



PRINCES PARADE SITE ALLOCATION STUDY

STAGE 2 CONSULTATION REPORT

Draft report | April 2013

URS



Allies and Morrison
Urban Practitioners



HYTHE TANDOORI - Nepalese Restaurant

SWAN
CARRIES
ON
SUNDAY

PERCEPS PARADE
CONSULTATION
COMPLETED
QUESTIONNAIRES

PERCEPS PARADE
CONSULTATION
COMPLETED
QUESTIONNAIRES

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

This document sets out feedback from the second stage of consultation on the Princes Parade project.

The study is being undertaken by GVA, Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners and URS on behalf of Shepway District Council. It is designed to inform the Council's approach as landowner and is not a planning policy document or planning application.

The project

Shepway District Council has commissioned this study of Princes Parade in Hythe. This Council-owned site has been the subject of considerable discussion and debate in recent years. The Council wishes to clarify the potential for meeting community needs, including leisure facilities, education, a range of natural, formal and play related public open spaces and any housing or commercial activities at the site. A consultant team made up of environmental specialists, engineers, planners and urban designers was retained to bring together site information and to consult with key stakeholders and the community on the future of Princes Parade.

Public consultation held during the summer of 2012 has been linked to technical review and investigations. A technical baseline report

and a consultation report have been prepared. The consultant team has now established an understanding of the site, including physical conditions, site issues, opportunities and aspirations as well as local community concerns.

This Stage

This stage of consultation set out a series of scenarios for future activities at Princes Parade. These included different extents of site use, balances of open space and active use and locations across the site. The purpose was to understand the potential of the site, the effect of different approaches to the site, and to gather opinion from a range of stakeholders, residents and businesses.

This consultation

This report details the feedback from the second stage of consultation on the project. The project team has already undertaken public consultation during the summer of 2012 to find out what local think people about the area. Following this, a number of ideas were prepared, including key principles which should shape the future of the site and a number of scenarios to demonstrate what these could mean.

Find out more

If you would like to find out more about the project you can access the web page with information at: www.shepway.gov.uk/princesparade.



2. STAGE 2 CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultation process for stage two of the project ran from Friday 8 February to Friday 8 March 2013 and was designed to provide a range of opportunities and formats through which local community members and stakeholders could review scenarios for the Princes Parade site and provide feedback on these.

The consultation activities for stage 2 of the consultation process included:

- A project website;
- A Saturday market stall consultation on Hythe High Street;
- A two week library exhibition;
- An evening drop-in session at Seabrook School; and
- Stakeholder discussions.

By providing a range of formats and opportunities for comment, the consultation was designed to draw out opinion and feedback from a broad section of the local community.

Project website

A project website with a pdf report of the exhibition panels and an online interactive version of the questionnaire was launched on Friday 8 February 2013. This enabled people to view the scenarios information in their own time at home. The website was also used to advertise the consultation events.

Market stall consultation

A market stall consultation was held on Saturday 9 February 2013 in Hythe town square outside Aldi supermarket from 11.00am to 1.00pm. Information on the potential scenarios for Princes Parade was exhibited on large banners in a marquee, with questionnaires available for people to give their feedback on the scenarios and to provide further comments. Project team members from GVA and Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners were on hand to answer any questions.

The market stall consultation was advertised on the project website, in the local newspaper and through posters in the local area. During the consultation session, approximately 150 people visited the stall to view the information on the scenarios and provide feedback.

Library consultation

Following the market stall consultation on 9 February 2013, the exhibition materials were moved to Hythe Town Library, along with questionnaires and a box in which people could deposit these. Two copies of the stage two project report were also available. This summarised the consultation feedback from stage one of the project and the key issues for Princes Parade, along with the scenarios. The exhibition was located in the main library area, close to the entrance and remained there until Monday 4 March 2013.

School drop-in consultation

A drop-in consultation session was held at Seabrook Primary School on Monday 4 March 2013, from 3.30pm to 7.30pm. Project team members from GVA and Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners were on hand to answer any queries on the project and the information in the exhibition. Questionnaires were available for people to complete at the venue or to take away and return. Approximately 100 people attended the school drop-in session.

