

An Action Plan to improve the planning system

Introduction

- 1.1 In October 2017, a public consultation was launched seeking views on possible changes to the Isle of Man Planning system. This paper summarises the findings of that consultation and sets out a proposed programme of work to be taken forward.
- 1.2 It was in the Programme for Government (2016-2021) that the need for a planning review was identified. One of the Programme 'Outcomes' is to **have a planning system which supports sustainable growth** and the recent public consultation, which was essentially an initial *Action Plan* for planning, has been at the heart of the ongoing work stream to achieve this. Officers from across Government contributed to all elements of the early Action Plan which was worked-up during an Officer and Council of Ministers review of how the planning system currently works. Officers continued working closely throughout the preparation of the consultation itself and the analysis of the comments received.

The Consultation

- 2.1 The Consultation was published as an Online Survey on the Consultation Hub. It consisted of **55 Questions** and ran between 20th October 2017 and 8th January 2018. There were **171 responses** although the respondents could choose not to answer some of the questions. All in all, those who did submit comments to the survey whether online or via email/letter provided comprehensive comments which have shaped the future work programme suggested in this document in terms of **Planning Processes** as well as **Planning Policies**.

The Consultation Findings

The Consultation sought views on the initial Action Plan which was made up of two elements:

- i. A list of changes that CoMin had already agreed to explore further; and
 - ii. A list of possible other changes upon which views were being sought
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Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the responses¹

Introduction

This section comprises the introduction from the person – who he/she is and what privacy instructions are given.

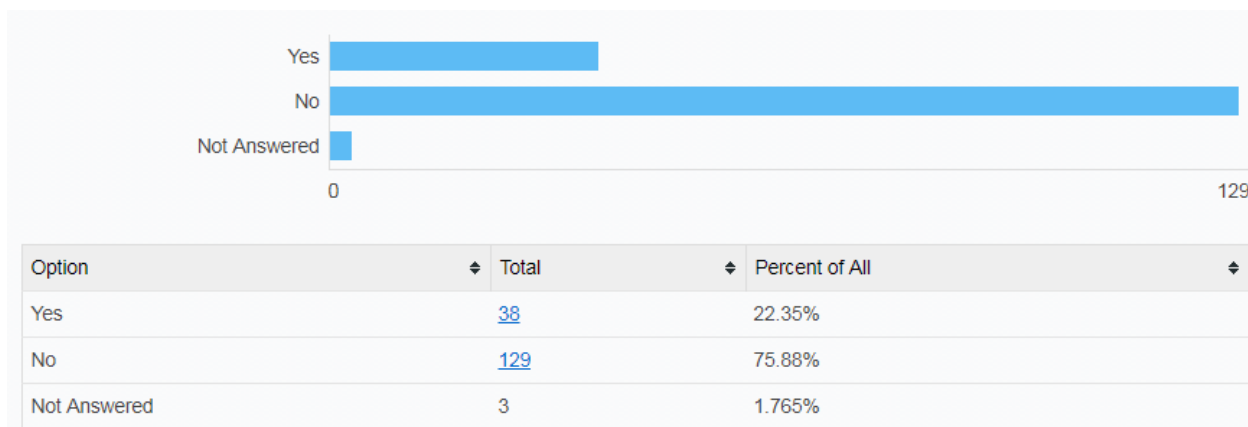
The questions are shown below:-

Title	Total Responses
What is your name?	169 (99.4%)
What is your email address?	151 (88.8%)
Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?	167 (98.2%)
May we publish your response?	170 (100%)

Of most importance are the last two questions. Examining them, the statistics show most responses came from private individuals.

Personal Information Question: Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

YES/NO question



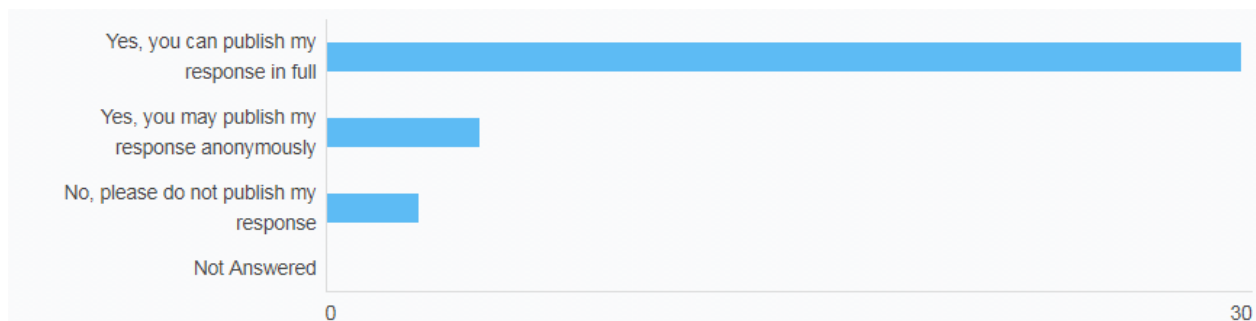
¹ There were a total of 171 responses but as one was submitted after the closure of the online survey the Introductory Questions 'total' adds up to 170.

Of those who answered YES, the following organisations were named:-

Alliance for Building Conservation	Arbory Parish Commissioners	Ashley Pettit Architects
Ballakermeen High School	Braddan Parish Commissioners	Brunswick Gardens Limited
Buildings Conservation Forum, Culture Vannin	Castletown Heritage	Castletown Town Commissioners
Chapman Chartered Surveyors	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) on the Isle of Man	Communications Commission
Cornerstone Architects limited	Department for Enterprise	Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture
Department of Infrastructure	Douglas Borough Council	Eden Park Developments
Garff Commissioners	H Richmond Limited	Hartford Homes
Isle of Man Chamber of Commerce	Isle of Man Enterprises	Isle of Man Natural History & Antiquarian Society
Langness Golf Course Limited trading as Castletown Golf Links	Malew Parish Commissioners	Manx National Heritage
Manx Utilities - flood risk team	Manx Utilities Authority	Manx Wildlife Trust
Marown Parish Commissioners	Onchan District Commissioners	Peel Heritage Trust
Peel Town Commissioners	Rushen Parish Commissioners	The Dandara group of companies
The Isle of Man Victorian Society	Triumph Group	

Personal Information Question: May we publish your response?

YES/NO question



Option	Yes
Yes, you can publish my response in full	30 (78.95%)
Yes, you may publish my response anonymously	5 (13.16%)
No, please do not publish my response	3 (7.895%)
Not Answered	0 (0%)

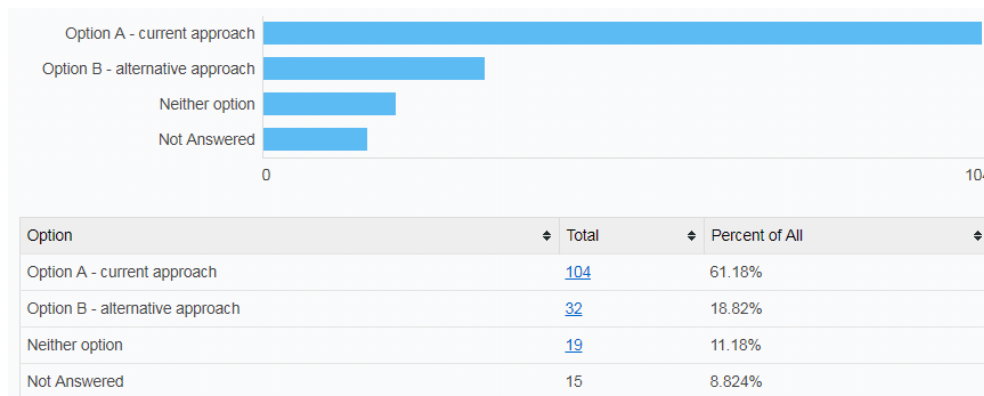
Section 1: 'Process' Questions

Development plan process (two questions)

Q1 Do you agree with Option A or Option B? YES/NO question

Option A - the current approach i.e. the site assessment framework and detailed assessment of individual sites remain integral to the development of an Area Plan.

Option B – an alternative approach i.e. the site assessment framework could be simplified for the Area Plan stage and changed to a 'criteria based approach' outside of the Area Plan process. The Area Plans would not identify specific sites for development or have development briefs.



Quantitative analysis

- Out of 171 respondents, 104 (61%) selected Option A which was in favour of retaining the current system of Area Plans.
- Out of 171 respondents, 32 (19%) chose Option B which began to explore the merits or otherwise of an 'alternative' system which would involve less prescriptive land allocations normally found in a local development plan.
- Out of 171 respondents, 35 or 20% picked 'neither option' or did not answer this question.

Qualitative analysis

123/171 respondents added comments in the free text box.

The common themes have been summarised:-

In terms of Option A, it was suggested that this was best for giving a defined plan which was able to be understood by everyone. There was broad recognition that these defined plans showed areas that should be developed as well as those areas that should not, such as areas that should be retained for/used for open green space areas/parks. The need for a single plan not four was mentioned but only by less than 1% who made comments.

The length of time to have a plan approved was a common theme - some were more balanced than others i.e. the view that Option A was the best 'despite the issue of the time it takes to prepare and adopt the final plan.' "Detailed area plans, although taking longer to formulate and pass through public scrutiny, are directly accountable to the public". For others, time was a more urgent factor - there was a sense of urgency that the "current Area Plan process should be completed as soon as possible as it has dragged on far too long".

Others suggested that whilst the current approach works reasonably well it would work better if there was a much stronger local involvement and control over what is in the area plans enabling many of the problems people have with planning to be alleviated. The Area Plan approach provides more stability to the community, especially in rural areas.

Key phrases

- Failure to produce up to date area plans has left the development framework for large parts of the Island in limbo.
- Plans need to be developed quicker with wide local involvement.
- The development plan needs to be kept up to date.
- Continuation of Option A provides certainty for the development industry and allows co-ordination of infrastructure.

Also to be noted

- The designation of sites suitable for development artificially inflates land prices and causes land banking.
- The current approach is far too complicated, detailed and protracted.
- Option A is the reason the Eastern Area Plan is 20 years overdue.

In terms of Option B, many of the comments about Option B were actually advocating against it. Some suggested that it would mean 'less clarity from Government and less certainty for developers,' the result being that planning decisions would most likely go in favour of those with the "deepest pockets and the community would be less likely in overcoming the financial might of developers".

It was suggested that Option B would make it very difficult to plan for future growth of the Island in a sustainable way as there would be no certainty over when and where development would take place. Other concerns expressed that Option B would add to the complexity and timescale of applications. If planning officers were allowed to determine the suitability of a site for development, the decision-making process is "revoked from the public and delegated to planning, reducing accountability and transparency"

Some saw the potential in Option B suggesting that all land should be seen as potential development land with a presumption in favour unless it fails against the set criteria. Some mentioned that developer applications should be judged on their merits at the time of submission.

Some were more hesitant about supporting an alternative approach but agreed that B had potential as long as the criteria used continue to protect areas of High Landscape Value and prevented sporadic development.

Key phrases

- Option B appears to be open season to build anywhere.
- I fear that the 'alternative' may be the Trojan Horse for easing restrictions.
- Option B would make it very difficult to plan for future growth of the Island in a sustainable way.

Q2 What are other potential changes that could improve the current Area Plan system?

In terms of a response rate, 136 out of the 171 respondents (80%) made suggestions. These have been summarised under broad headings.

General

- Simplify it all.
- Have a defined process for making specific changes to area plans.

Plan type and how plans are prepared

- Adopt an area plan covering the whole Island.
- Validity of plans should remain for longer - they are researched and deliberated upon in great detail.
- Area plans should be digitally available so that individuals can easily make out land classification.
- Area plans should be updated every two years.
- Advise landowners if their land is to be included in an Area Plan.
- Planning staff should "interview" developers for all schemes.
- Areas should be divided into rural (where virtually no development should be allowed) and urban (where virtually all development should take place).
- Speedier processing of Area Plan responses.

Plan content

- Give people the ability to nominate areas that should not be developed, such as areas that should be kept open for the use of the community.
- Better information on the road networks – this all too often is left to chance.

Site selection

- Better site appraisal.
- More encouragement to develop brownfield sites.
- Housing developments should specify a plot size for a house relative to its floor area.
- More flexibility for small scale development.

Communication and information sharing

- A programme of 'educating the public' would significantly improve the system.
- There should be proper registers kept of buildings and areas of scenic or scientific significance etc.
- There should be more local control and involvement in decision making regarding the plans; this would allow much greater community buy-in to the planning process.

Resources

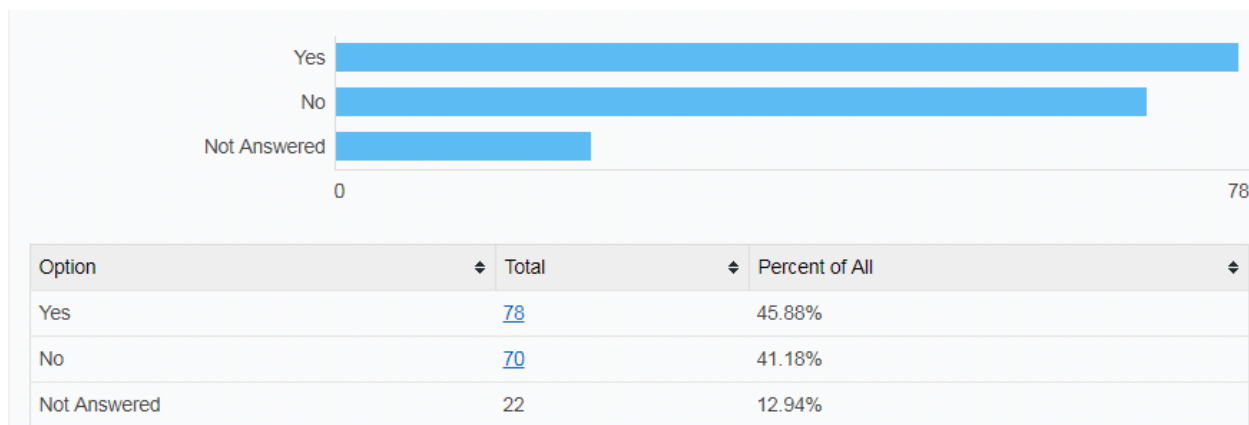
- Keep the current approach but look for time and resource saving details.
- Do not use off-Island consultants.
- Use additional resources to enable Plans to be drafted more speedily, effectively and to be kept up to date.
- Positive encouragement of brownfield site development.
- Additional resource (consultants if necessary) should be brought in to help progress completion of the outstanding plans without further delay.

