

GRIMSBY Town Centre Masterplan

Statement of Public and Stakeholder Engagement

05.08.2020



Contents

Section	Pages
Introduction	3
How we engaged	4 - 6
Who we engaged with	7 - 9
Consultation results	10 - 25
Summary	26 - 28
Appendix 1 – Focus Group participants	29 - 30

Introduction

This Statement of Public and Stakeholder Engagement provides a report of consultation undertaken in July 2020, as part of the preparation of the Grimsby Town Centre Masterplan Framework and Grimsby Town Deal.

A wide range of engagement activities have been carried out, both directly by North East Lincolnshire Council/ENGIE and the Arup project team on behalf of the Council. Because of social distancing limitations during the Covid-19 pandemic, public and stakeholder engagement has been carried out online via a Virtual Engage consultation platform and Microsoft Teams for focus group sessions. This has been supported by measures to provide access to the consultation for people who were unable to access it online.

This report sets out details on how we have engaged with the public and stakeholders, who we have engaged with, and an analysis of the results from the consultation itself. It also sets out the next steps to be taken, including the key messages emerging from the consultation which will be taken into account in the development of the Town Centre Masterplan.

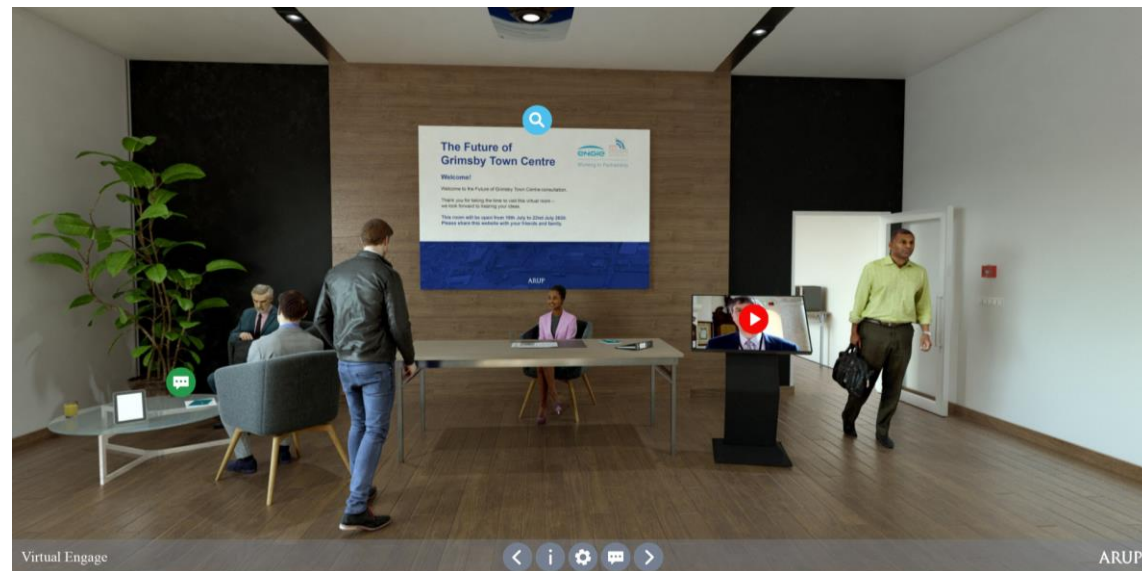
How we engaged

Consultation took place for 12 days, between Wednesday 15 July and Sunday 26 July. We engaged via a number of different methods over this time:

***Virtual Engage*, online public engagement platform**

Information and visuals on the draft masterplan were displayed on boards in a virtual 360 degree 'room', alongside a video introduction to the proposals from Cllr Philip Jackson (Leader of the Council). The virtual room included a feedback form, with ten questions linked to the materials on the display boards. The Virtual Engage room can still be accessed:

<https://virtualengage.arup.com/grimsby-town-centre/>



How we engaged

Offline public engagement

Covid-19 has necessitated changes to the usual way in which public engagement would be carried out, with public events not possible due to social distancing restrictions. Whilst the use of Virtual Engage has allowed engagement to continue, it was important to provide methods of engagement for people who were unable to access the virtual room. Printed copies of the display boards and feedback form were available, with all publicity including a Council phone number by which these could be requested.

Stakeholder focus groups

We held focus groups on 20 and 21 July, with around 30 stakeholders invited to represent a cross-section of community, business and voluntary sector groups as well as advisory organisations. Focus groups were held online via Microsoft Teams, and consisted of a two-hour discussion around the draft masterplan framework, providing opportunities for participants to discuss thoughts amongst themselves and with the project team. Within each session we used software called Polly, a plug-in to Teams, to allow participants to 'vote' on different proposals and form a basis for further exploration.

Other stakeholder engagement

During the development of plans for consultation we engaged with a number of other specific stakeholders, identified by the Council, to understand their ideas for the town. This included:

- Council officers
- Ward councillors
- Identified businesses and investors
- Voluntary and community group representatives
- The Grimsby Town Board
- The town's Commercial Property Group and Development and Growth Board

How we engaged continued

Advertising and publicity

A range of measures were undertaken to ensure that the consultation reached the widest possible audience, despite the restrictions imposed by Covid-19:

- A press release was written by the council including key information and images from the consultation, sent to all regional media.
- A digital package was paid for by the Council to ensure coverage in the Grimsby Telegraph and its website Grimsby Live (<https://www.grimsbytelegraph.co.uk/news/grimsby-news/huge-changes-planned-grimsby-town-4356435>).
- Posts were made on NELC's main Facebook account (12,000 followers), with the Grimsby Memories Facebook page (24,000 followers) also posting a link.
- BBC Radio Humberside made frequent mentions to the consultation on air, and interviewed the Leader of the Council.
- Posters advertising the consultation were displayed at 11 public venues around the town centre (shops, cafes, and community centres) and 10 businesses in Freshney Place Shopping Centre.
- Council and ENGIE stakeholder lists (around 4,000 contacts) were emailed with a link to the Virtual Engage platform, encouraging participation and response to the feedback form.
- Key businesses and education providers around Grimsby Town Centre were identified by the Council and emailed, asking them to share the link around all their staff, colleagues and students.
- Business support groups in the town were sent the link and asked to email around their members.
- All NELC and ENGIE staff were sent the link and asked to share among family and friends.

Who we have engaged with

Virtual Engage

During the 12 day consultation, **3,444** people visited the Virtual Engage site. Analytics data shows that:

- **57%** of visitors came via links posted on Facebook, **25%** by directly clicking on a link to the page (likely to mostly be via emails to mailing lists), **6%** via the NELC website and **5%** via the Grimsby Telegraph article. The remaining 7% were via a variety of other sources, including search engines.
- **61%** viewed Virtual Engage on a phone, compared to **23%** on a computer and **16%** on a tablet.
- The largest number of page views were on the second day of the consultation – 16 July.