Stakeholder discussions

A series of stakeholder discussions were held, which enabled the team to follow-up with stakeholders who were involved during stage one of the project and to engage strategic consultees. The stakeholder meetings included:

- Monday 4 March 2013, 11.00am - Hythe Town Councillors
- Monday 4 March 2013, 2.00pm - Seabrook Primary School head teacher and governors
- Wednesday 13 March 2013, 11.30am - English Heritage (on site)
- Wednesday 13 March 2013, 2.00pm - Hythe Town Councillors
- Wednesday 13 March 2013, 3.00pm - Hythe Civic Society

- Over 500 questionnaires distributed at drop-in events and during the exhibition period in the library
- 402 questionnaires completed, including:
 - 262 online responses
 - 140 paper copy responses
- Over 250 people attended drop-in events



2. STAGE 2 CONSULTATION PROCESS

Exhibition boards were used throughout the consultation process and are included here for reference. The boards provided the following information.

Board 1

This introduced the project context and outlined the programme for completing the project.

Board 2

This set out the baseline conditions for the Princes Parade site, based on the project team analysis and feedback from the stage 1 consultation process.

Board 3

This set out the key principles and approach to the Princes Parade site, along with the spatial components of the scenarios.

Board 4

This board set out the detail of the different scenarios that have been developed for Princes Parade, which encompass different levels of development and a different mix of uses and open space.



3. STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

As previously noted, the project team has met with a number of stakeholder groups during the course of the consultation, including members of Hythe Town Council, Hythe Neighbourhood Plan Group, Seabrook School and Hythe Civic Society. The following notes provide a summary of the issues raised in these meetings:

Viability

- Questions were asked about whether the site was viable to develop. It was noted that the development of the site was not expected to be entirely self-contained/self-financing if it includes community infrastructure. Multiple sources of funding would be needed in addition to any site receipts.
- There were concerns that the economics of development might push up the density and height of buildings in a bid to make a project more viable. It was noted that the aim was to keep any heights modest as an underlying principle.

School

- It was noted that a new site was needed for the school, but that the Eversley Road site had not been brought forward for many decades, despite being allocated for this purpose. Local residents were reported as not wishing to see any development on the Eversley Road site.

- If the technical issues around Princes Parade could be resolved it was considered that the site could be a good location for the school. It would be safer for traffic and parking, and would provide great opportunities for outside learning. However, there were some concerns that it may not be centrally located for the catchment area.
- Any parking or drop-off for the school should be on the north side of the Princes Parade road rather than on the beach side to minimise crossing.

Swimming pool

- The consultant's report into locations for the swimming pool was regarded by some as a missed opportunity. Some people questioned the conclusions of the report and the lack of public consultation on the pool project. It was suggested that the existing pool site needs to be addressed in much more detail and many people were reported as wishing to see the pool rebuilt there.
- There were concerns about the potential bulk of a sports hall on the Princes Parade site.

Technical constraints

- A question was asked about whether the flood risk was based on the continuing build-up of the beach. The gradual rise in sea levels expected over the coming decades was also noted.
- Concerns were expressed about the potential for piles and other below-ground structures to affect drainage of ground-water.
- The group asked whether the historic report into the ground conditions on Princes Parade was available for public scrutiny.
- There were concerns about the availability of insurance for any houses built in this area.
- There were questions about local infrastructure – can the existing fresh and foul water infrastructure really accommodate this new development?

Green space

- It was noted that it will be important to retain the natural beauty of the Princes Parade site.

- It was suggested that it would not be worth destroying this site to provide residential development.
- There is reported to be a good level of support for more usable open space within the site which could provide a range of recreation opportunities. It was suggested that the management of this space could include local people.
- There was support for a range of recreation uses. Active management could provide opportunities to involve local people.

Access and movement

- There was support for new links from the existing areas towards the seafront, including controlled crossings on Princes Parade. However, this should not include new vehicle connections.
- Some form of traffic calming and parking management also needs to be accommodated.

Housing development

- There are few jobs in this area – why are so many new houses needed?

Process

- There would be support for decisions taken about this piece of land to be made by Full Council rather than by Cabinet – this would be perceived as being more democratic and more accountable.
- Decisions on the Princes Parade site need to be made based on a number of factors, including political issues, corporate objectives, technical considerations, financial matters and the views of local residents.

4. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Introduction

A questionnaire was provided during the second stage of consultation at Princes Parade to assist the local community in providing feedback on the example scenarios that have been developed for the area.

The questionnaire could be completed online or by filling in a paper copy at the exhibitions and these results have been combined in order to give an overall picture of community feedback. 402 questionnaires were completed.

