

Wymondham Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Project

Stage 1 Consultation Report

November 2024

Version 1.3
Prepared by LUC





Document control

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Project

Wymondham Public Realm Improvement Project

Client

South Norfolk Council

LUC Project Number

13002

Project Team

The Design Report has been prepared by LUC in collaboration with South Norfolk Council and the Wymondham Working Group

All comments and contributions to the development of the study are gratefully acknowledged.

LUC project team

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Date

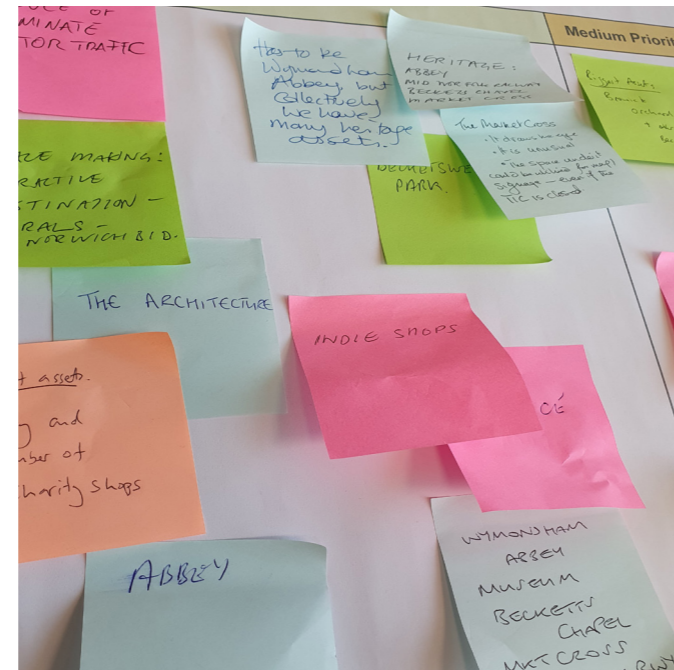
November 2024

Note

This document and its contents have been prepared by LUC for South Norfolk Council and Wymondham Town Council and is intended solely for use in relation to the Wymondham Public Realm Improvement Project.

LUC and all collaborators assume no responsibility to any other party in respect of or arising out of or in connection with this document and / or its contents.

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Part One
Introduction and Project
Background



Chapter 1.1 Introduction



The Wymondham Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Project involves a two stage consultation process. This report provides feedback and analysis on Stage 1 consultation.

Stage 1 engagement was carried out between July and October 2024 and focused on baseline information gathering to understand how residents and visitors use Wymondham Town Centre, what they feel are opportunities that could be harnessed as part of any future public realm proposals, and what are the constraints or issues currently preventing the Town Centre from reaching its potential.

Stage 2 engagement will occur in early 2025 and will utilise early stage concept design proposals to gather feedback on what could be included as part of the town centre improvements.

Project Background

The Wymondham Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Project is a joint-funded initiative between South Norfolk Council and Wymondham Town Council. It aims to maximise the appeal and beauty of this historical conservation town for the benefit of both residents and visitors. The vision is:

'A series of Town Centre public realm projects and enhancements to position Wymondham as a fantastic, vibrant Norfolk market town, with its special heritage, attractive for residents, businesses and visitors'

This vision is being driven by the Working Group. The primary project objectives are:

- To extend the trading day.
- To enable the town centre to be more commercially viable and improve access to the town centre.
- To expand the town centre to have a variety of uses.

A Working Group, consisting of representatives from each tier of local government, has been set up to deliver the Wymondham Public Realm Improvements. This group consists of members of the District Council, Town Council and County Council.

The Working Group have commissioned LUC, an award-winning integrated design consultancy, to lead on early-stage community consultation.

No decisions have yet been made on how improvements to Wymondham Town Centre will look.

We are seeking the views of Wymondham residents, business owners and visitors to shape these proposals.

Local Councillors

Here's what the local Councillors said about the project:

"The Council understands the vital importance of promoting and investing in our market towns and helping to support our vibrant local economy. South Norfolk Council has already invested in the Diss market triangle and in Harleston and Long Stratton with town centre improvements and sporting facilities. It's now Wymondham's turn and we are asking residents of Wymondham to give us your views on a project to future proof the town centre and the surrounding areas." Cabinet Member Lisa Overton-Neal

"Wymondham is a marvellous market Town with a variety of businesses coupled with a vibrant, irrepressible community spirit. The new Public Realm project from South Norfolk in partnership with the Town Council will seek to add to that vibrancy and keep Wymondham a favoured destination for residents and visitors alike." Cllr Suzanne Nuri-Nixon, Wymondham Town Councillor

What is Public Realm?

Simply put, public realm is the outdoor areas in our towns and cities which are accessible to the public. For the purposes of the Wymondham Town Centre Public Realm Improvements, it means the streets, pavements, squares, alleys, car parks and all the incidental spaces that link these, and the street furniture, lighting, planting, signage and surfacing that goes onto and into such spaces.

Project Costs

In total the project has a budget of approximately £950,000 which will need to cover the cost of professional fees including landscape architects, civil and mechanical and electrical engineers, quantity surveyors, heritage consultants and planners to progress a design, compile a planning application and subsequently oversee any improvements.

The public realm improvements are funded jointly by South Norfolk District Council and Wymondham Town Council, and early-stage community engagement is important in shaping the right proposals for the right people in the right place and prioritising interventions on the ground in order to get the best value for money.

Chapter 1.3 Study Area

The boundary for the focus of the Town Centre Public Realm Improvements is highlighted in red on the plan. This boundary indicates the main focus for town centre improvements where the project budget will be spent. However, responses were encouraged from the wider Wymondham area to ensure that the project team has the appropriate context for future proposals.

The town centre public realm boundary includes Wymondham Abbey, Wymondham Heritage Museum, Wymondham Library, Wymondham Market Square and the Mid Norfolk Heritage Railway but does not include the mainline railway station, Lidl, Morrisons, Ketts Park, Waitrose, Becketswell Meadow and the River Tiffey.



Esri Community Maps Contributors, Esri UK, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, Foursquare, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, Sources: Esri, Airbus

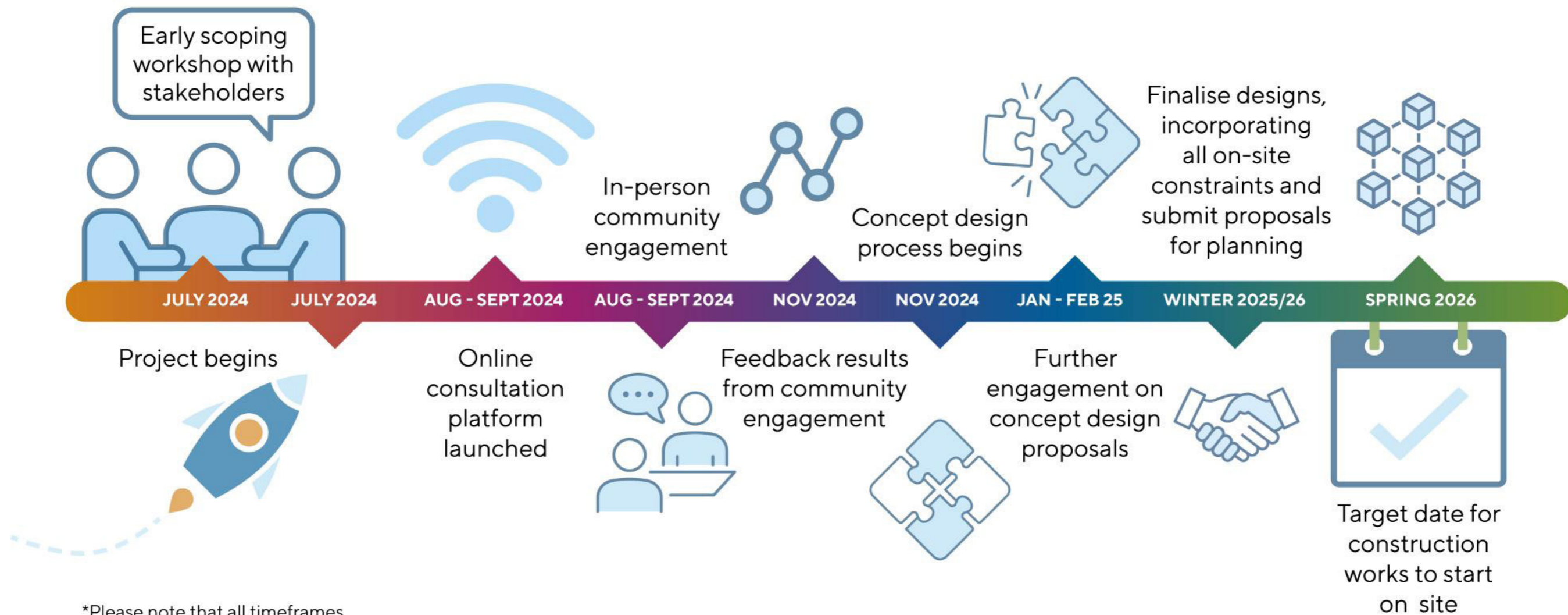
Chapter 1.4 Preliminary Project Timeline

The consultation part of the project is taking place over approximately 8 months (July 2024 - Feb 2025) focusing on how residents and visitors currently use Wymondham and what opportunities and issues are currently presented.

Responses from this initial consultation will be translated into a design strategy for further consultation anticipated in early 2025 with a planning application planned for Winter 2025 / 2026 and a target date for work commencing on site in Spring 2026.

All timescales are indicative and will be updated during the course of the project as more information becomes available.

Project timeline*



*Please note that all timeframes are indicative and will be updated during the course of the project as information becomes available

Chapter 1.5 Wymondham Demographics

The demographics included within this part of the report have been derived from the 2021 Census. They provide a baseline from which to compare demographic data gathered as part of the questionnaire to understand how representative this engagement process has been of Wymondham as a whole.

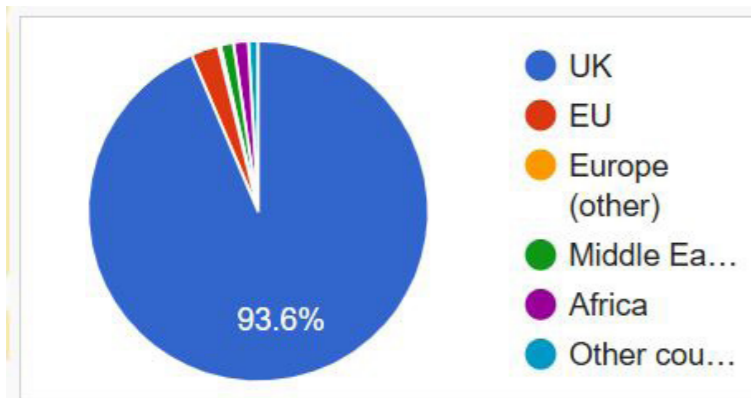
Key Information:

Name	Status	Population Census 2001-04-29	Population Census 2011-03-27	Population Census 2021-03-21
Wymondham	Parish	11,865	13,706	17,496

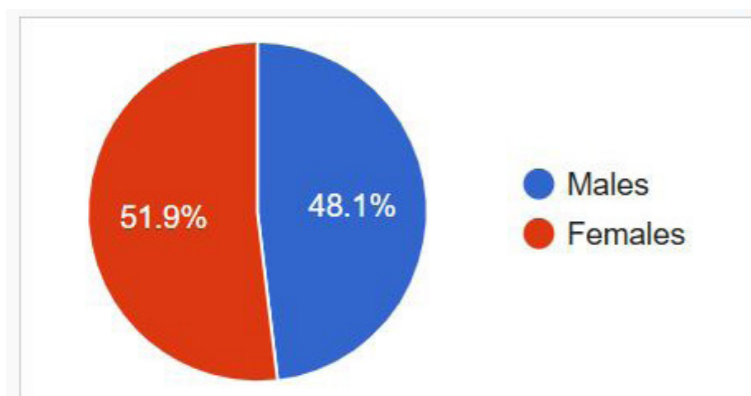
Wymondham

- 17,496 Population [2021] – Census
- 29.77 km² Area
- 587.7/km² Population Density [2021]
- 2.5% Annual Population Change [2011 → 2021]

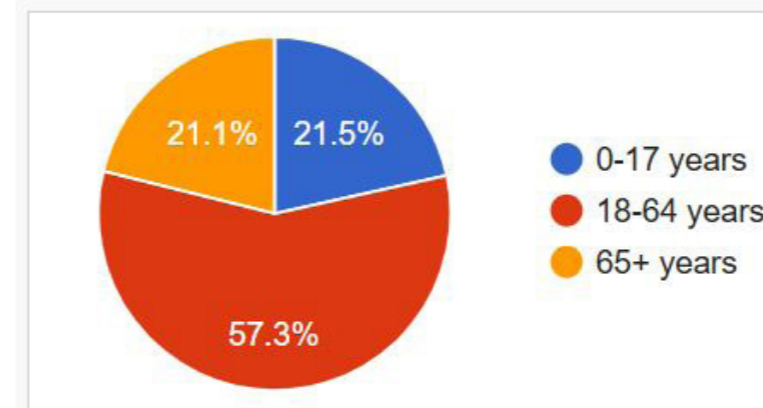
Wymondham: town and civil parish in Norfolk, England – [Official Website](#) – Local dialing code: 01953 – Postal code: NR18



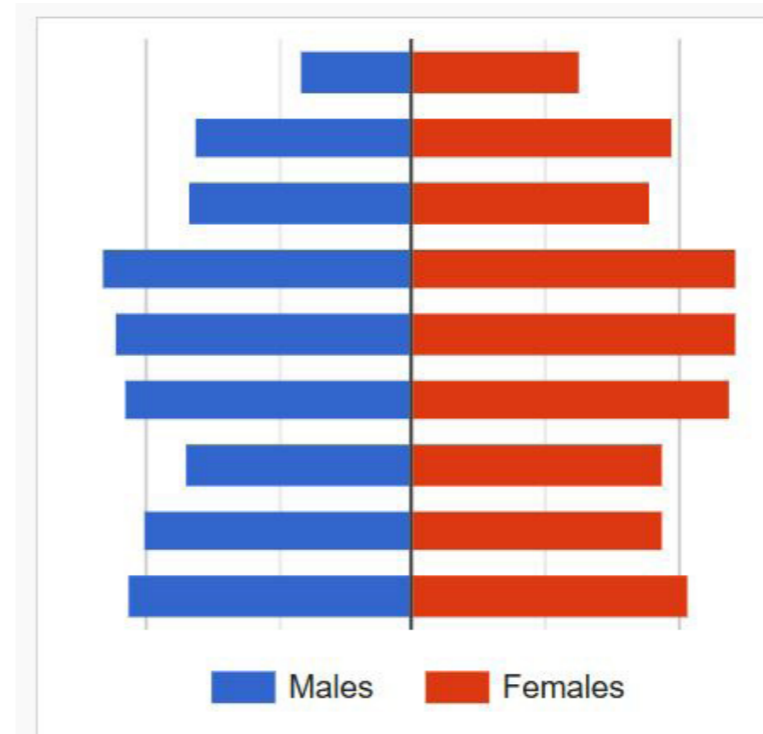
Country of Birth (C 2021)	
UK	16,364
EU	461
Europe (other)	38
Middle East & Asia	216
Africa	246
Other country	163



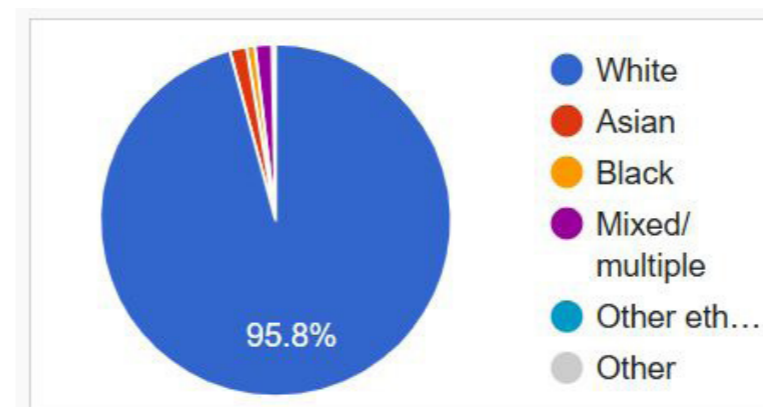
Gender (C 2021)	
Males	8,405
Females	9,065



Age Groups (C 2021)	
0-17 years	3,764
18-64 years	10,013
65+ years	3,693



Age Distribution (C 2021)	
80+ years	1,056
70-79 years	1,810
60-69 years	1,733
50-59 years	2,388
40-49 years	2,342
30-39 years	2,289
20-29 years	1,793
10-19 years	1,949
0-9 years	2,110



Ethnic Group (C 2021)	
White	16,747
Asian	271
Black	135
Arab	7
Mixed/multiple	276
Other ethnic group	50

Part Two
Consultation Analysis



Chapter 2.1 The Online Consultation Website

The online consultation website forms a platform to provide an introduction to the project, a platform to host the online questionnaire and interactive map, and a place to disseminate information about upcoming project events, contact details for the project team and a constant source of information throughout the project life-cycle.

Screenshots from the online platform are displayed to the right. And the link below will remain for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the project.

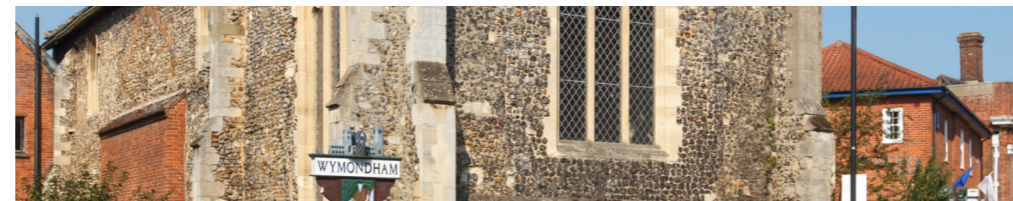
www.wymondhampublicrealmconsultation.co.uk




Welcome to the Wymondham Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Project

The Wymondham Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Project is a joint-funded initiative between South Norfolk Council and Wymondham Town Council aimed at making Wymondham a more attractive place to visit, work and live. The vision is:

'A series of Town Centre public realm projects and enhancements to position Wymondham as a fantastic, vibrant Norfolk market town, with its special heritage, attractive for residents, businesses and visitors'



Get Involved!