In total, **438** responses to the feedback form were received – based upon information provided by respondents, **94%** were from individuals and **6%** were on behalf of a business or organisation. Further analysis of the demographics and location of respondents is set out on the following pages.

Focus group invitees

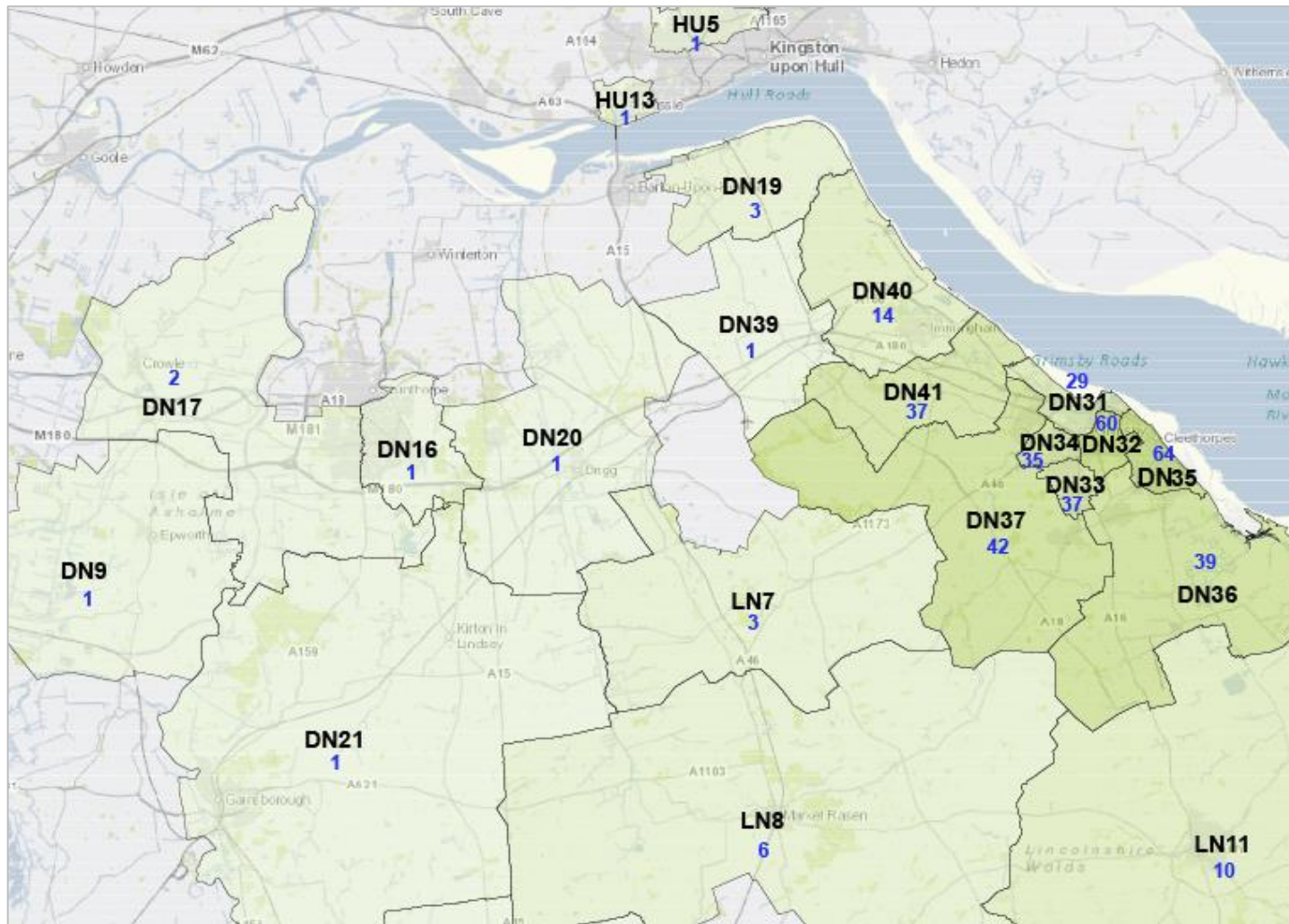
Around 30 stakeholders (see Appendix 1) were invited to join focus groups where perspectives on the proposals could be explored in greater depth. Invitees were selected by the Council to represent a cross-section of community, business and voluntary sector groups as well as advisory organisations. This allowed a diverse range of perspectives and town centre user requirements to be brought together.

My Town

Since 2019 the Government has hosted the ‘My Town’ platform, providing communities in each of the 101 towns eligible for Town Deals with a place to post suggestions. Whilst not included in the analysis in this report, we have considered the almost 100 comments on the Grimsby’s My Town platform (<https://mytown.communities.gov.uk/town/grimsby/>) when preparing the masterplan.

Who we have engaged with continued

Location of consultation respondents



Based upon postcode data, the majority of respondents to the consultation live within Greater Grimsby itself – with the DN32 (East Marsh and Old Clee) and DN35 (Cleethorpes) postcodes having the highest proportion of respondents.

Significant numbers of responses also came from Grimsby's wider catchment area, notably the DN36, DN37 and DN41 postcodes. Smaller but still notable numbers of respondents also came from further afield, such as Market Rasen (LN8) and Louth (LN11).