The questionnaire is included in the appendix to this report, for reference. It included questions on the overall principles for the site, questions on the elements of the scenarios and space for further comments. Demographic and geographic information could be provided by respondents in order to give a fuller picture of community opinion.

Each question has been included in turn and the results are analysed within this chapter.

Key messages

Results from the consultation have demonstrated the wide spread of local opinions and that there is no one singular view about Princes Parade. Three key messages have been identified:

- All of the questions in the consultation feedback have shown strong support for a new swimming pool. When combined with the call for new community and leisure activities this accounted for 30% of the comments received in question 3, greater support than for any other topic. A new pool was also the highest single priority for question 2.
- Feedback from the consultation demonstrated the strong voice against any development at Princes Parade. 'Do nothing' was the second highest priority for question 2. 'Leave it as it is' was the third most regular comment made in response to question 3.
- The consultation has clearly shown that Princes Parade is seen as a valuable portion of green space in Hythe, with regular comments such as 'Preserve the countryside character', create new green spaces and parks', and 'protect existing wildlife'.



Profile of respondents

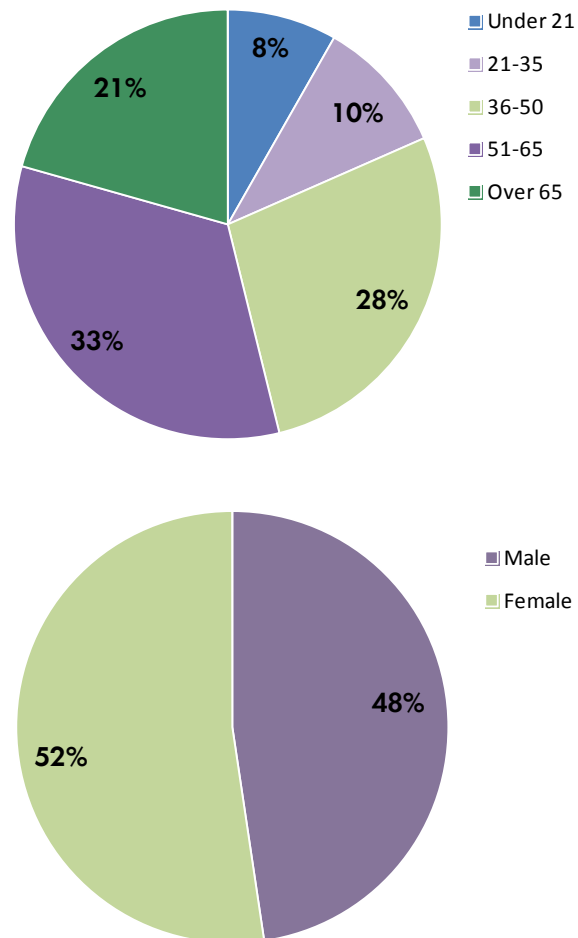


Figure 1: Age and gender split of respondents

The consultation questionnaire included optional questions for respondents on their gender, age group and postcode.

Not all respondents completed this question but from those who did, it is possible to see that questionnaires were submitted by community members representing a broad age range. Of the 364 people who gave their age, the breakdown of different age groups is as follows:

- 8% in the under 21 bracket;
- 10% in the 21-35 age bracket;
- 28% in the 36-50 bracket;
- 33% in the 51-65 age bracket; and
- 21% were in the over 65 age bracket.

The gender mix of respondents was broadly equal, with 52% of respondents being female and 48% of respondents being male.



4. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Question 1: Do you agree with the principles?

Question one of the questionnaire asked respondents to consider the principles for Princes Parade that were set out in the consultation document and exhibition, and indicate whether they agreed with the approach.

There was a relatively even spread of opinion between those who agreed and disagreed with the principles. Respondents generally had a strong opinion either way, with few people giving a neutral response.

In reviewing the results, it was apparent that in many cases, respondents extra comments for this question reflected a generally negative view of development rather than a response to the principles. This may have diminished the validity of the results for this section slightly. Figure 2 demonstrates these extra comments. Only around 25% of respondents left extra comments.