Flexibility

- Allow some flexibility for major national infrastructure and other unpredictable developments.
- There could be a points system, agreed by all and approved by Tynwald.
- Building in the countryside sometimes is a benefit for a small holding.

Public engagement in planning policy development

Q3 Do you think having a non-statutory community plan is a good idea?



Statistically, the results for 'yes' and 'no' were reasonably balanced but respondents were slightly more in favour of a non-statutory community plan than not.

In terms of written comments, there were more negative comments than positive and some respondents did not grasp the intention or purpose of such plans; what they would achieve in practice or where the decision making power would lie. This in itself reflects the complexity of trying to explain the structure and indeed underlying purpose of a theoretical new type of plan in only a few paragraphs in the online survey.

This did not prevent a number of suggestions/comments which included having a process to allow community generated plans to be formally adopted by Tynwald or the Cabinet Office and also to encourage more voice to be given to local communities via their locally elected commissioners.

The question did draw out views about the importance of local community involvement in the planning process, noting that involvement should be integral to the development of an area plan. It also prompted some to comment on the benefit of the current system, including suggestions that planning policies have worked well so far and that the Area Plan system is fair and sufficient and that any community input should be via the area plan process. The need for caution was hinted at in points that suggested communities lacked experience of planning matters and that the government planning team had understanding of the planning impact on the Island both through experience and qualification.

Summary of Comments

It would be helpful

A non-statutory community plan approach would

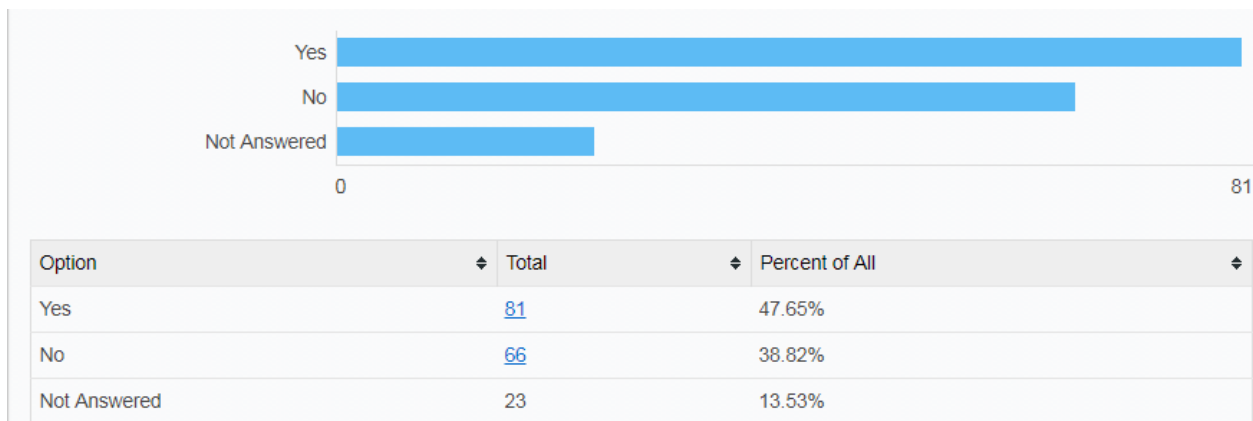
- Widen the range of opinions expressed.
- Give local input at an earlier stage.
- Help avoid a situation where people are presented with a 'fait accompli'.
- Help communities to comment and have a good say in new developments. A village that gets together to decide what they would like and how they would like their village to look has to be a good thing.
- Help because the locals know first-hand what [a place] requires and how well the local infrastructure is coping.

It would be unhelpful

A non-statutory community plan approach would

- Have no validity in law - as it will be non-statutory.
- Bring more ambiguity into the planning process - any plans should either be statutory or not.
- Risk a no-development ideology within the local community - the proverbial Nimbyism.
- Be insufficiently structured - a formal structure is required.
- Risk having an unbalanced mix of representatives which would be a disaster.
- Be an additional layer of red tape/bureaucracy. Elected representatives are already in place to convey the views of the community.
- Be more likely to generate negative, no change, participation than a go ahead ideal.
- Have the potential of being railroaded by the vociferous few or subject to undue influence by pressure groups/developers.
- Be open to abuse - no legal redress.
- Would not have the legal weight required to maintain enforceability.

Q4 Would you support the implementation of a pilot non-statutory community plan?



In terms of the yes/no answer, 81 out of 171 (47%) voted in support and 66 (39%) voted against. 24 out of 171 or 14% did not answer. This result was similar to the findings in Question 3 which was to be expected given the questions were closely related.

The broad concept for this kind of plan was that it could be prepared by local communities ahead of a statutory plan process. It could start to address what was needed (with guidance from Central Government), what was wanted, potential problems, etc. and be a way of gauging public opinion on highlighted matters. It could help to set a vision ahead of a statutory plan and be material to the latter's preparation (N.B. It was never the intention to make these plans statutory but if produced through a proper process, they would be a material consideration when it came to formal plan production).

There were 100 written responses which have been summarised below:

Some respondents questioned the relevance of introducing such a plan, suggesting it would be a waste of time and money, and that the existing system was working although could perhaps be improved by web based opportunities for comments to be made on future area/local plans.

Some felt that community plans would leave no room for the residents to say they did not have the opportunity to engage.

A number of people questioned the weight such a plan would carry. Some were in favour of a community plan but only if it was statutory. It was suggested that communities would get involved provided they knew that plans were going to be a guide to local development and not over-ridden by a planning inspector or the Minister.

One idea was to give Local Authorities a statutory responsibility to work with central government to partially fund and actively contribute to the development of community plans in their area. It was stated that Commissioners have a key role to play but they will have to be taught how to respond to a community initiative and be more proactive.

Other ideas that should be noted from the comments include

- The pilot should be extended to all parts of the Island as soon as practicable.
- Authorities should be given a set period of time to complete their community plan.
- Community plans in each region should be progressed on a similar timescale with neighbouring authorities.
- Local authorities should discuss and publish a short report and map showing the sort of development they wish to see in their area and whereabouts.
- All members of the community should be invited to view the proposals with support from planners.
- Any person/body impacted directly by the proposal good or bad should have the right to comment.
- An option could be to have a questionnaire included with each rate demand.

For a successful community plan, the following would be needed

- Random ballot to ensure a cross-section of representatives - no single organisation or interest should have a majority.
- Public meetings.
- Invitation to make written submissions.
- A public vote on the Plan.
- A recognition of local knowledge.
- Publication of proposals on Facebook groups and in local newsagents etc. to seek interest from affected parties.

Q5 Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding public engagement in Planning Policy Development?

Question 5 was a free box - comments were made by 123 respondents. One view captures the importance of getting public engagement right:

"A sound and well thought out Island plan clearly communicated to all stakeholders gives all a firm base for educated decision making".

Other comments have been grouped into a number of themes.

Current situation

- Some have suggested that the current Planning Policy [approach] works well so why change it? One respondent commented that "the only public planning process which I have experienced has had exemplary levels of public engagement".
- Others felt that it was difficult for the general public to engage in planning policy development under the present arrangement because it was so complicated.

Other comments on the present system included

- Planners made decisions and try to defend them, rather than adapting their plans in response to the public.
- The process was overly long because it was understaffed and possibly under resourced.
- The process suffered from the decision to remove the planning application notices in the paper suggesting that this was the time that public engagement dropped off.

Early public involvement would be best

- Successful public engagement was not easy but certainly worthwhile and must be encouraged, though it must be properly and professionally supported.
- Once the policy was set, it should be left to an independent planning committee and the planning department to consider planning applications.
- MHKs should lead consultation on local planning issues as part of the Area Plan development process.

Weight attached to/influence of public views

- Many felt that public engagement should not just be a paper exercise and weight should be given to it.
- Concerns were raised that public engagement was often ignored and it could be too costly for people to stay involved and even that local businesses seemed to be treated differently than wealthier developers.

Other comments suggested

- The public was not engaged because the system was unfair.
- There could be a perception of vested interest.
- Decision making needed to be returned to the people.
- Local Commissioners were better placed as central government was too detached from the populace.
- Consideration should be given to devolving planning to Regional Area Planning Authorities – although caution was expressed elsewhere that the Island was too small to have another layer of planning authority.
- Some expressed a need to be wary of NIMBY-ism when engaging with the public. Linked to this was a recognition that whilst everyone was entitled to their views, inappropriate views or vindictive interference should not be taken into account.

Better opportunities needed, such as

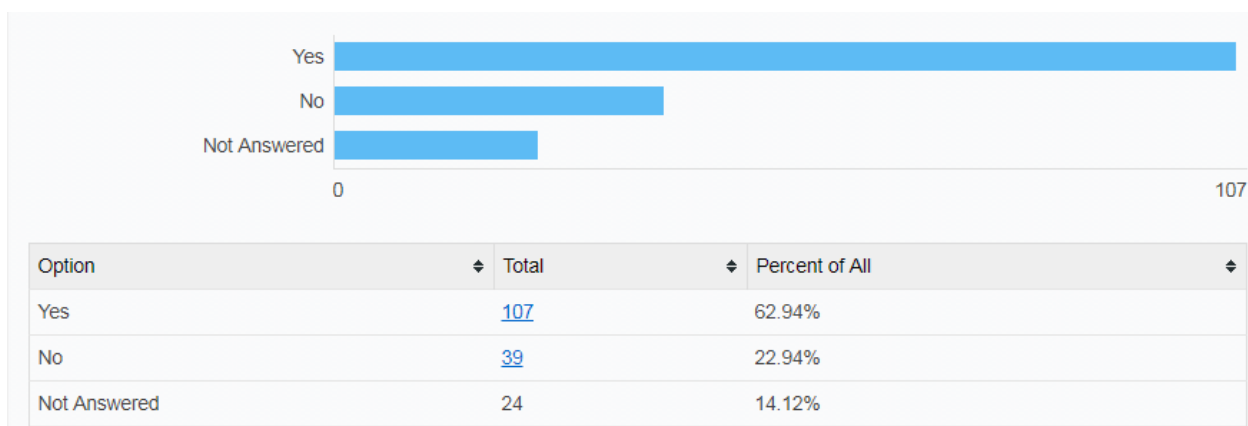
- More opportunities to make submissions, by better advertising of when to make comments.
- Local organisations should register an interest in the planning process and then be automatically consulted.
- More reminders in the local press.
- Recognising that not everyone wants to communicate on-line such as the elderly - return to publishing notices in the press; not everyone has access to 'on line' publication.
- There was the suggestion however that there was a need for an open transparent system using some form of digital democracy.

Other ideas

- It was suggested that it was very difficult to keep abreast of all emerging policy and consultation processes. The situation could be improved by a simple mailing list where anyone on the list could be informed of new publications/policies.

Planning application process

Q6 Do you think it would be beneficial to amend the Town and Country Planning Act to include a new application type that deals with amendments to previously approved applications?



There were 132 responses.

107 (62%) agreed, 39 (23%) disagreed and 25 (15%) did not answer.

While there was general support for this it was clear that there were some concerns about how it could operate and whether such a system could be open to abuse that would result in unwanted changes slipping through the system, or the quality of an original submission being eroded or undermined.

Overall it was seen as a pragmatic solution that would help speed up decision making, and be less costly to both Government and applicants.

Guidelines should be in place as to how we would determine materiality/what was minor, and the process should be transparent with all amendments clearly outlined. Changes should be advertised and people allowed to comment.

Some commented that if a change was sufficiently minor then a further application should not be needed at all, particularly if no-one was affected.

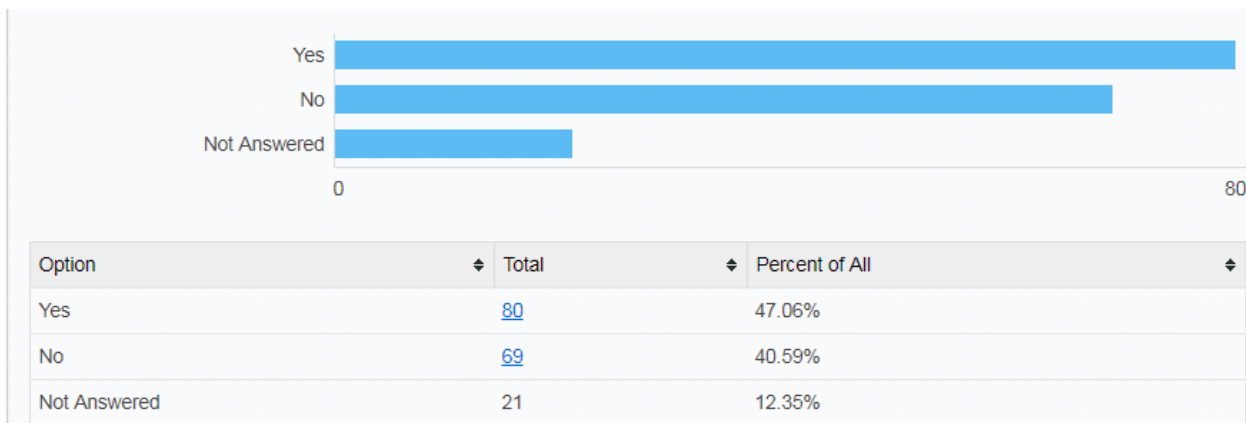
Q7 Do you have any other comments regarding the speed at which planning applications are decided?

A mix of responses was received, varying from applications take too long to deal with and that the process was entirely unsatisfactory, to that it was about right and that it was better to have proper objective, professional public scrutiny and a good decision at the end of it.

There were other views such as

- Applications which comply with policy were dealt with quickly and it was only those outside of policy that become problematic.
- Too much time was spent on minor issues.
- That it was the objections and appeals that were the problem.
- Some indicate that the hold ups were often because the applicants did not submit all the details they needed to.
- The view was expressed that the Department should be better resourced.
- A suggestion was made that there was the potential for a two tier system whereby there were two different processes depending on the complexity/impact of the application.

Q8 Should applicants be expected to pay for pre-application advice for more complex proposals?