Questionnaire

Many thanks for your interest in the Wymondham Town Centre Public Realm Project. The deadline for the first stage consultation questionnaire has now passed. We are collating results and will feed this back to the Working Group and wider community in November and December 2024. There will be a further round of consultation in early 2025, so please do re-visit the website next year.



How much will it cost and who will fund it?

In total the project has a budget of approximately £950,000 which will need to cover the cost of designing and then implementing any improvements.

The public realm improvements are funded jointly by South Norfolk District Council and Wymondham Town Council, and early-stage community engagement is important in shaping the right proposals for the right people in the right place and prioritising interventions on the ground in order to get the best value for money.

The examples of public realm improvements located here give a high-level overview of the cost implications associated with some of the potential interventions to give some indication of how many of those elements we may be able to include within Wymondham Town Centre.

Next Steps

Thank you for your involvement in the project to date. LUC are currently collating all the data from this online platform, and from the drop-in events into a report which will demonstrate the key uses, challenges and opportunities for the development of a Wymondham town centre public realm masterplan. This will form the next stage of the project and we aim to consult on concept designs in early 2025, so please watch this space for updates.

Additional Support

If you require any additional support to help fill in the questionnaire, please contact the engagement lead Julie Hyslop at julie.hyslop@landuse.co.uk.

If you would prefer to fill in a paper copy of the questionnaire, these will be available at Wymondham Library, Back Lane, Wymondham, NR18 0QB from 29.08.2024. Please visit [here](#) for Library opening times.



Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire has been embedded as a link within the online consultation website, but was also made available as a paper copy at Wymondham Library, and at both the public. The screenshots to the right indicate some of the content within the questionnaire.

It went live in August and closed on 13th October 2024, allowing 2 months for responses.

The questionnaire focused on how people current use Wymondham Town Centre, and the issues and opportunities which currently exist. It included a mix of both qualitative and quantitative questions to build up a clear picture of the existing baseline for use and movement within Wymondham Town Centre and the value attached to certain parts of the town.

Response from this initial consultation questionnaire will be translated into a design strategy for further consultation anticipated in February 2025.

There are 18 multiple choice questions, many of which offered the opportunity to expand on response within a free-text comment box. It was indicated on the website and in the introduction to the questionnaire that it should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete.

Within the subsequent analysis sections of this report, results from each question have been displayed in a graphical format. Where the questions guided the responder to a single response, the data has been displayed in a pie chart format to represent the various responses totalling 100%. Where multiple responses were allowed, this data has been displayed as part of a column graph which reflects the % of each response, but will not total 100%. Where a free-text comment box was included as part of the question, each response has been analysed and subsequently grouped / categorised where repetitive comments have been encountered. The comments included within this report therefore represent a snapshot of the numerous comments submitted as part of the full survey. They have been copied verbatim from the survey results, and therefore may include grammatical or spelling errors, but these have been retained to maintain authenticity to the original response.

1254 questionnaire responses were submitted whilst the questionnaire was live, of which 11 were paper copies.

Wymondham Town Centre (Public Realm) Improvements

Introduction

LUC are an integrated design consultancy working in partnership with South Norfolk District Council and Wymondham Town Council to rejuvenate Wymondham Town Centre. The project will focus on works to improve the physical fabric of Wymondham Town Centre to make it a more attractive place to live, work and visit and act as a catalyst for further investment and funding opportunities.

As part of this process, we want to engage with the wider community to understand how you use Wymondham Town Centre and the issues / opportunities which currently exist.

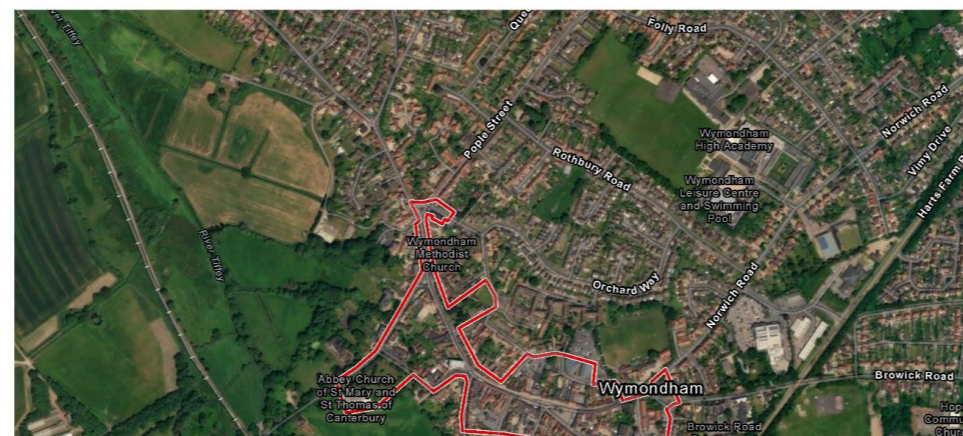
Response from this initial consultation questionnaire will be translated into a design strategy for further consultation anticipated in January 2025.

This is your opportunity to be involved in shaping the future of Wymondham. Please fill in the questionnaire which contains 18 multiple choice questions and should take no longer than 5 minutes. A plan of Wymondham has been included to help generate feedback but please also visit the interactive map [here](#) to let us know about any specific opportunities or issues.

We very much appreciate your help and support. Please note, the closing date for responses to this survey is 13th October 2024.

Wymondham Map

Please note, the red line indicates the main focus for town centre improvements where the project budget will be spent, but it is important that this early consultation is not defined by boundaries. Questionnaire responses are encouraged from the wider Wymondham area to ensure that the project team has the appropriate context for future proposals. Please note: the town centre public realm boundary includes Wymondham Abbey, Wymondham Heritage Museum, Wymondham Library and Wymondham Market Square and the Mid Norfolk Heritage Railway, but does not include, the mainline railway station, Lidl, Morrisons, Waitrose, Becketswell Meadow and the River Tiffey.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Wymondham-Public-Realm-Survey>

Wymondham Town Centre (Public Realm) Improvements

Questions about You

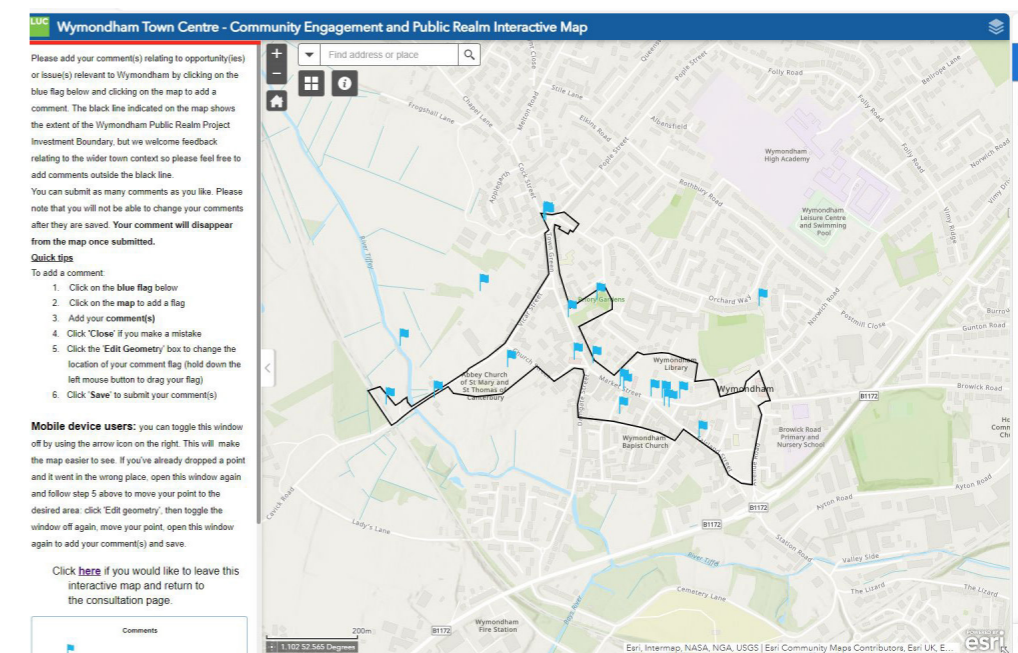
* 1. What is your age?

- Young person (aged 20 and under)
- Aged 21-39
- Aged 40-60
- Aged 60+

* 2. In what capacity are you answering this questionnaire (please tick all that apply):

- Wymondham resident
- Parent / carer of children in primary or secondary education within Wymondham
- Visitor / Tourist from Norfolk
- Visitor / Tourist from outside Norfolk
- Stakeholder in Wymondham with an official status / role e.g. Councillor, Active Business Group Member, Chairperson of a Local Group or Organisation or Local Forum with an active interest in the town
- I own a business in Wymondham
- I work in Wymondham
- Other interested party (please specify)

3. We would like to understand more about travel and visiting patterns, especially from different residential areas of Wymondham and also further afield. If you would like to assist with this analysis please enter your full postcode below.



<https://luc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=82d4b0f085974d83a4675e2bd9024b81>

Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

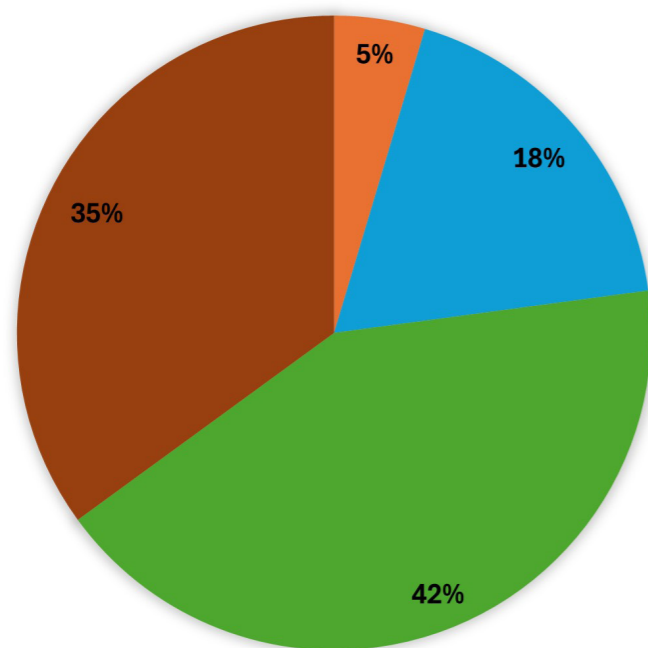
Question 1: What is your age?

This question was provided to understand the demographic / make-up of people responding to the questionnaire.

The ages of responders will help us understand the reason or priorities behind other question responses.

Most respondents (**42%**) were in the **40-60 age group**. The least represented group were aged 20 and under (5%).

The 2021 Census uses a slightly different age range: 0-17; 18-64; 65+ but outcomes from this questionnaire broadly align with the questionnaire, with 18-64 being the most represented age group in Wymondham at 57% of the population.



■ Young person (aged 20 and under)
 ■ Aged 21-39
 ■ Aged 40-60
 ■ Aged 60+

Question 2: In what capacity are you answering this questionnaire?

This question was provided to understand who was answering the questionnaire and the sector of the community that they represent.

This demographic will help us understand the reason or priorities behind other question responses.

Most respondents (**81%**) were **Wymondham residents**. A high percentage of respondents have **school-age children (12%)** and **people who work in Wymondham** were also well represented in the questionnaire responses (**9%**).

During the course of the questionnaire, a key stakeholder emphasised that they lived in a neighbouring settlement but considered Wymondham to be their market town, and they did not consider themselves to be a visitor. In this instance we encouraged the respondent to fill in the 'other interested party (please specify)' free text comment box. There were **108** responses to this free text category, **a selection of which are directly presented in the table to the right to demonstrate the broad range of views.**

Other interested party (please specify)

Resident in a neighbouring village including Wicklewood, Tacolneston, Barford, Wrampingham, Melton, Ashwellthorpe, Hethersett,

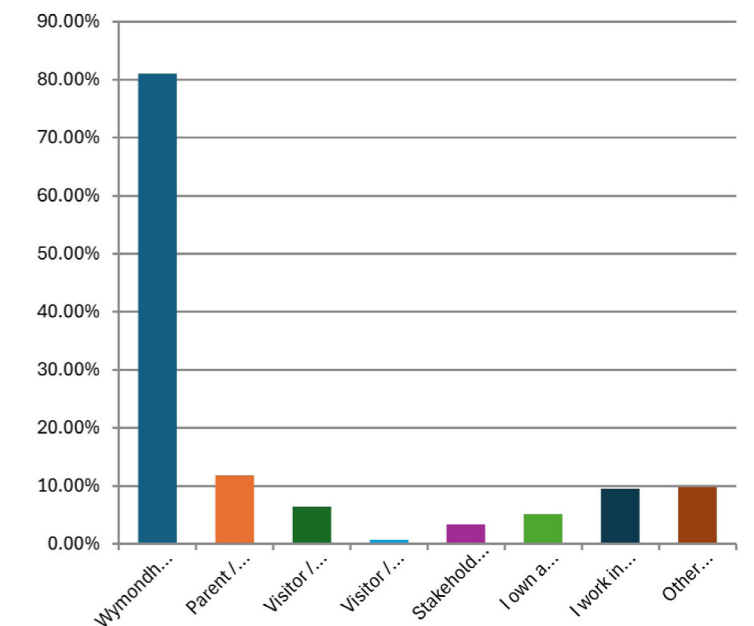
Former resident

Volunteer

Landlord of Wymondham Property

Family members live in Wymondham

- Wymondham resident
- Parent / carer of children in primary or secondary education within Wymondham
- Visitor / Tourist from Norfolk
- Visitor / Tourist from outside Norfolk
- Stakeholder in Wymondham with an official status / role
- I own a business in Wymondham
- I work in Wymondham
- Other interested party (please specify)



Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

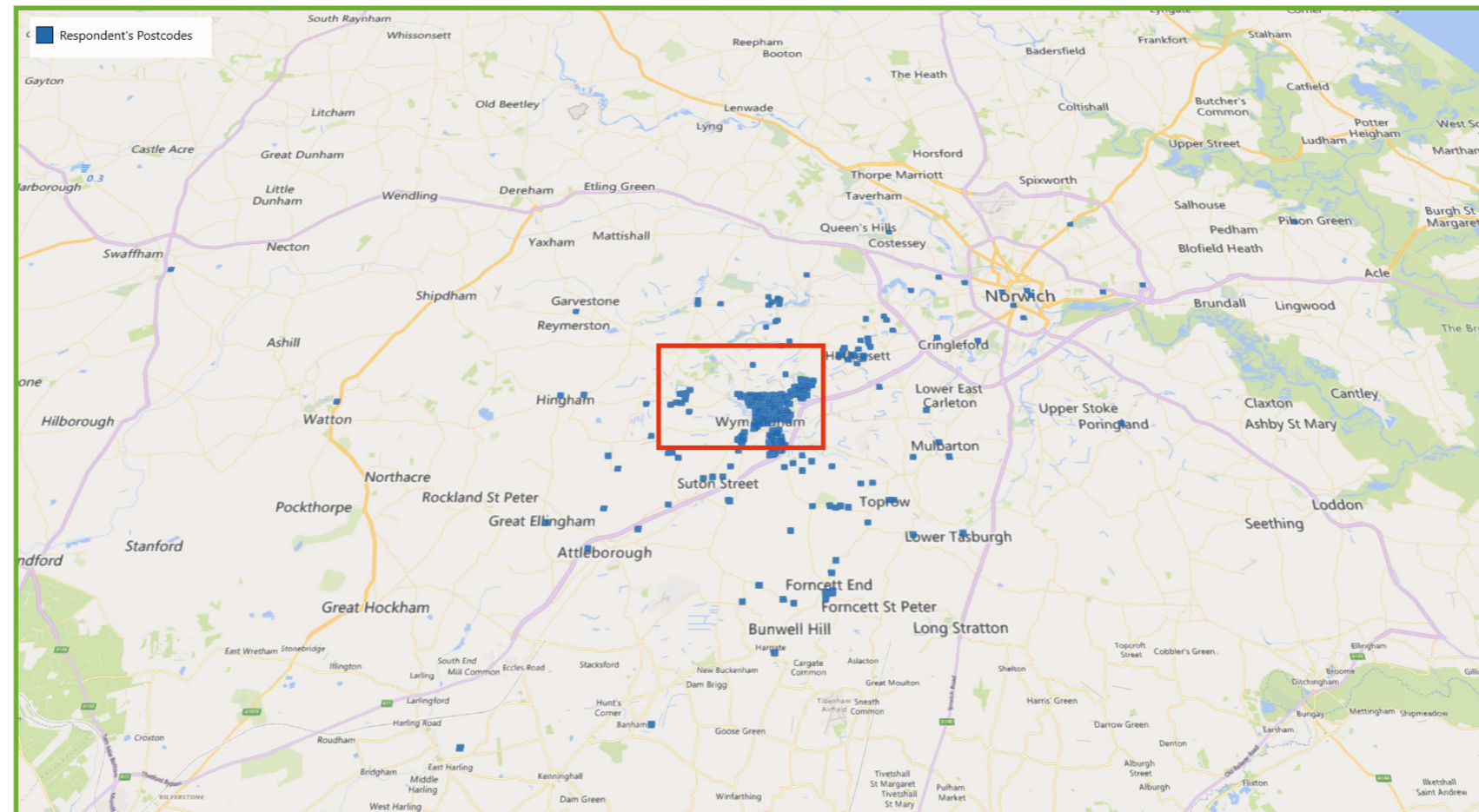
Question 3: Postcode

This question was included to obtain spatial data relating to respondents.

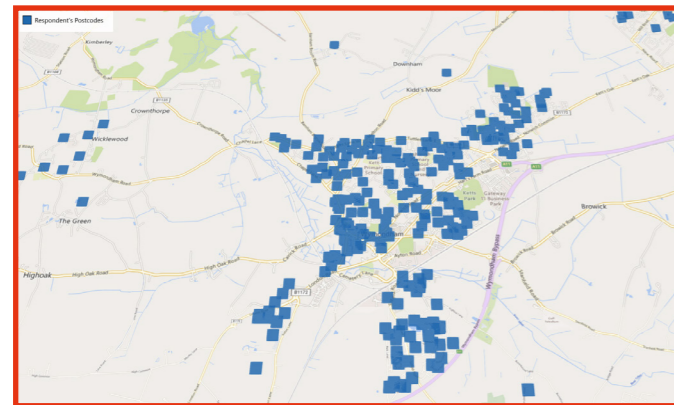
The dispersal of respondents will also help us understand why some parts of the town centre may be commented on, and where people are travelling from to get to the town centre.