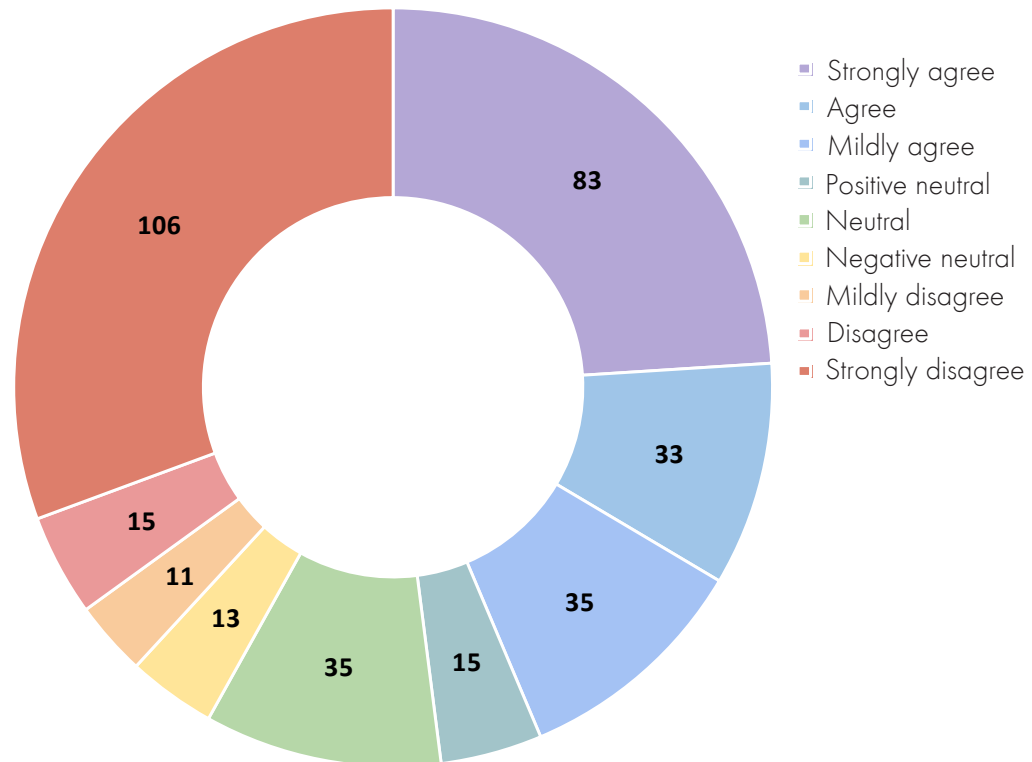


Figure 2: Level of agreement to the principles for Princes Parade

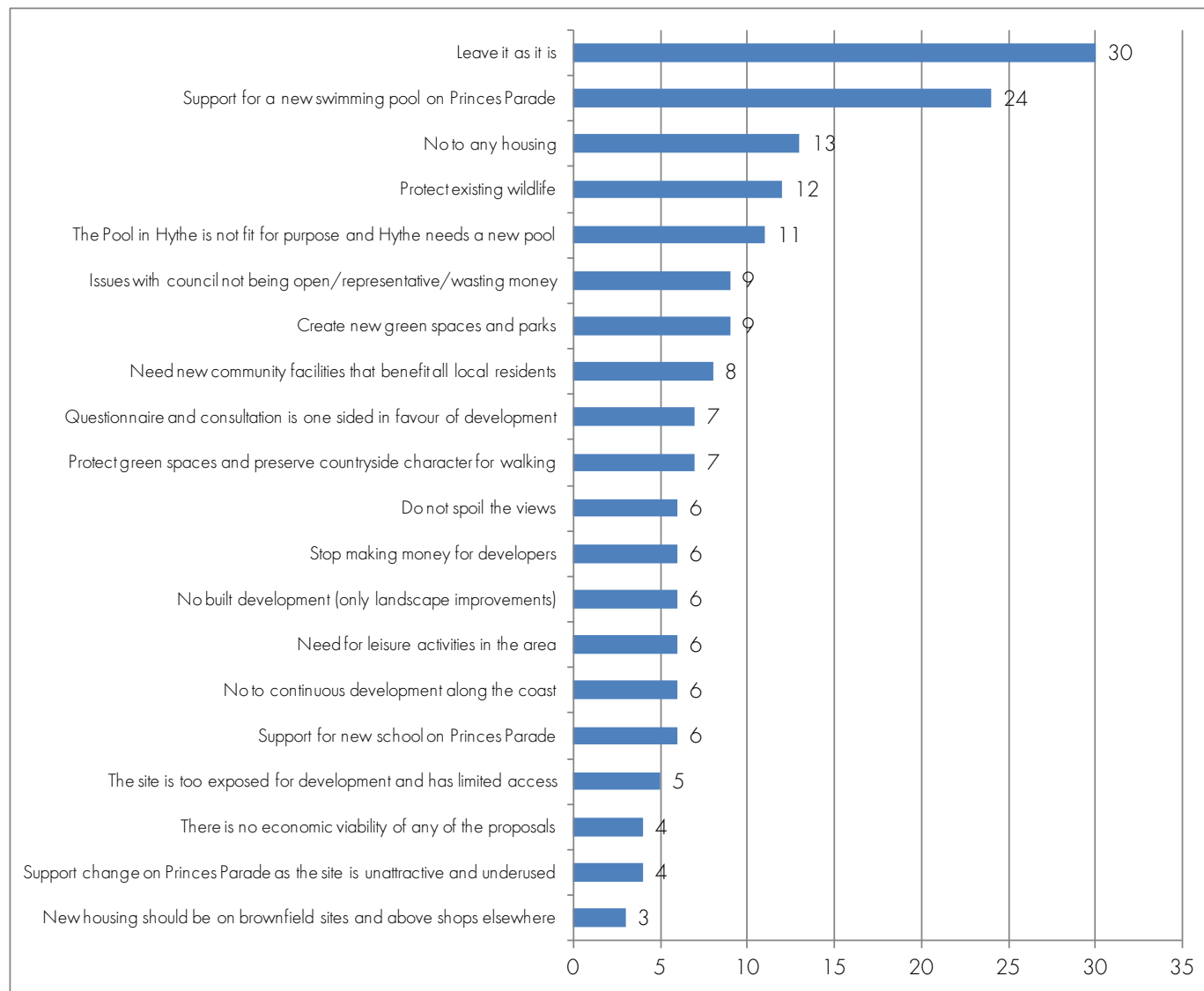


Figure 3: Further written comments given about the principles

4. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Question 2: Priorities for Princes Princes Parade

A series of scenarios were presented in the report and exhibition and question two set out the different elements of these scenarios relating to open space, uses and activities and development. In all, there were 22 different 'priorities' identified in question two, and respondents were asked:

'The different scenarios include a wide range of ideas for the area. We'd like to know which you think are the most important for Princes Parade - please tick up to five boxes'.

The question included space for respondents to add their own priority suggestions, with four blank boxes provided. The graph on the opposite page demonstrates the spread of opinion from the respondents who filled in the questionnaire. The green bars represent priorities provided on the questionnaire and the purple bars represent other priorities suggested by respondents.

The five most important priorities for Princes Parade were:

- Provide a new swimming pool;
- Do nothing;
- Protect the heritage of the canal;
- Leave as much green space as possible; and
- Establish wildlife habitats.

The five least important priorities for Princes Parade from those suggested on the questionnaire were:

- Improve links from housing to the beach;
- Add another bridge to improve links;
- Promote community use of a new school;
- Deliver affordable housing; and
- Homes should be family houses rather than flats.

The graph includes all of those comments which were made more than once. Other comments made once included:

- Two / three storey housing is NOT low!!
- A marina and houses

- Cinema, bowling alley, ice hockey rink, roller rink
- Conservation of ambiance and habitat
- Create a nature park
- Develop hotel
- Enlarge Hythe Aqua's carpark
- Keep 15 metres green along Princes Parade
- No car parks
- No school
- Open water swimming
- Parking at new pool to be free to users
- Poor survey
- Possible cycle lane either roadside or canal side
- Provide doctor and dental surgeries
- Reclaim existing scrub land
- Rowing
- Sailing facility
- Subtle lighting

