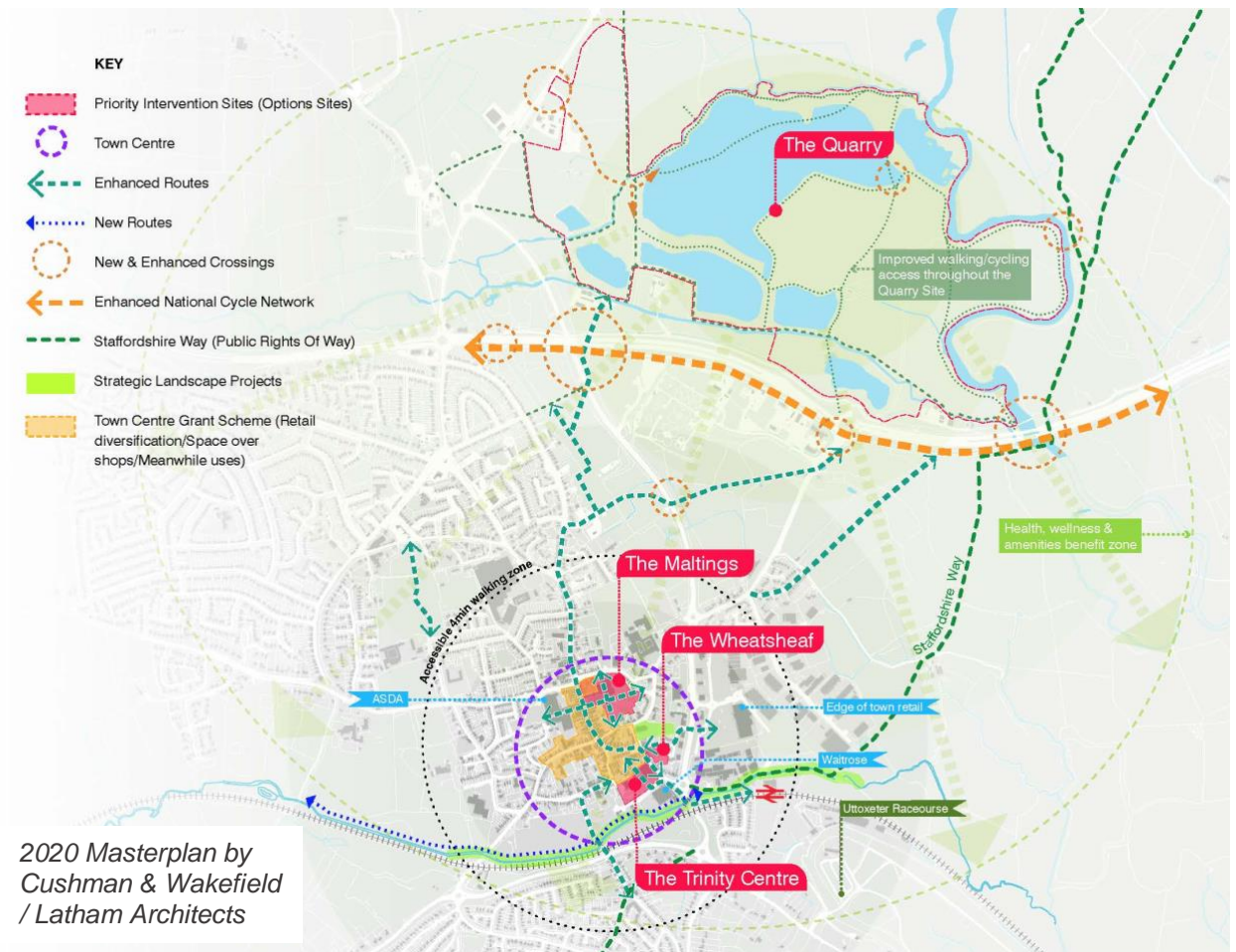


Uttoxeter Masterplan

Further Consultation

July – September 2021



00. Project Summary

In June 2021, URBED were appointed by East Staffordshire Borough Council (ESBC) to conduct further consultation on the Uttoxeter Town Centre Masterplan.

This document accompanies the 2020 Uttoxeter Masterplan Plus report, which was produced by Cushman & Wakefield and Lathams Architects, and released in January 2021.

The Masterplan Plus examines how Uttoxeter could be improved as a place for people to live, work, invest and visit over the next 10 to 20 years.

Why conduct further consultation?

Following publication of the Masterplan Plus in January 2021, the Council confirmed that it would be bringing forward its next round of consultation on the Uttoxeter Masterplan, focusing predominantly on developing the options for the priority sites. It was stated that this would take place as soon as Covid-19 social distancing restrictions eased to a level where physical engagement could take place.

The Masterplan Plus provides a review of the 2003 Uttoxeter Town Centre Masterplan, along with analysis of current issues and prevailing market conditions. Together with broad themes and objectives it introduces four 'opportunity sites', identified through a review of current policy, emerging trends and stakeholder engagement.

Feedback on the broad themes that underpin the Masterplan Plus i.e. a stronger and more vibrant town centre, a comprehensive active and sustainable travel network and improved amenity space has been largely positive.

The 2020 Masterplan Plus prioritised four sites for intervention based on their strategic importance and potential impact on the town centre. The purpose of further consultation was to provide an opportunity for residents to provide feedback and influence these site-specific options and priorities.

The aim of this study is to develop clear information and understanding of the emerging priorities and opportunities - generated collaboratively through workshops and public events. This study will help develop the evidence base needed to inform and guide the Masterplan process and site-specific interventions, ensuring that the town is a good position to secure funding and investment as opportunities become available.

01. The Masterplan Plus Context

“It is widely appreciated that the role of town centres has fundamentally changed over the last decade, owing to shifting sociodemographic and market trends. This has resulted in polarisation between larger destinations that have a critical mass of activity and the strategic accessibility; and smaller secondary town centres, such as Uttoxeter, that find themselves lacking the profile, accessibility, and local catchment capacity to drive footfall, dwell time and spend, to compete and thrive. Uttoxeter now requires an updated Masterplan to provide a long-term coherent image for the future of Uttoxeter as a whole town, that sets out realistic and deliverable masterplan options.” (Masterplan Plus for Uttoxeter town centre, Jan 2021)

The 2020 Masterplan Plus does not replace the 2003 Town Centre Masterplan as a Planning Policy document but recognises that since its production there have been fundamental changes. It provides an assessment of current economic and market factors that have had an impact on the Town Centre and reviews which of the twenty-seven sites identified in the 2003 Masterplan have been delivered and which have potential to come forward in the future.

