What types of renewable energy (installation / facilities) do you prefer, if any?



Note: Although the question asks for preferences, some respondents have voted for more than one type. Therefore the percentages relate to those respondents that supported each type of renewable energy.

Wind turbines

41% supported wind energy in Littleborough but 45% did not. Most of the comments received were from the latter.

Some respondents claimed wind turbines were inefficient and unsightly and that extensive wind turbine development would ruin the character of Littleborough. Some supported individual wind turbines for businesses although there was a concern that these can harm the landscape and detract from neighbouring uses/buildings if they are badly sited.

Solar

67% supported solar power but 20% did not. Comments suggested that private household installations were preferable to large scale sites but questioned whether they cost-effective.

Hydropower

48% of respondents supported hydro power but only 3% specifically disagreed that this should be an option. There was recognition that hydropower on a small scale, using local watercourses, may be acceptable and achievable. It was felt that larger scale hydropower installations could impact negatively on the landscape.

Waste	<i>42% agreed that energy from waste could be explored in Littleborough and only 8% disagreed.</i>
Biomass	<i>41% agreed biomass was a suitable option and only 8% disagreed.</i>
Other	<i>2% thought other options should be explored, although no alternative types of renewable energy were suggested.</i>
None	<i>17% either did not see a future for using any of the above forms of sustainable energy in Littleborough.</i>
Conclusion / Summary	<p>Solar power was regarded as the most preferable or acceptable form of renewable energy for Littleborough's future but only in respect of solar panels (not large installations such as a solar farm). However, the rapid expansion of the installation of solar panels on roofs of domestic and business properties raises a big issue in terms of their impact on the townscape and character of Littleborough, particularly bearing in mind that most will not require planning permission. Whilst solar energy should be supported wherever possible, solar panels on some buildings may need to be limited or controlled. It is possible for permitted development rights to be removed by the Council through issuing an 'Article 4 direction'. These are used where the character of an area of acknowledged importance would be threatened e.g. conservation areas. This will mean that a planning application will be necessary for work which normally does not need one. Scope for such controls or guidelines could be investigated as this an issue not adequately dealt with in the Urban Design Guidance.</p> <p>The further development of windfarms is not supported by more than half of the respondents although individual wind turbines are generally supported provided they are suitably sited. It is clear that the South Pennines is under pressure from wind power developments and the cumulative impact of these and their intervisibility could erode landscapes character and views across the Pennines. The Council has adopted a supplementary planning document on 'Energy and New Development' which gives guidance on the assessment of proposals for windpower developments and other types of renewable energy. Hydro-electric power received significant support and comments acknowledge the potential of the River Roch and its tributaries to generate electricity for local benefit. The promotion of hydro technologies ie., water wheels and turbines could be pursued through the plan in consultation with the Council, Environment Agency and energy agencies.</p> <p>Energy from waste was supported but it is unclear from the question and responses whether there is support for built installations within Littleborough. Smaller scale installations using modern technology could be appropriate in some existing employment areas although the GM Waste Plan DPD provides an adequate policy framework for considering new proposals.</p>

Biomass energy production is supported and such technologies can be used on a smaller scale and within rural areas. Current planning policy supports biomass so it may not be necessary to include a further tier of policy in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Local residents seem keen that Littleborough should be seen as a sustainable place to live and therefore the use of renewal energy technologies in new development and the development of renewable energy installations is generally supported. However, it also clear that proposals should be discreet and in scale with their surroundings.

The Rochdale Energy Supplementary Planning Document provides detailed advice on the interpretation of the Councils Core Strategy planning policy on energy developments and on how development proposals should be assessed. There may not be much to gain by duplicating this in the Neighbourhood Plan or seeking to provide more specific requirements. It is important though that the Neighbourhood Plan identifies special landscapes and townscapes so that it is clear what impacts need to be assessed policies when new applications for energy developments are submitted.