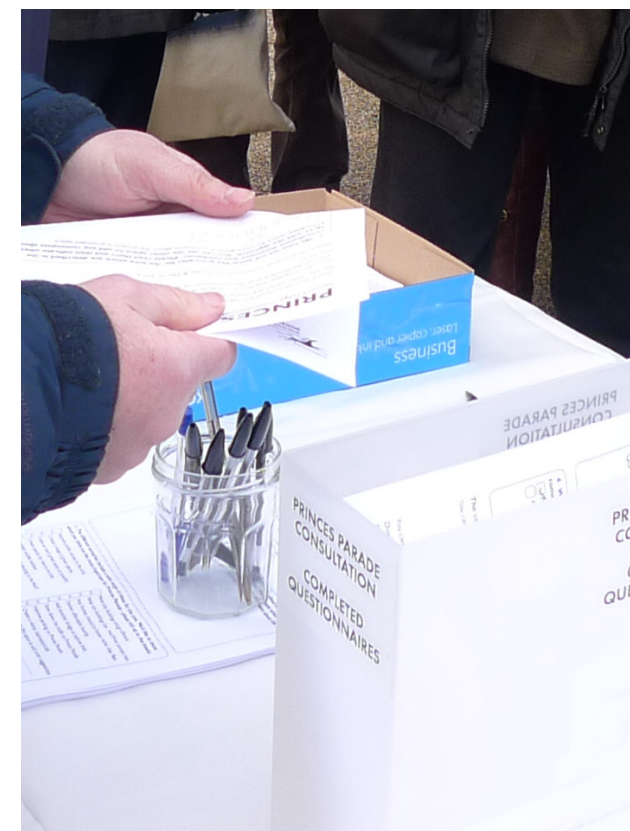
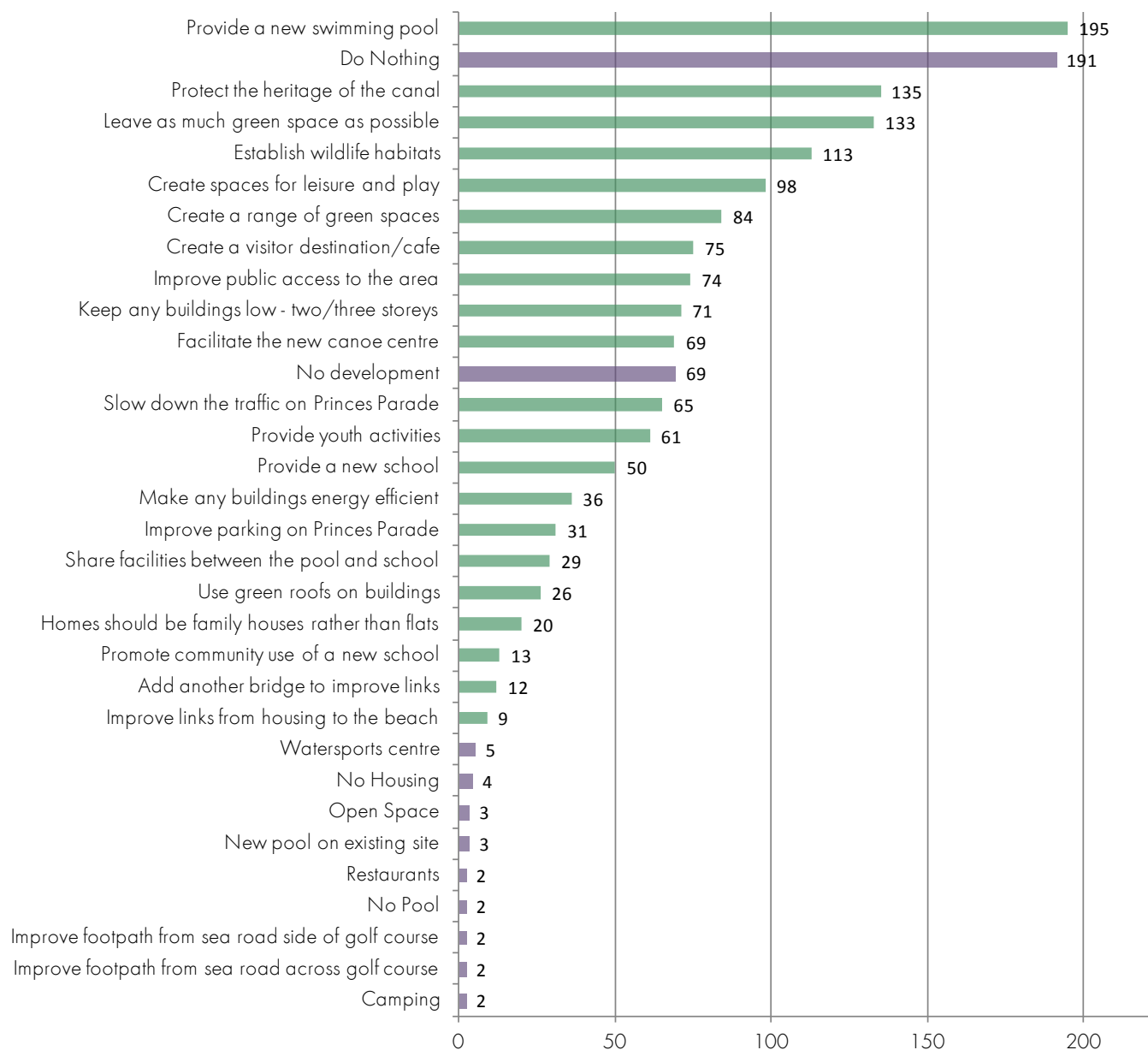