The 2020 Masterplan Plus identifies three key themes:

1. **A stronger and more vibrant town centre** – replacing underperforming and visually harmful developments such as the Maltings with modern, mixed-use schemes. Facilitating better use of upper floors through the town centre, and supporting appropriate diversification of use
2. **A more comprehensive active movement network** – focussing on improving the safety and accessibility of walking and cycling routes in Uttoxeter, and connections into wider networks
3. **New and improved amenity space** – developing the quarry as a destination for sports, leisure and recreation, and creating an integrated green space strategy for Uttoxeter including existing and new green spaces within the town

Following the review of the existing Masterplan and the twenty-seven existing Masterplan project sites, the 2020 Masterplan Plus identified four priority ‘opportunity sites’. These sites are as follows:

1. The Trinity Centre
2. The Quarry north of the A50
3. The Maltings and wider area
4. The Wheatsheaf

These four ‘opportunity sites’ are additional interventions identified by the Masterplan Plus. They do not diminish the strategic importance or replace existing 2003 Town Centre Masterplan sites yet to be brought forward or delivered. Likewise they do not limit the potential for other new sites to be identified through the Masterplan or Local Plans process in the future.

Whilst it is acknowledged that both the Maltings and Maltings Car Park are existing sites identified within the 2003 Town Centre Masterplan, the 2020 review concluded that a combined approach and possible expansion to incorporate additional areas provides an opportunity for a more strategic and cohesive approach to development and regeneration of this area. The Trinity Centre, Wheatsheaf and Quarry sites represent new opportunities identified by the 2020 review. Interventions at these sites were analysed and prioritised according to the transformative impact they would have on the town centre and the potential to increase the attractiveness of Uttoxeter as a visitor destination.

The Masterplan Plus carried out an options development process for each of the four new 'opportunity sites'. This process involved reviewing physical and policy constraints and the Market Assessment together with viability and delivery advice. At the town centre level, the development of options focussed on the potential for residential-led development where possible to increase population, footfall and spend. The Market Assessment recommended avoiding extensive areas of new retail floor space (unless addressing an anticipated occupier need), multi-storey residential apartment blocks and extensive provision of large family housing. The council is recommended to encourage landlords to look into converting space over shops for residential use, and where appropriate, use permitted development rights to convert office space into residential accommodation.

The 2020 Masterplan Plus identified and assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the four priority sites. A process of further analysis and consultation has now begun to guide the next steps in developing and refining site options, priorities and potential interventions.



Masterplan Plus for Uttoxeter town centre

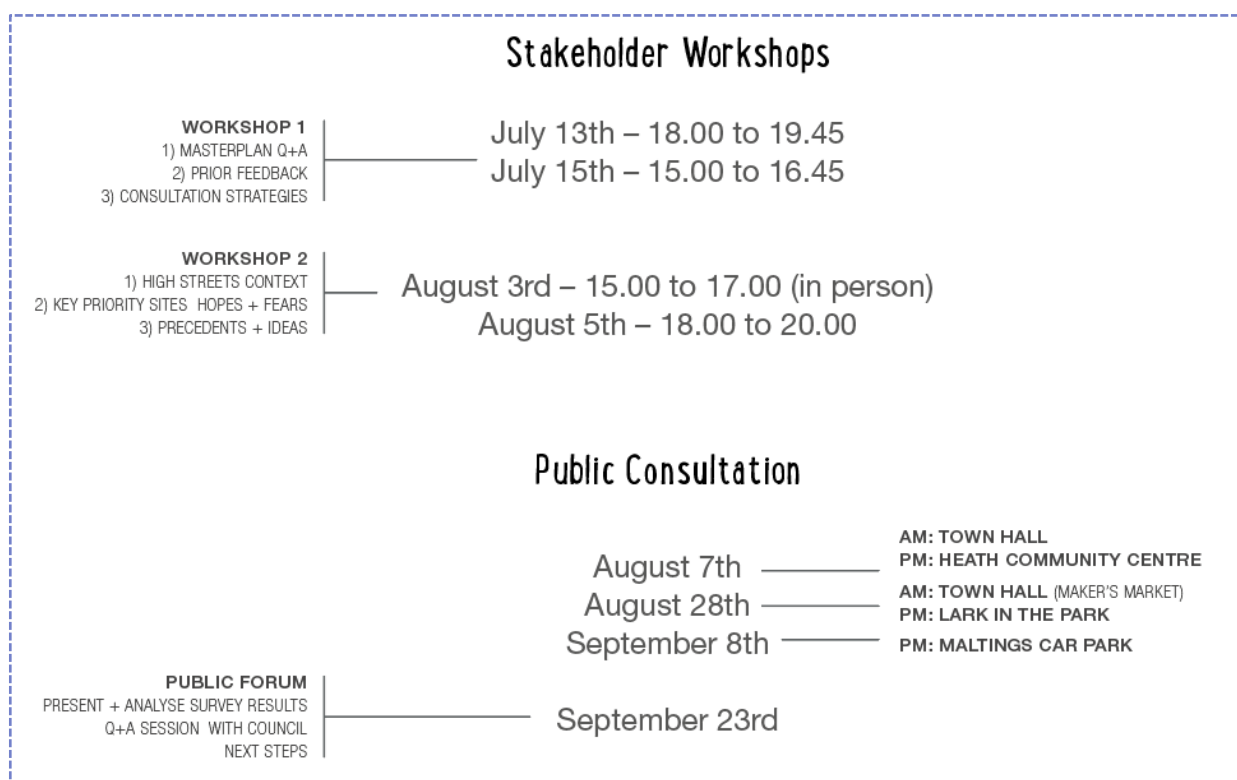
Prepared For
East Staffordshire Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council

JANUARY 2021

02. Consultation Process

URBED undertook extensive additional consultation over three months from July to September 2021. The process included:

- A review of previous feedback, as recorded within the Statement of Stakeholder and Community Involvement (undertaken by Cushman & Wakefield in 2020)
- A review of resident responses to the local MP's questionnaire about the Masterplan
- A review of feedback submitted by residents representing community action groups within Uttoxeter
- A series of invited stakeholder workshops over July and August
- 7 weeks of open public consultation, including five in-person events and one online event, and opportunities to view display banners in person at various venues or online throughout the 7-week period
- A questionnaire used to gather feedback – offered online via Survey Monkey and in printed format (also available to pick up at various venues)
- Uttoxeter Town Council also helped ESBC to distribute a postal leaflet to 10,933 properties within the ST14 5, ST14 7, ST14 8 and DE6 5 area codes around Uttoxeter, alerting residents to the consultation and online survey
- A worksheet distributed to Thomas Alleynes High School pupils in September



02. Consultation Process

Stakeholder Events

An initial stakeholder workshop was offered in the evening of the 13th July and repeated on the afternoon of the 15th July. Invitations were sent to approximately 60 key figures and groups within the Uttoxeter community, and those with a strong vested interest in the potential redevelopment proposals. This included local business owners, community groups and societies, support groups and charities, housing providers, volunteers, landowners, council members and representatives of key public services such as GPs, schools and transport providers. 22 stakeholders attended the initial workshop, including:

- staff from the Heath Community Centre
- business owners from Globe Foundation and from Bear Cafe
- the MP for Uttoxeter, and several members of Uttoxeter Town Council
- the Headteacher from Thomas Alleyne's High School
- representatives from Go Gardens Volunteers, Uttoxeter Juniors Football Club and Uttoxeter Heritage Trust
- operators from East Midland Trains
- a representative of the Burton & District Chamber of Commerce
- the Chief Executive of Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
- a GP from Balance Street Practice
- a representative from Trent and Dove
- a representative from MJ Barrett Group, landowners of the Maltings site

Collaborative activities included:

1. A presentation about the Masterplan concepts/ key strategies, followed by a group discussion to address previous masterplan concerns
2. Analysing prior public feedback (see image)
3. Reviewing the proposed public consultation strategy, such as venues and dates, and strategies for advertising the events, which generated good ideas for how different community groups in Uttoxeter could be reached. The subsequent decision to host consultation events at the Heath Community Centre and Lark in the Park arose from these informative conversations



IMAGE: Analysing prior public feedback task: assessing strengths, weaknesses, and missing facilities within Uttoxeter. Each group discussed the key themes and ranked priorities, with this group highlighting the importance of community spirit in Uttoxeter, and a need to improve public transport links to reduce car dependency

02. Consultation Process

Stakeholder Events

The second stakeholder workshop was held in person on the afternoon of the 3rd August, and virtually on the evening of 5th August, and was attended by 20 people in total. This included many of participants from the first workshop, as well as representatives from Redfern's Cottage Museum, Friends of Bramshall Road Park, Edmonston's Butchers and the Mayor of Uttoxeter.

This second workshop presented wider national context around changing High Street shopping habits, explored examples from other settlements around the UK, and provided participants with the opportunity to discuss hopes, fears and ideas for the 4 priority opportunity sites within the Uttoxeter Masterplan Plus.

It became clear within these sessions that people generally prioritise redevelopment of the Maltings over the three other sites. One business owner based within the Maltings noted that they were successful *despite* their location, and it was generally felt that the precinct is an eyesore and offers little to Uttoxeter's town centre in its current state. Generally, stakeholders favoured new housing being provided above modernised retail units and food & drink outlets, whilst views varied about whether the car park should be reduced in size. There was a clear distinction noted between the provision of 'housing' (meaning different types of residential units, such as apartments above other uses) and 'houses' – which were deemed less suitable for the site.



IMAGE (above):
Table discussing ideas at the in-person workshop on 3rd August.

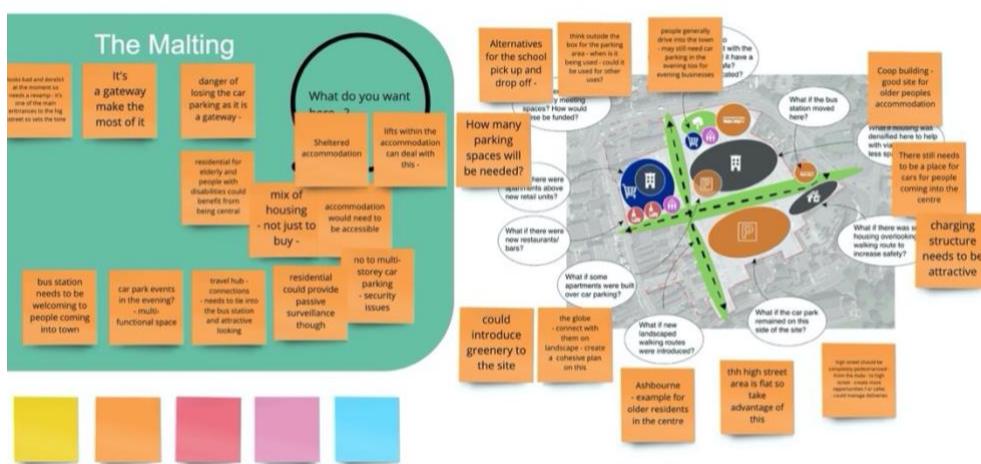


IMAGE (left):
Discussions about the Maltings Site, such as small business/ market units, residential for elderly people and introducing greenery

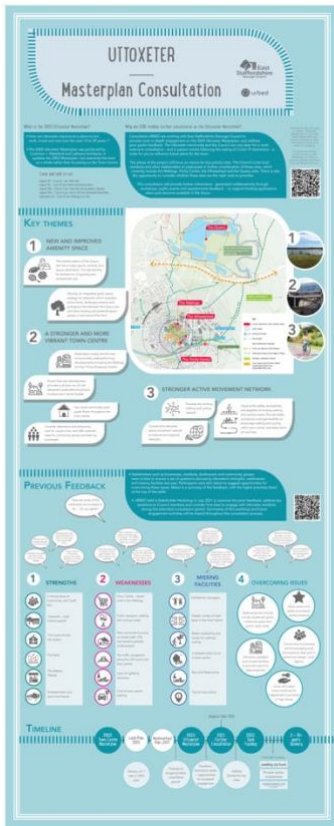
02. Consultation Process

Public Consultation

Information banners were displayed within the Town Hall between the 7th August and the 20th September 2021, whilst online versions of the information were made available on the Borough Council website in accessible formats between the 7th August and 27th September. Additional posters and banners were handed to the Heath Community Centre and Uttoxeter Leisure Centre, and were distributed to local Parish Councillors to help inform residents in Uttoxeter's hinterland about the opportunity to engage in the consultation process.

An online questionnaire was also made available in a printed format, and distributed around the town at key venues such as the Town Hall, library and Heath Community Centre.

In-person consultation events ran all day on Saturday 7th August and Saturday 28th August, and on the afternoon of 8th September. These events targeted specific groups of people – such as Saturday shoppers, visitors to the maker's market, families attending Lark in the Park, residents of the Heath area, and parents and pupils from Thomas Alleyne's High School who use the Maltings Car Park for pick-up.



IMAGES: Display banners for the public consultation. Banner 1: Representing the main themes of the masterplan, and strengths and weaknesses in Uttoxeter. Banner 2: Exploring national high street trends and design precedents. Banner 3: Presenting ideas and options for each of the 4 Priority sites to prompt

02. Consultation Process

Public Consultation

Approximately 300 members of the public came to talk to us across the various in-person public consultation events, including local families, older residents, people who work in Uttoxeter and others who use Uttoxeter to shop. The events occurred within the town centre or in key community buildings and parks across town and were planned to coordinate with popular summer events such as Maker's Market and Lark in the Park. The consultation stretched across one month of the summer holiday period, and throughout most of September.

Consultation Event 1: Town Hall 7th August (10am – 1pm)



Consultation Event 2: Heath Community Centre 7th August (2pm – 5pm)





Consultation Event 3: Maker's Market 28th August (9am – 1pm): A bustling atmosphere with visitors from all over Staffordshire and beyond.