The response to this was fairly even with 80 responses (47%) saying 'yes' to paying for pre-application advice and 69 (40%) saying 'no', with 22 (13%) not voting either way.

From the responses it was clear that pre-application discussions were very beneficial and helped iron out problems early on and speed up decisions.

In terms of paying for it, some felt that it was not appropriate with connotations that because advice was paid for then the decision should be in-line with officers' advice at that stage. Others say that the cost needs to be borne by someone and this should be the developer who gets the benefit from the advice.

There was a view that Government should be promoting its policies and business plans to encourage development, and that there would be an economic benefit to the Island from that development. Charging for pre-application advice may put some people off seeking it and the resulting process or development would be worse as a result.

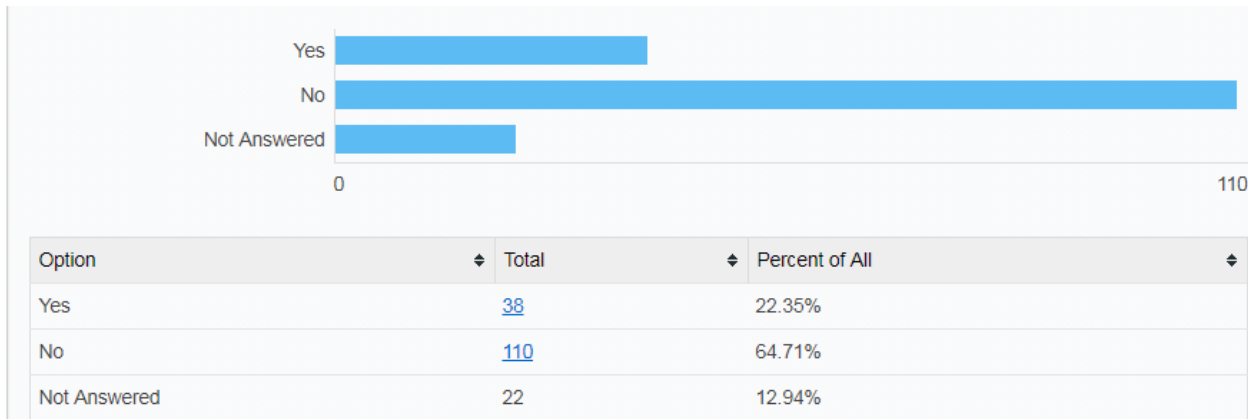
Q9 What types of development should be able to occur without the need for a planning application to be submitted?

Again there was a mix of responses with some saying none, others setting out development that was already Permitted Development and others indicating that the current allowance was about right. Most people gave examples of small scale development that was likely to be uncontentious. Of more note were suggestions in terms of improvements to open spaces, considering some commercial and agricultural PD (with DEFA approval); changes of use in town centres; and schemes of national importance in pre-determined zones.

Some said follow the UK whereas others warned against doing so due to its unnecessary complexity. An alternative approach was suggested that PD could be determined by height and percentage of land mass.

An idea of restricting development in perceived environmentally sensitive areas was suggested by some.

Q10 The ever-increasing pace of mobile phone and data usage means that 5G or other telecommunication technology will be required quickly, so do you think planning exemptions for telecoms development should be extended?



A proportionately high number of people (110 – 64%) of people felt that exemptions should not be extended, with only 38 (22%) believing they should. Twenty-three people (13%) did not answer.

Although some expressed concerns over health, the overwhelming response was that control was needed as masts have a high impact on visual amenity and that these developments should be subject to as much scrutiny as other types of development. There was concern that we do not always know what the next technology would look like and that planning exceptions encourage lazy solutions.

Some were resigned to the fact that this was needed, but others felt strongly the need for advanced high quality communication infrastructure for economic growth was essential. It was suggested that telecom infrastructure should be planned as part of new developments.

Q11 Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding the planning application process?

Comments in respect of these were wide ranging. Some indicated that the planning process worked and cautioned against changing it.

Some felt that the process was stifling business and that the public had too much say, whereas others felt there was inadequate public engagement and notification.

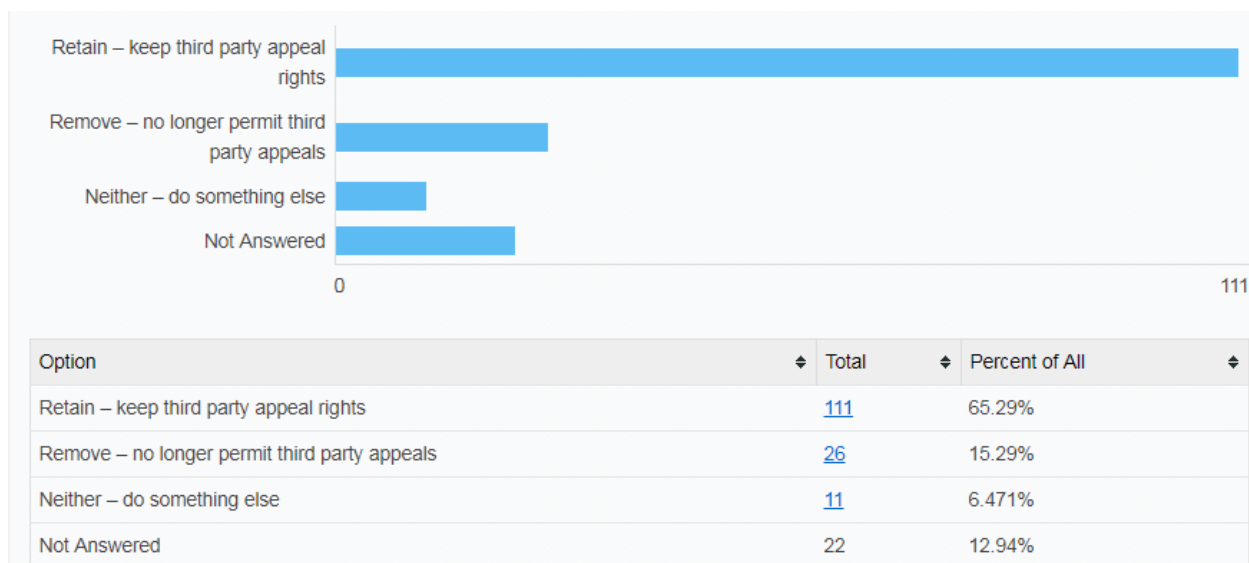
A comment was made that it was not easy to undertake minor development but it was easy undertake major development; similarly comment was made that the process was biased in favour of big developers.

It was suggested that the function should be freestanding and not sit within a department and nor should COMIN take decisions, these should be democratic and separate from political pressure. It was put forward that planning policy should only be overridden in emergencies and not at the whim of perceived commercial imperative.

It was also suggested that the web-site could be improved and that access to staff (who seemed overstretched) should be easier.

Planning Appeals Process

Q12 Should third party appeal rights be retained or removed?

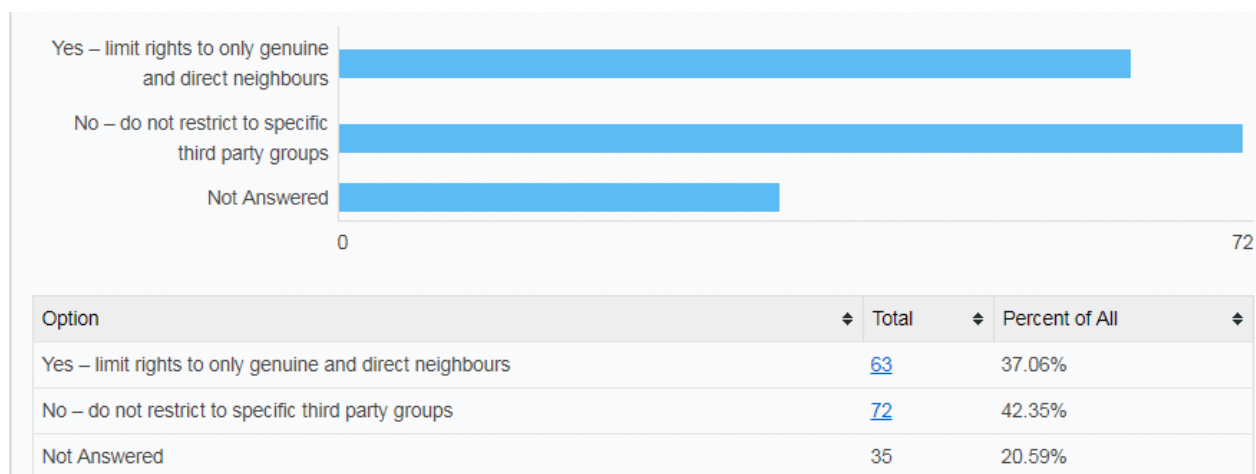


A large percentage 65% (111 people) indicated that they thought 3rd party rights should be retained. Twenty-six people (15%) felt they should be removed. Eleven people (6%) felt we could do something else, and 23 (13%) did not vote.

Of those that commented, views that were expressed were that third party appeal rights were important and democratic. It allowed those whose interests would be affected and those with specialist knowledge the ability to express their views.

Those who were against their retention stated that speed and efficiency would improve, that investors were put off proposing development on the Island; that the cost of appeals outweighed their benefit, and that views should be expressed at the application stage.

Q13 If you think third party appeals should be retained, should the right to appeal be limited to those people who have a genuine and legitimate planning concern that affects them or their property which is close to the proposed development?



Of those who responded, 37% (63 people) felt rights should be limited only to genuinely affected neighbours, whereas 42% (72 people) felt that there should be no restrictions. 36 people (21%) did not vote.

In supporting their views some people stated that some pressure groups make comments just because they were against change, that time wasters result in cost and uncertainty and that concerns should only be listened to if those people are directly affected.

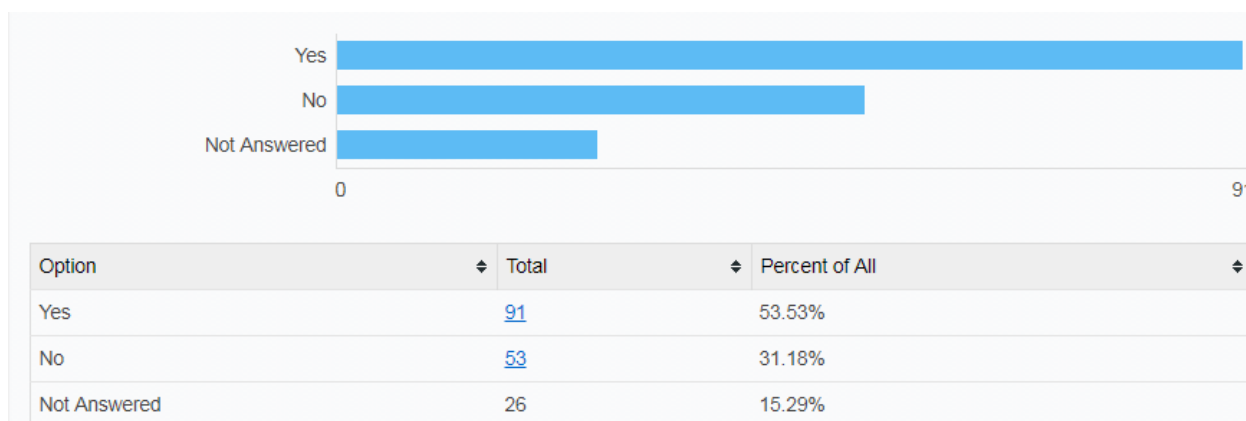
Others cited reasons such as development proposals may have wider Island or community interests, such as impact on retail or community facilities, light pollution, traffic or ecological implications. Development does not just affect those living adjacent. Interest groups with specialist knowledge should be listened to.

Many stated the current method of assessment of third party interest should be amended as it is too open to inconsistencies. It was indicated that it should be open to (or limited to) those people who commented on the application.

Q14 What might constitute a legitimate and genuine planning concern and what might not?

Respondents generally set out those matters that are considered to be material considerations for planning purposes at the current time such as loss of light, loss of amenity, loss of privacy, size of a build, impact of a build, environmental issues such as noise, pollution, traffic impact, aesthetic impacts and so on. Those matters not normally considered to be planning matters but suggested as being so included land banking. In terms of what was not a legitimate concern these included vexatious complaints, monetary value, view, and/or who the applicant was.

Q15 Do you think it is appropriate to have a two-tier fee structure?



Of those that responded 53% (91) said yes whereas 31% (53) said no. 16% (27 people) did not answer either way.

The benefits of having a two-tier fee structure were expressed as being that the appeal system would be simpler and faster and it would keep costs down. A view was express that the oral hearing does not add anything to the process so long as it is a fair and transparent process.

The disadvantages of a two-tier structure was said to be that it would favour those who could afford it. There was concern that appeals dealt with by written representations would be less fair with less scrutiny.

It was put forward by some respondents that controversial or complex matters should be dealt with as hearings, rather than by written submissions.

Q16 How can the number of appeals be reduced?

There were a variety of thoughts as to how the number of appeals could be reduced. Some suggested better pre-application discussions and consultation with neighbours at the outset. Others felt the need to restrict the grounds of appeal, making appeals more expensive or there being costs for unreasonable behaviour. Some respondents expressed the view that MHKs making decisions against policy in the past had encouraged people to 'have a go'.

The aim to reduce the number of appeals was questioned by respondents who believed they were a valuable part of the process but the process needed to be reviewed.

Q17 Do you have any other comments regarding the matter of third party involvement?

The comments made expand on those expressed above. Many felt that the importance of listening to everyone's views should not be undermined and that it was primarily important that the system should be fair.