21. How to encourage healthy lifestyles?



Promote shops selling fresh food

94% of respondents agreed with promoting more fresh food shops, e.g. organic local food produce shops, green grocer and fish monger.

One suggested promoting Co-operative growing projects (e.g. Todmorden's Incredible Edible) where people are encouraged to grow and sell their own flowers, fruit, vegetables and herbs. This encourages community activity and physical activity, educates children about where their food comes from as well as encouraging them to be community-minded. It is also cuts down on our collective carbon footprint.

Improve routes for walkers in the town

91% supported improvements to walking routes although it was acknowledged that there were already many well-used, attractive routes. Respondents suggested surfaces could be better maintained, safety improved and more information about the routes and feature of interest prepared to encourage more walking.

Others

A number of other suggestions were put forward by respondents:

- *A new swimming pool*
- *More built sports and leisure facilities, e.g. fitness centres/gyms*
- *Improvements to outdoor sports facilities to encourage greater use such as evening lighting, facilities for more activities, and outdoor gyms in parks*
- *Promotion of outdoor sports events*
- *Protection of existing allotments and more provision where possible.*
- *Improve routes for cyclists and provide more segregated cycle routes.*

Conclusion / Summary

There are no planning policies that would discourage the provision of shops selling healthy food in the town centre. There may be potential for more farm shops selling local produce although rural retail businesses would compete with town centre shops if they were to sell products bought in for sale.

Improving facilities to encourage walking is a strong theme through many of the questions and this must be a priority for the plan.

The Questionnaire overlooked a number of obvious ways to encourage healthy lifestyles which the respondents identified.

Whilst Littleborough already has a sports centre, there was support for more indoor fitness facilities. The Plan could seek to encourage such uses within certain key locations or types of buildings.

Interestingly whilst an over concentration of hot food takeaways was seen as an issue in the town centre, none of respondents suggested that these should be controlled to help deliver more healthy eating habits (as takeaways are a sources of predominantly high calorie food). The Council's draft Guidelines and Standards on Hot Food Takeaways set out controls which would apply to Littleborough and would discourage takeaways close to schools.

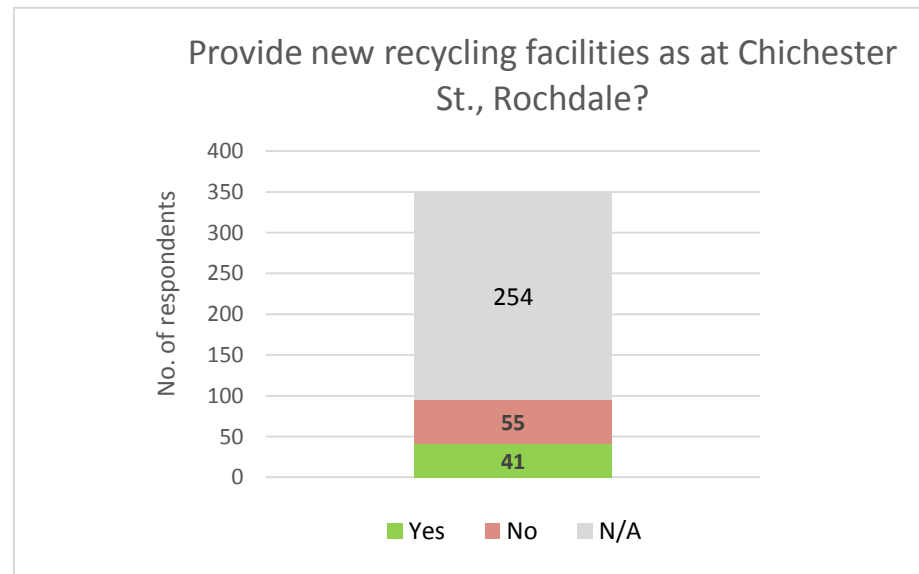
A number of respondents were keen to see a new swimming pool in Littleborough although provision through the Council and Link4life does not seem likely in the foreseeable future. Some larger private fitness centres provide swimming pools although it is not clear if there is commercial interest or potential sites to accommodate this scale of development.