Consultation Event 4: Lark in the Park - 28th August (2pm til 5pm): Very lively family



Consultation Event 5: Maltings Car Park 8th September (2pm til 5pm)



03. Results

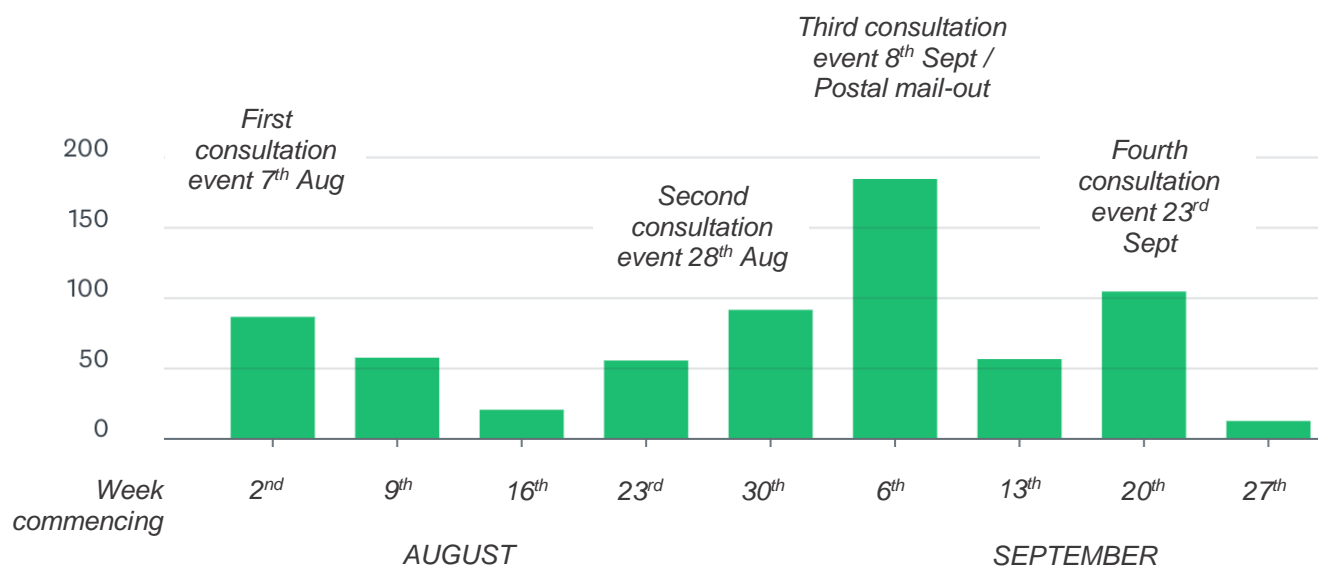
Data Collection

684 questionnaires were completed either online via Survey Monkey or in a printed format. Responses were compiled to generate graphs representing data trends, whilst comments were analysed to identify recurring priorities.

Response volumes were monitored throughout, and advertising methods amended to increase the response rate and target specific groups. For example, to increase response levels a leaflet drop campaign was delivered by Royal Mail at the start of September, covering 10,933 households within Uttoxeter and surrounding villages.

Additionally, it was noted that a low proportion of respondents were aged under 18 (which is a common occurrence in public consultation), and a worksheet aimed at the younger generation was subsequently created and shared with Thomas Alleyne's High School. It should be noted however that the response level in this age category remained low, and the worksheet could be used as a future tool to increase engagement with this age range, who represent the future of Uttoxeter.

Response volumes



GRAPH: Representing the volume of responses over the weeks between 2nd August and the end of September. A clear peak is highlighted on the week commencing 6th September, following the consultation event on the 28th August and demonstrating the successful response to the leaflet postal distribution

03. Results

Statistical Accuracy of Data

684 surveys were collated, representing 3-4% of the total population of Uttoxeter and the surrounding hinterland. The survey results are a very reliable indication that opinions expressed are representative of the wider Uttoxeter community, which was also verified by the fact that response trends remained the same for the last few weeks of the data collation period.

Understanding Statistics

The table below is taken from statistical surveying consultancy (The Research Advisors) and offers guidance on assessing statistical accuracy of a set of data, based on the overall population size measured against the sample response rate. The larger the population, the smaller the percentage of respondents required to ensure accuracy. Professional researchers typically aim for a sample size of about 500 people when conducting research within large populations.

Here we see that the rate of response to the Uttoxeter Masterplan survey (684 out of a total population of between 15000 - 20000) provides a very high level of confidence that the results are accurate, with the table recommending a response level of at least 622 – 646 to achieve a 99% confidence rating (with a 5% margin of error).

Population Size	Confidence = 95%				Confidence = 99%			
	Margin of Error				Margin of Error			
	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
20	19	20	20	20	19	20	20	20
30	28	29	29	30	29	29	30	30
50	44	47	48	50	47	48	49	50
UTTOXETER SAMPLE SIZE								
10,000	370	727	1332	4899	622	1193	2098	6239
25,000	378	760	1448	6939	646	1285	2399	9972
50,000	381	772	1491	8056	655	1318	2520	12455
75,000	382	776	1506	8514	658	1330	2563	13583

TABLE: www.research-advisors.com/tools/SampleSize.htm

Respondent Trends

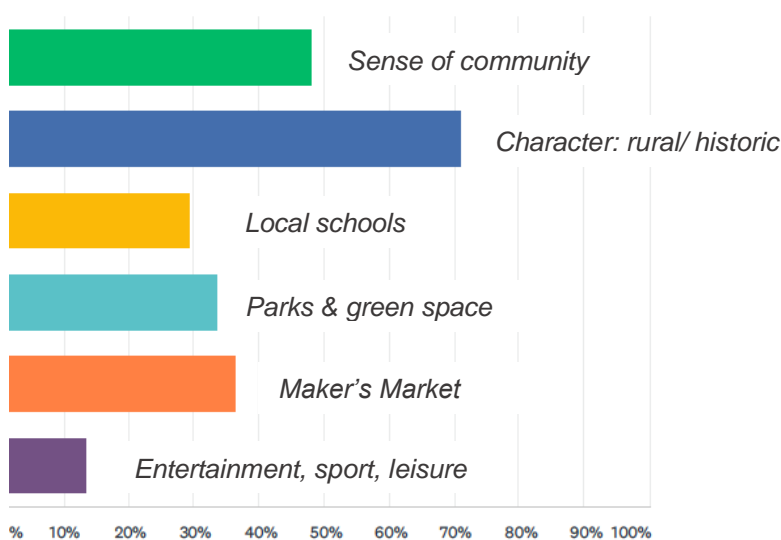
- 97% of participants said that they lived in the local area, whilst just under half worked in the local area. Many of those who did not work in the local area stated that they were retired. A postcode search helped to ensure that distribution of responses covered all areas of Uttoxeter and the nearby villages
- Interestingly, females represented 59% of responses
- 85% of respondents were aged 36 and over, with 26% aged over 66

03. Results

Existing Uttoxeter Strengths & Weaknesses

The respondents were asked to consider Uttoxeter in its existing form, and to identify the top two strengths and weaknesses. Suggested tick box answers came from the previous rounds of consultation undertaken by Cushman & Wakefield in 2020. Additionally, this early part of the survey asked participants to tick two solutions they thought would best address these identified weaknesses, and two facilities that were missing from Uttoxeter which have the greatest priority. Throughout the survey, people were able to add comments to any of the questions if they felt they wanted to say more than the options allowed.