As discussed in Question 2, some respondents may live within outlying settlements but consider Wymondham to be their market town, therefore it's important to understand which neighbouring towns are included within this remit.

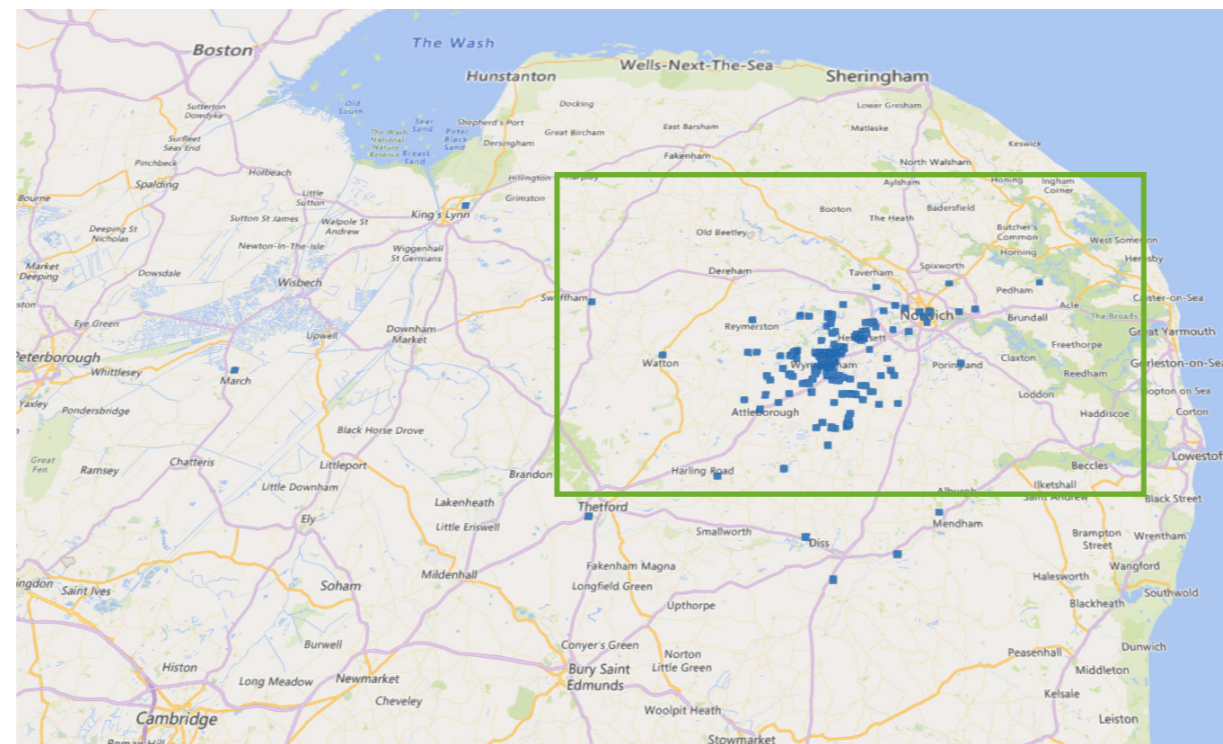
The blue dots portrayed on the map to the right indicate the immediate spatial dispersal of respondents and confirms that the majority of respondents are **Wymondham residents**, although outlying villages and towns such as **Hethersett** and **Wicklewood** are also represented. There were **729** responses to this question.



Zoomed-in area (indicated as a green rectangle on the map below) showing distribution of postcode responses relating to Question 3 of the questionnaire



Zoomed-In area (indicated as a red rectangle on the map to the right) showing distribution of postcode responses relating to Question 3 of the questionnaire



Map showing distribution of postcode responses relating to Question 3 of the questionnaire

Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

Question 4: How do you usually travel into Wymondham thinking about your most regular journey:

This question was designed to understand what modes of transport respondents mainly use to travel into Wymondham. This was intended to understand whether physical interventions should focus on vehicular accessibility such as car parks and road gateways, or more active travel infrastructure such as pedestrian walkways or cycle parking.

The results indicate that **vehicular transport** (car, van, lorry, motorcycle) was the most common transport mode for accessing Wymondham Town Centre at **53%**. This was followed by **pedestrian / on-foot** access at **37%**. The map below demonstrates the distribution of Wymondham residents who confirmed they accessed Wymondham town centre via foot. The responses show a relatively even distribution across the wider town.

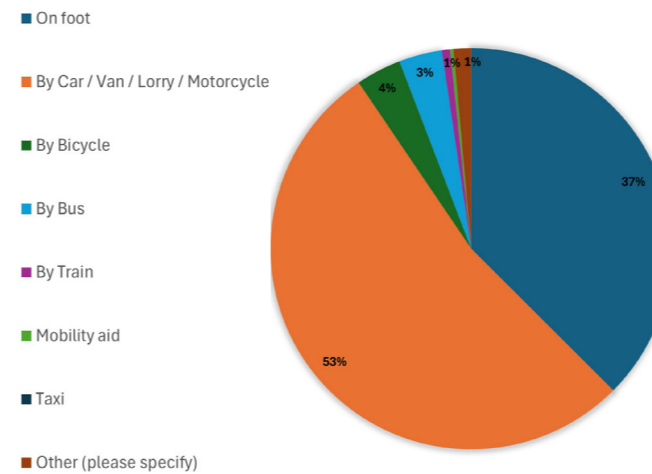
There were no responses for taxi, and 0.7% of respondents said that train travel was their most common method for accessing the Town Centre.

There were **15** responses to the 'other (please specify)' free text comment box, a **selection of which are directly presented in the table to the right to demonstrate the broad range of views.**

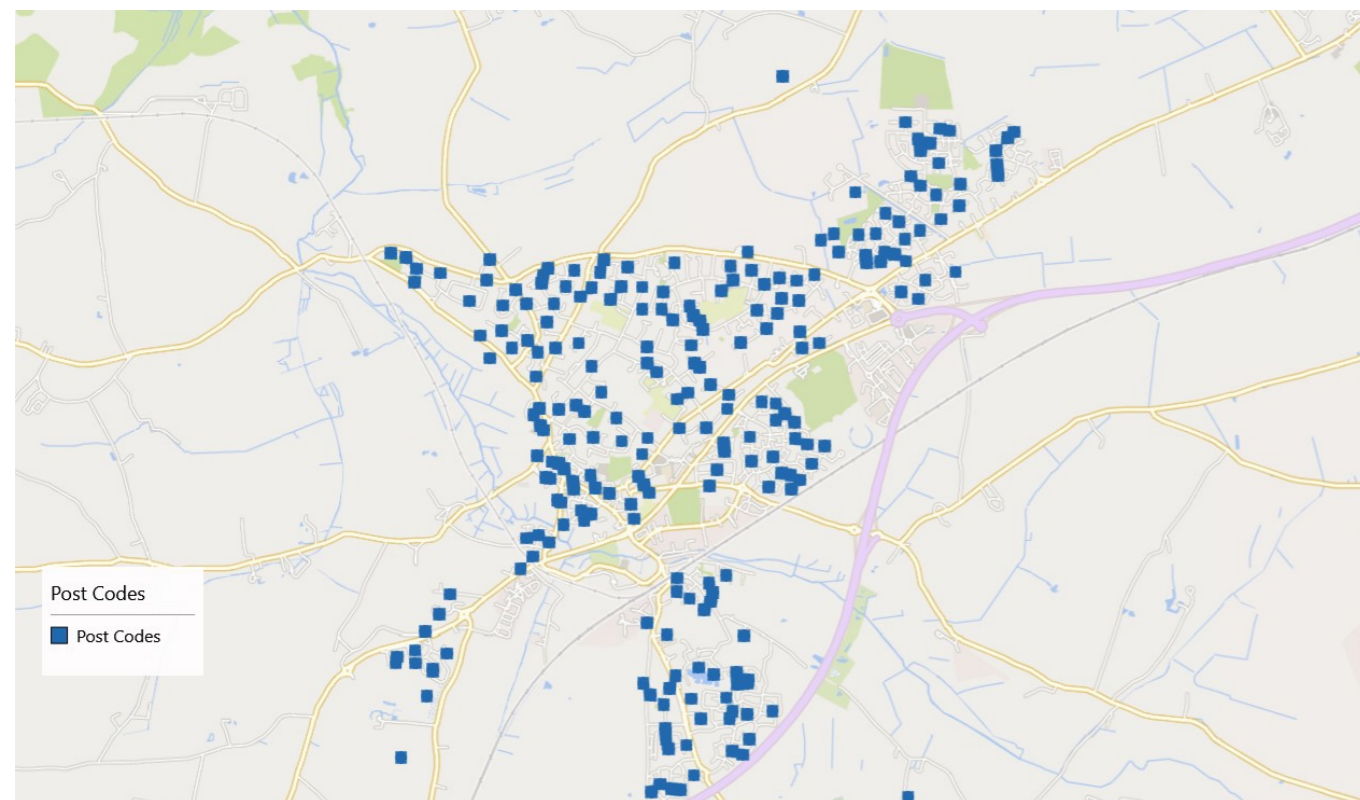
Other (please specify)

An equal mix of car and foot

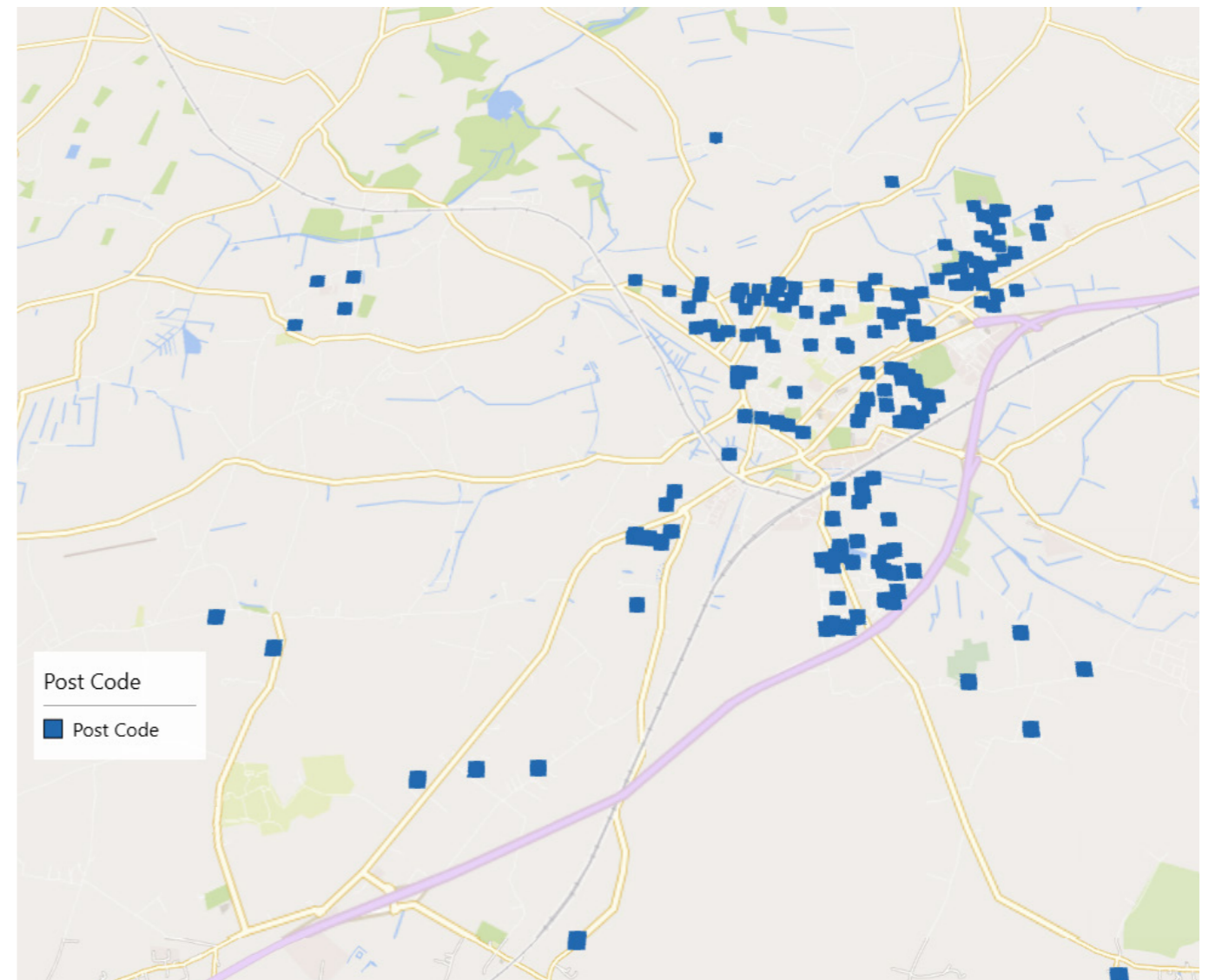
A resident therefore always walk



The map below demonstrates the distribution of Wymondham residents who confirmed they accessed Wymondham town centre by car. The responses show a relatively even distribution across the wider town environs, but do include clusters around the new residential developments on the B1172 (south and north of Wymondham), Silfield Road, south of Ketts Park and in suburban Wymondham along Melton Road and towards Tuttle Lane West.



Map showing distribution of postcode responses relating to people who stated that they were a Wymondham Resident and also selected the pedestrian / on-foot response



Map showing distribution of postcode responses relating to people who stated that they were a Wymondham Resident but that they also travelled into the town centre by car

Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

Question 5: This project seeks to broadly encourage visitors to access and use all parts of Wymondham. Thinking about your typical destination, please indicate which parts of the town you normally visit:

Whilst the funding stream is intended to focus on physical implementations within the Town Centre, a key part of the project will be the promotion of connections with other parts of Wymondham. With this in mind, Question 5 was developed to understand which parts of the town most people use. People had the option to tick multiple choices.

The survey data indicates that the town centre around **Market Square** is the most popular destination with **93%** of respondents using this part of the town. This was closely followed by the **outskirts of the town** including the doctors surgery and the major supermarkets (**74%**). Shops near the **War Memorial / Town Green / Middleton Street / Priory** were the third most popular part of the town to visit with **49%** of respondents selecting this category. The least used part of the town is currently **Ketts Park** (27.8%) and the **Wymondham Leisure Centre / Wymondham Dell Bowls Club** (28.3%).

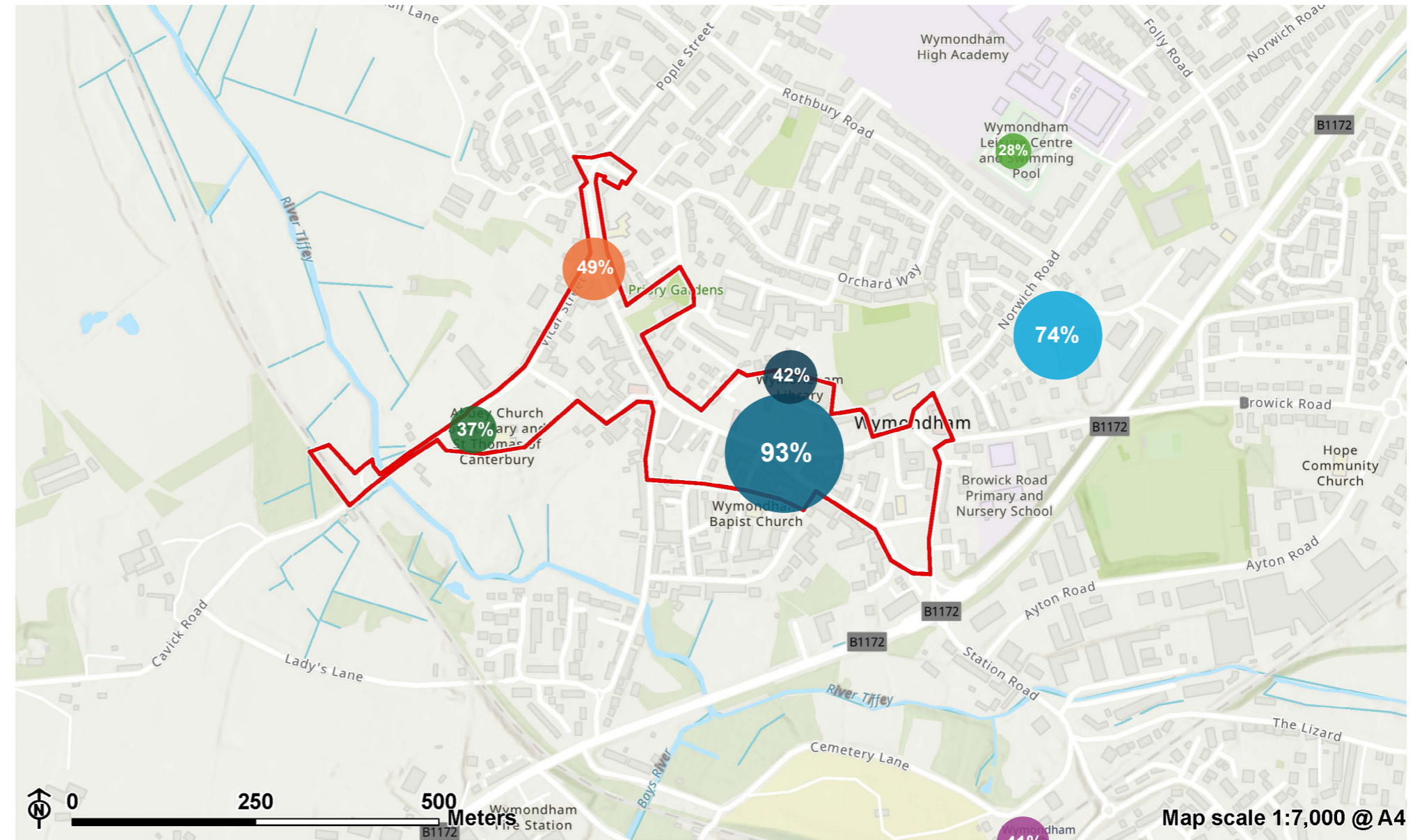
There were **85** responses to the 'other (please specify)' free text comment box, a **selection of which are directly presented in the table below to demonstrate the broad range of views.**

The map to the right demonstrates a graphical representation of which parts of Wymondham are most popular, and builds on the statistical results below the map.