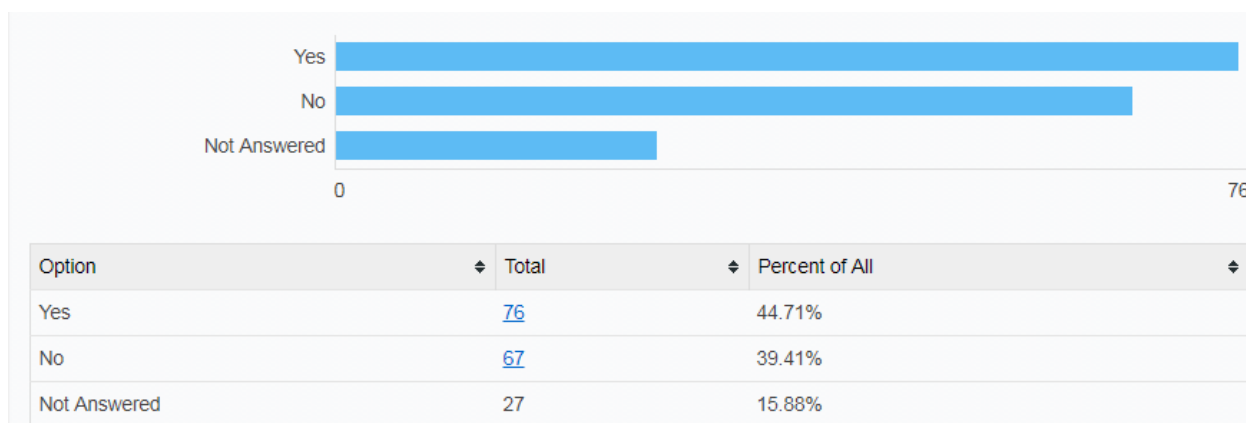
Others felt that known vexatious commenters should be black-listed and that there should be better control of NIMBYs. It was recognised that special interest groups tend to benefit the process.

It was suggested that evidence and forecast backed economic assessments associated with applications were required to be "tested" for viability and sustainability, then afforded an appropriate weighting, when considered against third party objections. There must be a stage when the public can contribute to a democratic planning system. Cumulative impact and "nil detriment" testing of economic factors could also be used.

The level of local authority input into the system was mentioned.

Decision-making process

Q18 Should Government have the ability to create a policy document at the highest level which would carry material weight in decision-making?



76 respondents or 44% were in support, 67 or 39% were not in support. 28/171 failed to answer (17%).

Comments were centred on 3 themes:

1. Is there really a need for such a mechanism?
2. Those in favour of having such a mechanism
3. Those not in favour of having such a mechanism

Is there a need – could the current system be sufficient?

The question prompted people to think about the how policy was created and how it aligned with government objectives. To have a clearly responsive system with an unambiguous overall policy direction, supported by Tynwald, seemed a clear message. Whether this related to major projects or an overall intent was not clear.

- Up to date plans could cover all eventualities on a small island.
- Government should agree the framework within which the planning process operates.
- If it were a framework within which the detail could be rapidly changed, there would be no problem.
- Is this not the objective of the strategic plan?

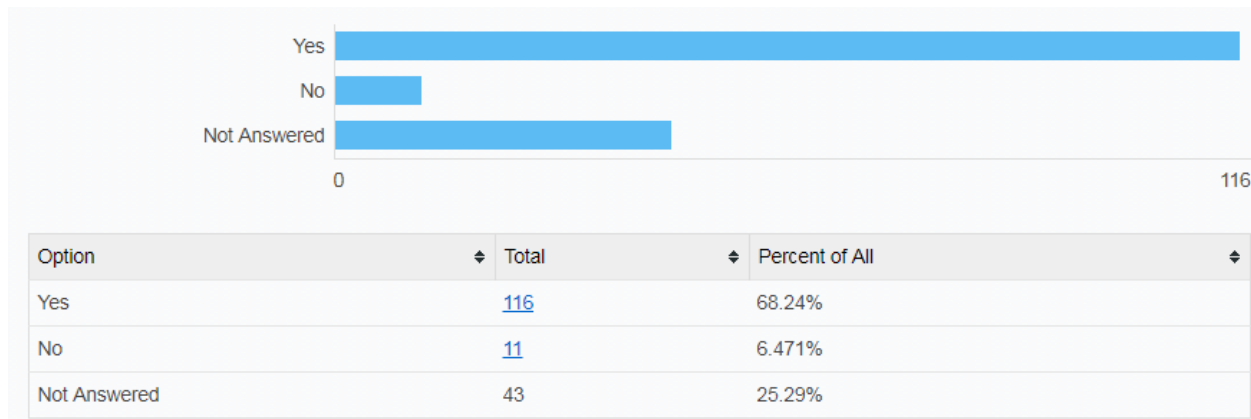
Where 'yes' – summary of comments:-

- Government should allow such policies to be properly scrutinised.
- Some developments are necessary and should happen, so could therefore be streamlined.
- There was too much power in the hands of civil servants at present.
- National priorities should be clearly documented and exemptions from local decision making should be clearly spelt out.
- The ability to create policy would give Government the ability to be much more responsive to the current economic and environmental landscape.
- Those policies would need to be adopted by Tynwald (as should all to date) and be updated regularly.

Where 'no' – summary of comments:-

- The need to be wary of 'flavour of the week'.
- It would create too much restrictive Government interference.
- The concentration of power in this way would be undemocratic and there should be joint policy with local communities.
- Too much power was not a good thing.
- It would be best to keep Planning as it is now and not to create a Policy that just suits this Government and their aims. It could all change in 4 years.
- The problem was that it takes too long to change a development plan because that is too detailed.
- There was not sufficient confidence that Government was made up of relevantly qualified members.
- Concern that the Government could be manipulated by unscrupulous extremely wealthy individuals who are often consulted and are then found to be behind these planning applications for their own personal gain. The planning system on the IOM was absolutely fair as it stood. Care must be taken in the consideration of applications made by people who have ulterior motives.
- It can be seen as a way for Government to circumvent its own policies for pet projects which may be of dubious "importance" - or may be important to certain vested interests.

Q19 If so, do you agree that any such change in planning policy should continue to be the subject of public consultation and approval by Tynwald?



Yes Responses 116 (68.24%), No Responses 11 (6.43%), Not Answered 44 (25.73%)

There was clear support for Tynwald to have the final say in changes to planning policy, following public consultation.

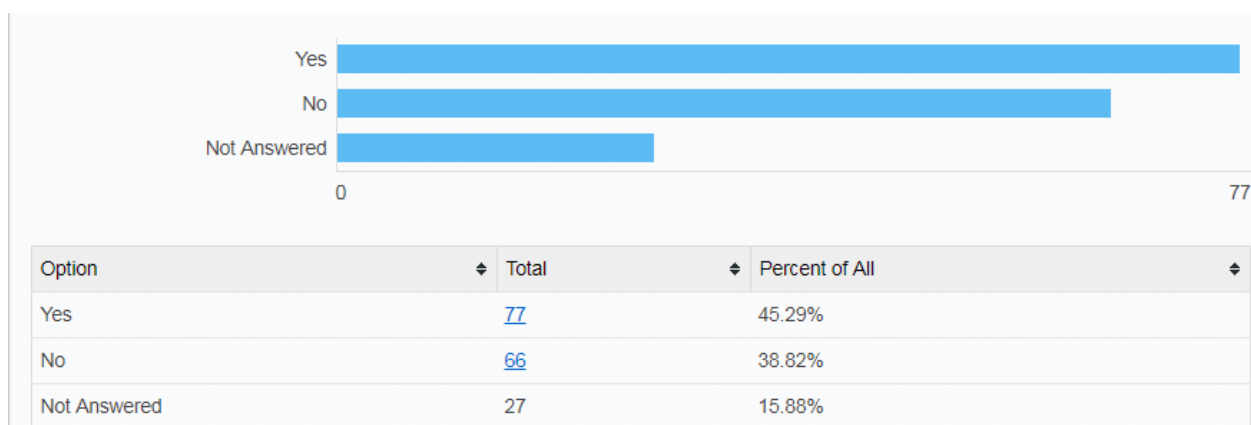
Reasons and themes

- To prevent arbitrary decisions being made.
- Everything needs public input.
- Due democratic process is key.
- Tynwald is the highest court in the Land, and that is who should decide any changes.
- The lack of adequate consultation with the public may result in the wrong decisions being made.
- The absence of a public mandate for a specific policy or broad political support for a minister's policy cannot be sustained in the long term.

Need to have

- Transparency and fairness if Government is allowed to create policy documents.
- The time to be transparent with such decisions.

Q20 Do you think that Local Authority representatives should be included in the membership of the Planning Committee?



Of those that responded 45% (77) felt that they should, whereas 38% (66) said that they should not. 16% (28) chose not to answer.

Comments in favour of having Local Authority representatives

- Representatives are elected and are the best mandate locals have.
- They look after an area, have better local knowledge than the Planning Committee and can give a local view, which should be heard when decisions are being taken.
- Central Government is notoriously blinkered and unaware of local needs.
- Attendance should only be in respect of development in their own areas.

Comments against Local Authority representatives

- Decisions should be based on policy and legislation and not local politics.
- Planning Committee should be made up of people with relevant training and expertise and not politicians.
- Representatives of the Local Authorities do not necessarily have adequate knowledge and understanding of the issues.
- It is important that the Planning Committee is fully independent with no political input.
- There would be too much potential for conflicts of interest.

The point was made that the views of Local Authorities are important but have a role to play in the existing system. They are consulted on applications and have a position as an interested party.

Q21 Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding improvements to the decision-making process?

The responses to this open question were very wide ranging. Many said the process worked well when policy was complied with. There were quite a number of comments that more weight be given to Planning Committee's decisions and Inspectors' recommendations, and MHKs should not overturn these recommendations. There is concern that MHKs are not independent and that it discredits the system.

Others commented on public involvement stating that it was good protection against radical ideas and that the impact of a development on people living in an area should be given greater weight. The right to speak at Planning Committee was seen as being a major contribution to the planning system and should be maintained. A comment was made that planning committee meetings should be recorded in Hansard and live streamed; another mentioned that additional material, such as the PowerPoint presentation should be public and included on the file alongside the minutes.

The potential to restructure the Planning Committee was seen as a reform which could and should be brought forward now – that it should be made up of elected members with professional related backgrounds. There should be a pool so that if there were to be a conflict of interest someone else could take that seat. It was put forward that if the Chair was to continue to be a politician an MLC might be better as they would not be influenced by their voters.

Section 2 – Policies

Design quality

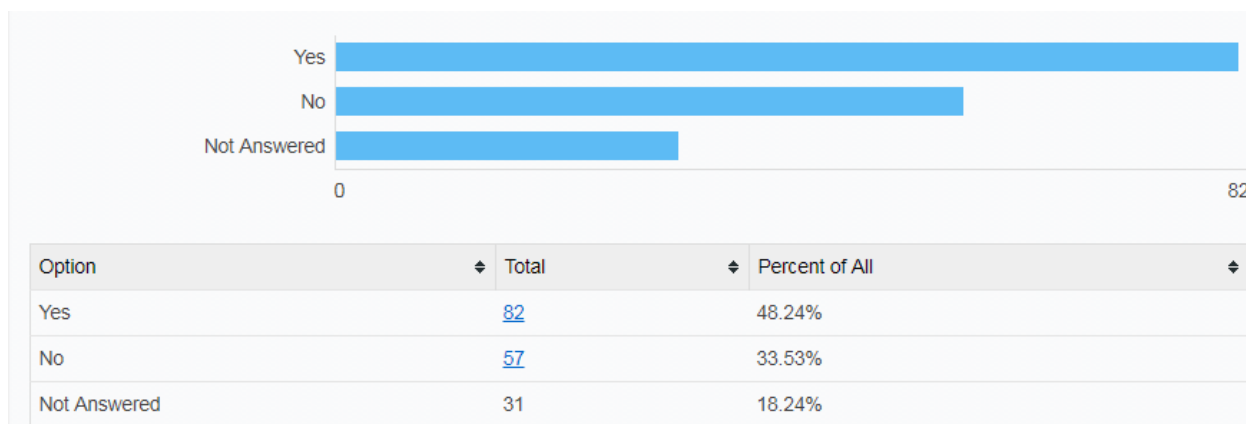
Q22 Is there anything you would like to tell us regarding how to raise design quality?

Although this was an open question, there appeared to be a number of similar themes in response. There was a concern about the number of ubiquitous designs, with housing estates all looking the same with white painted render that goes green. There was also a strong call to ditch the 'faux Manx farmhouse' requirement. Suggestions included: showcasing good design; having seminars and workshops; lowering densities; having design awards; improving materials; better liaison with the public and community housing projects.

Others sought that we do not forget our rich architectural heritage; that we be bolder in town centres; or that we remove aesthetic control from planners.

Living and working environments

Q23 Do you agree that the minimum size standards required in new residential developments should be increased?



Nearly half the respondents 48% (82) said yes we should have minimum size standards, whereas 33% (57) said no, and 19% (32) did not vote.

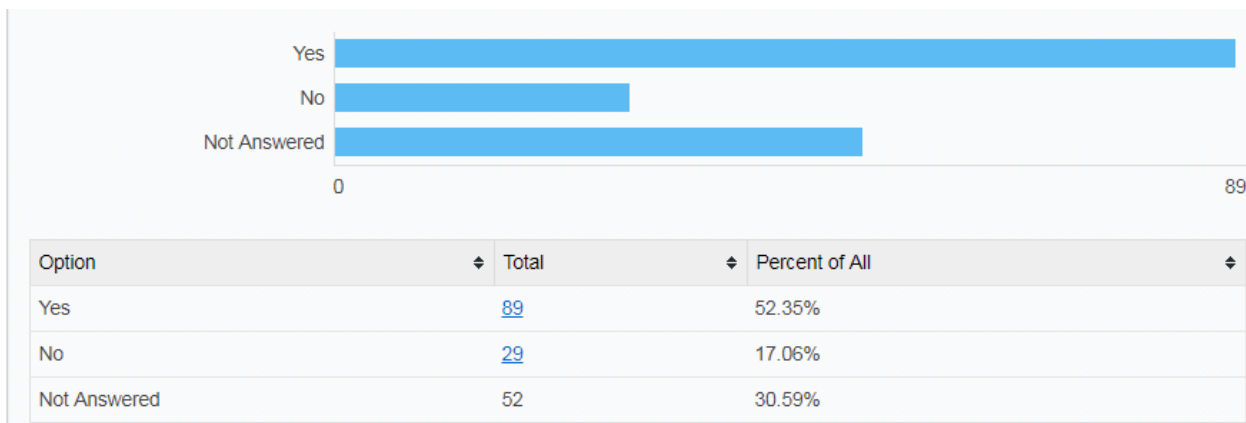
There was some concurrence that newly built properties were far too small noting that social housing had higher standards than some privately built dwellings and that rooms should have enough space for a reasonable standard of living and able to accommodate furniture. Many felt that property was of an insufficient size to raise a family in and that there should be enough space to provide essential facilities including that for white goods, storage space with space around the home and adequate parking.

