Druids Heath Together

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Resident & Community Engagement Summary Report

Delivery Phase 5: July 2022 - September 2022

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This phase details activity and findings of consultation undertaken between July and September seeking feedback on the five design principles which had been central to the Council's Levelling Up Bid submitted to Central Government in the early Summer.

Key Highlights

- Team actively engaged with residents and stakeholders through the Summer Half Term (Whitsun) and Summer Holidays.
- Established resident drop-in sessions over the summer, enabling residents to meet the Pioneer Group Engagement team, City Council and Architects.
- Continuing relationship building with local organisations and groups through partnership approaches.
- Continuing refinement of design concepts and the specific designs developed for the Levelling Up Bid as well as the overall vision and thematic priories.
- Continued engagement with children and young people through activities with youth groups.

Outcomes

- The team delivered 290 engagements through the range of outreach activities in the community.
- Established resident drop-ins to enable better flow of information sharing and communication.

Activity Summary

Over summer, the Team continued with door knocking activity and began a programme of community outreach at events and activities organised by local organisations.

This enabled a wider reach to residents as well as engagement with local voluntary and community groups and other key stakeholders.

Activity included:

a) Two greener spaces 'walk and talks' on 25th July 2022.
b) Children's activities at Manningford Hall facilitated by The Active Well-being Society (TAWS) - 1st August 2022.
c) Commonwealth Games Fun Day on the Dell facilitated by TAWS – 7th August 2022.
d) Bramshaw Close engagement event with older people.
e) Wrap--Up Evening Design Workshop at Druids Heath Library – 17th of August.
f) Doorstep conversations through resident door-knocking.

Although numbers of residents attending the community events were not as high as Easter and Whitsun family days (residents may have been away over summer or engaging in other events and there were fewer family activities advertised at the events) the team made 290 individual engagements, broadly in the profile of numbers targeted for the summer.

Summary of Key Findings

There was an overall -feeling of positivity towards the five initial design concepts, the specific designs developed for the Levelling Up Bid as well as the overall vision and thematic priories.

Design concepts were presented to residents with no fixed location, other than the Village Green enhancements, within the defined red line area set out in the December 2022 Cabinet Report.

1) **Public Square with Opportunities for Start-Ups and Shops**

There was strong support for this design concept. Residents appreciated how the design of the public square would provide a centrepiece for the estate. The idea of shops and start-ups were liked. Some commented on the need to retain vibrant shopping on the main parades principally Alcester Road. This was particularly welcomed at the older resident's engagement with a particular interest in seeing new health facilities included as part of this initiative. There was also strong interest in the potential of a retirement village.

2. **Sports Pitches & Community Amenities**

Again, there was strong support for this concept. There was some questioning how it would fit and align with the public square - would they be integrated or in different segments of the estate and how would safe streets and sustainable tenure blind homes be built around community amenities.

3. **Village Green Enhancements and Bridge Connection**

This was strongly supported and generated most enthusiasm particularly with young people and children. Some questions were raised around the ongoing management particularly around curtailing anti-social behaviour.

4. **Safe Streets**

This concept was well received but was seen as more as a statement of design principles. Further information required in terms of the overall design principles for the estate and how much of the existing design flaws needed addressing such as the back alleyways.

5. **New Sustainable Tenure Blind Homes and Local Parks**

There was very strong support for the idea of micro parks connecting-up different neighbourhoods of the estate as a key linking design principle and for tenure blind homes.

As with the safer streets concept, further detail would be required in later phases of the engagement and master planning. There was also a clear support for the idea of a 20-minute neighbourhood – where residents and local stakeholders could access all local amenities in 20 minutes or less.

Feedback included:

- **Sports pitches:** Dell as location for sports pitch, include basketball as well as football in sports pitches, sports pitches need to be at the heart of the estate not at its margins, sports pitches on Baversock would be good. Some views that Baverstock should be for houses and pitch needs to be more central. Pitch needs to be more central, Baverstock should be for houses.
- **Health facilities:** New GP surgery, dentist, opticians and pharmacy at the Village Centre.
- **Green spaces:** Allotments, views and vistas are brilliant – keep and enhance in the new designs, homes should have gardens, keep green spaces accessible and with a

natural look. Love the outdoor green spaces development proposals including play spaces, make sure its accessibility friendly. One suggestion for a 'Go Ape style in the woods and develop as a social enterprise.'

- **Safety:** Lighting and CCTV needed, issues with safety, drug dealers in tower blocks, rubbish and poor environmental management.
- **Housing:** Low rise accommodation not high rise, flats are currently in a dire state but want to remain in Druids Heath, Likes the area but hates the current condition of the flats, turn blocks into lower rise retirement flats, build homes on the Baverstock area, ensure that there is shared ownership housing. Low rise blocks like Castle Vale, take out the tower blocks. Shared ownership housing. Two residents consulted out of 75 felt that there should be a build first policy. 'Retrofit rather than demolish, Clear FOGS and bungalows but 'build first' as people move out'.
- **Village Centre:** needs to be the fulcrum of the estate and not be located in its margins, make sure that the community facility and library are open regularly and are sustainable, love the village centre idea.
- **Bridge** strongly positive and connects the estate. One resident expressed concern that the canal bridge may encourage bikers onto the canal.
- **Community:** Good sense of community and neighbourliness – retain and build on. Creating employment and 'help with jobs'.
- **Older people:** Retirement homes for older people in the blocks to the south, like the retirement village idea. Several tower block residents aged 50+ stated that they liked the idea of a retirement village. Turn the 3 blocks into lower rise retirement flats. 'Balconies a great thing to have.' 'Either create a retirement village or make blocks older people only'.
- **Children and young people:** More play groups and nursery facilities for young children, activities for young people, facilities and services for special needs children.
- **Access:** Level the ground and internal pathways to make for greater accessibility particularly for wheelchair users.
- **Shops:** Develop Pound Lane shops and develop good centre of local shops.

Overall, the consensus of the residents consulted is positive towards the regeneration and masterplan vision, with an optimism about the changes to Druids Heath and the vision, with some voices that felt there should be priority given to building new homes first.

For more in-depth scorings of door-knocking findings see Appendix 1.

Key Actions for Next Phase

- As we enter the next phase, continued need for more regular programme of drop-in events at different community locations, enabling better flow of communication and direct contact for residents with issues and concerns.
- To ensure stakeholder engagement results are communicated and fed into development of masterplan.
- Consultation on draft version of masterplan to shape design.
- To develop a communications strategy to support residents to access relevant information and stay up to date with the regeneration as highlighted in survey, including more regular updates on website, social media and newsletter.

Appendix 1 – Door Knocking Scorings

During door knocking engagement residents were prompted to comment specifically on key design features and were asked to rate their opinion on these proposals based on whether they 'agreed strongly' or 'not at all' on a scale of 1 to 5.

It is important to note that it has not always been possible to apply this scoring criteria consistently especially at the doorstep where time may have been limited or residents have preferred to have broader and more generalised conversations.

While some concerns were raised, overall residents were in favour of the design features.

It is also important to review this scoring in line with attitudes drawn out in conversations included in the main body of this report.

Table to show scoring attributed to key design features

	Score (1 strongly disagree, 5 strongly agree)				
Design feature	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Sports Pitch	1	0	0	17	33
Village Centre	0	3	7	15	40
Tower Block Demolition	6	1	4	11	41
Pylon Grounding	0	1	9	10	41
Canal Bridge	0	1	2	13	45