Who we have engaged with demographics

Demographics of consultation respondents

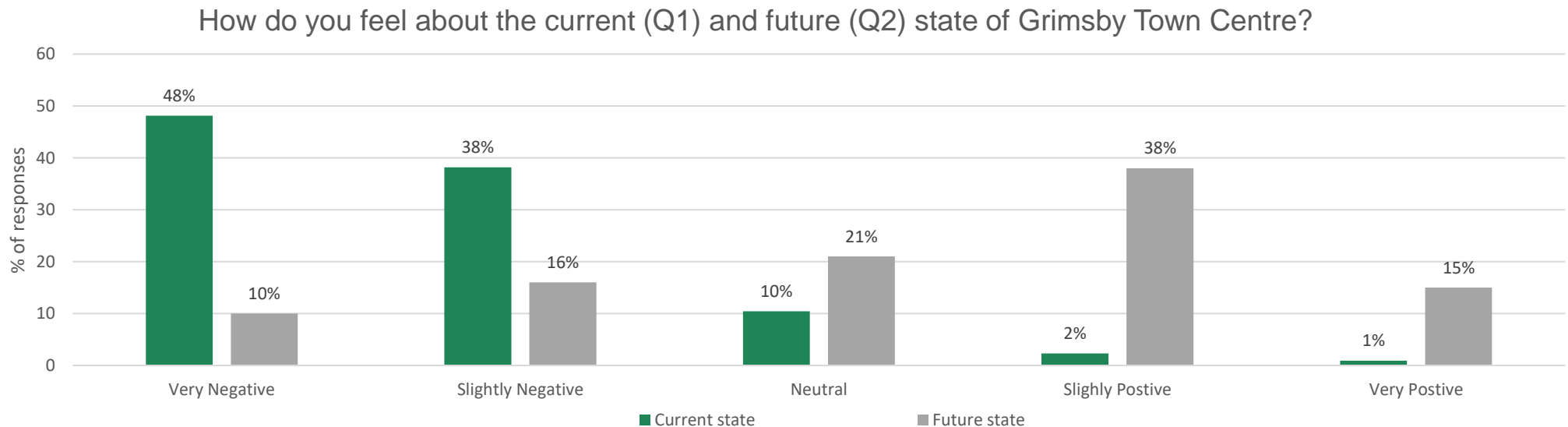
- A higher proportion of females (**57%**) than males (**42%**) responded, with 1% non-binary.
- Of respondents who indicated their ethnicity, White British people were slightly over-represented at **97%**; compared to the **95%** of North East Lincolnshire residents who were White British in the 2011 Census.
- The chart below illustrates that the youngest and oldest age groups were under-represented in responses to the consultation. The 45-54 year old age group were over-represented.

Age groups of consultation respondents compared to 2011 Census population for North East Lincolnshire (Age groups under 16 excluded)



Consultation results

Q1/2: Perceptions of Grimsby Town Centre



Survey respondents were clearly negative about the current state of Grimsby Town Centre. However, respondents remain generally positive and optimistic for the future. By asking the same questions in future town centre engagement exercises, progress on these metrics can be measured.

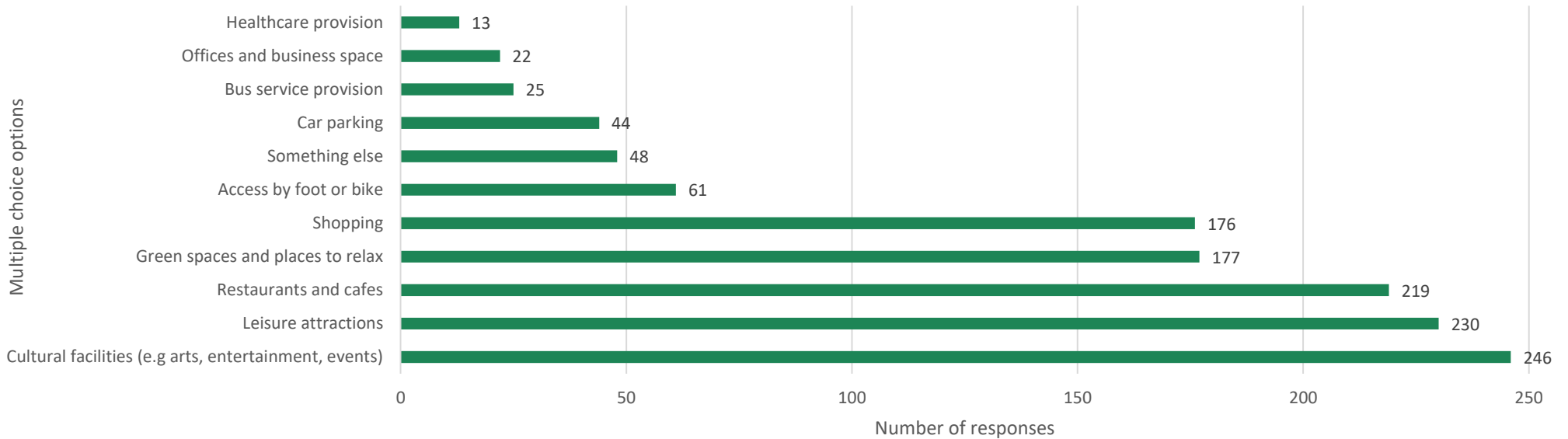
Focus group participants expressed similar views through polling and subsequent discussions. Whilst the current challenges in Grimsby Town Centre (exacerbated by Covid-19) are clear, there was a sense of optimism about the opportunity that ongoing and future investment offers for change.

Key messages

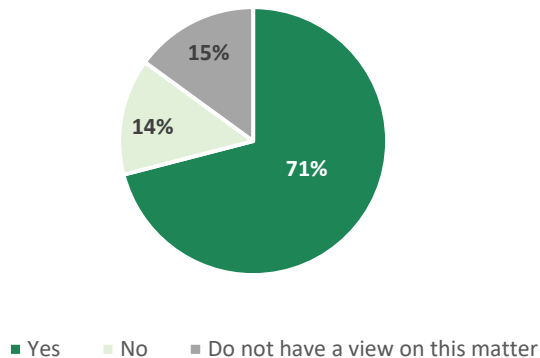
- The Town Centre Masterplan has a clear role to play in addressing negative perceptions.

Q3: Future priorities for Grimsby

Q3a: What three things would you most like to see prioritised in Grimsby Town Centre in the future?



Q3b: Would you support the idea of a new ice rink located within the town centre?



Survey respondents expressed a clear desire to prioritise leisure-oriented activities, cultural facilities and restaurants and cafes. It is notable that shopping – a main ‘traditional’ town centre use – has been prioritised to a lesser extent. Respondents’ prioritisation has also tended to lean towards uses and activities, rather than supporting infrastructure provision.

Respondents have also expressed clear support for the provision of a new ice rink within Grimsby Town Centre.¹²²

Q3: Future priorities for Grimsby continued

Survey respondents who felt that ‘something else’ should be prioritised were asked what that would be. Key identified themes included the following:

- Providing a mix of uses to have both a day and night time economy
- Restoring derelict buildings and enhancing heritage assets
- Provision of a public transport hub
- Measures to improve public and community safety
- Measures to improve sustainability, including increased renewable energy provision
- Residential development, particularly affordable / low cost
- Provision of public toilets
- Development of new and improved educational facilities
- Provision of youth space and facilities for the elderly

Focus group participants expressed a similar view that the provision of a mix of uses – particularly focusing on a leisure and cultural offer – will be crucial in driving town centre regeneration – whilst shopping will continue to have its place, it can no longer be the town centre’s main role. Discussions focused on the particular need to focus on the ‘early evening economy’ to help drive leisure and culture within the town centre, giving people reasons to stay after shopping or work.