With regard to improvements to outdoor recreational facilities, the Forum could work with the Council to identify priorities and opportunities which could be funded from housing developer contributions and other budgets.

Opportunities for sports events could be pursued by the Forum and other local community groups outside the Plan process.

With regard to allotments, existing plots could be protected in the Plan but in order to justify new plots, demand would need to be assessed, sites and potential funding identified.

22. Should new recycling facilities be provided in Littleborough e.g. as at Chichester Street Rochdale?



Should recycling facilities be provided?

This question sought to establish whether residents and businesses wanted to see a waste recycling / waste transfer facility provided in Littleborough – primarily to deal with household waste and locally generated waste items, similar in function to the drive through facility at Chichester Street in Rochdale. These

facilities deal with a large range of waste materials including wood, metal and garden waste. However it seems clear from the answers that some respondents have interpreted the question to mean recycling facilities such as recycling 'banks' or 'bins' for paper, plastic and bottles etc.. of the kind found at supermarkets. It is assumed that those who suggested that waste facilities should be located at local supermarkets, the rail station, Harehill Park and Hollingworth Road have these recycling banks/bins in mind. Where others have suggested that a waste facility should be located within industrial areas (e.g. Todmorden Road) or Durn it is assumed that they are suggesting that these sites are suitable for the larger waste facility similar to Chichester Street, Rochdale.

Conclusion / Summary

The Forum could clearly explore options for recycling banks with land owners, operators and Rochdale Council and the Neighbourhood Plan could identify significant development sites where new uses should incorporate recycling banks/collections subject to consideration of their potential visual, noise and traffic impacts. Larger recycling and waste transfer facilities would need to be investigated by the Council and waste collection operators in line with policies of the Greater Manchester Waste Plan. Accessible industrial sites such as Todmorden Road may be appropriate if demand exists, if land is available and the visual, traffic and environmental impacts can be addressed.

APPENDIX

Questions	Main issues for the Plan	Information / Evidence required
Q1	These questions set out what really matters to the local community. The analysis could be used to revisit the aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.	Review objectives to demonstrate they reflect the main issues raised by the consultation.
Q2		
Q3		
Q4	<p>What mix of new housing is desirable to meet local need and demand?</p> <p>What balance of housing ownership / tenure should be sought?</p> <p>How can the Plan's policies ensure that new housing developments provide an appropriate mix of housing?</p> <p>How can the Plan ensure that housing types in new developments benefit Littleborough residents in terms of fulfilling local needs?</p>	<p>Housing need in Littleborough needs to be more closely understood and discussed with RMBC Strategic Planning.</p> <p>Research is needed on how other Neighbourhood Plans have sought to control housing mix and tenure in proposed new housing developments.</p>
Q5		
Q6	Which sites if any should be identified for housing?	Discuss locations and potential site allocations with Council (taking account of sites identified in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment).
Q7	Which open spaces and transport improvements should developer contributions be used for?	<p>Identify key open spaces in need of improvement.</p> <p>Identify key transport improvements needed.</p> <p>(Discuss approach and share information held by RMBC Planning)</p>
Q8	Should shopping frontages be protected against non-retail uses and hot food takeaways?	Carry out further analysis of problems, change of use use statistics, and potential for a local policy.
Q9	<p>Should the Plan identify primary pedestrian and cycle routes for protection / improvement?</p> <p>Is a 'Parking Strategy' needed to decide how can parking be better managed new car parking secured?</p>	<p>Identify priority pedestrian and cycling routes.</p> <p>Discuss the preparation of a parking strategy with Council and establish what information on parking is held by</p>