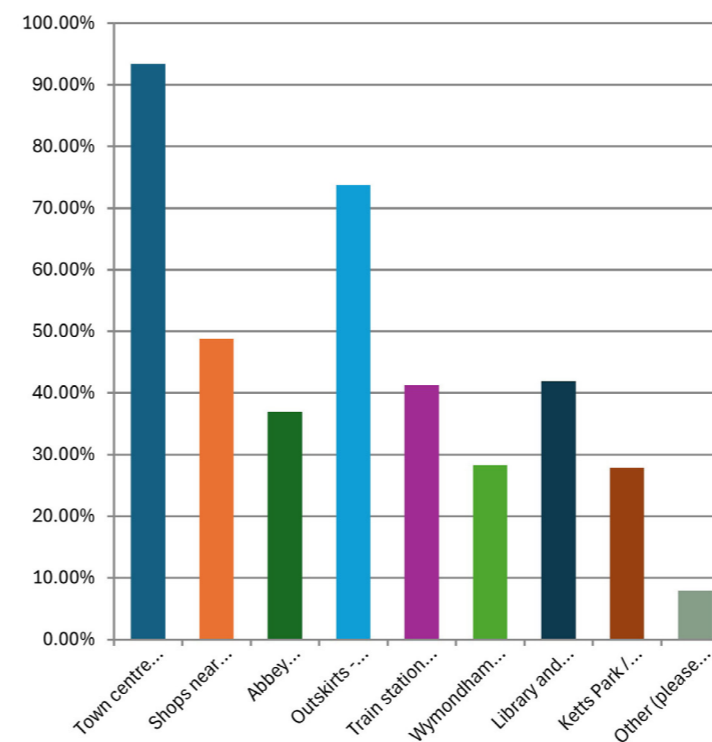
Other (please specify)

- _____ River Tiffey
- _____ Lime Tree Avenue Area
- _____ Wymondham Garden Centre
- _____ Suburbs to visit family
- _____ Schools including Wymondham High and the Robert Kett School
- _____ Browick Road Park including Skate Park

Map showing a geographical representation of which parts of Wymondham are most popular



- Town centre around Market Square
- Shops near War Memorial / Town Green / Middleton Street / Priory Gardens
- Abbey Quarter including Mid-Norfolk Heritage Railway
- Outskirts - including major supermarkets and doctors surgery
- Train station including station café
- Wymondham Leisure Centre / Wymondham Dell Bowls Club
- Library and Central Hall / Wymondham Town Football Club Area
- Ketts Park / Wymondham Town Council Offices
- Other (please specify)



28%

Ketts Park (off map)

Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

Question 6: Wymondham has several car parks. Some are used well and others less frequently. If you drive, could you please indicate where you normally park.

This question was included to evidence which car parks are most used, and therefore which routes people are subsequently taking to access Wymondham Town Centre.

The results demonstrate that the **Back Lane Car Park** (to the rear of Well Pharmacy) is the most popular car park when visiting the town centre with **46%** of respondents using this facility. The Fairland Hill parking area and Cemetery Lane Car park at the train station were the least used facilities with just over 6% of respondents using such car parks.

There were **87** responses to the 'other (please specify)' free text comment box, a **selection of which are directly presented in the table to the right to demonstrate the broad range of views.**

Other (please specify)

Private parking space / driveway

Work car parking space

Morrisons

Station car park

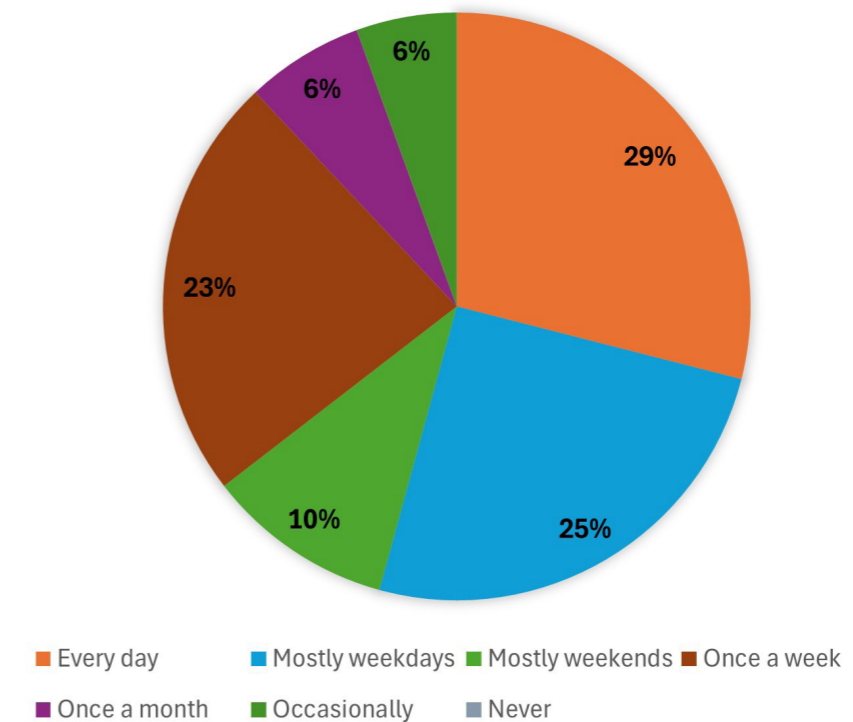
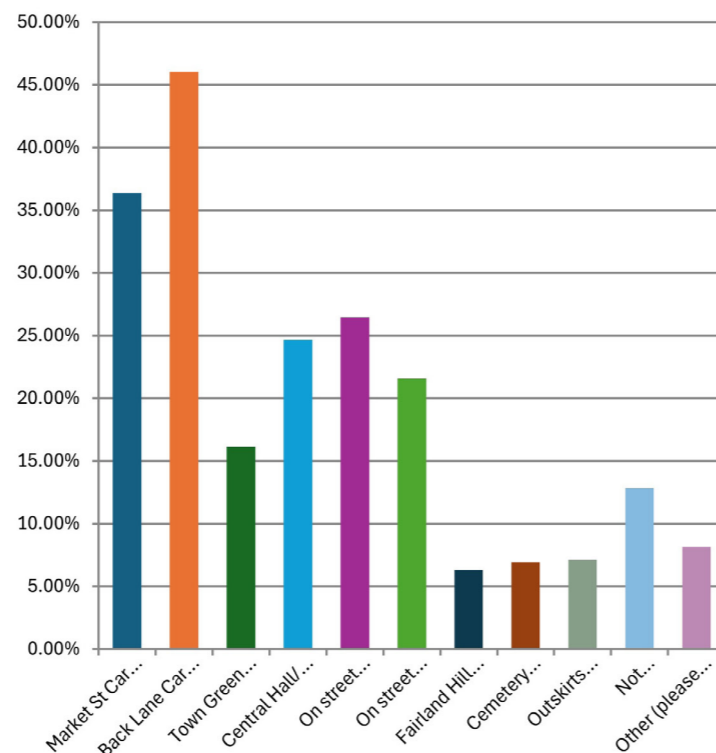
Blue badge holder

Question 7: Please tell us on average how often you visit Wymondham:

Question 7 was included within the survey to understand the frequency of visits to Wymondham and how busy the town centre may be at certain times of the week.

The majority of respondents (**29%**) visit the town centre **every day**, whilst interestingly weekdays (25%) were more popular than weekends (10%) for visits.

- Market St Car Park (SNDC – NR18 0UQ)
- Back Lane Car Park (SNDC – NR18 0QB)
- Town Green Car Park (SNDC – NR180PX)
- Central Hall/ Library Car Park (Private Operator – NR18 0QB)
- On street parking in the Market Place
- On street Parking elsewhere in the town
- Fairland Hill unrestricted parking area
- Cemetery Lane Car Park (Train station) (SNDC - NR18 0JY)
- Outskirts location and then walk in
- Not applicable (I don't drive)
- Other (please specify)

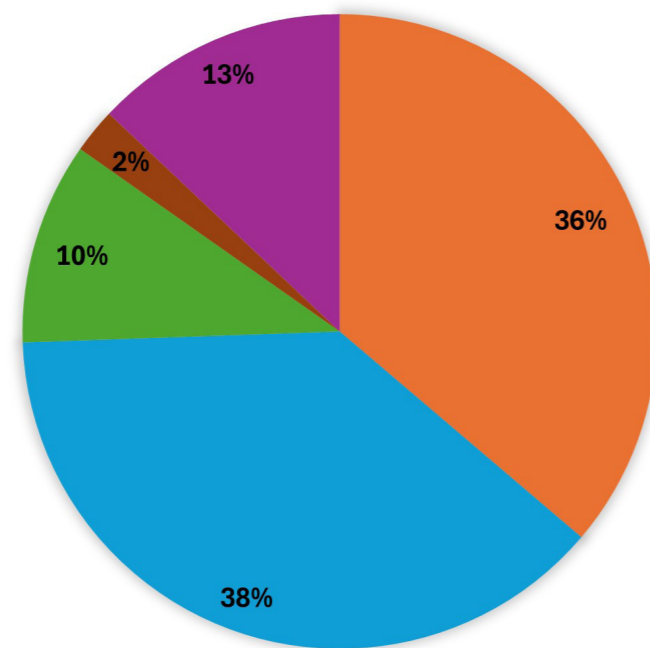


Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

Question 8: Please tell us on average the duration of each visit to Wymondham Town Centre

This question was included to understand how long people are currently spending within Wymondham town centre. This will provide a useful bench mark to ensure one of the primary objectives of the project, increased footfall, has been delivered.

Results indicate that most people spend an average of **1-2 hours** in the town centre at **38%**, although this is closely followed by approximately 36% of respondents who spend up to an hour visiting.

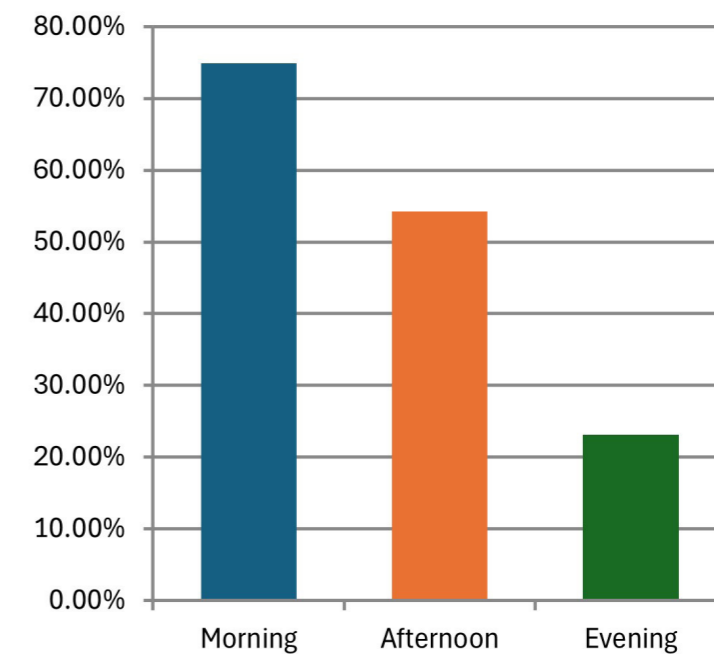
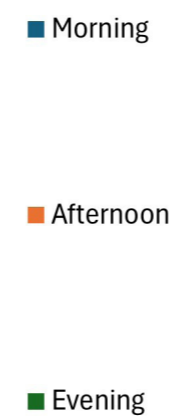


Up to 1 hour 1-2 hours 2-4 hours More than 4 hours All Day (I work or live in Wymondham)

Question 9: What time of day do you usually come into Wymondham Town Centre?

Question 9 aims to provide analysis for understanding when in the day people are visiting Wymondham. Again, this will form baseline evidence to measure against following interventions, whilst also helping to understand if interventions should focus on drawing footfall in at specific times, such as evenings.

The majority of respondents (**75%**) visit the town centre during the **morning**. Only 23% of people filling in the survey visited the town in the evening.

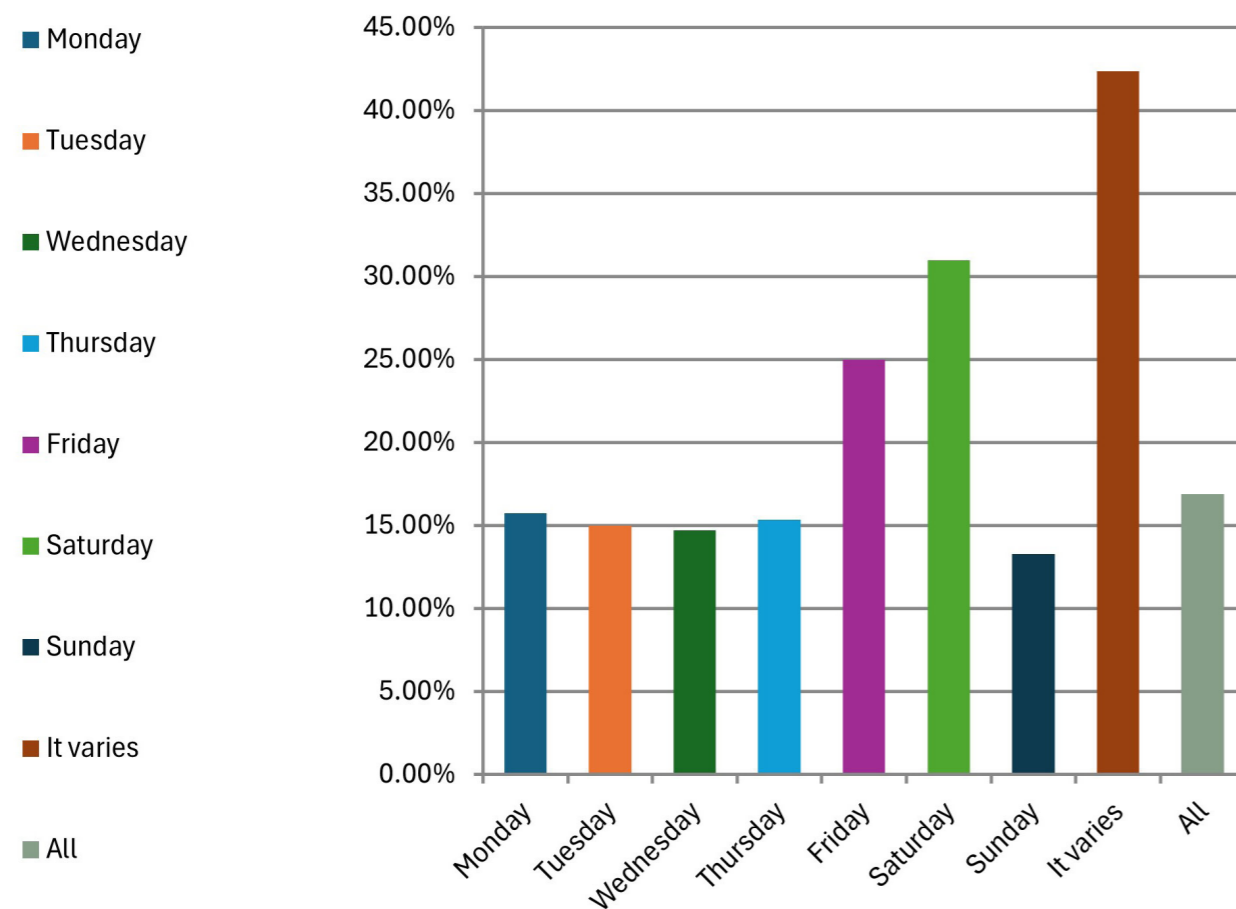


Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

Question 10: What day of the week do you usually come into Wymondham Town Centre?

This question was included to try and establish if certain events or activities such as the weekly market or monthly farmer's market affected when people visit Wymondham.

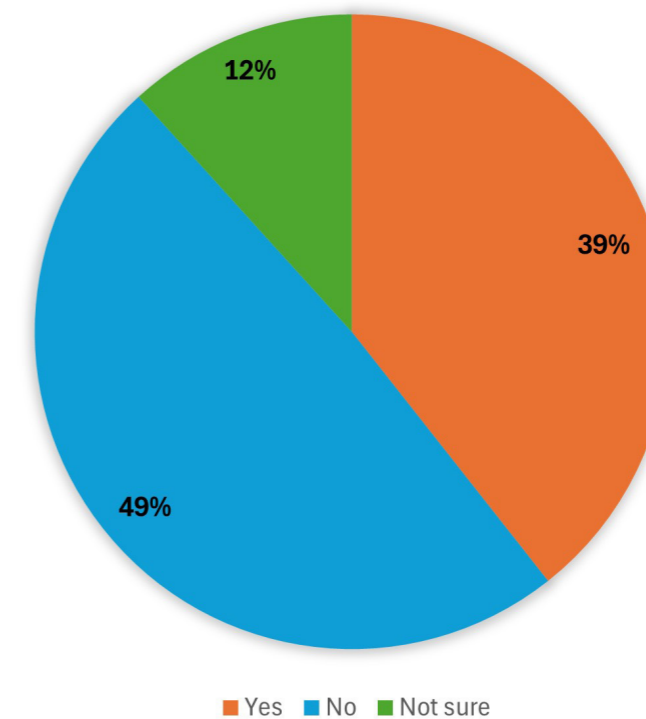
Results indicate that most respondents suggest that their visiting habits vary, and that they come in on a more **ad-hoc** basis (**42%**). More definitive responses indicated that most people visit on a Saturday (31%) or a Friday (25%).



Question 11: At present some businesses vary their opening days and hours. Does this affect your visiting habits?

Question 9 aims to provide analysis for understanding if limited opening times are a barrier to visiting Wymondham Town Centre.

The majority of respondents (**49%**) suggested that varying opening days and / or business hours **does not affect their visiting habits**, although **39%** of respondents mentioned that it would. **12%** of respondent said that they weren't sure if it did influence their visiting habits.