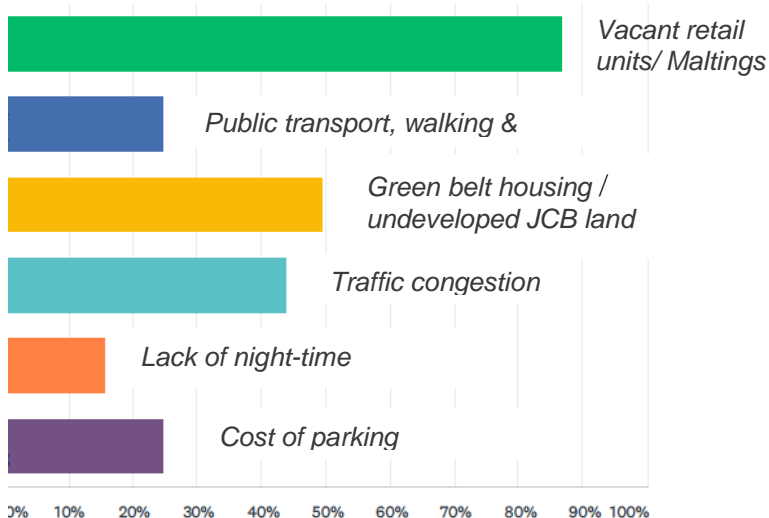
Greatest Strengths



Generally, people thought that Uttoxeter's character (rural/ historic market town) and sense of community were the greatest strengths. Several people are concerned that Uttoxeter's character is threatened as it becomes a 'commuter town'.

The Maker's Market was regularly mentioned in comments, and many participants would love to see more markets in the town, and view this as a great potential for increasing visitor numbers. URBED witnessed this bustling event during our consultation process, with people from across Staffordshire descending on the town.

Greatest Weaknesses



87% of respondents identified the vacant retail units in the town centre as one of the greatest weaknesses.

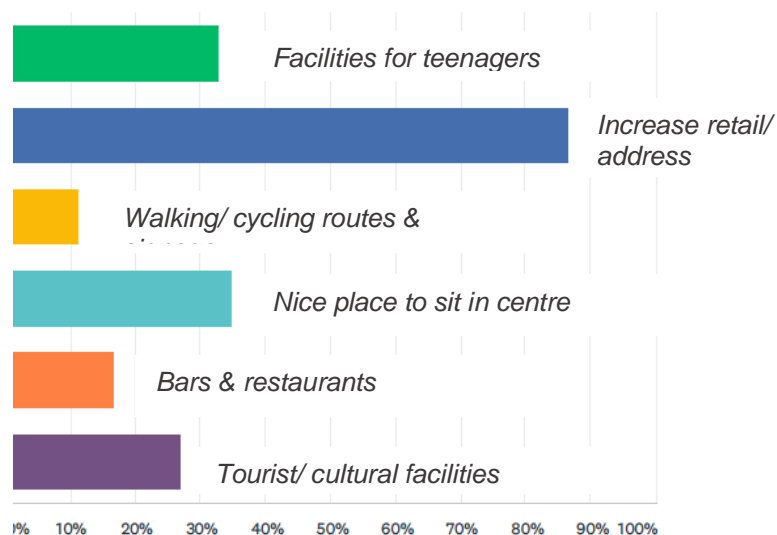
Almost 50% of people identified the amount of new housing on the green belt, and the partially undeveloped JCB on Pinfold St as greatest weaknesses.

In comments, the poor state of the Maltings was mentioned 37 times, and it was clear that the undeveloped JCB, A50 traffic and destruction of green space/ green-belt were also considered to be big issues in town.

03. Results

Existing Uttoxeter Strengths & Weaknesses

Missing Facilities to prioritise

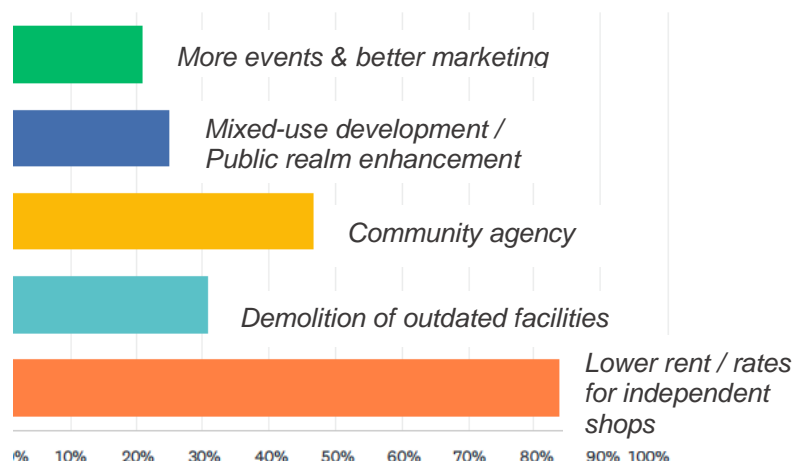


Increasing the variety of retail units in the town centre and addressing vacancies was seen as the utmost priority within the survey.

An increased provision of attractive and welcoming green spaces / areas to sit and meet others in the town centre was also deemed a priority. These should cater for all ages - several respondents recognised that teenagers have little to do in town.

Mixed responses were received to the idea of more food and drink outlets in town.

Best solutions to address weaknesses



In conversation at consultation events, several participants recognised the challenges of nationwide changes to High Street retail patterns, with many larger chain stores forced to close.

Over 80% think that incentives such as lowered rent and business rates / taxes may help independent businesses / start-ups to set up in Uttoxeter. This is an area where the council may have limited influence; but perhaps landlords could consider the benefits of this in terms of attracting more business and filling vacancies.

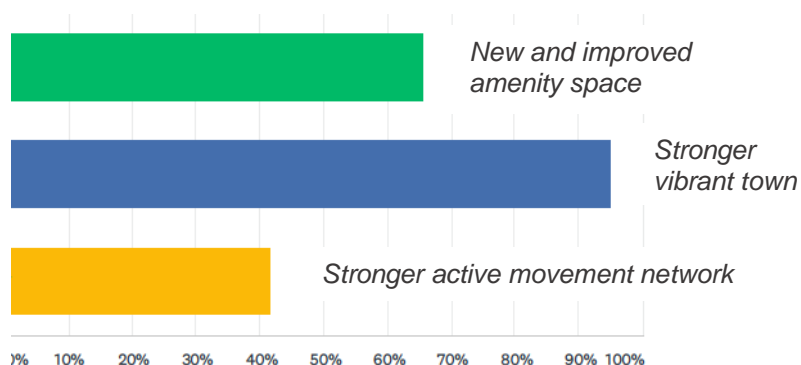
46% would like to see greater community involvement in future change. At the stakeholder workshops, several participants were keen to explore a town forum/ community group to action change in the town, whilst the Town Council were also keen for this to develop.