The converse view was expressed that this would mean more land to get the same number of houses and that larger houses mean higher prices and that the current standard of accommodation was acceptable.

Many felt there was room to provide some minimum standards but that care should be taken not to become too prescriptive. Reference was made to achieving this by minimum plot ratios or by following the London housing guide.

A few contributors considered that this was an area which should be market lead or that it should be a building regulations or public health matter.

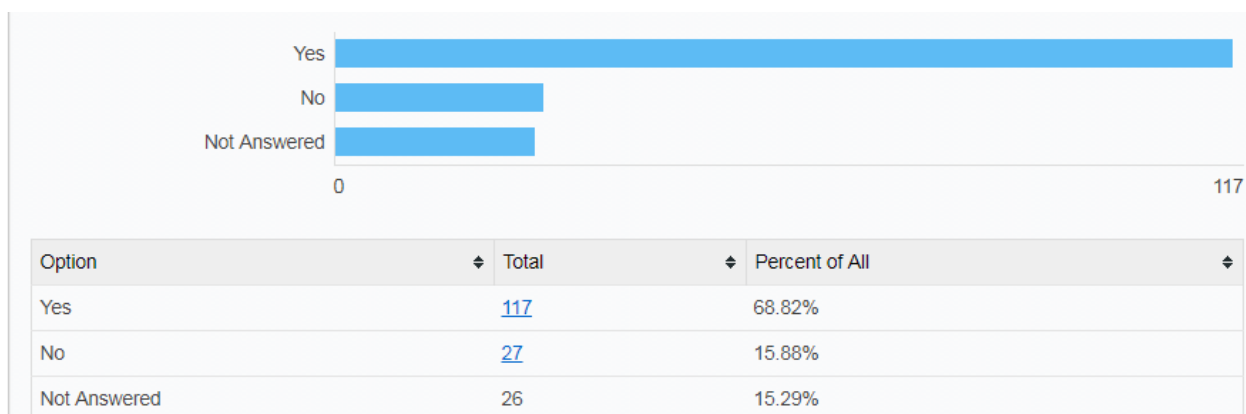
Q24 If yes, should there be exceptions to these standards?



Over half of the respondents said yes, there should be an exception to the standards (52%- 89); 17% (29) said no and 31% (53) did not vote either way.

In commenting, there was an indication that studio apartments, conversions, buildings in conservation areas and Registered Buildings should be exempted. Others said that development should be considered on their merits. However there was a view that exceptions undermine any code.

Q25 Do you think that key sites should be the subject of greater master-planning?



68.42% of respondents considered that key sites require greater master planning. In respect of housing sites, many comments related to the integration of the new sites with the existing road infrastructure, for the provision of more off road parking than is currently required and the creation of a better environment via the inclusion of more open space, integrated landscaping and social provisions. A number of comments suggested the use of compulsory purchase powers where appropriate to ensure that individual sites were developed to their full economic potential, to ensure consideration of all the economic, environmental and social needs. Of the 15.79% that responded negatively, some considered that such an approach was too prescriptive

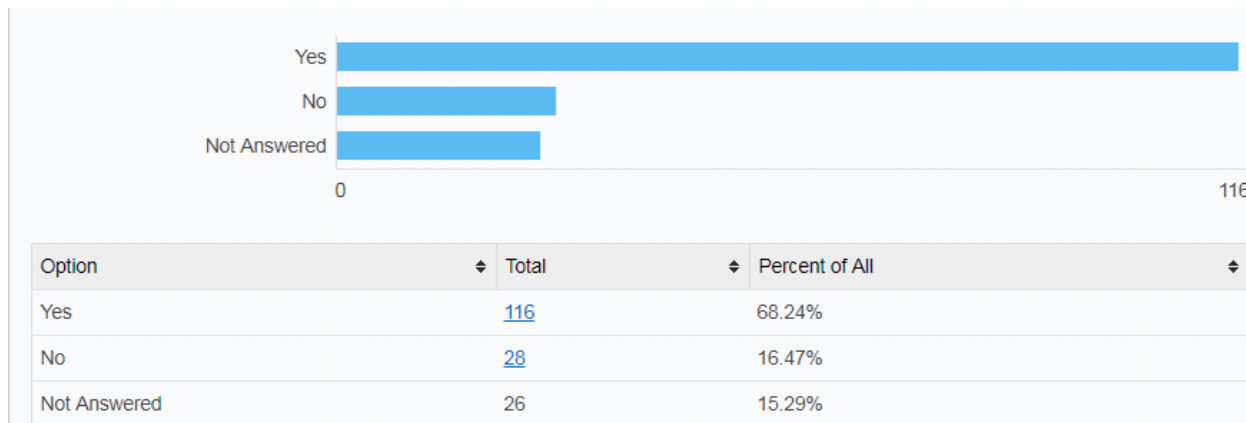
Q26 Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding building sizes and density?

A 68.4% response rate, the majority of respondents considered that densities of housing developments were too high and that the parking provision was not sufficient, with concerns at the impact that this was having on the infrastructure of the surrounding areas. In the more detailed responses, it was clear that a definition was made between urban densities and countryside densities i.e. that urban could be higher, but the densities should reduce toward the countryside. Higher density within towns should respect the

setting, be of higher quality design, including better landscaping and more consideration for open space, privacy considerations and massing. There was also concern that the nature of recent design was too generic and was losing the Manx identity of the individual areas and that we should be focusing on designing communities.

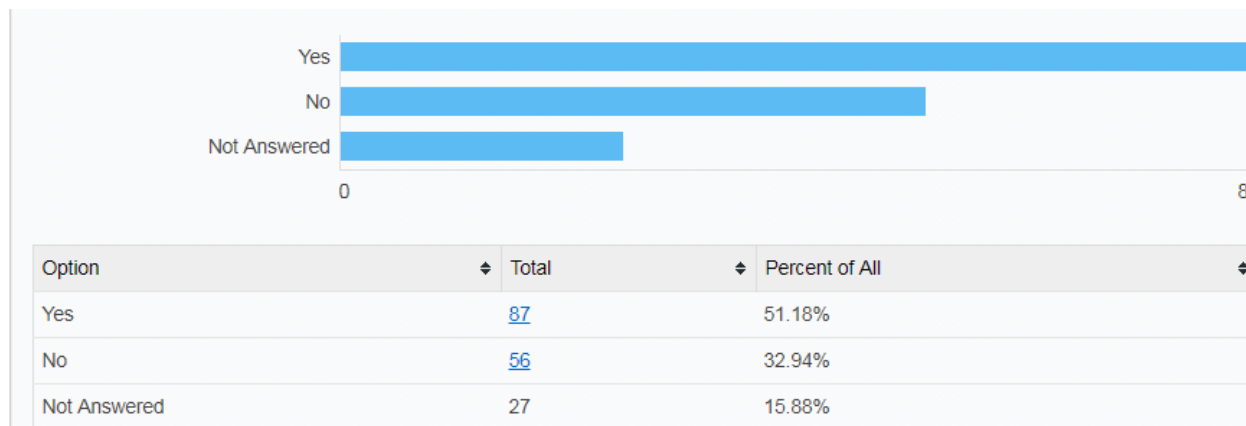
Heritage

Q27 Do you think there should be the introduction of a ranked classification for buildings which recognises their varying importance and potential for change?



85.4% response rate, with 67.84% considering that this was a good idea, as it would offer clarity as it is accepted that some buildings are more historically and architecturally important than others and that a forward thinking society protects its heritage, culture and integrity. Of the 16.37% that responded negatively, a number of those concerns related to the additional layers of bureaucracy and added complication that such a system might bring, the suggestion that 'lesser' quality buildings would be demolished, whilst others thought that the Island needs to be more forward looking and redevelop.

Q28 Do you think that in the current economic climate the reintroduction of the Historic Buildings Grants should be a government priority?

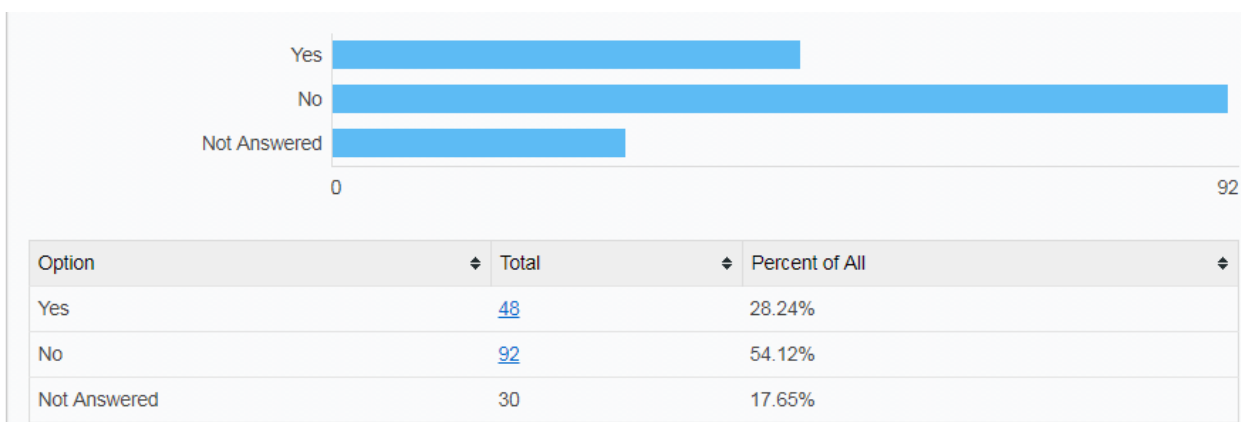


This question had an 86% response rate with 50.88% considering it a good idea and 32.75% not. Some considered that investment in our built heritage was likely to attract people and business to the Island and that funding provides encouragement to ensure historic buildings are well maintained and would encourage/stimulate business in the construction industry. Others considered that the grant system was open to abuse and that the former system was too complicated.

Q29 What are your views on the idea of transferring the research and subsequent recommendation of Registered Buildings and Conservation Areas to other bodies (for example MNH)?

84% response rate 54.97% yes, 21.05% no and 23.98% not answered. Of those that agreed with moving the function to MNH, there was consideration that the function needed to be adequately resourced and that the separation of the Registration of buildings from the decision making process on future uses / changes to buildings was a positive. Those with concerns at the transfer highlighted issues such as an additional layer of bureaucracy, the organisations vested interests and the risk that conservation focused bodies would tend to over- conserve and that it would prevent MNH from impartially objecting to any planning application.

Q30 In recognition of limited resources, do you think that consideration should be given to focusing attention on fewer Conservation Areas to raise their quality and allow them to meet their social and economic potential?



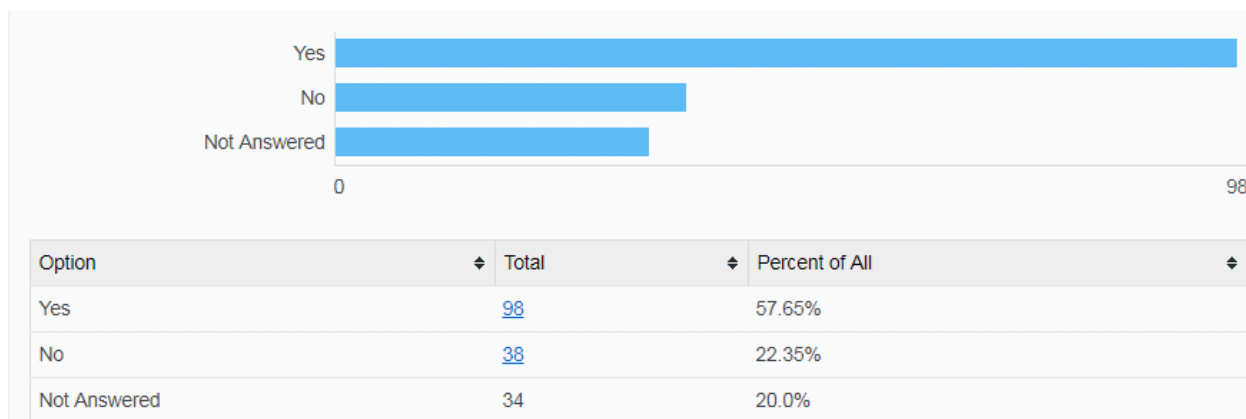
This question received an 83.6% response rate. 53.80% of the respondents did not agree, commenting that conservation areas are important for their social value and that the number of conservation areas should be dictated by the importance of these areas to the Island's heritage, not on the availability of resources. From a more pragmatic point of view, some considered that conservation areas could be graded and resources directed accordingly. Of the 28.07% that responded positively, comments ranged from yes, subject to consultation with the respective local communities and a suggestion that there was a general need to increase quality and resources needed to be found. The amount and scale of Conservation Areas should be re-appraised to focus the attention onto what was truly significant. There was a notable 18.13% that did not answer this question.

Q31 Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding how best to protect and cherish our heritage while at the same time providing a more flexible environment that supports economic development?

The responses to such an open question were broad. Some suggested that Government should work with partner organisations to develop good policies to protect and promote our built heritage. Some considered that a heritage audit should be carried out to ascertain and understand the full extent of our historic built environment. The current two separate consent systems of planning applications and registered building applications should be streamlined into one single consent system with different criteria being used to assess applications for non-registered and registered buildings. Others considered that the innovative reuse of buildings should be encouraged as our heritage is part of our economic development. Some considered that Government should have greater powers to ensure property owners maintain their properties. A number of comments suggested that the Conservation team should be 'properly resourced'.

Where new development should go

Q32 In future plan making should new development continue to reflect a settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy similar to now?



There was an 82.5% response rate to this question with 57% in favour and 22% against.