	Should the plan identify tourism assets and tourism 'roles' for different areas of Littleborough?	Council. Use a tourism strategy to identify land use implications and potential plan policies.
Q10	Which non-retail uses should be restricted or encouraged within shopping frontages? Which streets, frontages and public realm are in need of improvement? Do parts of the town centre need their own 'design principles' for new developments, new shop frontages and environmental improvements? Does the town centre need its own parking standards for new development or a parking strategy to balance on-street and off-street parking?	Discuss appropriate use-classes with RMBC Planning. Carry out surveys to identify ground floor and upper floor uses, retail and non-retail uses, condition of buildings etc. to inform policy. Expertise is needed to inform design principles/controls in the town centre. Discuss preparation of a joint car parking strategy with RMBC (Planning and Highways).
Q11	What are the key conservation and enhancement priorities in terms of the built and natural heritage? Can policies identify where and how character and heritage should be protected and enhanced?	An up-to-date assessment of heritage assets and threats would inform the plan.
Q12 & Q 13	Should existing primary employment zones for B1-B8 uses continue to be protected? Should smaller employment areas/sites be protected from other uses? Are there employment sites which generate environmental problems and which have potential for other uses? Should the town centre boundary (the key retail and service centre) be revised (expanded or shrunk) for the purposes of applying retail and other policies?	(These are mapped by RMBC.) Discuss problem or underused employment sites with RMBC Planning. More input from the Littleborough business community would be helpful on these issues and to demonstrate consultation is inclusive and the process 'sound'.
Q14	Should the Plan identify specific employment uses/businesses which would be suitable in rural areas (consistent with green belt and protected open land policies)?	Needs more discussion with Council, other relevant agencies and local rural businesses.
Q15	Which sites and projects should be the subject of Plan policies? (Policies would need to identify the site areas,	Existing UDP allocations/policies need to be revised in consultation with RMBC and with specialist input/expertise

	acceptable uses and development/design principles which development would need to satisfy)	if available.
Q16	Should the Plan promote certain types of overnight accommodation and should it steer such types to particular locations?	It would be helpful to have an audit of existing accommodation and an independent market view of likely demand.
Q17	Can the Plan identify additional parking provision which is capable of being implemented? Which recreational routes for cycling and walking should be identified for protection and improvement in the Plan? Should the Forum seek to address a strategy for managing traffic and car parking with RMBC outside the Plan process?	More discussion and collection of traffic data needed. Discussion will be necessary with RMBC Highway Engineers.
Q18	Which open spaces should be identified on the Plan Proposals Map for protection? What improvements are needed to open spaces for the purposes of using developer contributions?	Some resurvey work to identify open space condition, facilities and potential would be helpful and would supplement RMBC Planning data on greenspace. This could be used to agree priority improvements with RMBC.
Q19	Which sites /areas should be identified on the Plan's proposals map for regeneration and redevelopment? What uses are sought within those sites/areas and what design/development requirements should set out in the Plan?	Some sites are already identified in the Unitary Development Plan and area development briefs. Other sites e.g. Hare Hill Mills will need expert appraisal before proposals can be included in the plan.
Q20	Are existing planning policies adequate to deal with proposals for renewable energy installations or development which incorporate renewable energy sources? How could the plan promote appropriate forms of renewable energy?	This needs discussion with RMBC Planning.
Q21	How should facilities for sport and active outdoor recreation be promoted through the plan? Which allotments should be identified for protection in the plan? Can priorities and opportunities for improvement be identified to inform spending of housing developer contributions and other budgets? Is existing policy and emerging guidance on hot-food	Needs discussion with sports groups, RMBC, Link4life. Needs discussion with RMBC Planning.

	<p>takeaways adequate for Littleborough?</p> <p>What else can the Plan do to encourage Healthy Lifestyles?</p>	<p>Need to engage with Link4life, NHS, other local health providers and agencies.</p>
Q22	<p>In which locations / developments should additional/new small scale recycling facilities be provided?</p> <p>Should / can the Plan identify locations for a dedicated local waste recycling / transfer station?</p>	<p>Needs discussion with RMBC, GM Recycling, waste recycling operators.</p> <p>Potential sites would need full consultation with adjoining uses.</p>