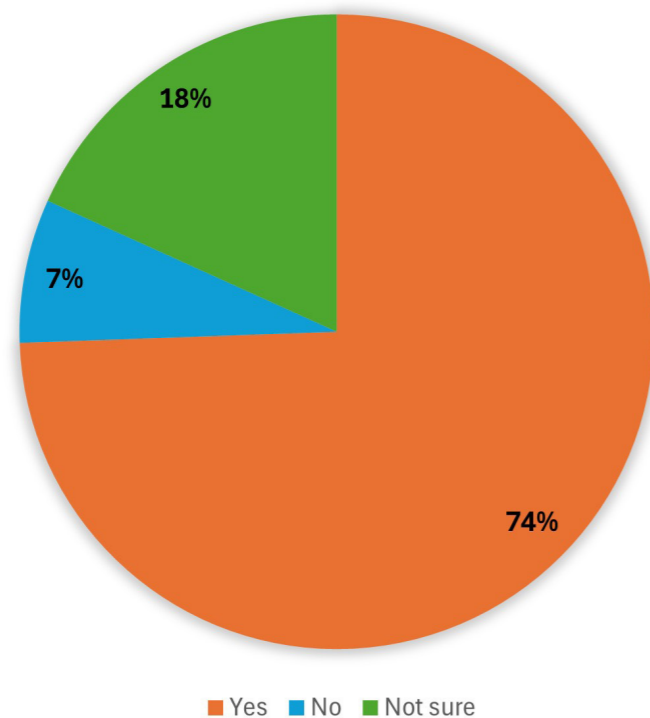


Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

Question 11a: If you answered 'yes' or 'not sure' to Question 11, would you visit the town more often if you could reply on shops being open every day for a full day?

This question was intended to obtain more information in relation to Question 11.

Results indicate that the respondents who said that restrictions on opening days and hours did affect their visiting habits, **would visit more often** if they could rely on shops / businesses being open more often (**74%**).



Question 12: What do you normally visit Wymondham Town Centre for?

Question 12 was included to provide an insight into what people are doing when they visit town - does activity mainly focus around retail, or is there a diverse mix of activity associated with the town centre.

Responses were relatively widespread across all 19 specified categories. The most common response was **Retail / General shopping** with **62%** of respondents ticking this category. **Doctors / medical / pharmacy** was the second most common response with **60%** of respondents also using this facility. **Food shopping** and **cafes** were also popular categories with over **51%** of respondents accessing such venues.

There were **165** responses to the 'other (please specify)' free text comment box, **a selection of which are directly presented in the table to the right to demonstrate the broad range of views.**

Other or be specific (please feel free to add your favourite shop or destination)

Ketts Books

Work

Dominos

Volunteering

Tourist Information Centre

Events

Clements

Beauty Salon

Optician



Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

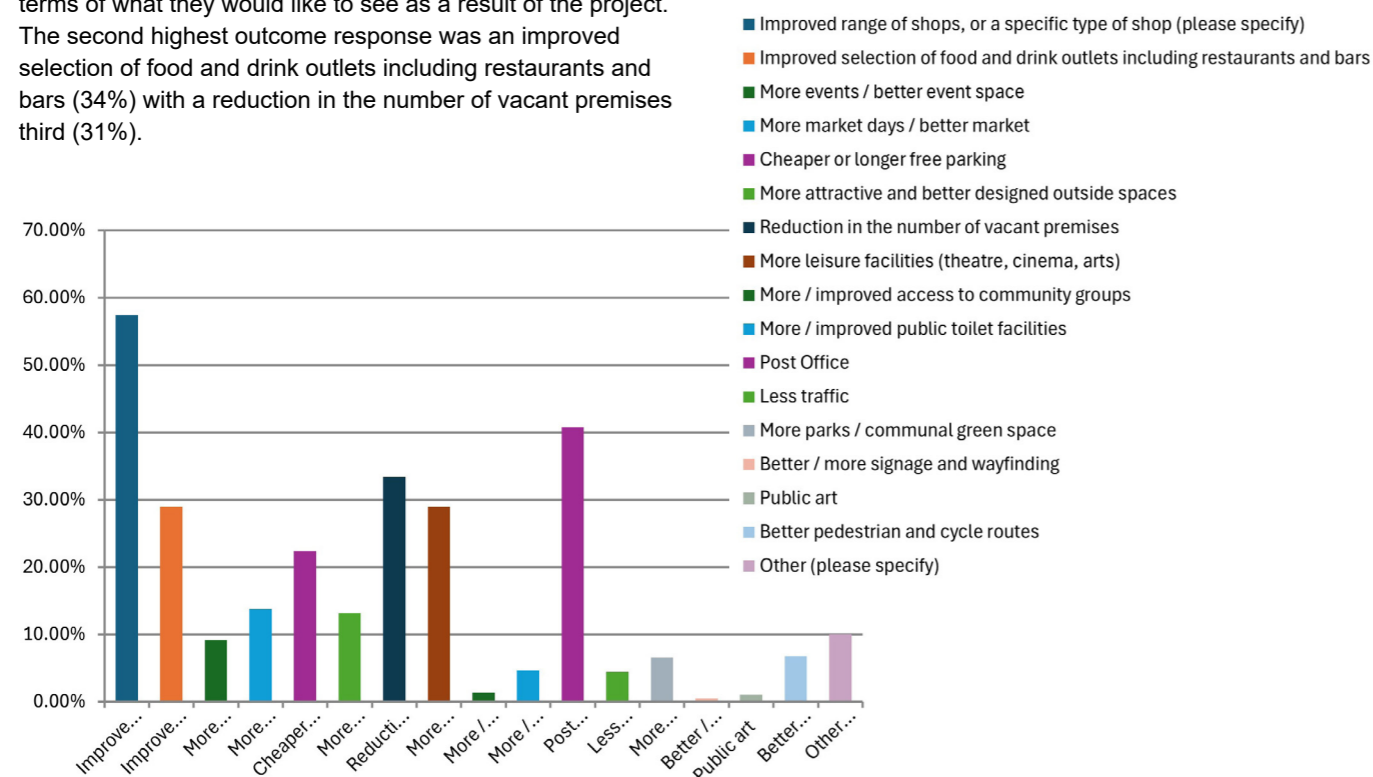
Question 13: Which of the following would encourage you to spend time in Wymondham Town Centre?

This question was designed to provide key information on what would encourage the community to visit Wymondham more often and spend more time there. Responses may be outside the scope of the physical implementation part of this project, but will help South Norfolk Council and Wymondham Town Council understand key areas for future investment and connectivity.

Responses were relatively widespread across all 16 specified categories. The most common response was an **improved range of shops** or specific type of shop with **57%** of respondents ticking this category. A **post office** within the town centre was another high scoring category with **41%** of respondents acknowledging that such a facility would encourage them to spend time in Wymondham Town Centre.

Respondents who visit Wymondham every day (response to question 7), reinforced the statistics above with an improved range of shops (52%) and a post office (41%) the most popular responses. A reduction in the number of vacant premises (31%) and more leisure facilities (theatre, cinema, arts) (31%) also scored highly in responses.

Respondents who visit Wymondham less frequently (once a month) suggested that an improved range of shops, or a specific type of shop (57%) was also the highest priority in terms of what they would like to see as a result of the project. The second highest outcome response was an improved selection of food and drink outlets including restaurants and bars (34%) with a reduction in the number of vacant premises third (31%).



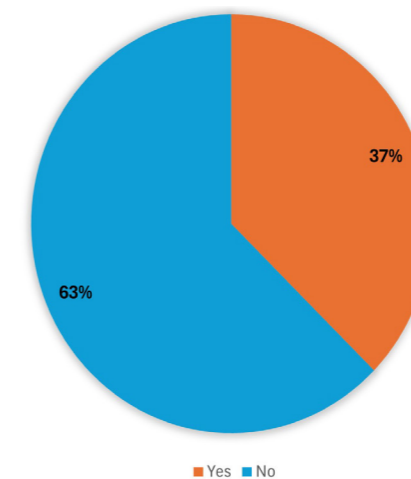
There were **100** responses to the 'other (please specify)' free text comment box, **a selection of which are directly presented in the table below to demonstrate the broad range of views.**

Other (please specify)

- Health food shop
- Banks
- More for teenagers / young adults
- Easier vehicle parking / ticketing system

Question 14: Do you visit other local/market towns for in-person services?

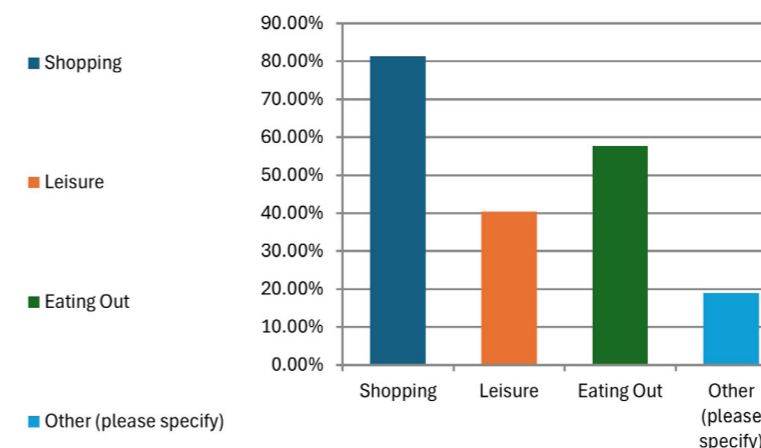
This question was intended to understand which other local or market towns the local community area visiting and what they might offer that Wymondham currently doesn't offer. **63%** of respondents said no they **did not visit other market towns** compared to 37% who confirmed that they did.



Question 14a: If answered 'yes' to Question 14, can you please state what this in-person visit is for.

This question was intended to obtain more information in relation to Question 14.

Results indicate that the respondents who said that did visit other local market towns in-person said that their main reason was in relation to **shopping 81%** of respondents ticked this box).



Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

This question was included to try and understand Wymondham's key assets.

To better inform the physical implementation stage of the project, qualitative comments from the 'other (please specify)' category have been separated into the following key themes which will be used at numerous analysis points within the report to help organise results and provide a clear steer for the Working Group and key stakeholders:

	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

The theme colour corresponds to the table to the right.

In summary, comments focused on a combination of five of the six emerging themes which will be discussed in more detail in Part 3 of this report.

Generally, respondents felt that the **Heritage Features** were Wymondham's biggest asset with comments relating to how unspoilt the town is. There are key links to some of the other themes including fulfilling **economic objectives** and **increased footfall**.

Access, movement and infrastructure comments mainly related to the **excellent transport links** via bus and some good off-road active travel links to Norwich via the Blue Pedalway.

Positive environmental comments relate to **key green space features** such as the River Tiffey, Wymondham Parks, and general access to nature and proximity to the surrounding countryside.

Positive comments relating to **retail & food / drinks outlets** and leisure facilities included references to the leisure centre, the charity shops and the fact that there is still a functioning Tourist Information Office.

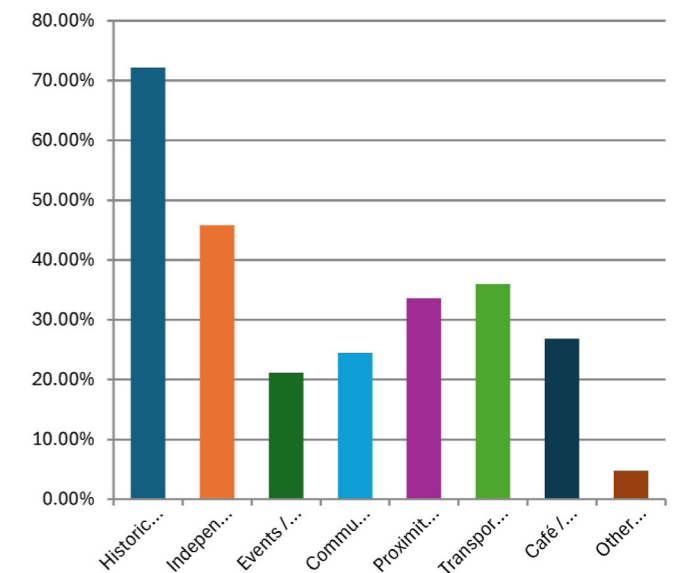
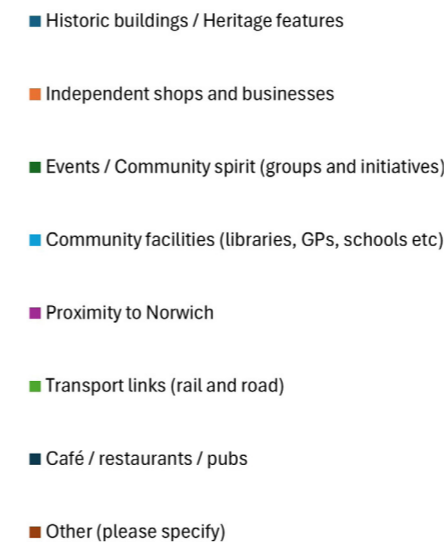
Comments categorised into the community theme included the **numerous events and community spirit** Wymondham offers and that the people provide a friendly and welcoming experience for visitors.

Question 15: What would you consider to be Wymondham's biggest asset(s)?

72% of respondents confirmed that **historic buildings / heritage features** were Wymondham's biggest asset or opportunity for conservation and enhancement. **Independent shops and businesses** also ranked highly with **46%** of respondents confirming this. The third highest category selected was **Transport links** (rail and road) with **36%** of respondents selecting this category.

There were **42** responses to the 'other (please specify)' free text category **a selection of which are directly presented in the table below to demonstrate the broad range of views**.

It is noted that there were no repeated comments which have been classified into the 'Economic' category, although it can be argued that this thematic cross-cuts through the majority of other themes as an indirect outcome or objective.



Park
Peace and quite and ease of access to nature
Bus route
Events / community spirit
Friendly and small welcoming place
Tourist Information Office
Good off-road cycle route from Norwich (Blue Pedalway)
Pubs
Unspoilt
Leisure Centre
Charity Shops
Mid-Norfolk Railway
Easy access to green spaces like parks, walks, wood and meadow
Proximity to countryside
The River Tiffey

Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

This question was included to try and understand the key issues, problems or concerns that people associate with Wymondham Town Centre. 15 multiple choice categories were included from experience of alternative town centre regeneration projects with additions specific to Wymondham. Respondents were limited to 3 choices to focus the respondent.

To better inform the physical implementation stage of the project, qualitative comments from the 'other (please specify)' category have been separated into the following key themes which will be used at numerous analysis points within the report to help organise results and provide a clear steer for the Working Group and key stakeholders:

	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

The theme colour corresponds to the table to the right.

In summary, comments focused on a combination of six emerging themes which will be discussed in more detail in Part 3 of this report.

Generally, respondents felt that **empty shops / premises** were the key issue, and this was further reinforced within other comments which included a focus on not realising the full potential of the retail offer in Wymondham, particularly relating to **limited opening hours**, the lack of a **banking hub**, a **formal restaurant offer** and the lack of a **post office**.

A number of respondents also reported on the **scruffiness** of the town centre including inappropriate signage, the permanent boarding of Wells Pharmacy,

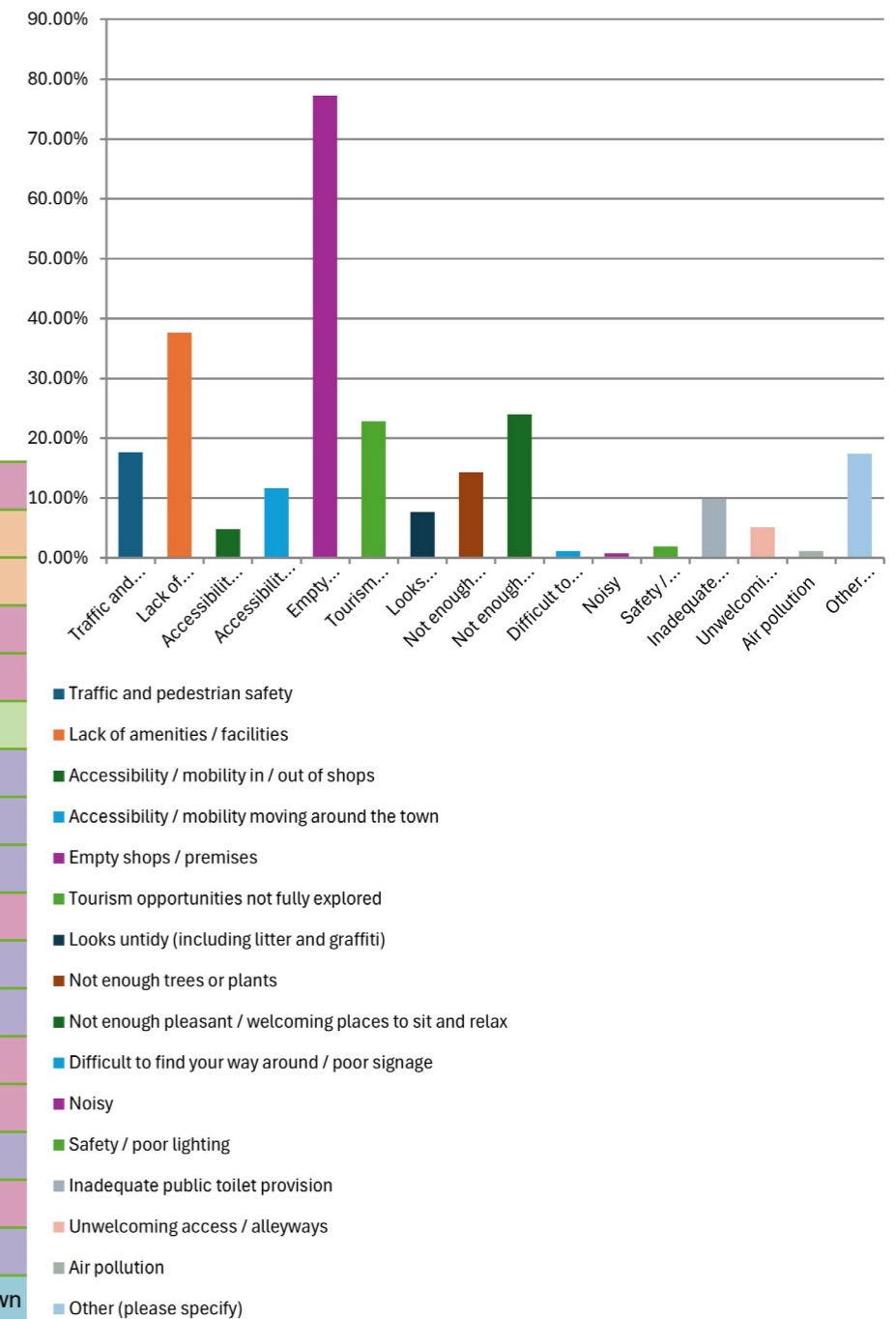
Interestingly only **17%** of respondents raised concern over **Traffic and Pedestrian Safety** and **11%** of respondents selected **Accessibility / mobility moving around the town** as part of the qualitative data collection, but a number of the free-comments related to **accessibility, parking, signage** and the **traffic congestion** associated with the town centre.

Question 16: Please tell us the issues/problems/concerns that you feel are most apparent relating to Wymondham town centre?