Key messages

- The Masterplan’s proposed development principle to provide of a mix of uses is important, given respondent’s prioritisation of leisure, culture and restaurants.
- The principle of a new ice rink within the town centre is supported.
- Public and community safety, and sustainability measures, emerged as the most commonly identified alternative future priorities – these can also be considered in the Masterplan.

Q4: Grimsby Town Centre vision

Survey respondents were asked whether they agree with the vision set out below. Some **86%** of respondents indicated that they do, compared to **14%** who disagree.

“Grimsby Town Centre will be a successful and vibrant town centre that is well used by local people and visitors throughout the day and the evening. It will provide a range of functions and be home to a number of uses including shopping, businesses, homes, cafes and restaurants, and leisure activities. There will be exciting spaces for all ages to learn, explore new things, and develop skills. Grimsby will be known for clean town centre growth and use of low carbon technologies. It will feel safe and welcoming to all and its heritage assets and waterside location will be celebrated and well used.”

Respondents were also asked to contribute any further ideas for the vision. Whilst some of these reflect priorities which are touched on in the vision, they provide a useful indication of people's wants and needs for the future. Key themes are:

- *Safety* – address issues of anti-social behavior in the town, and increase policing.
- *Attractions and culture* – provide seasonal events, provide an ice rink, boost tourism.
- *Transport and movement* – improve bus provision, provide more car parking, pedestrianise streets.
- *Accessibility* – improve access between areas in town centre, improve disabled access/movement.
- *Climate change and sustainability* – town of the future, provide electric vehicle car charging points, green regeneration.
- *Heritage* – provide heritage walks/trails, reuse existing buildings, celebrate the town's history.
- *Waterfront* – make a central part of the vision, maximise leisure opportunities on the waterfront.

Q4: Grimsby Town Centre vision continued

- *Business and skills* – more opportunities for local independent businesses, attract and retain young professionals, higher educational facilities, local market place for small businesses.
- *Community and youth spaces* – places for youth, creative hub, places for the elderly.
- *Health and wellbeing* – for the community and visitors.
- *Retail/shopping* – provide a diversity of shopping, and independent shops.
- *Maintenance* – focus on cleanliness, and an attractive town centre.
- *Leisure* – introduce watersports, entertainment facilities.
- *Outdoor space and environment* – landscaping, natural environment, public realm.
- *Civic pride* – celebrate the people of the town, ensure community ownership in proposals.

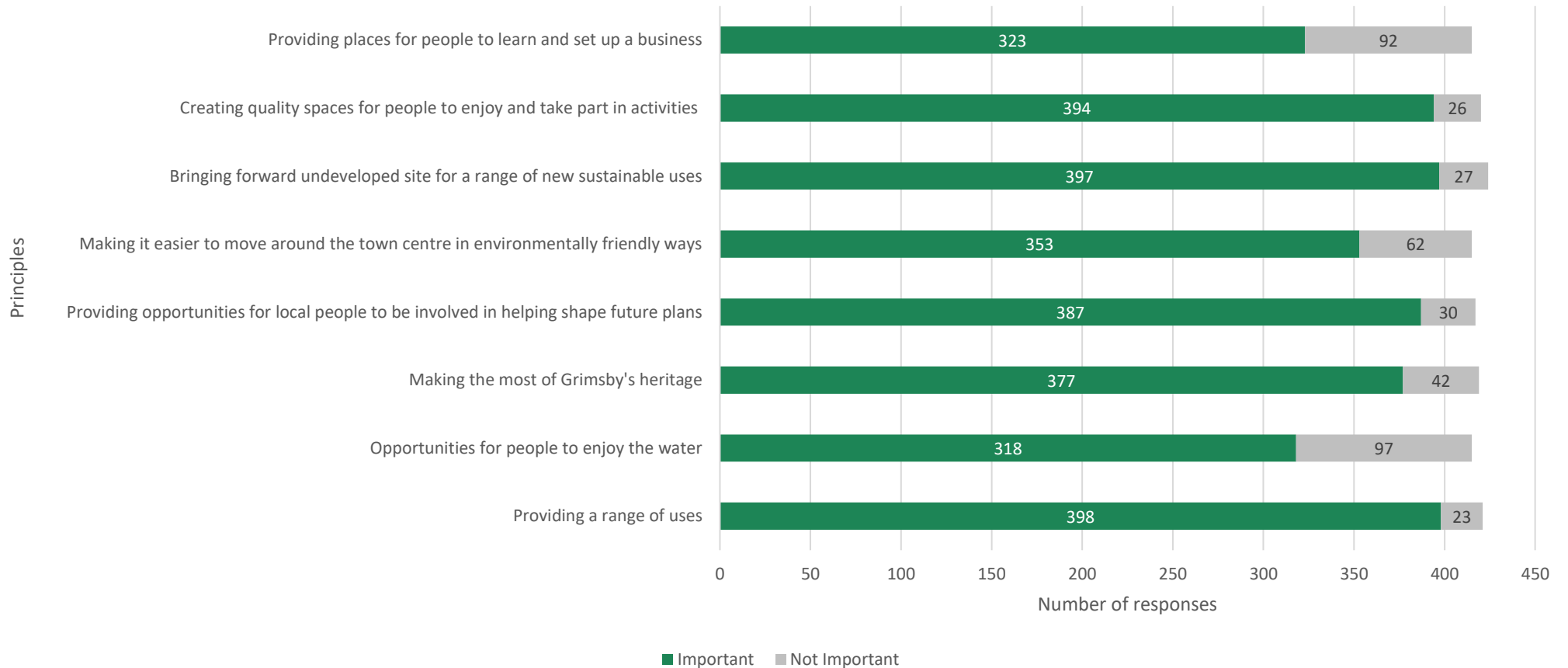
Focus group participants highlighted a need for the vision to focus on why people should choose to visit Grimsby in preference to other towns – it should be a destination, with a clear purpose. The value of building on unique assets and heritage was also emphasised, alongside civic pride.

Key messages

- The vision for Grimsby Town Centre set out within the consultation is broadly supported.
- Grimsby needs to be able to articulate what makes it unique and worth visiting – the vision can be updated to ensure that this is drawn out.
- A number of ideas emerged in response to the vision, with reoccurring themes around safety, heritage and leisure/culture – updates to the vision can consider how these are reflected.

Q5/6 Development principles

Q5: Which of the following principles are important to you for the future development of Grimsby Town Centre?



Q5/6 Development principles continued

Survey respondents indicated a strong level of support for the proposed development principles.

Respondents were also asked what they like about other town centres. Key ideas tended to reflect responses to Q3 and Q4:

- Provision of a more diverse range of shops, from chains to independents.
- Provision of a clear central hub with transport infrastructure and other amenities.
- Provision of cultural facilities such as public art, seasonal attractions, interesting markets
- A sense of welcome.
- Provision of clean and attractive public realm, and outdoor spaces with a green environment.
- Provision of leisure opportunities on the waterfront.
- A general feeling of safety.