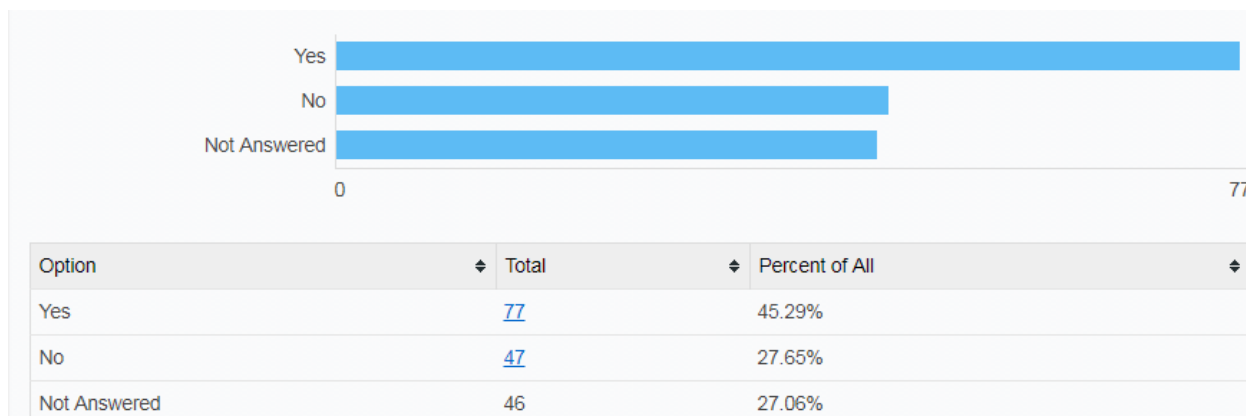
Those that supported continued use of a settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy made reference to benefits such as focusing development where infrastructure already exists, preventing urban sprawl, ensuring development is proportionate to the size of existing settlements, adhering to principles of sustainable development, protecting the countryside and supporting town centres.

There was strong support for encouraging the development of brownfield sites with some respondents linking this with protection of the countryside.

A need for more flexibility was highlighted in a number of responses as was the importance of reducing the need to travel to work. The idea of creating a new town was suggested by some as was the need to support smaller hamlets by allowing some development to sustain a vibrant community. Some felt that no more land should be allocated for development until all brownfield sites have been used whilst others believed that an over-provision of land for development would give greater flexibility and encourage economic growth.

Of those that did not support continued use of a settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy similar to now, a range of perceived issues were put forward including concerns about the scale of previous developments and the impact of these on the settlement they related to, a need to preserve the character of existing towns and villages, a view that development should be spread more evenly around the Island.

Q33 Do you support the current land for employment approach?



There was a 78% response rate to this question with 45% in favour and 27% against.

Those that supported the current land for employment approach made reference to evidence that businesses want to locate in and around Douglas and as such Douglas should remain the Island's main employment centre. This was reiterated in comments which referred to market forces. Some felt that an over-provision of land for development should be provided to encourage economic development and allow greater flexibility. Reference was also made to businesses wanting to locate close to where people live to ensure an adequate workforce is in close proximity. Having an available stock of employment land was considered as being vital in the view of some respondents with reference made to the need for the Island to be in a position to compete with other jurisdictions.

A number of respondents highlighted the importance of reducing the need to travel to work and that public transport should better serve commuters. Mention was also made of the impact that increased 'working from home' may have.

Of those that expressed concern with the current land for employment approach, some put forward the view that more development should be spread around the Island with less focus on Douglas, possibly with the use of financial incentives to encourage businesses to locate to other towns and villages.

Q34 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about how development is prioritised around the Island?

There was a 67% response rate to this question.

A range of views and ideas were expressed by respondents including the need to protect agricultural land, preserve the natural environment and focus on brownfield sites.

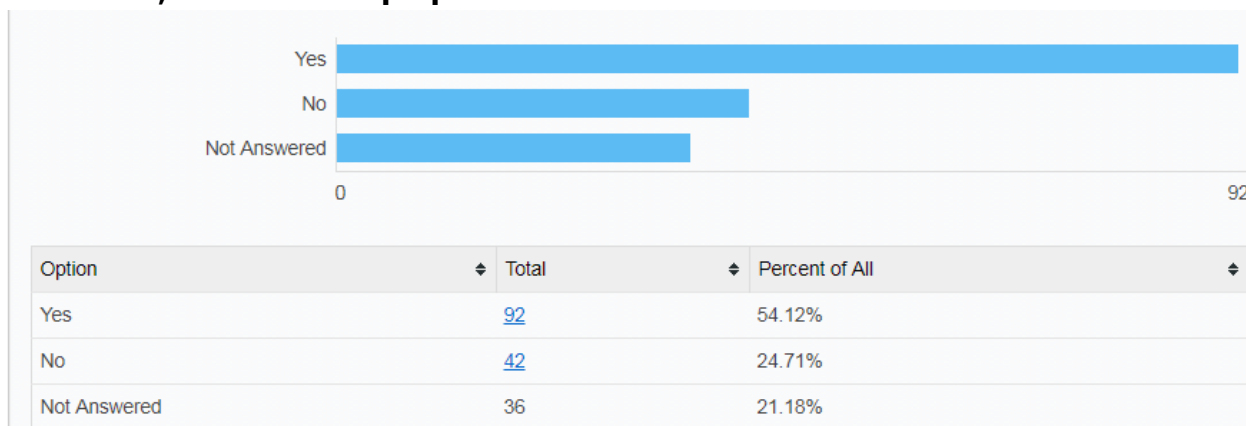
Some highlighted the importance of ensuring new development is supported by appropriate infrastructure such as shops, bicycle lanes and pedestrian linkages.

The need to better consider issues around biodiversity, possibly through greater use of Environmental Impact Assessments was highlighted.

Some respondents felt that more housing and employment land was needed to support an increased population.

Rural development and protection

Q35 Do you agree that policies for new or replacement houses in the countryside should be revised to enable more unique, innovative and attractive properties, while retaining existing traditional, smaller-scale properties?



There was an 82% response rate with 54% in favour and 25% against.

Responses to this question included some views that no development should be allowed in the countryside; with others feeling that any development should be the subject of very strict controls. There was some support for more flexibility in terms of the design of new or replacement houses although some felt that current policy achieved the right balance.

There were a number of references to the importance of any policy being applied fairly and consistently with some commenting that larger houses should not be allowed only for the rich. The need to retain the best traditional rural properties was also highlighted as was the potential to allow some development in existing small hamlets.

**Q36 Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding development in the countryside?
There was a 75% response rate to this question.**

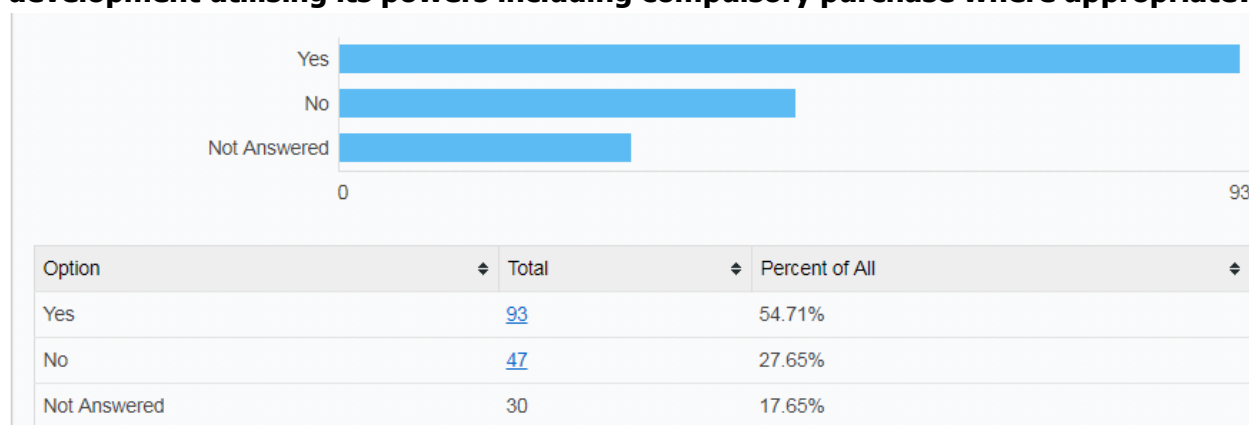
Some expressed a view that there was potential for more development in the countryside provided it was sympathetic whilst others felt that more restriction and adherence to policy was required.

Greater protection for 'unspoilt' countryside was advocated by some with detailed ideas around stricter controls on lighting and agricultural dwellings being suggested. A number of responses expressed caution to ensure protection against development of the countryside.

The importance of the Island's countryside as a tourist asset was highlighted by a number of respondents. There was a suggestion that a 'vision' for what the countryside should be used for be agreed with sites with potential for development being identified. There was also a view that 'Over-riding National Need' be defined.

Economic development

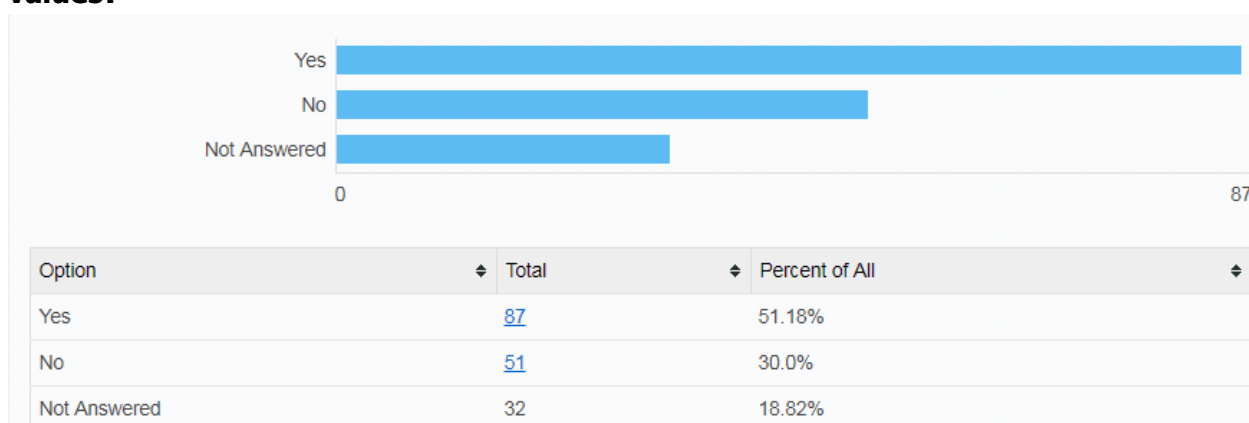
Q37 Do you think Government should take on a more proactive role in securing economic development utilising its powers including compulsory purchase where appropriate?



83.6% response rate. 54.39% of respondents said yes stating that facilitation of new development should be a priority, but it should only be used in very limited/exceptional circumstances. Compulsory purchase has been seen to work in other jurisdictions and could bring forward those key sites for appropriate development and that brownfield sites should be developed first before any green field sites. Site assembly might be the key to moving forward, specifically in our Town Centres and Government should where necessary, assemble sites to enable development to take place.

27.49% said no, leave it to the market. Others stated that the existing use of compulsory powers was sufficient and should only be used in exceptional circumstances and not without clear idea of what was planned for the area. Some thought that Government should have a light touch in as many areas as possible, but it should offer incentives as a catalyst for economic development. Others still thought that it should not be the role of Government (i.e. tax payers) to fund the purchase of brownfield or key access sites, especially in these economically constrained times; it was for private enterprise to purchase land for their economic developments.

Q38 Do you think that compulsory purchase powers should be simplified to enable compulsory purchase and possibly subsequent resale of land back into the market place at current market values?



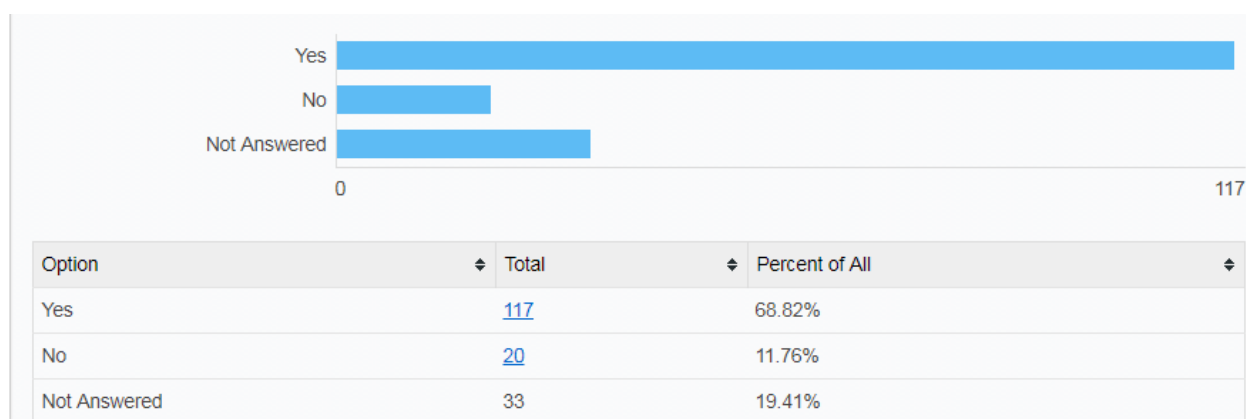
83.0% response rate. 50.88% yes, 29.82% no, 19.30% didn't answer. Yes, but a fair valuation independently assessed must be paid for any compulsory purchases. Where the purchase would lead to development and economic activity on the site as the presence of key sites being developed, particularly in Douglas, breeds confidence and would act as a catalyst for other development nearby. Others commented that it should only be used in exceptional circumstances and yet others voiced concern at an abuse of power by Government.

Q39 Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding how planning can further support economic development?

Only 63.7% responded to this question. There is a general acceptance that economic development is important, but that this should be in balance with other Government policies in respect of sustainability and the protection of the environment. A number of the respondents considered that the quality of the built environment needed to be improved, particularly in town centres, which needed to be vibrant places to be as a result of better design quality, landscaping and the creation of open space, but also Island wide. There should be a presumption in favour of the development of brownfield sites before greenfield sites recognising the asset that we have in our countryside. Some considered that empty, derelict buildings needed a more flexible approach which might include the use of incentives packages. In terms of wider policy issues, some respondents considered that the Area Plans needed to be kept up to date.