03. Results

Overall Masterplan Aims

The principle aims of the 2020 Masterplan Plus include creating a stronger and more vibrant town centre, a more comprehensive active movement network, and new and improved amenity space. Consultation on the key themes indicated general support for these overarching aims.

Do you agree that these key themes are important to the future regeneration of Uttoxeter?

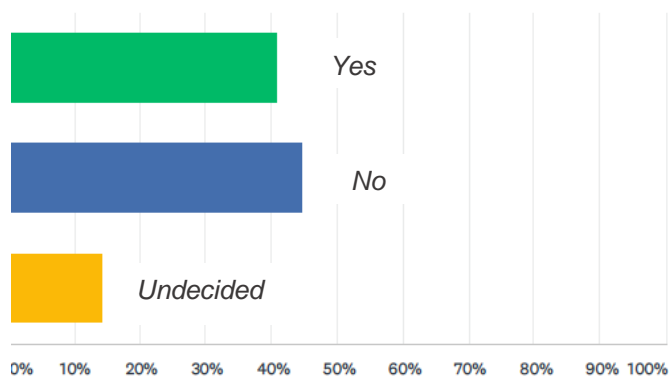


95% of people agreed that creating a stronger and more vibrant town centre was crucial to Uttoxeter's future success. This supports earlier trends seen in the assessment of strengths and weaknesses, and it a clear priority for local residents.

66% think that new and improved amenity space is important, and many would like to see a new park in Uttoxeter, and inviting public spaces throughout the town centre. Bramshall Lane Park is highly valued, but some people believe it is too busy. Support for 'a stronger active movement network' was lower however several people commented that they did not know what this meant, and many people supported footpath and cycling improvements within comments. If this key theme is set to continue it will be important for the Council to engage with residents about what the theme is trying to achieve.

Do you agree with the principle of developing town centre living opportunities, if there is the right balance of this with other uses?

The Masterplan Plus is residential led, with town centre living promoted as a means of increasing footfall in town, to better support high street businesses and create a safer, livelier environment. The survey explored whether people agreed with the principle of developing Town Centre living opportunities.



There was a relatively equal response to the idea of town centre living, so long as it is carefully balanced with other uses such as retail, and infrastructural improvements to support increased traffic and manage parking.

Many 'undecided' respondents support housing for older people, and mixed-use development with apartments over retail, but remained wary of too much housing. A majority stated that housing should not dominate or undermine the town centre as a commercial district. Several respondents thought Uttoxeter is growing too large for facilities and services, and many would like to see new housing concentrated on the JCB site.

03. Results

Key Site A: Trinity Square Shopping Centre

Respondents rated this site as the second most important for regeneration of the four options. The most popular ideas for the Trinity Square Shopping Centre site include ensuring there is plenty of parking near the GP surgery, extending and enhancing the health care centre, enhancing footpath connections into town, and activating the frontage along Bridge St – which is currently a blank wall. New housing was not a popular suggestion at this site, although some people liked the idea of affordable accommodation for older people near the GP Surgery, or flats above other facilities.

Many people commented that they would like a minor injuries / x-ray clinic, and walk-in centre availability at the health centre. Several commented that adequate parking (in particular, disabled parking) is essential by the GP surgery and should be free for appointments. Public realm improvements and green spaces linking the train station into town were also quite popular.

Most popular ideas:

- 76%:** Retain parking by GP surgery
- 57%:** Health centre extension
- 51%:** Footpath improvements
- 49%:** Activate Bridge St. frontage

Other ideas:

- 44%:** Support current tenants to relocate
- 37%:** Retail unit on corner of site
- 16%:** New housing to enhance viability

IMAGE: This was used as a consultation discussion prompt for people to consider and opportunity to add other ideas.



03. Results

Key Site B: The Quarry

Whilst the quarry was generally deemed a lower priority for respondents than the Maltings or Trinity Square, ideas for the site gained the highest overall level of support, with almost all suggestions gaining a majority vote. This was also the area that most participants seemed excited about, with many commenting that this could help Uttoxeter to become a tourist destination and raise the profile of the area, tapping into the success of Alton Towers and the Peak District. Many people liked the idea of open water swimming, accessible walking and cycling opportunities, and suggested other outdoor activities such as fishing and archery as well as ideas to support the environment and wildlife.

However, there was acknowledgement from many that the timescales for this plan would be long and several did not see this happening in the foreseeable future. Numerous people commented that this would only be viable if improvements to crossings over the A50 were made, and the McDonalds roundabout was noted as a priority for many – an initiative which was also strongly supported in prior consultation by the local MP.

Most popular ideas:

- 87%:** Landscaped lakes for walks & ecology
- 73%:** New woodland & walks
- 67%:** A50 crossing improvements
- 63%:** Pedestrian and cycle routes into town
- 59%:** Sailing and open water swimming

Other ideas:

- 54%:** Education centre
- 50%:** Tourist hub / visitor centre
- 47%:** Sports pitches for football / rugby etc



IMAGE: This was used as a consultation discussion prompt with potential ideas for people to consider and opportunity to add other ideas.

03. Results

Key Site C: The Maltings

74% of respondents prioritised the redevelopment of the Maltings over other sites and most conversation at consultation events focussed on this site. People generally believe that the current site is detrimental to the appearance and success of Uttoxeter. A majority stated that the bus station must be kept at the Maltings site, but many would be happy for it to alter slightly provided it was not lost. The public toilets are also deemed vital in this location. Over 50% support development of modern apartments above new retail/ food and drink outlets at the Maltings, whilst several commented that the scale of development should not be too big and that the area should remain retail and leisure focussed and retain the character of a market town. Many people worry that reductions to car parking will detract visitors and shoppers, and noted that the car park gets very busy at events such as the Maker’s Market or school pick up, although in conversation some acknowledged that improved connections to other town centre car parks and better public transport/ cycling routes may help to balance a reduction in parking.