Places such as Lincoln, Liverpool and York were frequently identified for the ways in which they harness their heritage and proximity to water to create attractive environments, and attract visitors.

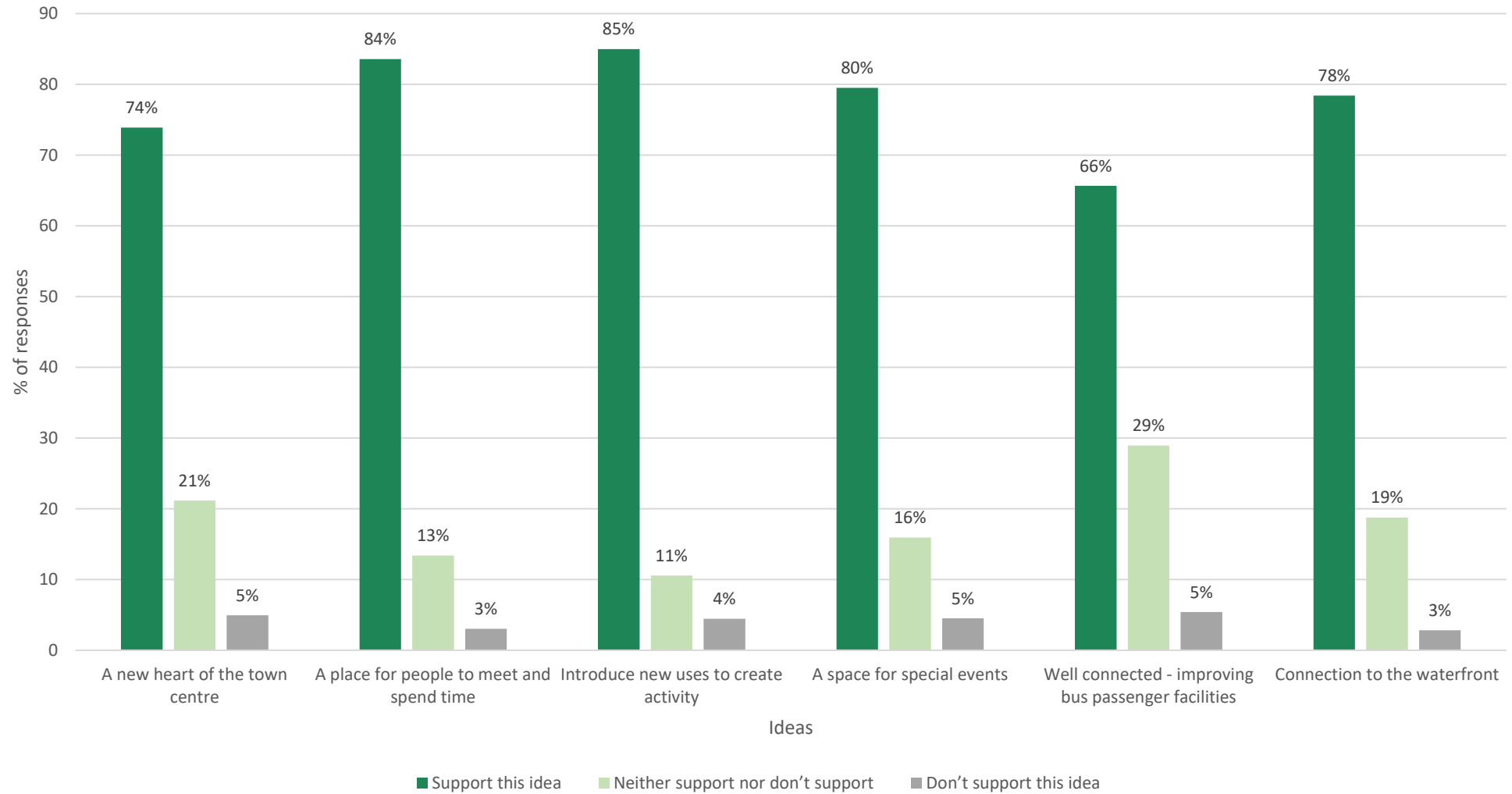
Focus group participants indicated strong support for the development principles, although it was noted that they could apply in many places and the Masterplan therefore needs to implement them in a way that responds to Grimsby's needs and assets. The importance of Grimsby as a sub-regional destination was also highlighted.

Key messages

- All of the eight identified principles are supported.
- Development needs to harness Grimsby's unique character to create the interest needed to attract visitors – particularly its proximity to the water, and its heritage.

Q7: Ideas for the Riverhead

Q7: What ideas do you support for Riverhead?



Q7: Ideas for the Riverhead continued

Consultation respondents expressed clear support for the ideas presented for the Riverhead. Key additional ideas suggested include:

- *Safety* – focus on an environment safe for families, provision of better lighting, encourage community ownership of the square.
- *A University presence* – provision of a new University campus in this area, to grow ‘student culture’.
- *Local business space* – provision for business and skills growth, small business spaces.
- *Heritage* – preserve the ‘Barge’, better promote the history of the area.
- *Housing* – potential for residential development in this area.
- *Cultural facilities* – provision of gallery space, craft centres.
- *Public realm / outdoor spaces* – provision of outdoor seating, public art.
- *Transport* – restore the bus station to provide a transport hub, park and ride provision, car parking.
- *Nature and climate change* – soft landscaping, climate change adaptation, plant trees, nature walk.