Brownfield sites

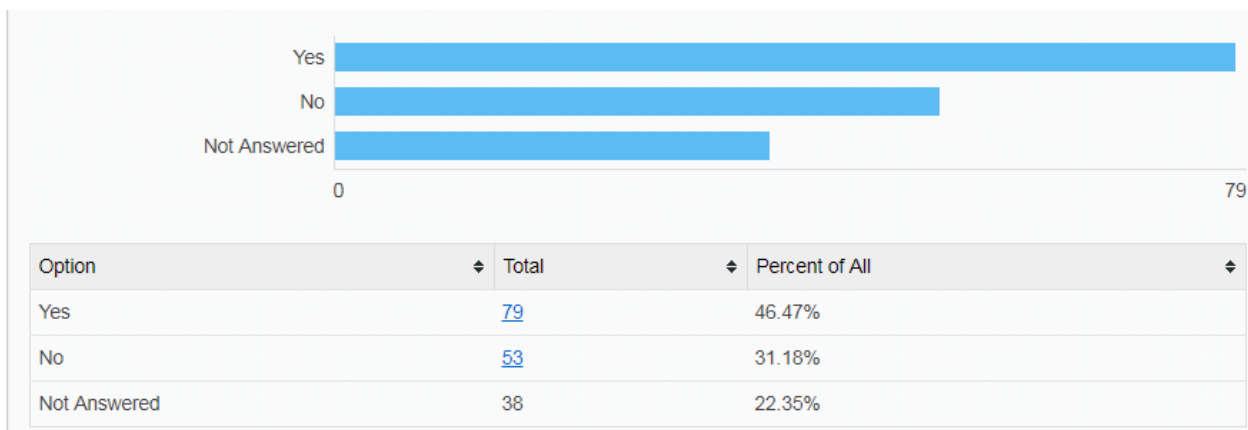
Q40 Do you think that the current rate discounts associated with empty buildings and brownfield sites should be removed or become time bound to encourage development of those assets?



83.0% responded. 68.42% said Yes, 11.70% no, 19.88% did not answer.

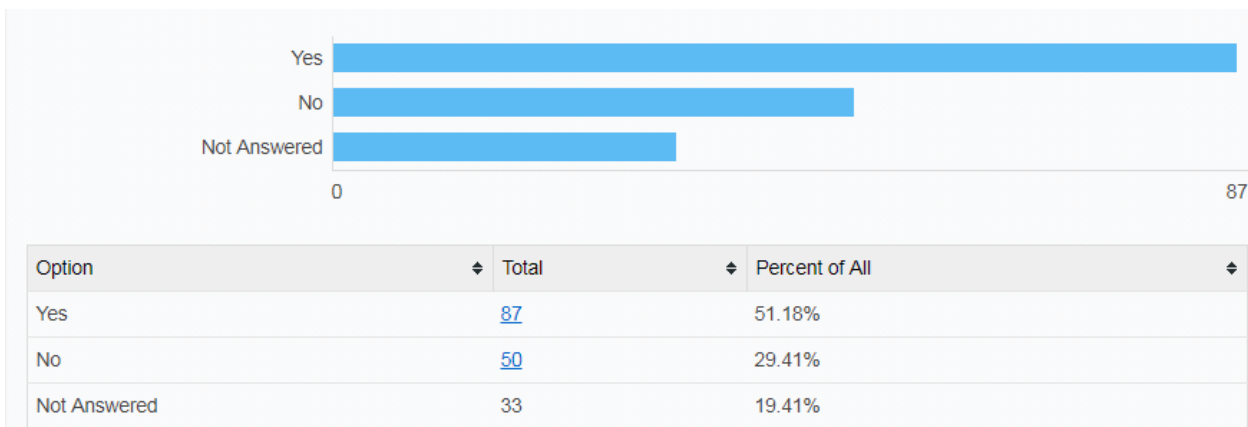
Dilapidated, empty buildings and disused sites were considered to be encouraged by the current system. The majority of respondents considered that an increase in the rates on such properties if not developed or improved within a reasonable time frame would encourage development. Some added that this should be time bound, i.e. that discounts were only applicable for temporary vacancy/inactivity to encourage use. Others added that further incentives, for example tax reductions, deferrals, were needed for development. There were those that did not agree that penalising owners of empty buildings and brownfield sites was the right approach to encourage development suggesting that Government’s focus should be on providing stimulus to unlock these buildings and sites for development

Q41 Do you think that cleared sites intended for future developments should not be allowed to be used for interim car parking to prevent income from parking fees reducing the urgency of long term site development?



82.5% responded, 46.20% said yes, 30.99% said no and 22.81% did not answer. In principle, it was considered preferable if such sites were developed as opposed to becoming car parks, some of which were considered to have a negative impact upon the surrounding townscape. However this would need to be considered as part of an overall strategy for parking in our towns, to ensure adequate provision and forward planning, with an eye on future demand. With such a strategy in place, surface car parking would be unnecessary. Any approvals should be time bound. Some had a balanced view suggesting that interim parking was an important use of land but prevented development of brownfield sites.

Q42 Do you think that reducing the length of time that planning approval lasts for on certain sites would encourage approved developments to commence quickly so that their benefits are realised?



142 respondents or 83.0%, 50.88% of the respondents said yes, 29.24% said no and 19.88% did not answer. Some concerns were raised at the current perceived process of continuing to update approvals when they run out with little apparent desire to develop the site until such time that the economy picks up and with it land prices. A number of respondents suggest that the constraints on development were more related to the market conditions, viability and the ability to secure sufficient funding and that as a result, shorter planning approvals would not change this situation.

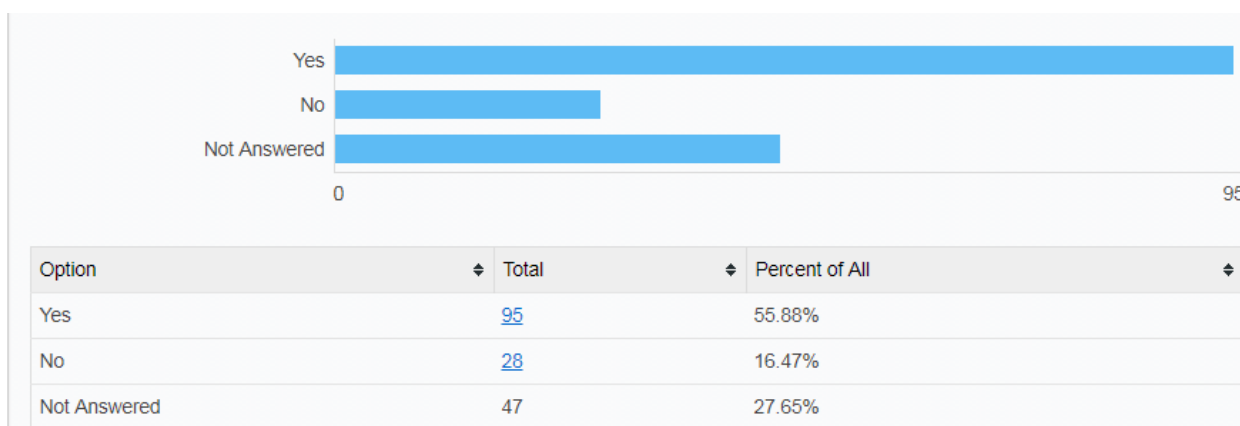
Q43 Is there anything else you would like to suggest which could help stimulate re-development of brownfield sites?

This question drew a 64.9% response rate with comments centred around the provision of Government incentives packages which could including rates relief but go beyond this to include a wider range of

financial and other support (first year's rent paid by Government?), where an economic win could be realised. However, some considered that out of town development sites especially green field sites should attract a higher rate level which also related to the reduction of the availability of out-of-town office and retail development, which could concentrate development and activity in the town centres. A few respondents suggested that a more flexible approach to the use of the sites should be adopted and that Government could set up a development agency to facilitate development of key sites from land assembly to the actual development of the sites.

Infrastructure provision

Q44 Do you agree that a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should be introduced for larger developments?



Over half of those who responded said yes CIL should be introduced for larger developments (55% - 95 people). 16% (28) said no, and 28% (48) did not answer.

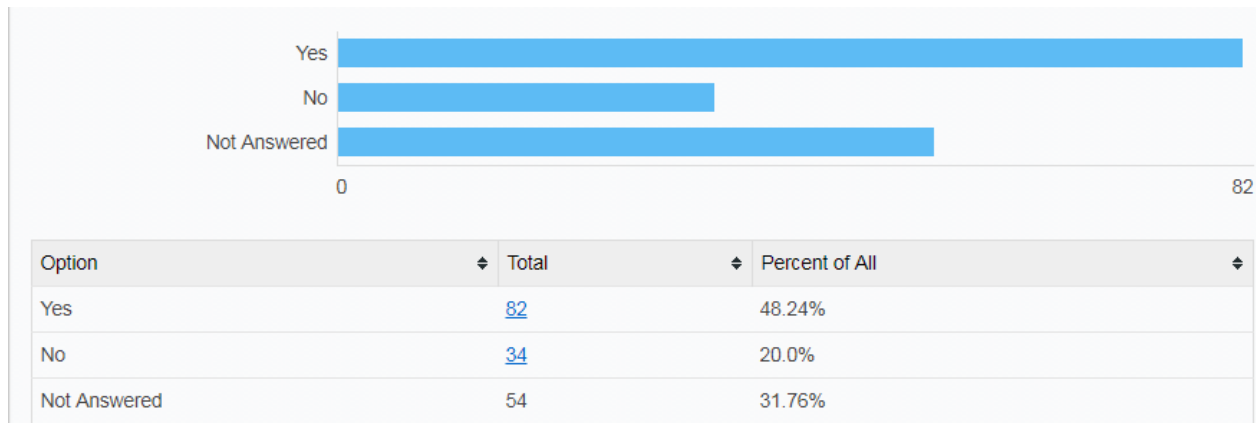
Reasons for

- Developers should contribute to the increased levels of infrastructure which were needed; that they should contribute to a community; that larger developments placed a disproportionately higher burden on other infrastructure such as roads, parking, utilities, public transport etc.; and that it would reduce the impact of a series of piecemeal developments eventually overwhelming existing infrastructure.
- Others commented that this could encourage greater public participation, but that it should only augment Government's capital spending, not partly replace it.

Reasons against

- Any increase in developer spending would be passed on to the property purchaser.
- Government and planners needed to be more supportive of major developments which would make a significant contribution to the spending on infrastructure.
- Potentially act as a barrier to development which we should be encouraging.
- Property tax had already doubled.
- CIL would harm prospects of brownfield sites being developed.
- Disincentive to regeneration.
- May sway an approval for an unacceptable application.
- Would add another level of unnecessary complexity and impact on viability.
- There should be a comprehensive tax on betterment.

Q45 If so, do you think that the CIL should be in addition to existing Section 13 monies?

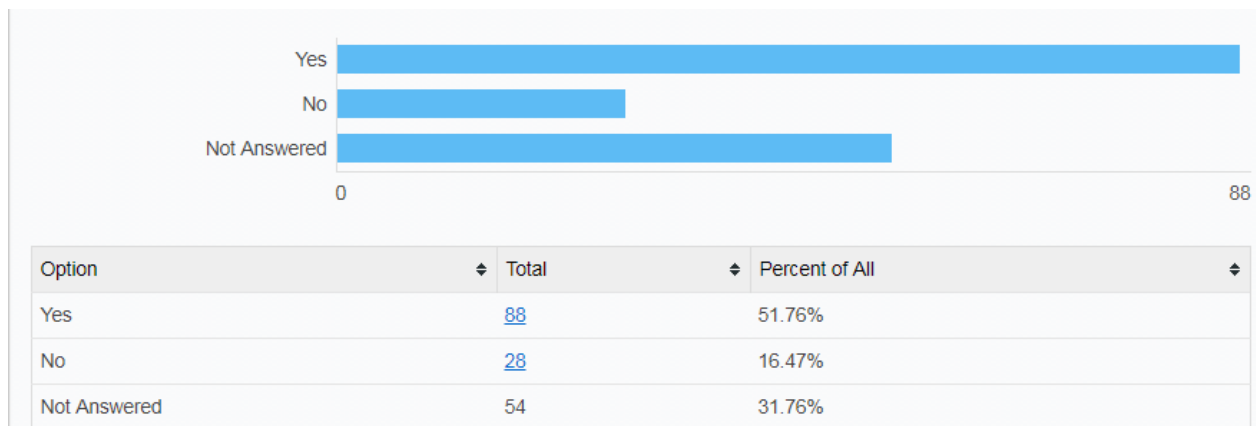


Nearly half the respondents (48% -82) said that it should, whereas 20% - 34 people disagreed. About a third (32% - 55) did not answer.

Many felt that S13 contributions do not go far enough, that it only seemed to deal with affordable housing, leaving Government to finance the other direct or indirect costs of development. Others indicated that there needed to be more flexibility to levy fees for infrastructure enhancements such as those that contribute to sustainable living.

Conversely others stated that they cover similar issues so it should be either or, not double taxation, and the comment was made that consideration should be given to a comprehensive tax on betterment.

Q46 Do you think that a fixed and proportionate CIL would provide greater certainty and clarity for developers in respect of what would be required of them?



Over half the respondents agreed that a rate should be fixed and proportionate to the development (51% - 88). 16% (28) said no, and 32% (55) did not answer.

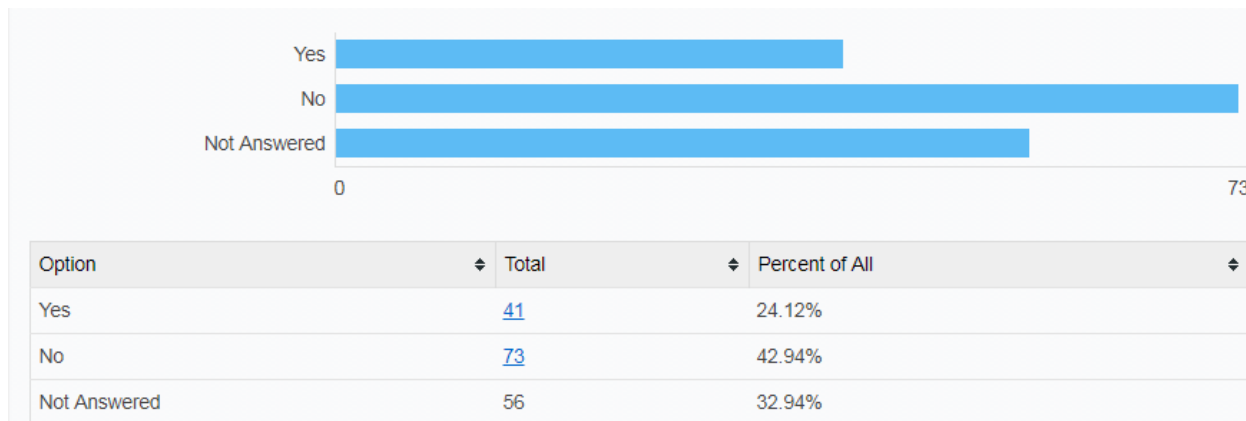
Some felt it would enable proper budget control, would clarify the Government’s expectations and that it was better to have a clear formula rather than negotiations behind closed doors.