Most popular ideas:

- 81%:** Retain public toilets
- 52%:** Apartments above new retail units
- 50%:** Altered bus station, more facilities
- 48%:** Food and drink venues
- 44%:** New landscaped paths

Other ideas:

- 42%:** Community meeting spaces
- 36%:** Pocket park/ square
- 28%:** Stronger frontage along Bradley St
- 15%:** Reduced car park
- 12%:** Densified housing

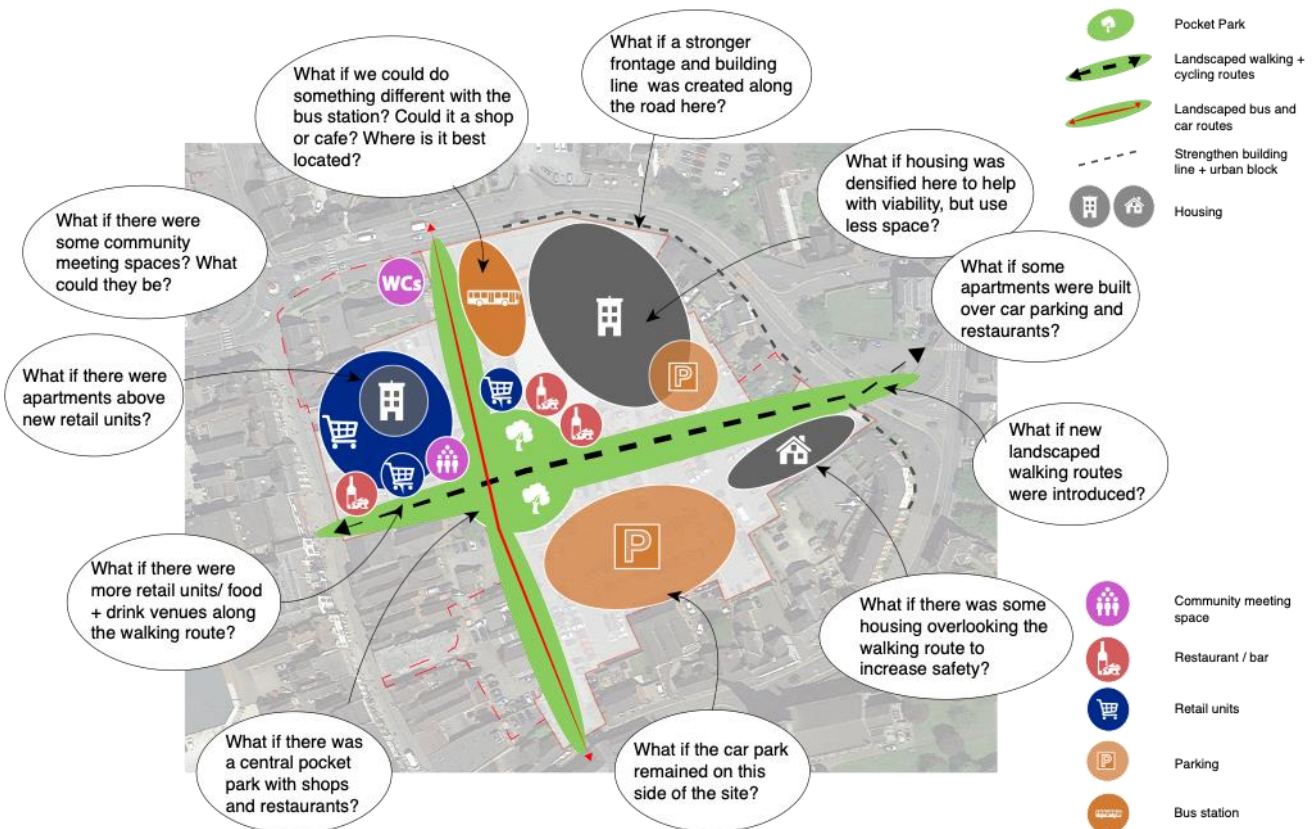


IMAGE: This was used as a consultation discussion prompt with potential ideas for people to consider and opportunity to add other ideas.

03. Results

Key Site D: The Wheatsheaf

This site was deemed a low priority for redevelopment with just 5% of people rating it as their top priority and many commenting that they would prioritise the JCB site being brought forward over redevelopment at this site. Many commented that the area is historically residential and would not object to more low-level housing here, however local residents of Chamberlain Close were concerned how access would be granted to housing behind the Wheatsheaf as they do not want to lose their green space.

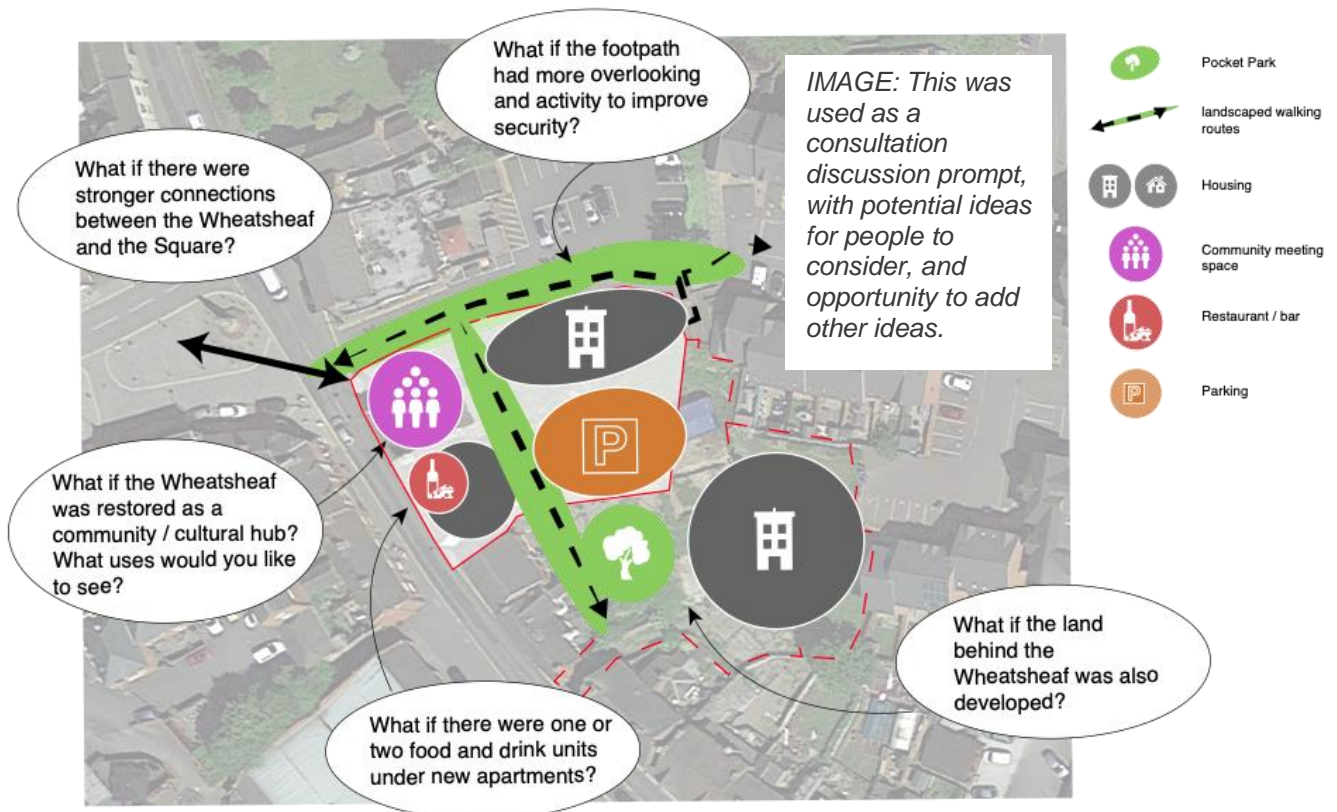
The majority of people would like the Grade II listed building to be brought back to life rather than demolished, with a community/ arts centre being most popular, potentially with apartments above and a pocket park/ memorial garden. Other popular ideas include a pocket park/ memorial garden. However, several others commented that the architecture has little merit and would rather focus spending elsewhere.