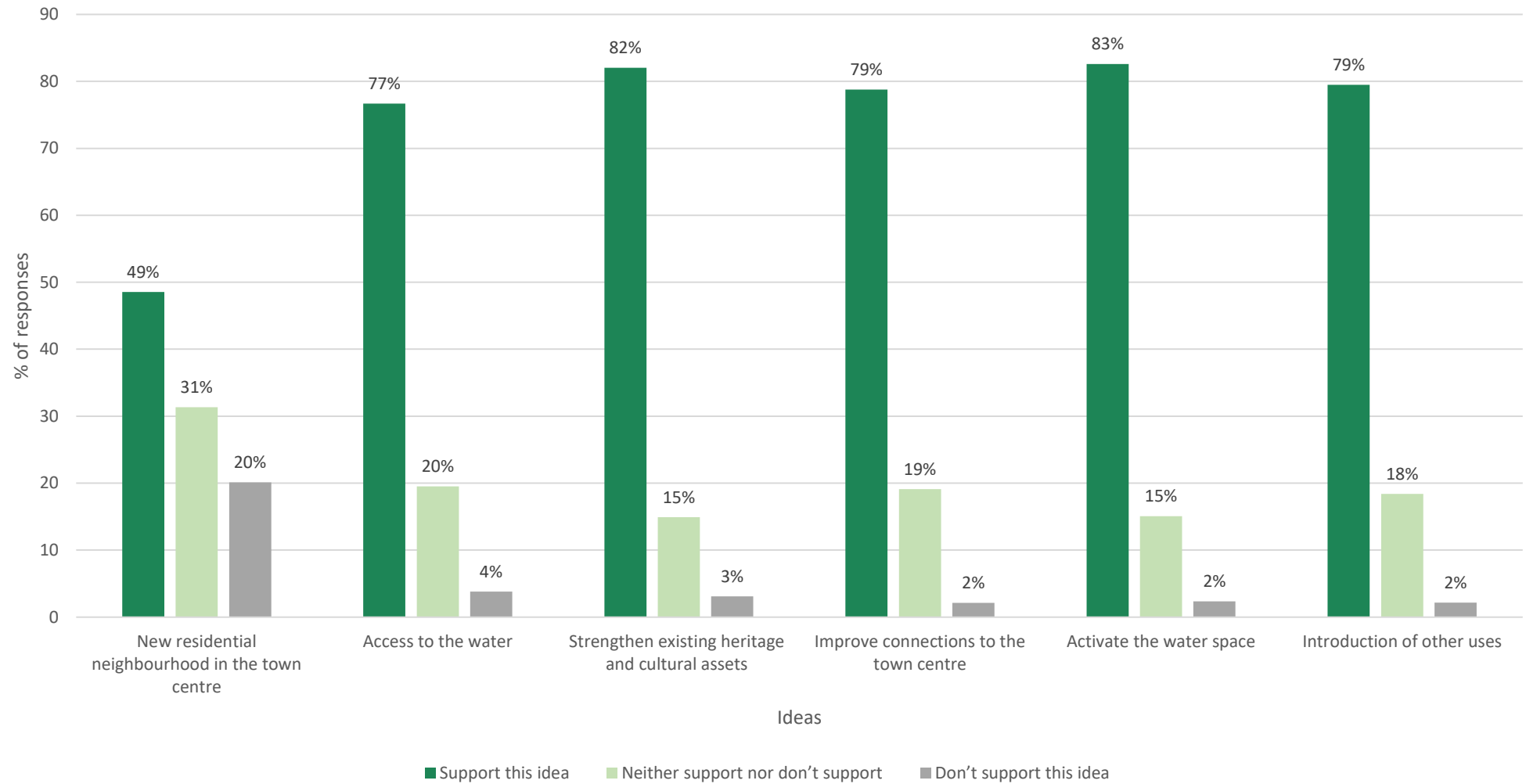
Focus group participants were generally in support of the ideas set out for the Riverhead. Other ideas put forward focussed on community and cultural linkages, and provision of better links across Fredrick Ward Way to break down the barrier it poses to Alexandra Dock.

Key messages

- Respondents support the ideas for the Riverhead, particularly ‘A place for people to meet and spend time’ and ‘Introduce new uses to create activity’.
- The range of additional ideas will be considered in the development of more detailed proposals.

Q8: Ideas for Garth Lane

Q8: What ideas do you support for Garth Lane?



Q8: Ideas for Garth Lane continued

Consultation respondents expressed general support for the ideas presented for Garth Lane, although the provision of a new residential neighbourhood was not as well supported as other ideas. Key additional ideas suggested include:

- *Safety* – better policing in the area, improved lighting.
- *Transport and connections* – parking provision, better connections to other areas, access for all.
- *Employment opportunities* – opportunities to build skills for local industries, live/work provision.
- *University presence* – opportunity to provide a university campus, other educational facilities.
- *Housing* – mixed views due to potential safety/cohesion issues, housing for young professionals.
- *Cultural facilities* – museum, pop up events.
- *Heritage* – use existing heritage buildings, provide heritage trails and information.
- *Recreational activities* – ice rink in this location, watersport activities, leisure and entertainment.
- *Nature* – provision of trees, green space.

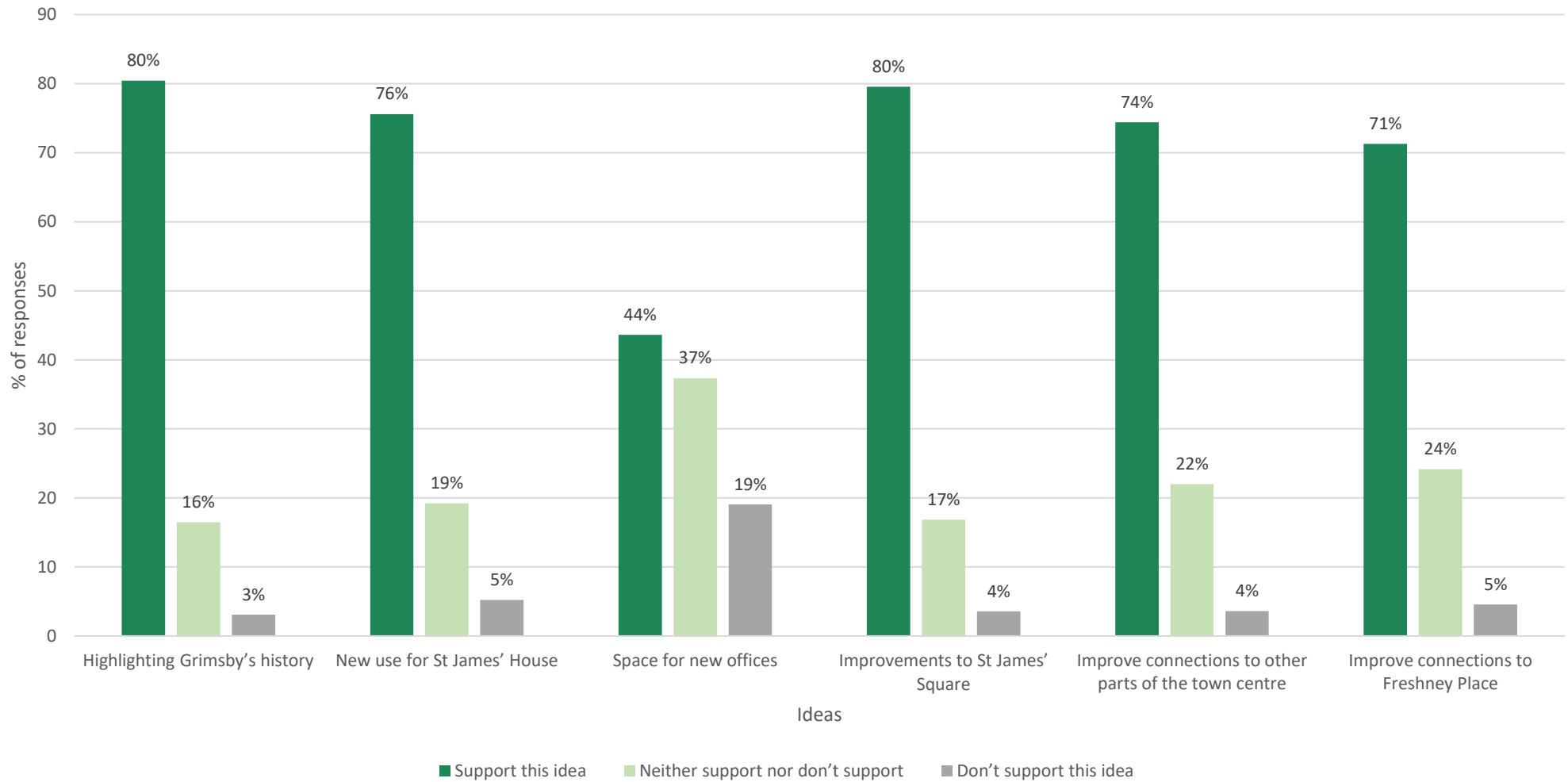
Focus group participants were generally in support of the ideas set out for Garth Lane. Discussions focussed on ensuring the ‘right’ type of residential offer, appropriately linked to existing neighbouring residential areas around Alexandra Road, and the provision of public realm alongside the water.