Figure 4: Level of priority given to elements of the Princes Parade scenarios by respondents, including suggestions by respondents

4. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Question 3: Further comments

Question three of the questionnaire asked respondents to provide further detail and comments on the ideas that were presented during the second stage of consultation for Princes Parade.

A large number of additional comments were made and these were reviewed to identify similar comments made by different people in order to identify the most frequently occurring comments and therefore highest priorities for the site.

The bar chart, figure 5, graphically represents the comments made most frequently by respondents, with any comment made five or more times included in the chart.

The top five comments made most frequently in response to question three were:

1. Support for a new swimming pool on Princes Parade (74 comments);
2. Protect green spaces and preserve countryside character for walking (50 comments);

3. Leave it as it is (49 comments);
4. The pool in Hythe is not fit for purpose and Hythe needs a new pool (48 comments); and
5. No to any housing (46 comments).

A number of comments were made by less than five people for question three. These have not been included in the chart to the right, but are set out below:

- New housing should be on brownfield sites and above shops elsewhere;
- Would prefer pool to be built at Nicholls Quarry;
- Seabrook is not a 'village centre';
- Concern over pollution with increased development;
- The site is too exposed for development and has limited access;
- The sketch shows a leisure centre not a swimming pool;
- Pool should be multi-functional;

- Is there a reduction in biodiversity over time as in Scenario 1;
- Consultation is a waste of public money;
- No new bridges are necessary;
- Subtle lighting at night;
- Need activities for young people in the area;
- The site could provide much needed jobs for the area;
- Create a dog exercise area;
- Employ a warden;
- Concern over expansion of school and losing links with church;
- Keep development near existing playground;
- Need a cycle lane separate from walkers;
- Do not build on the golf course;
- Single storey housing for elderly; and
- Need a doctors surgery and dentist.