77% of respondents confirmed that **empty shops / premises** were their biggest concern. Analysis has also indicated that a **lack of amenities / facilities** was also one of the biggest issues with over **38%** of respondents selecting this option, and the third-ranked issue was associated with **not enough pleasant / welcoming places to sit and relax** with **24%** of respondents selecting this category.

There were **154** responses to the 'other (please specify)' free text comment box, a **selection of which are directly presented in the table below to demonstrate the broad range of views**.

Lack of high quality active travel (cycling and walking including safe bike storage)
Need more affordable community spaces to rent
Nothing to do (except stART)
Toilets in need of updating
Parking - too complicated, restrictive and expensive for a small town and a lack of residents parking
Poor quality play spaces for children. There's nothing for children from around 10 years old up
Scruffy e.g. the permanently boarded up Wells Pharmacy
Too many charity shops
Lack of a town centre post office
Town centre often highly congested with traffic
Lack of banking hub
Lack of a more formal restaurant offer
Inaccessible tourist information office
The main street is too narrow
Very little open early evening between 4pm and 9pm if you want to meet after work or school
Not enough free parking
Very little open on a Sunday
Learn lessons from other town centre improvements including Downham Market which changed the character of the town
Anti-social behaviour
Signage - particularly car parks
Poor road layout
Lack of public transport along Chapel Lane
Needs to be more accessible by bike
Retail offer not fully realised to prevent people going to Norwich
A traffic system which sends visitors away from the town centre
People in Silfield feel cut-off from the town centre due to the closure of the bridge
Town centre lacks vibrancy
Lack of CCTV
Garish shop fronts



Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

This question was included to try and understand key outcome priorities if budget constraints limit project interventions. This will also be a useful baseline question from which to measure response post implementation.

Ultimately, any proposals should seek to balance all potential categories, but some people will hold higher value certain outcomes over others.

To better inform the physical implementation stage of the project, qualitative comments from the 'please add anything that we may have missed that is a higher priority than those mentioned' category have been separated into the following key themes which will be used at numerous analysis points within the report to help organise results and provide a clear steer for the Working Group and key stakeholders:

	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

The theme colour corresponds to the table to the right.

Overall, comments focused on **accessibility** and **moving around the town centre** either by foot or by car, and also **vehicle parking**. There was a genuine split in support of pedestrianisation with others feeling this type of intervention would be at the detriment of the town.

A number of comments focused on the lack of a **post office** and **banking hub**, but overall, comments were more general looking at seeing an **improvement in the variety of shops** and **maximising opportunities to tenant vacant shops**.

The **appearance of a market town** was also mentioned repeatedly during comments, maintaining a balance between the heritage apparent in the existing built form and streetscape with modern pressures such as traffic flow and time-poor audiences who require convenience or multi-functional offers.

Young people (aged 20 and under), the most under-represented demographic in terms of Census comparisons felt that more **trees / planting / green spaces** were the highest priority (30%).

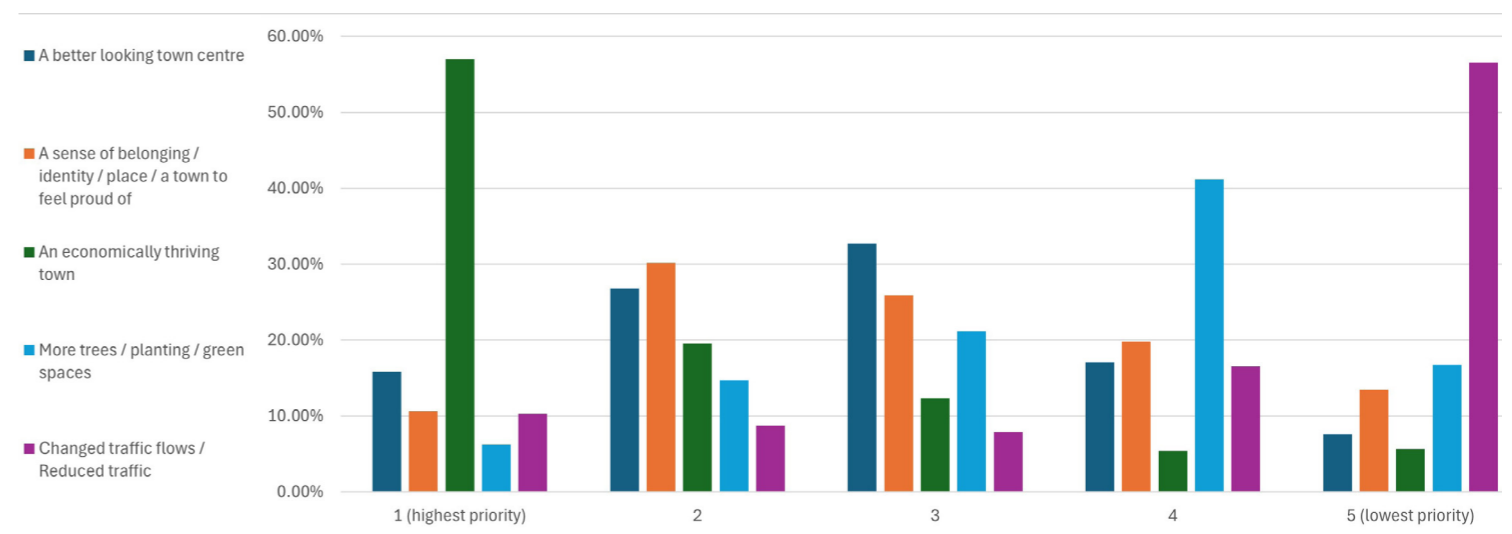
Question 17: What would you like to see most resulting from improvements to Wymondham Town Centre?

The categorisation is as follows (ranked from number 1 highest priority to number 5 lowest priority):

1. Highest Priority: An economically thriving town: **57%** of respondents chose this as their first priority
2. A sense of belonging / identity / place / a town to feel proud of: **11%** of respondents chose this as their second priority.
3. A better looking town centre: **16%** of respondents chose this as their third priority.
4. More trees / planting / green spaces: **6%** of respondents chose this as their fourth priority.
5. Changed traffic flows / reduced traffic: **10%** of respondents chose this as their last priority.

There were **189** responses to the 'please add anything that we may have missed that is a higher priority than those mentioned' free text comment box, **a selection of which are directly presented in the table below to demonstrate the broad range of views.**

Improved accessibility to car parks
Better evening / out of hours food and beverage provision
Free parking
Banks
A busy and buzzing high street
Improved and more speed humps
Businesses working together
Better shopping opportunities
Improved public toilets
All outcomes are important and any scheme should deliver all outcomes
More green areas
Reduced traffic volume and speed
Coach parking to encourage tourists
Don't get rid of town centre parking
Better interpretation of the history of the town
Post office
Cleaner car parks
Rejuvenation of high street with better retail opportunities
Cafes and shops open more often
More thought given to pedestrian and cycle safety
Better access for those that need it including keeping free of obstructions for wheelchair users
Not to lose its character



Better traffic management
More diverse shopping offer
Bringing in more events in to town
More car parking due to town expansion
Stop two-way traffic on Market Street and Fairland Street
Improvement to facades of town centre buildings, including signage
Fill empty shops
Gay-friendly venues
Pedestrian priority in main streets
A better skate park
Reduction in anti-social behaviour around the market square in the evening
The town centre lacks a market town feel - prettier shops near the market place
Being able to access the town due to road closures
Improved bus waiting areas
A better town centre for younger residents
No pedestrianisation - this will kill the town centre
Places to sit, particularly around the market place
CCTV
Habitat creation e.g. bat boxes
Big population - make it easier to get into the town without the reliance on vehicles
Pop-up shops in vacant premises
Community hub / centre
Alley ways made more attractive and safe
Better signage
Buses to and from new housing estates

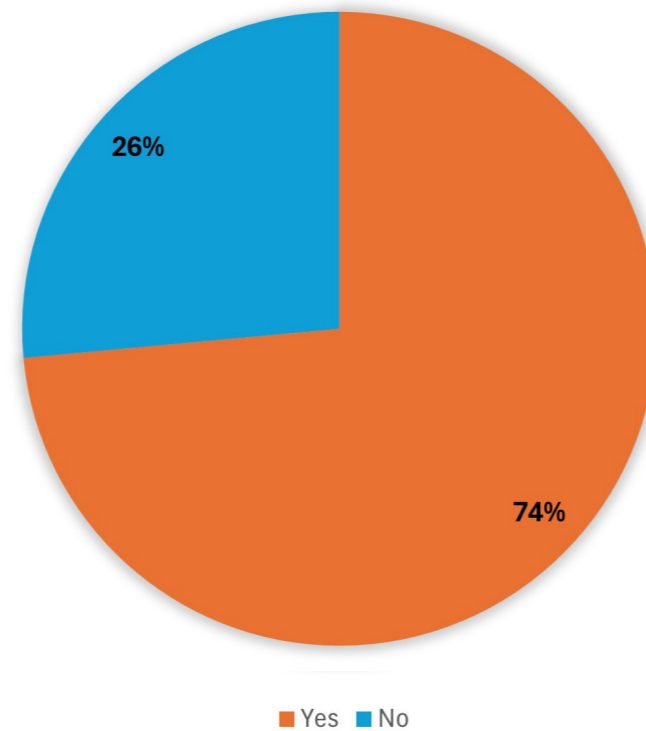
Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

Question 18: Thinking about Wymondham as it is now would you recommend it as a place to visit?

This question was included to understand how people generally feel about Wymondham. This provides a useful baseline response which can be measured against following future physical implementation.

74% of respondents answered that they **would recommend Wymondham as a place to visit.**

The comments from the 'please state why' addition are summarised in the table on the right. Please note, this is a snapshot of the **552** comments received in the free text comment box, **grouped into common or repeated responses and subsequently separated into the following key themes:**



	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

The theme colour corresponds to the table to the right.

In summary, comments focused on a combination of six emerging themes which will be discussed in more detail in Part 3 of this report.

The majority of comments relate to the theme of **Retail and Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities** or **Community** focused, picking up on specific shops or cafes such as Ketts Books that would be recommended or that the community spirit is a real asset, but could be a more coordinate resource.

There were some comments relating to comparisons to other towns such as Dereham, Beccles and Attleborough, which don't fall into a specific theme and have been left blank.

The heritage and 'quaintness' of the town is a real draw
It's not as bad as some towns
Town centre feels dead
Too many empty shops
Untidy and poorly maintained
The Abbey area is a lovely place to visit
It's a pretty town with good shops and facilities
Historic town rich in heritage and attractions
A lot nicer than Attleborough
It's a proper community
It's a nice market town, just could be better
Nothing for young people to come into the town centre for
I'd recommend specific shops or eateries but not the town as a whole
Not enough to do - the abbey is beautiful but otherwise the town is pretty uninspiring
The library is a great facility
It's a town with great potential
Ketts books is definitely worth a visit
Beccles is better
A few years ago I would have said yes but losing some prime shops and the banks means there's less of a reason to visit
Parking charges put me off
The town needs to meet the needs of residents before it can attract visitors
Love the market, pubs and cafes
Easier to access than Norwich
It has almost everything without being too hectic
Market day is a great
Locals don't use facilities enough
Historical streets give real character to the town centre
Still very vehicle dominated - feels like a place to drive through but not stay
This depends on audience
Better than Dereham

Chapter 2.2 The Questionnaire

Further comments?

A text box was included at the end of the questionnaire to offer the opportunity for respondents to include any additional information that they didn't feel had been covered elsewhere in the survey.

This information is summarised in the table on the right. This table represents a snapshot of the **381** free text comments, **a selection of which are directly presented in the table to the right to demonstrate the broad range of views.** Repeated comments / topics have been grouped into the 6 themes below. Where comments cannot be attributed to a theme, they have been left blank.

	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

The theme colour corresponds to the table to the right.

In summary, comments focused on a combination of six emerging themes which will be discussed in more detail in Part 3 of this report.

There was a bigger focus in the comments within this question on the **environmental** aspects of the project, with a number of respondents mentioning their preference for a **'greener' town centre** including **sustainable materials** and achieving increased biodiversity and climate resilience. Comments also mentioned about creating a more inviting fabric to the town centre albeit in keeping with the historic character of the town.

A number of respondents also mention **pedestrian safety, traffic calming** and having **increased security** through CCTV. Again, there is clear divide in those that support a more pedestrian-friendly town centre and those that would favour vehicle priorities which they feel better support local businesses, and allow better connectivity for convenience visits.

Youth clubs and activities for young people
Pedestrian town focus
Consistency over traffic calming measures
More independent shops
Incentivize for businesses
1 hour free parking prohibits longer visits
Fill all vacant premises
Give a new identity to Wymondham
Narrow streets and road priorities cause traffic issues including congestion
Banking hub and post office
We need radical change
Better community transport
Better infrastructure to encourage residents from new housing areas into town centre
Anchor chain stores to entice people in and use independent shops
Cinema
The survey feels too limited with only 3 choices for some questions - all responses apply in most cases
Parklets, rain gardens and extra planting to 'green' the town centre
Pocket parks
Use space above shops for accommodation
The station area needs some attention
Needs better thought for wheelchair users to fully access the town centre
No faith in the town or district council
Proper parking for the Abbey to encourage visitors
Please use the money wisely, stretch it, make the best use of it for the public
Inappropriate additions to heritage buildings need to be stopped
The towns population is growing too quickly and not being matched by facilities or services
Would love to see a more community coherent vibe to the town considering its size
Make it clear if Wymondham is a suburb of Norwich or a town in it's own right
We need more traffic calming measures
People need a real reason to visit
The town centre needs a 'wow' factor
Please don't waste money on signposts
Access routes from car parks are so unappealing and so inaccessible
Illuminate Town Cross / Market Square at night

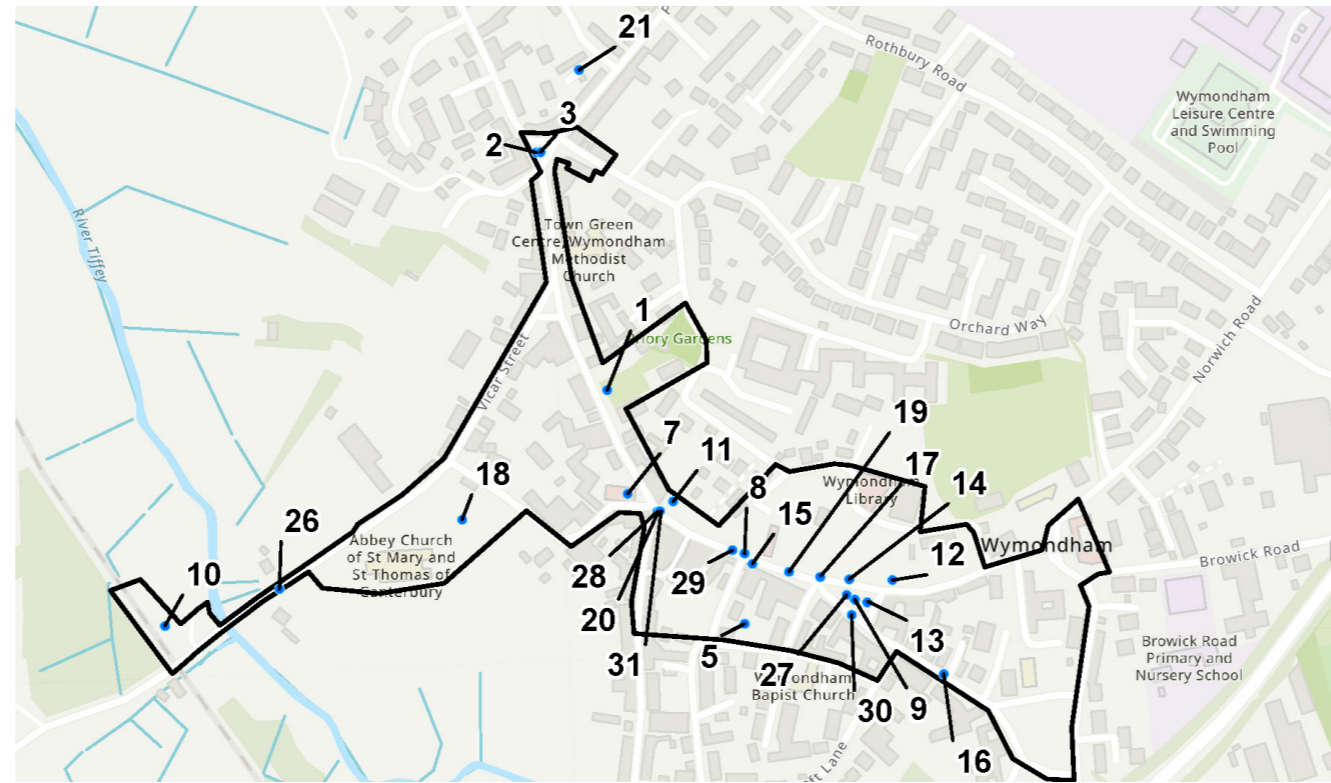
Porous paving would reduce flooding
Premises opening later, particularly late afternoon / early evening
Improved alleyways
Even if shops are empty, they could be made to look more attractive
Please do not pedestrianise the town centre
Prioritise sustainability and biodiversity
Reduce traffic speed and noise
The town centre must feel inviting and welcoming - making you want to stay longer
Look to Germany for inspiration - not British towns
A permanent one-way system would make the town centre safer
More events might tempt people into the town
Better focus and access for the Tourist Information as the key identity for the town centre
The town centre needs to be a destination
The signage is terrible and it's confusing to drive around and difficult to find things, including car parks
It would be good to see more interesting walks linking to the town centre / through the town centre
The council need to ensure value for money with this project
Wymondham is a traditional market town - don't do anything to change that
Please try to stop personal agendas from dominating the plans and deliver what is best for the town
The town centre does not feel safe for pedestrians
Harness early morning and evening commuter market (people getting buses from the market cross into Norwich)
CCTV would make a massive difference to anti-social behaviour in the town centre
Encourage access from different modes (vehicles and pedestrian) into the town at different points to segregate users and make it safer
It would be good to have a bit more learning into the history of the town
Its good to see improvements already happening
New / revamped toilets
Welcoming entrance gateways to the town to let people know they've arrived
Invest in the parks and green space we already have
Bring together community groups to form an active force to push forward initiatives

Chapter 2.3 The Interactive Map

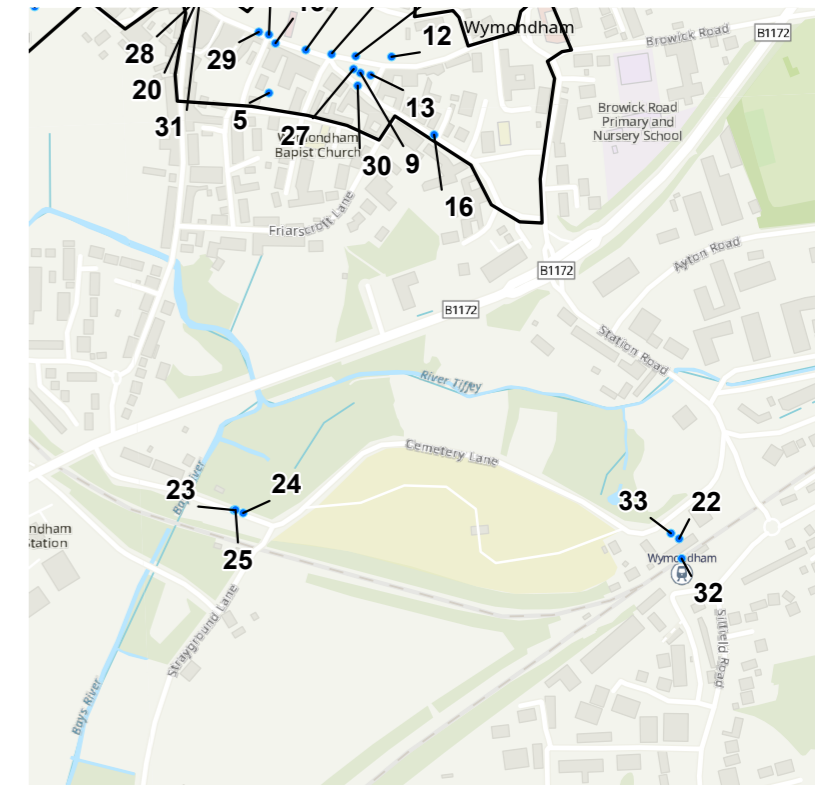
An interactive map was embedded within the Consultation Hub to enable participants to respond with comments at a geographically accurate point on a map.