Key messages

- Respondents support the ideas for Garth Lane, particularly ‘Strengthen existing heritage and cultural assets’ and ‘Activate the water space’
- Whilst views are more mixed on a ‘New residential neighbourhood within the area’, more respondents support this idea than object. Given the benefits of increased footfall and vitality in the area that a residential use in the area would offer, it is recommended that this idea remains.
- The range of additional ideas will be considered in the development of more detailed proposals.

Q9: Ideas for St James

Q9: What ideas do you support for St James'?



Q9: Ideas for St James continued

Consultation respondents expressed general support for the ideas presented for St James, although the provision of space for new offices was not as well supported as other ideas. Key additional ideas suggested include:

- *Safety* – increased policing and better security.
- *Housing* – provision of living space in the area.
- *Leisure opportunities* – café culture and restaurants harnessing the square's sense of place.
- *St James House* – suggested uses as offices, NELC customer hub, education, local history centre.
- *Events space / culture* – provide an information centre, flexible venue spaces.
- *Civic Pride* – use the square and its surroundings to generate a sense of community.
- *Outdoor space / public realm* – provision of public art, green spaces, outdoor seating, lighting.
- *Access / connections / wayfinding* – better signage, access to car parks.

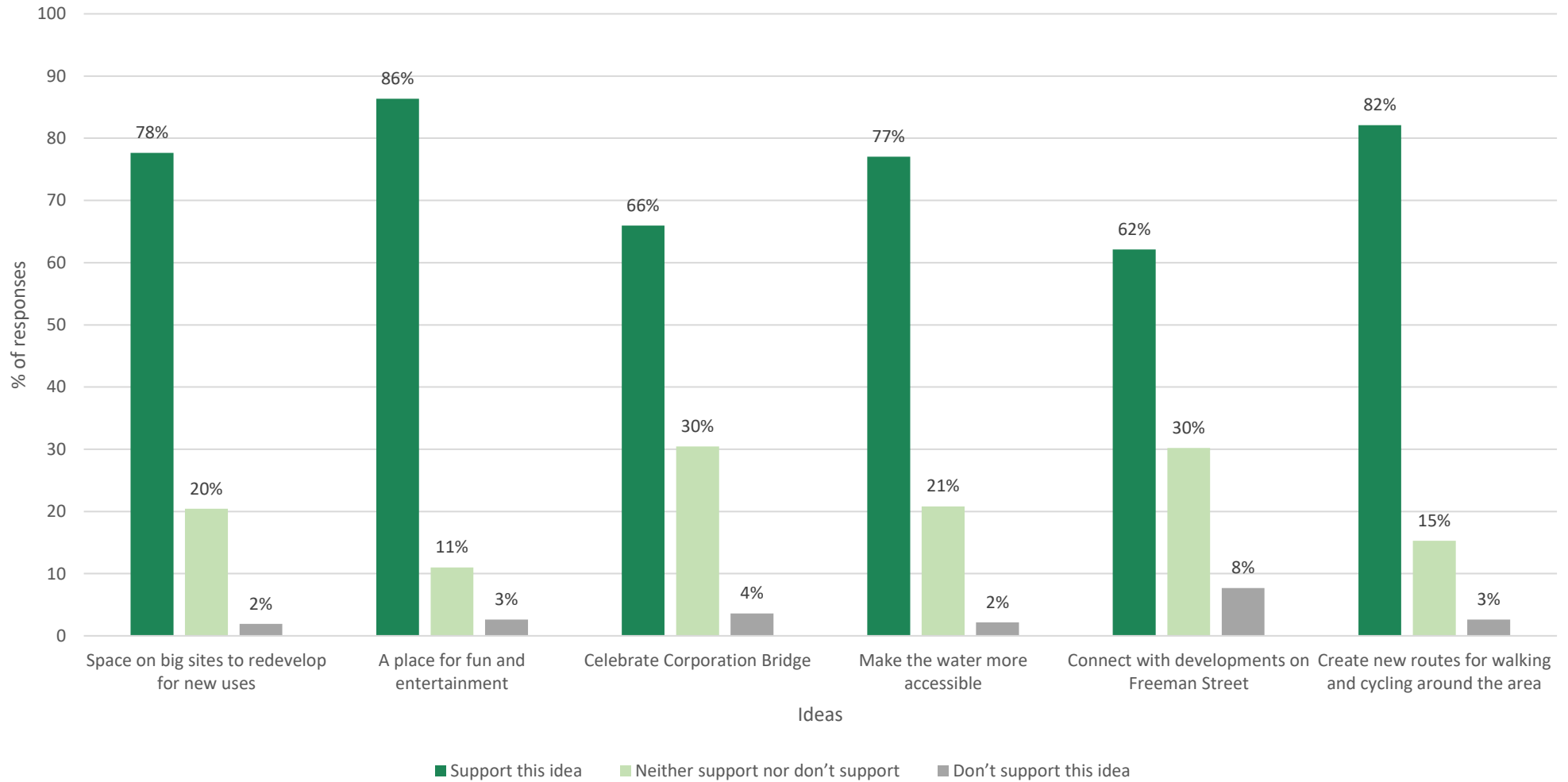
Focus group participants were generally in support of the ideas set out for St James. Discussions queried the realities of new office provision in the current economic context, and highlighted the need to maximise heritage opportunities for development in this area. It was also suggested that St James and the Riverhead should both be considered as the 'heart' of the town centre.