Others were concerned that aesthetic considerations would be traded for finance, that it could prevent development from occurring as it could affect viability, that the cost would be passed onto home owners, and that flexibility was essential.

It was highlighted that those authorities in the UK more effective at securing community infrastructure were those that had prepared supplementary planning guidance in association with infrastructure providers. It was such guidance that aided decision makers and developers and importantly delivered.

The need for a transition period was raised.

Q47 Do you think that the CIL should be applied to all types and sizes of development in all locations?



A quarter of respondents felt that CIL should be applied to all types and sizes of development in all locations (24% 41 people). However 43% (73) said no, and a third (33% -57 people) did not answer.

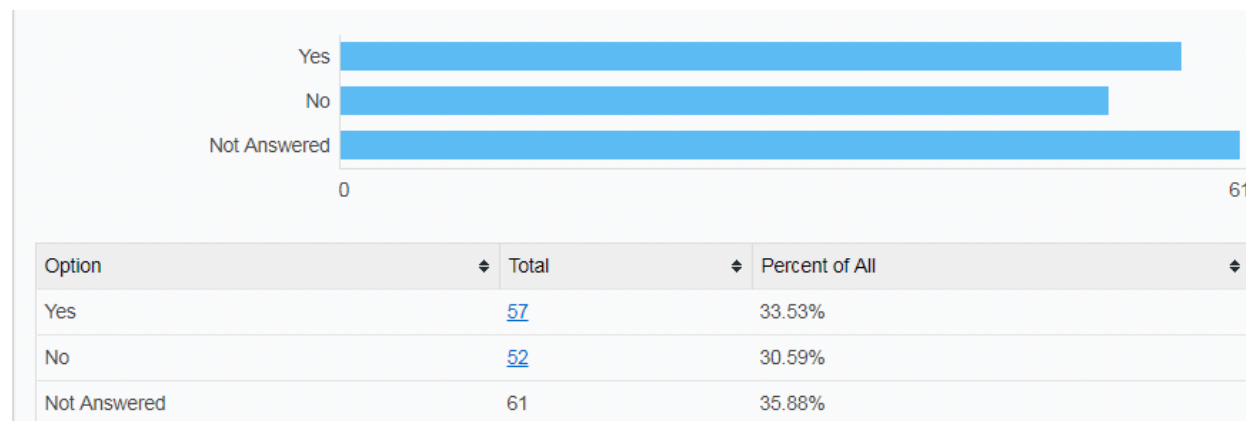
Those in favour pointed to simplicity and fairness.

Others felt that the following should be exempt: redevelopment of existing properties, extensions, small domestic development, starter businesses, self builds.

Some felt that different rates should apply to different types of development e.g. residential/retail/schools and for greenfield as oppose to brownfield.

It was also suggested that such a scheme was only appropriate for major housing or industrial development.

Q48 Do you think that exemptions from the CIL should apply to certain areas to incentivise development?



No clear view in favour or against was received in respect of this question with approximately a third in favour, a third against and a third not answering (33% - 57 saying yes; 30% - 52 saying no; and 36% - 62 people not answering).

The views against such an idea expressed concern about encouraging sterile developments, being not aware of anywhere that would benefit from this. The need to be equal, fair and transparent about who allowed the exemptions -officers could discriminate and therefore it could be open to abuse. It could result in bargaining where lawyers would become richer.

In favour it was suggested that it could be used to establish start up areas to encourage growth and it could be used to assist development of brownfield sites. Exemptions could be made for development that would create jobs. A system could be tailored for particular schemes for instance where infrastructure had been provided up front.

It was also suggested that any scheme should have community input and that areas should be set out in area plans to enable a degree of clarity.

Q49 What type of projects should the income generated by the CIL fund?

A variety of type of project were put forward including; schools, community halls, playing fields, new roads, water and sewage treatment plants, electrical or telecoms infrastructure, allotments, cultural facilities, leisure facilities, footpaths/cycle ways, charity projects, youth training, Queen's pier, doctors' surgeries, compulsory purchase of brownfield sites, landscaping maintenance, restoration of publically owned historic buildings, waterways, real time bus stops, public art, flood alleviation, WiFi, biodiversity gains and green infrastructure.

It was suggested that the ideas should be generated by the local authorities. Also that projects should only be carried out where they were accompanied by a robust process of infrastructure planning.

Q50 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about how new developments could support the needs of the community?

New developments should take into account the need for small shops, childcare facilities, school places, medical facilities, community uses, sewerage and highway improvements.

Consideration should be given to measures which could be introduced to assist reducing loneliness for the elderly. More 2 bed properties are required to incentivise young people to move to or stay on the Island; we need good affordable.

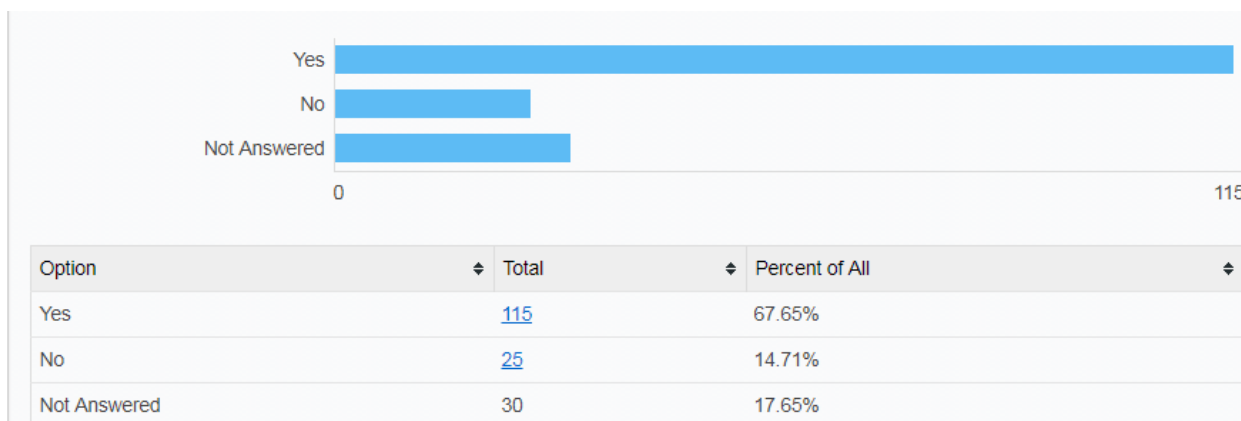
We need to link infrastructure and developments to leisure strategies and think long term in respect of the size of the main arteries into and out of Douglas.

The question should be asked at the local level and then input into area plans.

This could be achieved by positive planning documents including those that assist with sustainable development, focussing on people, ecology and so on.

Retail, leisure and entertainment destinations

Q51 Should Government increase Permitted Development rights to allow greater flexibility for changes of use within town centres?



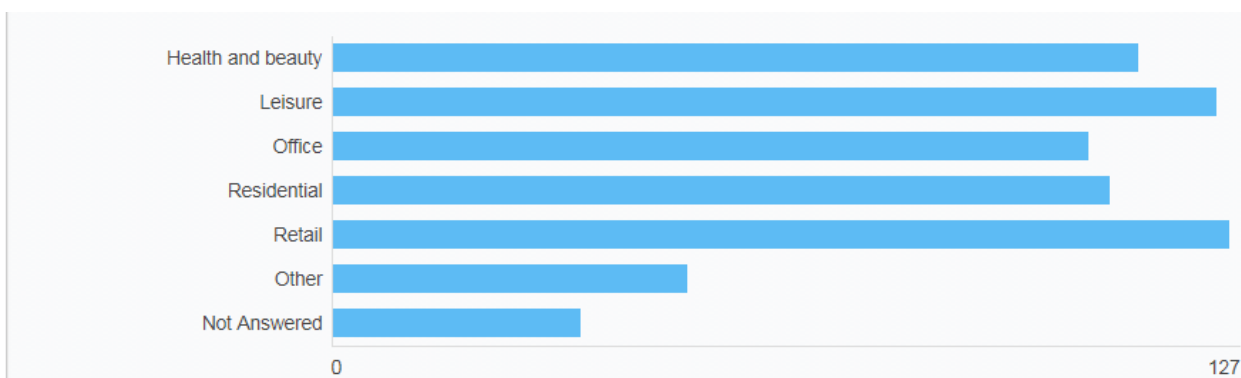
There was a high level of support for increasing permitted development rights for changes of use in town centres with 115 people 67% of respondents agreeing, and only 25 respondents 15% saying no. 18% chose not to vote.

Comments were that it would improve flexibility and that it would have economic benefits with no environmental impact. Popular views included that residential use should be encouraged, but only on upper floors. Other comments were that there are enough coffee shops and that retail presence should not be undermined.

Caution was expressed in terms of protecting areas/buildings that are of community asset to prevent them being lost to a higher value use.

Temporary exhibitions/fairs etc. should be included.

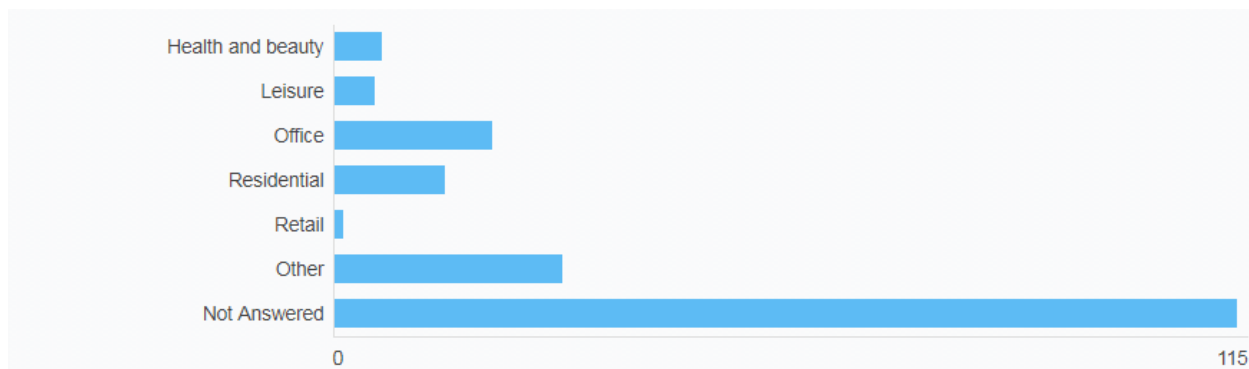
Q52 What types of use would you like to see in town centres?



There was a high level of support (over 60%) for all of the types suggested

In addition respondents would like to see the introduction of arts and culture, space for small businesses, workshops and craft shops which may help encourage tourism, open spaces, community areas, places for people to wander – walkways, tourist accommodation, pop up shops, artist studios, cash machines and music venues.

Q53 What types of use would you not like to see in town centres?



There were few categories of use that people did not want to see in town centres, but these were industrial uses, large scale goods (washing machines – cars), betting shops, tattooists, nightclubs, anything polluting and empty buildings.

Q54 What else would you like to tell us regarding how to rejuvenate our town centres and make them fit for tomorrow's needs?

The responses to this were also wide ranging although many responses highlighted the need for improved public realm, stating that regeneration schemes seemed to be successful. The ideas in the master plan were seen as good. The importance of good outdoor space for events and temporary attractions e.g. markets, funfairs, ice rinks, concerts was highlighted such as those at Liverpool's Waterfront and Belfast's Custom House Square. Similarly the creation of a place for people to experience, which could provide space for fountains, trees, play areas, kids 'jungle gym', climbing walls and so on. Property owners should be encouraged to maintain their property to a high standard including regular painting, active window displays/removal of stickers/posters and dealing with the derelict sites. The Manx character should be retained. It was recommended that improvements should be made to the Promenade and Stand Street should be enclosed (with Perspex).

Other suggestions included more use of upper floors for housing or restaurants and having rate reductions for new businesses/entrepreneurs; encourage fresh food outlets and outdoor eateries and artisan food; better disabled facilities and WIFI.

Some felt that Douglas town centre was doing well, better than some other high streets, an improvement from the 1970s and getting better year on year. Others commented that the policy not to allow out of town retail except for bulky goods should continue.

In terms of transport and access, respondents suggested the implementation of a parking strategy for different users such as a 'nip and go' scheme; browsing, long stay etc. There should be more and wider parking spaces, with a change to parking restrictions in office areas on a Saturday when office workers were not in. Thinking to the future – monorails and improved cycle paths and cycle parking should be considered.

Final Thoughts

Q55 Is there anything that we've missed?

This question was answered by 84% of those that took part in the consultation. The question was included to allow any other issues to be captured. It attracted a wide range of ideas and views including

- Increase Permitted Development to reduce the number of planning applications.
- Make any changes that arise from the Review quickly to avoid uncertainty.
- Do not stray from policies.
- Allow greater flexibility.
- Be careful about what development is encouraged outside urban areas.
- Use Social Media more to explain planning matters.
- Keep the system simple and 'at scale', appropriate to the Isle of Man.
- Keep the Island as it is – the 'do nothing' concept.
- Focus on brownfield sites first.
- Ensure fairness, transparency and democracy.
- Remove power for Ministers to overturn inspector's recommendations – often in conjunction with the 'do nothing' concept.
- Do not simply copy planning systems from other jurisdictions.
- Have a bold vision for the Island.
- Improve public engagement and consultation.
- Enforce conditions of planning approvals.
- Provide the planning system with more resources.
- Ensure an effective building registration system.
- Provide clear guidance.
- Use on-line services to make the process faster and more transparent.
- Be strict about the standard of planning applications.
- Clarify what 'Over-riding National Need' means.
- Consider flooding risk.