Comments were added to a base map using an 'add pin' function which opened a supplementary dialogue box where a comment could be added to the text box. During the two month period where the interactive map was live, 32 pins were added to the map, although this includes a test pin, and 3 pins where no comment was attributed. A series of screen shots of the resulting maps is indicated to the right, with the corresponding comments noted in the table below.

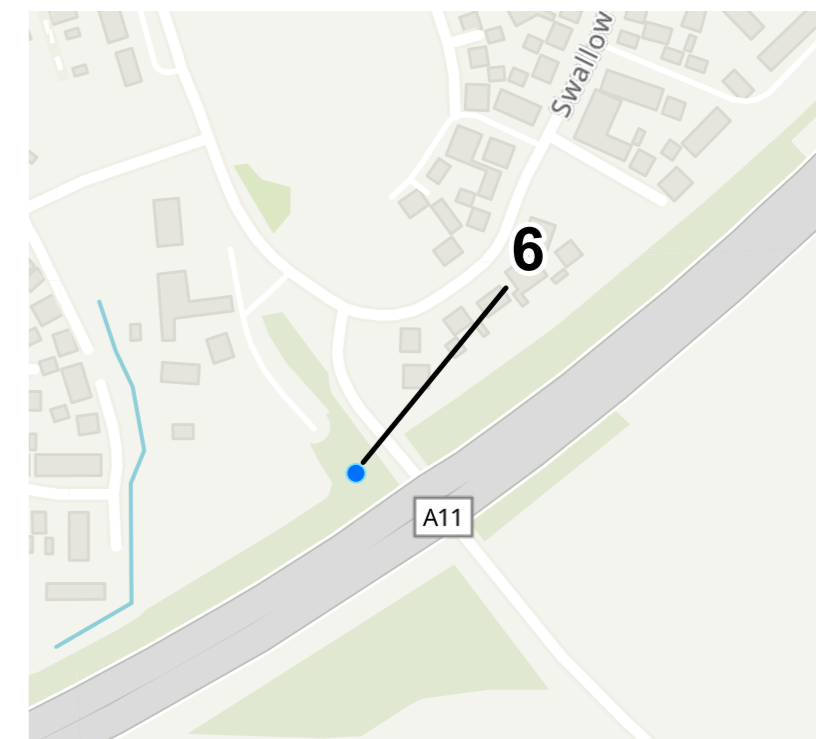
The added pins predominantly focus on the town centre within the red line boundary identified on page 7 of this report. There is one pin (6) located on the A11 and six pins 22, 23, 24, 25, 32 and 33 located in the south of Wymondham near Cemetery Lane and the rail station.



Map Ref	Comment
1	This is a lovely park that can be easily passed by. I'd love to see some sort of sculptural entrance arch to give a sense of arrival and place so it cant be missed and you feel compelled to enter
2	This is really the very start of the high street when entering Wymomdham from this direction. It doesn't get the same care and attention as further down the high street and some of the empty buildings currently look very scruffy. Weeds don't always get cleared from the shopfronts here either
5	Lots of potential for this area - outdoor seating, filling empty units with accessible offerings etc
6	Make a slip road onto the A11 here. The (regularly closed) route under the rail bridge is unsuitable for the volume of traffic due to the new houses. This must be dealt with as a matter of urgency
7	Improve junction by Becket's Chapel and consider pedestrianising the area immediately facing the south side of the chapel
8	Consider traffic calming measures to deter drivers using the town centre as a short cut through and prioritise pedestrians. Add trees where possible.. Ensure any new street furniture and signage is appropriate for the Historic centre.
9	More planting, pedestrians prioritised
10	Improve car park surface to an all weather one
11	Empty space enhance with greenery / tree
12	Too many closed Banks. Could one of them re-open as a bank Help-Hub and Post Office??
13	Redevelop the are where the market stalls operate, and convert to bus stop(s). Move Market stalls to location of current bus stops, and widen pavement along north side of Market Street.
14	Local Council to buy / lease one of the former bank properties. The property to be used a local banking hub for all interested banks and be a local post office. This, and my previous comment re bus stops, will encourage to come to Wymondham, rather the pass buy. It will also help local business with their day to day cash banking and hence bring business to the 'high street'.
15	More free or longer time for free car parking
16	Make this street one way only into town, narrow the street for traffic, increase parking bays
17	Have a large green garden type sitting and meeting area
18	More permanent and nice seating and picnic area and bins for waste
19	Please block pave all of the road and pavement so that is all one level. Cars can still drive through. 5mph limit. Pedestrians have right of way. From here to my other blue flag. This would be amazing!
20	End of level paving. You could make this access only for vehicles. There are other routes to get from one side of Wym to the other
21	No paved road. Everyone in Fern Court have to park in a pothole-filled, gravel/mud-like area
22	Why is this area not included in the Public Realm? It is probably the biggest eyesore in Wymondham and not attractive to visitors arriving to the town by train.
25	Stinging Nettles and Brambles are encroaching the road making it unpleasant to walk along.
26	Stinging Nettles are encroaching the road making it unpleasant to walk along.
27	Asset - Food Markets
28	Issue - confusing right of way for road users and pedestrians. Never feel very safe when walking in this area
29	Issue - narrow footpaths. Never feel very safe using the pavements
30	Opportunity - bring back one way system and install better parklet with raingarden planters
31	Opportunity - install parklet outside the florist along with raingarden planters.
32	Issue - no access to Platform 2 for people in wheelchairs or mobility problems
33	Issue - having a safe and easy route for people to travel to the town centre.



Screen shot of pin comments located on the interactive map in the south of Wymondham near the train station



Screen shot of pin comments located on the interactive map near the A11

Chapter 2.4 Community Drop-In Event

A drop-in public consultation event was held on Friday 20th September 2024 from 9am-11am at the weekly market in the town centre of Wymondham. A second event was held on Saturday 21st September 2024 from 9am - 12pm at the monthly farmer's market, held in the centre of Wymondham. The location and timing of the events were arranged to maximise potential participation.

Both events were attended by a number of people representing residents of Wymondham and visitors to the town.

The aim of the event was to provide confirmation of data gathered as part of the Online Consultation Website in a face-to-face environment. Not everyone has access to the internet, and some prefer to make a representation in person or to meet the project team.

Attendees were given the opportunity to fill in a questionnaire either on their mobile device by scanning a QR code, or via a paper version. Attendees were then asked to look over large scale base mapping to discuss any existing issues or highlight any opportunities to take forwards into the physical implementation stage of the project.

The subsequent page summarises a small part of the discussions that took place.



Attendees at the Drop-In Consultation Event

Chapter 2.4 Community Drop-In Event

A mapping exercise was also undertaken at the Stakeholder Workshop to understand any opportunities or issues which are geographically focused within Wymondham Town Centre. Green dots indicate opportunities / assets to build on and red dots indicate issues which could be looked at as part of the project.

The table below summarises the comments into the 6 key themes:

Opportunities / Assets

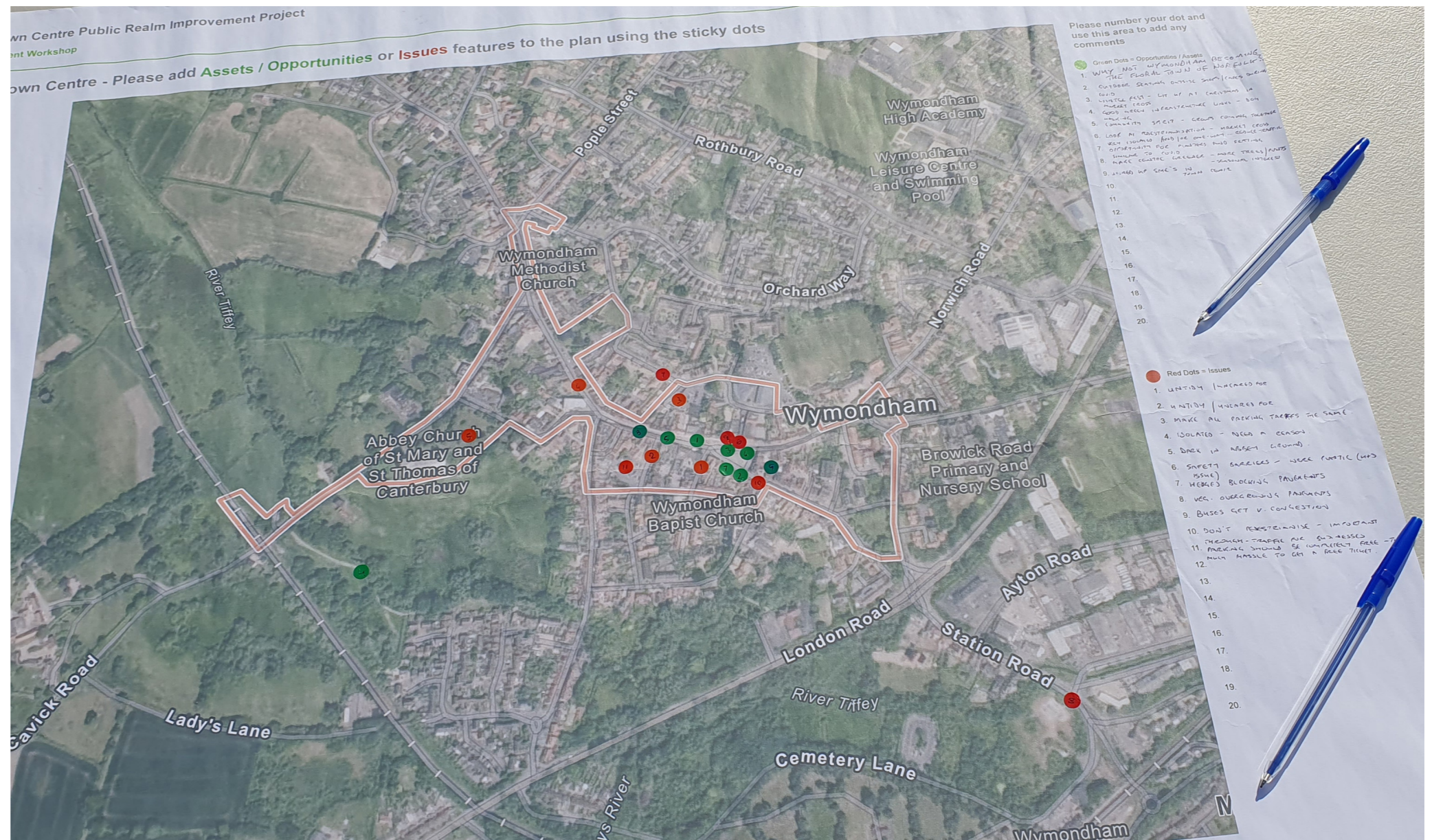
- Wymondham becoming the floral town of Norfolk
- Outdoor seating outside shops / cafes similar to during Covid (opposite Market Cross)
- Use Winterfest-type lighting all year, particularly in Market Cross
- Build on the existing good green infrastructure links
- Build on the community spirit - bring groups together
- Look at pedestrianisation of Market Cross area which is currently very isolated and / or one-way system to reduce traffic congestion / speed
- Make centre greener - more trees / plants and seasonal interest such as blossom
- Joined up SME's in town centre

Issues / Problems

- Looks untidy / uncared for particularly around side streets such as Queen Street and access to Market Street Car Park
- Make all parking tariffs the same
- Town Green feels isolated - need a reason to visit
- Dark in Abbey grounds
- Safety barriers / bollards need to be looked at - made of plastic and don't provide defensible space for shops from adjacent proximity vehicle parking
- Hedges and vegetation is overgrown and blocking pavements on walk from station (Station Road) and Back Lane
- Buses get very congested in Market Cross
- Don't pedestrianise - important through-traffic for businesses
- Parking should be completely free - it's too much hassle to get a free ticket

	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

Most comments focused on accessibility within the town centre and **vehicle / pedestrian safety** in particular



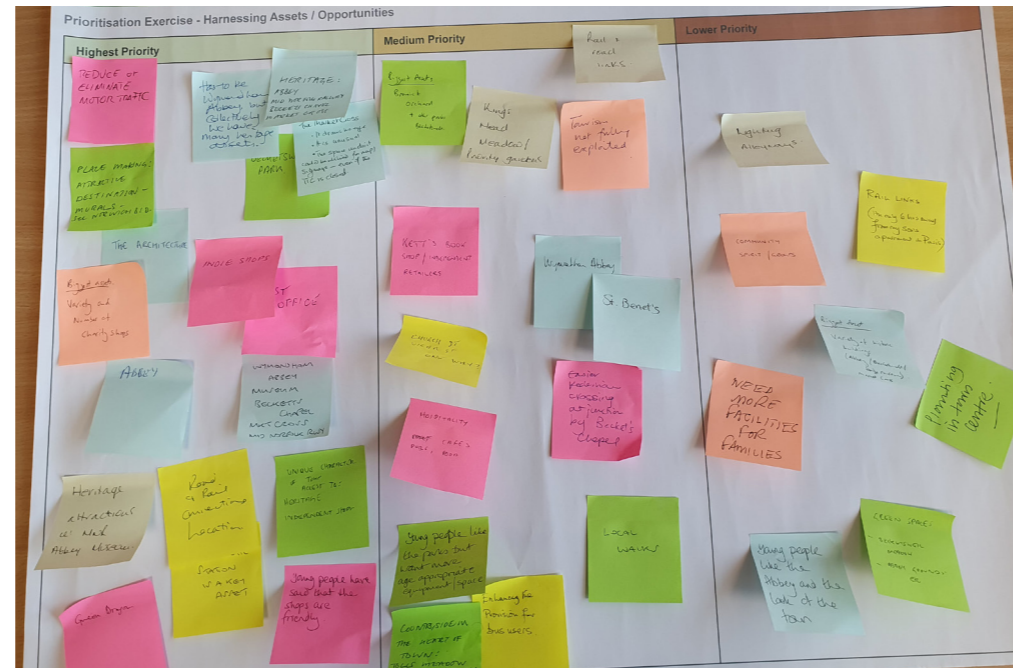
Large scale map base with red dots indicating current issues and green dots indicating current assets

Chapter 2.5 Stakeholder Workshop

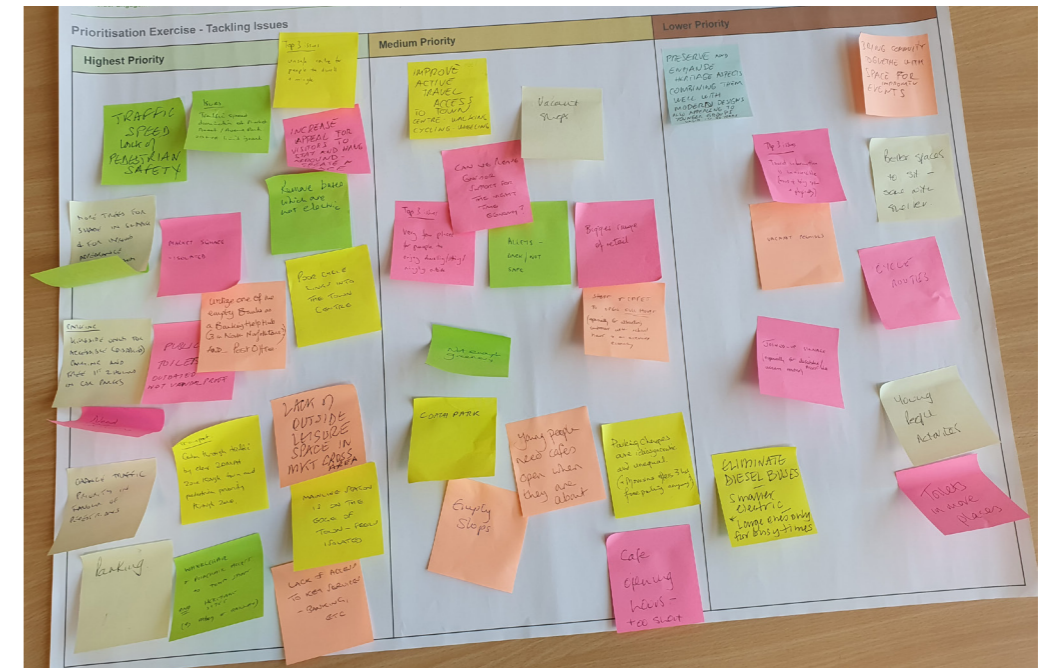
A stakeholder consultation workshop was held on Friday 20th September 2024 from 12pm-2pm at Wymondham Town Council offices located at Ketts Park in Wymondham. 12 people attended the workshop representing the following stakeholder groups and organisations:

- Wymondham Heritage Railway
- Wymondham Abbey
- Wymondham in Bloom
- Greening Wymondham
- MTM Youth Services
- Norfolk County Council
- Sustainable Wymondham
- Historic Norfolk
- Barford and Wrampingham Parish Council

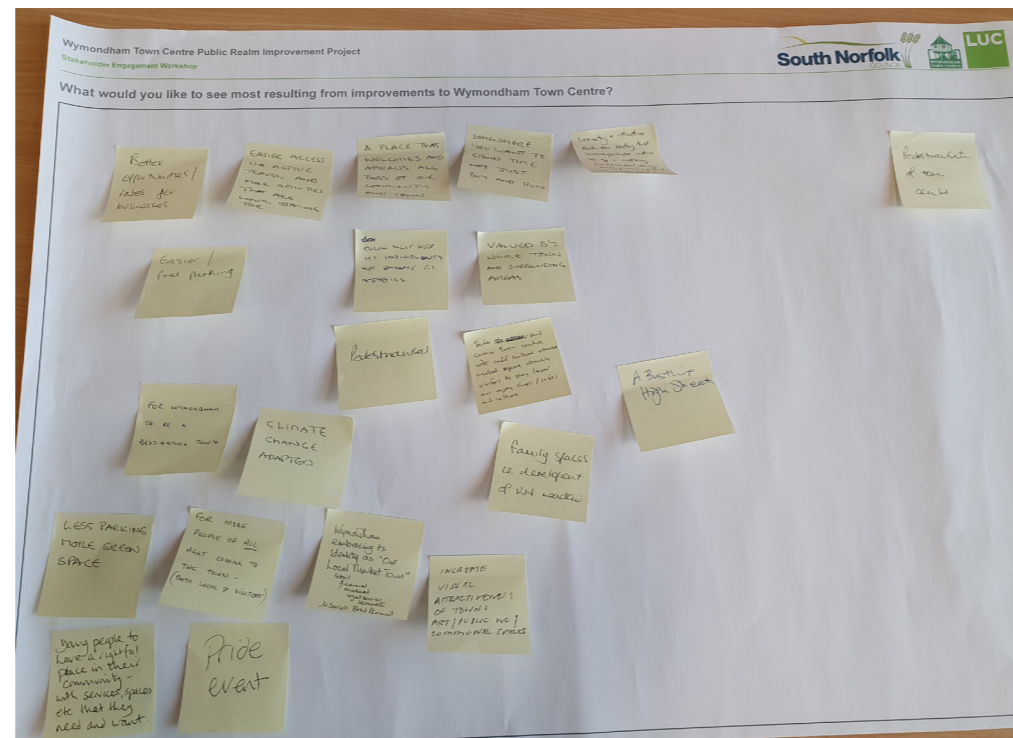
An analysis of comments received at the stakeholder consultation workshop is included on the next page of this report.



Looking at the top 3 priorities for harnessing opportunities within Wymondham



Looking at the top 3 priorities for tackling issues in Wymondham



What do stakeholders want to see most coming out of the Public Realm Improvements?









Interactive participation at the stakeholder workshop

Chapter 2.5 Stakeholder Workshop

The discussions from the stakeholder consultation workshop is summarised in the table on the right.

Three questions from the questionnaire were used to form the main interactive parts of the workshop. Attendees were asked to look at Wymondham's top 3 assets or opportunities, Wymondham's top 3 issues or problems and then what people wanted to see most resulting from the project.

Comments have been separated into the following key themes which will be used at numerous analysis points within the report to help organise results and provide a clear steer for the Working Group and key stakeholders.

	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

The theme colour corresponds to the tables to the right.

When asked what Wymondham's biggest asset was, most stakeholder discussions and comments fell into the heritage category, and included the **heritage architecture** and **unique character**.

When asked what the issues / problems concerns were, comments have been attributed to the access, movement and infrastructure category and focused around **traffic speed** and **pedestrian safety**, the **isolation of the market square** surrounded by the road network, and **unclear traffic priorities**.

In response to what stakeholders want to see most resulting from the town centre improvements, comments were quite varied, and included a number of key points noted in the table on the right.

What would you consider to be Wymondham's biggest asset(s)?

The Architecture
The Abbey
Variety and number of charity shops
Independent shops
Heritage generally
The Market Cross
The Green Dragon
Road and Rail connections
Location
Unique Character
Friendly

Please tell us the issues/problems/concerns that you feel are most apparent relating to Wymondham town centre?

Traffic speed / lack of pedestrian safety
Unsafe to dwell / mingle
No reason for visitors to stay / hang around
Remove buses which are not electric
Not enough trees for shade in Summer
Improve appearance of the town
The market square feels isolated
Poor cycle links to the town centre
Parking - inconsistency of regulations
Public toilets are out of date
No banking hub - utilise one of the empty banks as a banking hub
No post office
Traffic priority not clear - change in favour of pedestrians
Wheelchair and pushchair access to town shops and heritage sites
Lack of outside leisure space in Market Cross area
Train station is on the edge of town - feels isolated

What would you like to see most resulting from the project?

A place that welcomes and attracts all parts of our community
Somewhere you want to spend time
An interesting and attractive destination
Easier / free parking
Retaining it's individuality
Valued by whole town and surrounding areas
Pedestrianised
Climate change adapted
Safer and calmer town centre
A bustling high street
Family spaces



Chapter 2.5 Stakeholder Workshop

A mapping exercise was also undertaken at the Community Drop-In Event to understand any opportunities or issues which are geographically focused within Wymondham town centre. Green dots indicate opportunities / assets to build on and red dots indicate issues which could be looked at as part of the project.

The table below summarises the comments into the 6 key themes:

Opportunities / Assets

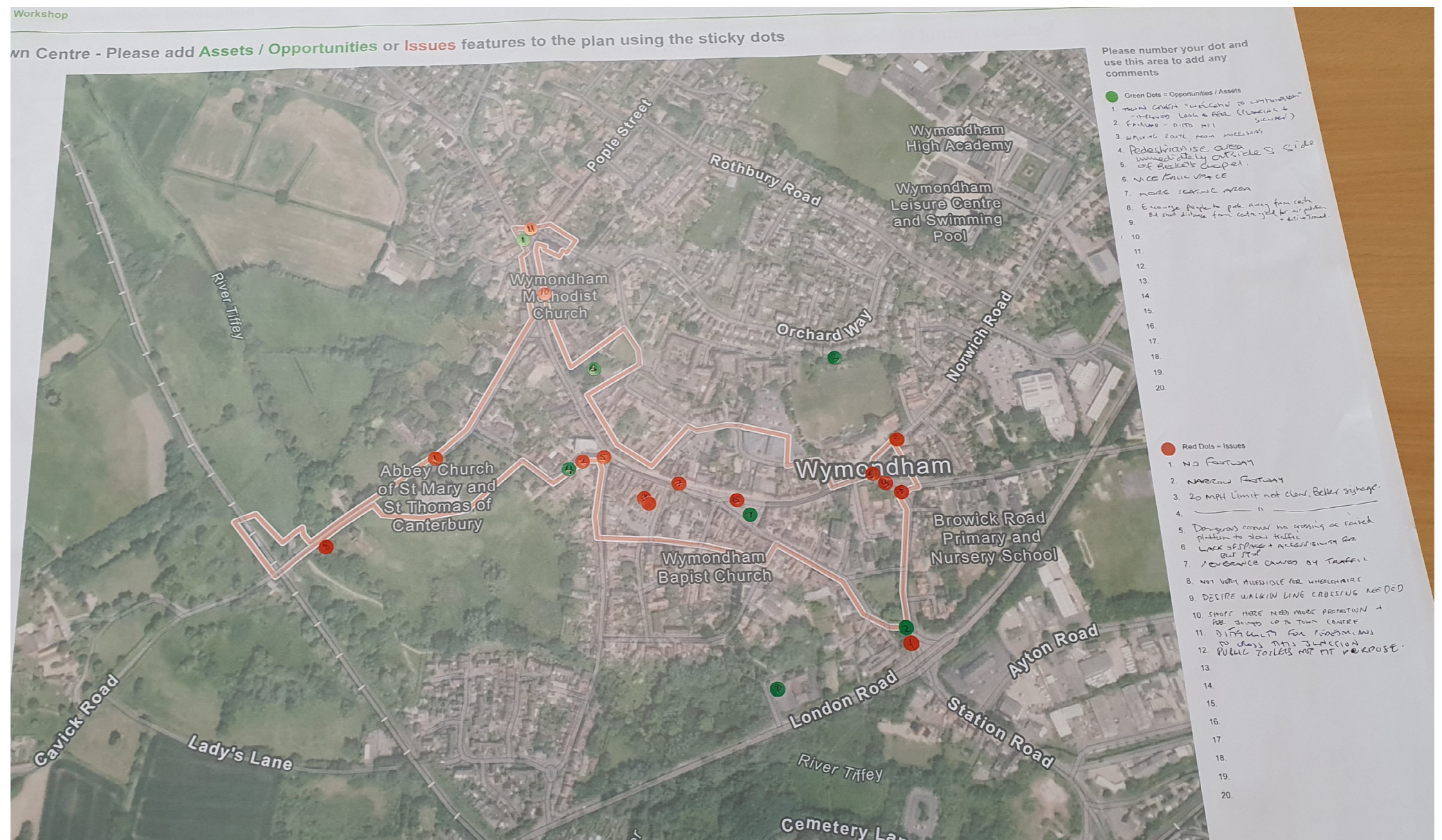
- Welcome to Wymondham and / or 'Gateway Features' near Town Green and Fairland Green
- Improve walking route from Morrisons
- Pedestrianise area immediately outside south side of Becket's Chapel
- Improve Priory Gardens Public Space interface to town centre
- More seating in Market Square
- Encourage people to park away from town centre - good for air pollution and active travel

Issues / Problems

- No footway leading to Abbey
- Narrow pavements near Becket's Chapel
- Better signage to emphasis 20 MPH speed limit / zone on Norwich Road entering the town centre and on Fairland Street entering the town centre from the B1172
- Dangerous corner on Browick Road / Avenue Road near the Wymondham Heritage Museum
- Lack of space / accessibility for bus stop near Market Cross
- Severance of Market Cross and Market Street caused by Traffic
- River Tiffey walk not very accessible for wheelchair users
- Pedestrian crossing needed near Wymondham Heritage Museum
- Shops near the Town Green need more promotion and to feel connected to the town centre
- Difficult for pedestrians to cross the junction at Pople Street / Cock Street at the end of Town Green
- Public toilets not fit for purpose

	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

Most comments focused on **accessibility** within the town centre and **vehicle / pedestrian safety** in particular



Large scale map base with red dots indicating current issues and green dots indicating current assets







Chapter 2.6 Focussed Stakeholder Feedback

As part of wider and targeted stakeholder consultation, the project team invited feedback from any stakeholder group that was unable to offer representation at the in-person event or wanted to provide more detailed feedback. This was in the form of face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations and emails. The following organisations offered feedback in this way:

- Barford and Wrampingham Parish Council
- Ketts Books
- Wymondham Business Group
- Pub Landlord

This information is summarised in the table on the right.

To better inform the physical implementation stage of the project, qualitative comments from this part of the consultation process have been separated into the following key themes which will be used at numerous analysis points within the report to help organise results and provide a clear steer for the Working Group and key stakeholders.

	Access, Movement and Infrastructure
	Community
	Retail & Food / Drink Outlets / Leisure Facilities
	Heritage
	Economics
	Built Environment

The theme colour corresponds to the table to the right. If a comment cannot be allocated to one of the themes, it has been left blank.

In summary, comments from this part of the consultation process focused on **access, and movement** around the town, with a specific focus on enabling **multi-user access** (wheelchairs, pushchairs and those less able, including an aging population).

Stakeholders also repeatedly mentioned the general condition of **shop / premises** and how little things like untidiness can bring the appearance of the whole street down.

Grouped comments also mentioned the **conservation of the overall heritage aspect of the town**, building on this to provide a multi-functional heritage destination where people can experience **independent shopping and leisure opportunities**.

Clearer signage for town centre car parks
Covered bus stops
General accessibility improvements - widened pavements, dropped kerbs to improve movement for wheelchair users and pushchairs. Recommendation for those surveying the town centre visit with a wheelchair user
Toilets need to be improved for visitors with more reliability on opening times
Late-night shopping events to encourage evening footfall
Provide a better sense of arrival - welcome to Wymondham signage / treatments
Improve safety of alleyways as key access routes - even just improved lighting to make them feel safer
Residents in Barford and Wrampingham feel that Wymondham is their market town too - they access medical services, shopping, leisure facilities etc.
At the Wymondham Town Hall Meeting on September 20th, it was stated that the population area of the survey was Wymondham Town, should it not include the hinterland / catchment villages?
More attractive places to wait for a bus, thereby encouraging bus usage
Inconsistent parking charges are confusing
Central banking hub and post office
Incorporate dementia friendly design
Independent shops that provide increased social interaction should be a priority
Don't do seating like in Thetford
Retain the historic / conservation nature of the town
Heritage of buildings is a real asset
There is very little on offer on a Sunday - little reason to visit
Basic branding and skills workshops for shop owners to improve frontages
Shopfront schemes such as painting schemes - there are lots of barriers for businesses currently
To encourage more events, we need improved power supply, better / flexible lighting, more seating
Improve access / flow from train station - a green route with tree planting
Safety barriers to shop fronts
Remove the hare - takes up too much room
Remove Covid decals
More seating throughout the town centre
Fairland Green is underused - it has lots of potential as a gateway into the town
A vibrant high street boosts the local economy
The main goal of the project should be to make Wymondham Town Centre a real destination
The town currently looks shabby in places and this lets it down as a whole
An updated streetscape could exacerbate the shabby appearance of some buildings - it needs to be considered as one
If the visual appeal of the town is increased, it is likely to bring in more investment
Swaffham seems to be a very busy market town
Wynn Williams report contained lots of good work, good designs and project ideas which should be incorporated into this project
The next round of consultation should include a public display of designs
Wymondham should be a heritage destination with a retail / catering offer to encourage tourists to stay for longer (more than a day) - people visiting for leisure with shopping as a secondary / additional offer



View of the Market and Market Cross

Part Three

Summary and Next Steps



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Chapter 3.1

Key Emerging Themes - A Focus for Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Project

Following a thorough consultation analysis and review, the key challenges and opportunities facing the town centre are clear. These challenges are inter-linked, as are their proposed solutions. Based on work completed to date, the following are emerging as the key themes for feedback into the design process. All have the potential to be included as part of any physical implementation scheme. Prioritisation will need to be addressed in accordance with cost planning, alongside constraints analysis and policy compliance. Interventions are indicated in order of frequency of support from the consultation process to date.

Access, Movement and Infrastructure

- Pedestrian focus, particularly around Market Cross
- Signage (including welcome to Wymondham signage / gateway features)
- Improved access from car parks
- Perception of safety

Built Environment

- Improved maintenance
- Gateway features
- Improved alleyways
- An improved market place offer - the heart of the market town
- Parklets
- Street trees and increased 'greening' / green routes
- Sustainable urban Drainage
- Onwards connection to periphery locations eg train station, River Tiffey
- Trails
- Tidy-up - remove Covid decals, declutter

Heritage

- Retain overall character of the town
- More information linked to the town's heritage
- Link heritage assets for example through a trail

Community

- Increased physical infrastructure to promote social interaction - more seating
- Community groups ownership / governance over interventions
- Sunday / late afternoon / early evening focus for events

Retail & Food / Drink Outlets

- Increasing footfall to encourage diversity in retail and food / drink / leisure offer
- Shop / premises frontages (painting / signage / defensible space)

Economics

- All of the above recommendations but ensuring there is provision balanced for both residents and visitors to generate maximum economic return on investments



Access, Movement and Infrastructure



Built Environment



Heritage



Community



Retail / Food / Drink Outlets



Economics

Chapter 3.2

Key Emerging Themes - Outside the Scope of the Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Project

The consultation process has led to a number of key areas which remain outside the scope of the Town Centre Public Realm Improvement Project, but are important to feed back to the Wymondham Public Realm Working Group for further scrutiny at both a regional and local authority level. Interventions are indicated in order of frequency of support from the consultation process to date.

Access, Movement and Infrastructure

- Consideration of parking structure including charges
- Improvements to bus stops
- Improved active travel corridors into the town centre to discourage vehicular use
- Improvements to the train station curtilage and links to the town
- Improved community transport linking outlying new development

Built Environment

- Improved efficiency with regards to maintenance within the town to ensure it looks tidy

Heritage

- Better visitor facilities to promote the Abbey

Community

- The creation of a Wymondham (and environs) community group network

Retail & Food / Drink Outlets

- A town centre post office
- A town centre banking hub
- Incentives to entice and retain tenants
- Pop-up shops
- Use of vacant premises for other uses
- Initiatives to make even vacant premises more attractive, including temporary window-art, temporary digital displays, community information points

Economics

- Funnel income generated from new residential developments into Wymondham Town Centre
- Create additional income from currently underused resources - for example pop up shops, more regular town-centre focused community events



Access, Movement and Infrastructure



Built Environment



Heritage



Community



Retail / Food / Drink Outlets



Economics

Chapter 3.3 Next Steps

The Stage 1 Consultation process has now largely concluded, and the engagement team at LUC will take a brief pause whilst a design team are appointed to Stage 2.

This next phase of works will see the transfer of Stage 1 consultation outcomes into concept designs, alongside practical baseline work to look at:

- Relevant local planning policy and guidance,
- Review of the previous Wynn Williams project work to ensure this momentum is continued into this project.
- Undertake survey work including topographical surveys, utility surveys and drainage and flood risk assessments and compile a heritage review to fully understand site constraints.

Stage 2 Consultation will build upon the existing work established at Stage 1 and will utilise a similar format in order to gather community and stakeholder feedback. This will include:

- The continued use of the on-line web platform which will remain live between Stage 1 and Stage 2 and provide a useful resource for project updates.
- A revised on-line questionnaire to seek buy-in to any concept design proposals and provide the opportunity for feedback on options and details as part of this next phase in the design process.
- In-person community event(s) to present the concept designs and gather face-to-face feedback.
- In-person Stakeholder workshop to gather representative feedback on concept designs.
- Stakeholder interviews where appropriate.
- Production of a Stage 2 consultation report with recommendations.