Key messages

- Respondents support the ideas for St James, particularly 'Highlighting Grimsby's history' and 'Improvements to St James Square'.
- Whilst challenges around the viability of new office development are recognised, in the long term it is considered that St James Square will remain a strong location – but flexibility will be key.
- A 'dual heart' approach could be considered in the Masterplan, with the Riverhead and St James anchoring opposite ends of the town centre.
- The range of additional ideas will be considered in the development of more detailed proposals.

Q10: Ideas for Alexandra Dockside

Q10: What ideas do you support for Alexandra Dockside?



Q10: Ideas for Alexandra Dockside continued

Consultation respondents expressed clear support for the ideas presented for Alexandra Dockside.

Key additional ideas suggested include:

Outdoor spaces – provision of entertainment space, focus on the water, location for events and markets.

Heritage and culture – celebrate fishing heritage, provision of a heritage trail, showcase historic vessels

Housing – provision of new housing in this area.

Safety – improved policing, make the area feel safe for families to enjoy, better surveillance through stronger connections to other areas.

Local environment and climate change – use area for renewable energy production, improvement of habitats for wildlife, deployment of low carbon technologies.

Leisure opportunities – waterside cafes, entertainment spaces, food establishments, a new water facility providing educational and training opportunities.

Connections – clear walking paths, provision of a water taxi service, improved cycle routes.

Focus group participants were generally in support of the ideas set out for Alexandra Dockside, particularly the use of the water for recreation and ensuring that development utilises heritage assets within and around the dock (including historic fishing vessels).

Key messages

- Respondents support the ideas for Alexandra Dockside, particularly ‘A place for fun and entertainment’ and ‘Create new routes for walking and cycling around the area’.
- The range of additional ideas will be considered in the development of more detailed proposals.

Summary

Key themes and messages

In summary the key messages and thread of themes that were highlighted throughout the consultation responses were:

Safety

This was a clear theme throughout the consultation with respondents expressing support for the ideas while highlighting the need for proposals to contribute to reducing anti-social behavior and other security issues through introducing lighting, policing, and other security measures.

Heritage

Building on Grimsby's existing heritage assets and fishing history, consultation respondents expressed that heritage should be a focus within the proposals. This was particularly focused around celebrating Grimsby's heritage, providing heritage trails, and educational facilities.

Local attractions

In relation to local attractions consultation respondents expressed a support in developing leisure opportunities, watersports, and an ice rink. This was particularly focused in the four areas and around connecting people back with the water.

Culture and events

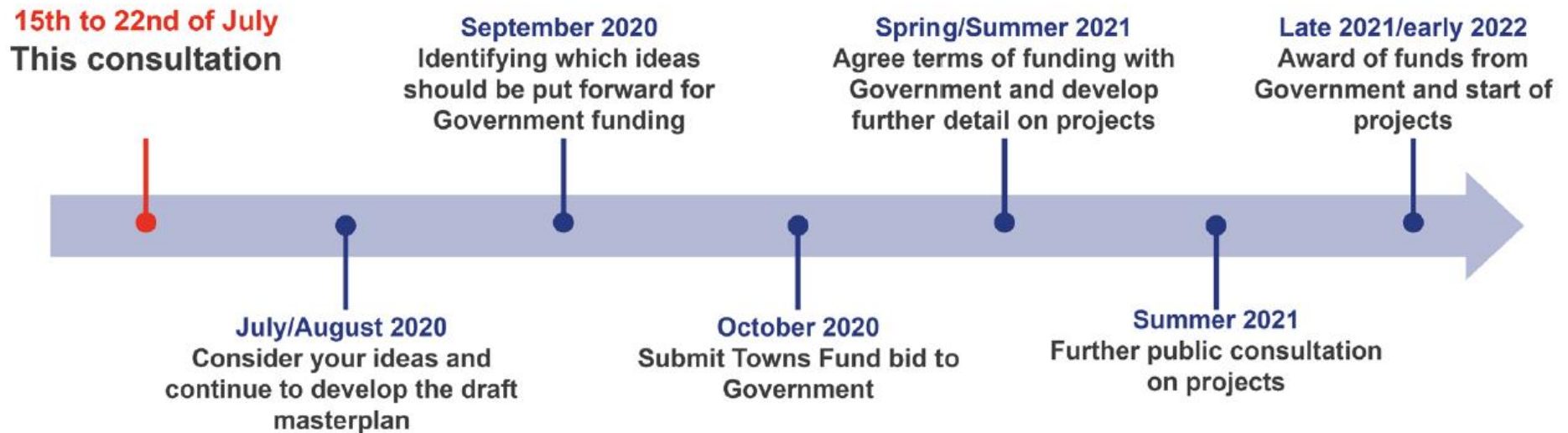
This was a clear theme throughout the consultation with respondents suggesting ideas such as local markets, seasonal events and festivals, and improved public realm with art, seating and green space.

The key themes and additional ideas proposed will be considered in the development of more detailed proposals.

What happens next?

All of the key themes and messages emerging from the consultation will be considered in the development of the final Town Centre Masterplan, expected to be published later in 2020. We will also consider all of the additional ideas that were put forward by participants as we develop proposals in further detail.

The outcomes of consultation will also be used to identify the specific schemes that form part of Grimsby's Town Investment Plan, for around £25m of Towns Fund monies from the Government. It is currently anticipated that this will be made by October 2020, with detailed development of projects (supported by further public consultation) following in 2021.



Appendix 1:

Focus group invitees and participants

Focus Group invitees and participants

Invitee organisation	Attended?
Visitor Economy, Services and Retail Group	Yes
Fishing Heritage Centre	Yes
Magna Vitae	
Culture Works	
Our Big Picture	Yes
Chamber of Commerce	Yes
Housing and Development Board	
Sector Support NEL	
Grimsby Civic Society	Yes
Young Persons Forum	
Nunthorpe Centre4 Community Centre	Yes
Freeman Street Market	
Freeman Street Creative Hub	
Historic England	Yes
Stagecoach	
Riverhead Coffee	Yes
Abbeygate	
St James Hotel	
Lincs Inspire	Yes
Orsted	Yes
DFDS	
Scotts Property	Yes
Humberside Police Crime Reduction Officer	Yes
Grimsby Institute	
Franklin 6 th Form College	Yes
Carers Centre	
CATCH Energy Academy	
Job Centre	Yes
Environment Agency	Yes
Humberside Police	Yes