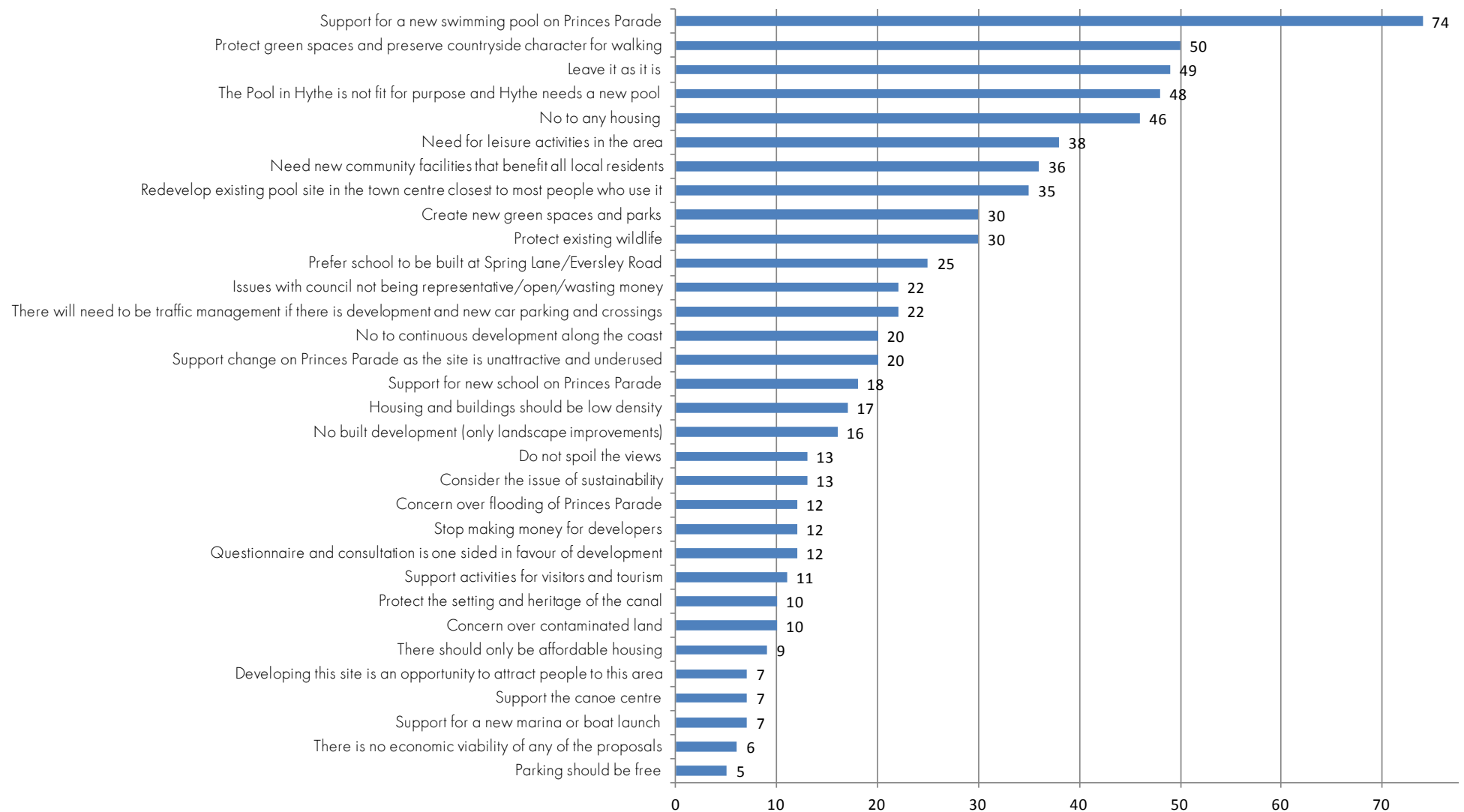


Figure 5: Most regular comments made regarding priorities for Princes Parade for question 3 of the feedback form

5. APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

PRINCES PARADE

Second stage consultation - February / March 2013



Thank you very much for taking the time to tell us what you think about the ideas for Princes Parade. Your views are really important in shaping the ideas for the future of the area.

You can complete this form online at www.shepway.gov.uk/princesparade or fill in a paper copy. This can be handed in at the exhibition or posted back to us at the address on the back of this form.

Please send in your comments by Friday 8 March 2013.

1 - We have set out some key principles for the area which are described in the consultation document and exhibition. Please read them and then indicate whether you agree with the approach. You can use the other space to add any comments about the principles (Space for more general comments about the project is provided later).

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2 - The different scenarios include a wide range of ideas for the area. We'd like to know which you think are the most important for Princes Parade - please tick up to five boxes:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Improve public access to the area | ☐ Make any buildings energy efficient |
| ☐ Create a range of green spaces | ☐ Keep any buildings low - two/three storeys max |
| ☐ Leave as much green space as possible | ☐ Any homes should be houses rather than flats |
| ☐ Create spaces for leisure and play | ☐ Deliver affordable housing |
| ☐ Establish wildlife habitats | ☐ Add another bridge to improve links |
| ☐ Improve links from housing to the beach | ☐ Slow down the traffic on Princes Parade |
| ☐ Provide youth activities | ☐ Improve parking on Princes Parade |
| ☐ Protect the heritage of the canal | ☐ Create a visitor destination/cafe |
| ☐ Provide a new swimming pool | ☐ You can use this space to add other suggestions |
| ☐ Provide a new school | ☐ _____ |
| ☐ Facilitate the new canoe centre | ☐ _____ |
| ☐ Promote community use of a new school | ☐ _____ |
| ☐ Share facilities between any pool and school | ☐ _____ |
| ☐ Use green roofs on any larger buildings | ☐ _____ |

3 - Please use this space to provide any other comments on the ideas that are presented:

4 - We would be grateful if you could answer this voluntary question. Your other comments are still valid if you decide not to answer this question:

☐ Male	☐ Under 21	Postcode:
☐ Female	☐ 21 - 35	
	☐ 36 - 50	
	☐ 51 - 65	
	☐ Over 65	

The consultation period closes on Friday 8 March 2013.

You can post your responses to:

Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners
Princes Parade Consultation
85 Southwark Street
London
SE1 0HX

You can also email us with your responses at princesparade@am-up.com

Don't forget that you can download the report and register your response online through the council website - www.shepway.gov.uk/princesparade

Our policy is to collect no personal information about you. Any information you volunteer that identifies you will be deleted on receipt.