Most popular ideas:

- 60%: Restore as community hub
- 37%: Improve overlooking onto footpath to enhance safety

Other ideas:

- 30%: Housing for older people
- 29%: Housing on site behind Wheatsheaf
- 26%: Food and drink units under housing
- 20%: Demolish Wheatsheaf



03. Results

Further Comments

The questionnaire provided opportunities for participants to contribute additional comments throughout and make further suggestions for what they would like to happen in town. This page summarises topics which were most regularly discussed and should be read in conjunction with the previous pages on Key Priority Sites. A response was also received from the author of the Uttoxeter Masterplan petition (debated at Full Council in June 2021) which collated feedback that they had received from residents when obtaining signatures for the petition. This document provided useful further context and it broadly aligned with the responses received to the URBED questionnaire.

- Make sure that local opinion / community views are carefully considered in redevelopment process. Many expressed fear that outcomes of the consultation would be overlooked
- Several people raised concerns about funding viability and about landowners not being willing to sell or develop land and change therefore not materialising
- Many expressed strong opposition to unsympathetic housing projects, without sustainable amenities and infrastructural enhancements to support them
- Revival of the Market Town: more regular markets and covered space for markets and events
- Look to Ludlow as a precedent. Create a stronger aspirational identity for Uttoxeter – play on historic character and agricultural past
- Bring life and community back to the town centre, prioritising local shops and in particular clothes shops. Make Uttoxeter attractive to new businesses. The retail park detracts from town centre
- Also consider facilities in Uttoxeter's residential areas and in local villages, for those unable to come into town. Local cafes and community spaces
- Develop old JCB sites (Pinfold St) with new housing and park for community leisure and events. This site was mentioned over 100 times in the question *"Are there any other sites you would prefer to prioritise over the 4 proposals shown on the banners?"*
- Promote sustainable development: Masterplan should place more emphasis on nature, environmental benefits, climate change and benefits to the existing local community
- Essential to have more services, entertainment, retail and workspaces within the town centre to accommodate the burgeoning population growth
- More trees, greenery, places to sit, places to play and public gardens in the town centre
- Pedestrianisation of the Market Square and High Street and café culture introduced
- Ensure there is not a substantial reduction of easy and affordable car parking available within the town centre. A thorough traffic and parking survey should be completed to estimate the volume of traffic on central Uttoxeter roads if all proposed housing estates are built
- Make Trinity Square/ Bridge Street a more inviting gateway into town. Improve pedestrian links and wayfinding from the racecourse and train station
- Improve public transport services in Uttoxeter and keep the bus station central
- A space for teenagers, and a space for elderly people. Activities for these age groups
- Arts, crafts and cultural space

04. Conclusions

The residents of Uttoxeter and nearby areas are passionate and care a lot about the future of the town. There is fear that Uttoxeter may soon become a characterless commuter town and lose its historic, rural, market town appeal and its sense of community. Instead, residents would like to draw lessons from Ludlow, Ashbourne and Leek and strengthen the market town identity.

Like many similarly sized settlements across the UK, the town centre is struggling to compete with retail parks, supermarkets, online shopping and the wider range of shops in larger nearby settlements. However, Uttoxeter's High Street is actually faring far better than many – and there are several independent businesses which are thriving, along with a bustling Maker's Market, lively family events such as Lark in the Park, and great community assets such as the Heath Community Centre, Redfern Museum and several community gardens.

Local people would like to see more independent shops and restaurants in town. They strongly support reduced business rates and rents to incentivise start-ups although many recognise that the council would have limited power in this decision. It is apparent that the redevelopment of the Maltings shopping precinct is a key priority. Most people would be happy to see this demolished and replaced with a new attractive mixed-use development in keeping with the scale and character of the area. The majority of people would support new apartments over retail units at the Maltings and residential upper floors throughout the town centre - whilst ground floors should facilitate retail, commerce and leisure. They would like new housing to be carefully balanced with improvements to infrastructure, public services and parking and would also welcome pocket parks, trees, signposting, play spaces and seating within the town centre – making it a more attractive and inclusive space.

Another key priority for the people of Uttoxeter is the redevelopment of the vacant JCB sites on Pinfold Street which many complained was an 'eyesore'. Residents would be happy to see housing on this land in addition to a new public park along Picknall Brook, which would ease pressure on Bramshall Road Park. The Quarry scheme excites many and is deemed to be a bold strategy for increasing tourism and strengthening health and wellbeing. Ideas for walks around lakes and woodland, ecological improvements and outdoor sports were well received. However, many people felt that this was unlikely to occur for a long time and would only benefit Uttoxeter if the right connections are made across the A50 and into town (buses, cycle paths, footpaths etc.). The Wheatsheaf site is of lower priority to the majority of respondents, and opinions varied about what should happen at the Trinity Square Shopping Centre site, although most people welcomed enhanced services at the healthcare facility.

Accessibility to the town centre was regularly discussed, with concerns over the effect that a population increase would have upon traffic congestion in town. People are worried about losing too much car parking in the town centre and made it clear that the bus station must remain close to its current location. The public toilets are also a very important public amenity.

Several respondents commented that the masterplan should be holistic and aspirational and consider the town as a whole – not just implementing construction in the town centre. Many people are concerned about climate change and would like the council to prioritise sustainable development and environmentally-friendly projects.

05. Next Steps

This report will be submitted to the to the Deputy Leader for Regeneration and Planning Policy at East Staffordshire Borough Council. The Cabinet at ESBC will then consider the next steps taking this consultation into account.

The community have made it clear that they would like to be kept informed of decisions and have opportunities for further consultation as the masterplan progresses. It will be important for the outcome of the further consultation to be widely communicated amongst Borough Councillors, Town Councillors, stakeholders and the public. The public should also be kept informed of any progress on a regular basis, if the Council takes forward any regeneration projects in Uttoxeter for these priority areas.

Some of the ideas coming out of this consultation exercise will require significant funding and take a number of years to implement. As such, it will be important for the Council to take forward smaller regeneration initiatives to enhance the town whilst still moving forward strategically. For example, this could include an enhancement of the Maltings precinct in terms of greening the area and providing better seating.

With this in mind, it will be for the Council to identify a programme plan for how the regeneration of Uttoxeter could be phased and how smaller, iterative enhancements could help the town move in the right direction.

Appendices

- a) Public consultation questionnaire
- b) School pupil questionnaire (sent to Thomas Alleynes)
- c) Site diagrams – discussion prompts for consultation events