

# COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED REGENERATION OF OLIVER BOND HOUSE

*Insights and findings from a unique community  
information sharing, and consultation process  
in relation to the proposed regeneration of  
Oliver Bond House*

**October 2020 – January 2021**

*This consultation was delivered by  
Robert Emmet Community Development Project*

## Foreword

The proposed regeneration of Oliver Bond House is a significant project with genuine potential to improve the welfare of the Oliver Bond House community and end a cycle of poverty and social disadvantage that has affected the complex for decades.

The need for physical regeneration is starkly apparent by taking a walk through the flats or making a (pre covid!) visit to the homes of one of it's residents. There is an obvious lack of suitable resources- play areas, community centre, shared spaces- for the population of the complex and the complexes small and poorly insulated households are affected by widespread dampness which impact on the health and dignity of residents. These structural shortcomings have been particularly telling over the past twelve months.

Oliver Bond House is not the only inner city housing complex that is due to undergo or has undergone comprehensive regeneration in recent years. The project is part of a wider course of regeneration being taken by the Government of Ireland across the South West Inner City to tackle 'estate decline' and raise the horizons of the entire SWIC area. The proposed regeneration project will also be complemented by a number of improvement projects in the area- the establishment of a new community park on Bridgefoot Street, the development of fifty seven new social housing units on Bonham Street and the potential development of a Creative Community Campus across two locations in the vicinity of Oliver Bond House.

While other regeneration projects- Teresa's Gardens and Dolphin House- have been underway for a number of years the prospect of a comprehensive regeneration for Oliver Bond House has only become apparent within the past twelve months. During this period Dublin City Council have developed draft plans for the proposed works and established a clinic for Oliver Bond House residents in local community centre Robert Emmet CDP, An Taoiseach Michael Martin has visited Oliver Bond House and publically declared his support for the project and a number of local elected representatives have expressed their willingness to advocate for the local community to ensure that the project is properly resourced and completed in a timely manner. Most importantly of all Oliver Bond House residents have expressed overwhelming support for the project and formed a strong residents group to effectively participate in appropriate regeneration processes.

The following document is the account of a community consultation on the proposed regeneration of Oliver Bond House delivered by Robert Emmet CDP which took place between October 2020 and January 2021. It follows an earlier 2019 consultation delivered

by Peter Dorman of Community Action Network which led to the development of the plans currently being considered.

As a community development project located in the shadows of Oliver Bond House it is an honour and privilege for Robert Emmet CDP to deliver this piece of work. I hope it is of some use in identifying the needs of this historic inner city community and ensuring the opportunity of regeneration is fully realised to safeguard these needs into the future.

**Austin Campbell**

**Executive Director**

**Robert Emmet Community Development Project**

## ***Contents Page***

## Executive Summary

The community consultation aspect of the proposed regeneration of Oliver Bond House offers a considerable opportunity to engage a historic inner city community in important decisions regarding its future.

With this in mind Robert Emmet CDP have taken every effort to ensure that the consultation net has been cast as wide as possible, and in as many way as possible, to allow community members ample opportunities to share their thoughts on the proposed regeneration. The primary purpose of the consultation project is to derive community feedback on the proposed plans for the physical regeneration of Oliver Bond House. A secondary purpose is to display the appetite of the community for appropriate physical and social regeneration of Oliver Bond House as well as it's ability to participate in appropriate regeneration structures and consultative bodies- such as a Regeneration Board- which at the time of writing have not yet been established.

This consultation process was partially co-designed with the Oliver Bond House community to ensure that it was appropriate, accessible, and, ultimately, useful. The process consisted of three main parts:



**Model of Plans:** Robert Emmet CDP hosted, and invited feedback on, the model of proposed Oliver Bond House regeneration plans in our premises on 3 Usher Street from October 12<sup>th</sup> until December 11<sup>th</sup>

There were 270 visits to view the plans.



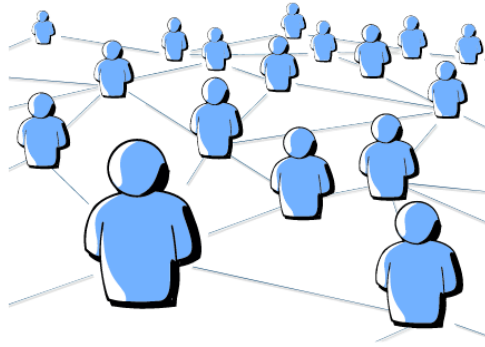
**Seminars:** Robert Emmet CDP facilitated two online seminars to provide a platform for community members to access and question DCC senior staff and architects involved in the project.

53 individuals attended live seminars and 426 watched these back retrospectively.



**Surveys:** Robert Emmet CDP distributed regeneration surveys to all 394 households in the complex.

54 households completed and returned surveys.



**Total Number of Engagements with  
Consultation Process: 803**

The number of 803 total engagements with the process is surprisingly high given that the consultation took place in the context of a public health pandemic. The high number is somewhat explained by the obvious overlap between elements of the consultation –a number of people took part in all three aspects of the consultation process so the number of people who engaged with the process is lower than the total number of engagements. The high number is also explained by the appetite of the Oliver Bond House community for constructive regeneration and offers an indication of the community’s willingness to engage in appropriate processes related to that regeneration.





## Oliver Bond House- An Estate in Decline

Oliver Bond House, one of Dublin's most famous and largest flat complexes is 84 years old, more than twice the age that Oliver Bond, the man after whom it was named, ever reached.

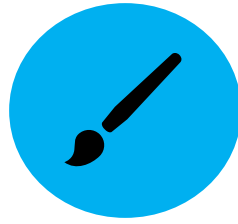
Built in 1936, the complex is one of Ireland's largest social housing estates consisting of sixteen separate blocks of flats and three houses- a total of 394 households built over 2.847 hectares with capacity to support a population of 1,287 people.

The establishment of such a large and well appointed social housing complex was a response to the dire slums in the area and the physical manifestation of a philosophy and culture around public housing and service provision synonymous with a young and enthusiastic country that cared for its people. The buildings themselves are monuments to their architect, Herbert Simms, the man who designed them along with 17,000 other social housing units across Dublin before dying in an untimely manner in 1948.

However while the two men synonymous with the complex, Bond and Simms, died in the prime of their youth the complex has lived well beyond its best years. If the current regeneration project is to be successful an understanding of and appreciation for the reasons of this decline are important. The four main factors generally considered to be responsible for 'estate decline' are explored below in the context of Oliver Bond House.







## **Design:**

Research on the built environment (Newman 1972, Coleman 1990) indicate that the following aspects of estate design are most likely to cause problems: multi story dwellings without appropriate access to higher floors, very large complexes, large open spaces and areas shielded from public view.

Oliver Bond House has at least three of the above design points. In addition to these Oliver Bond House is chronically underserved by appropriate recreation areas for children and young adults and underserved by appropriate parking, rubbish disposal facilities and shared spaces. The porous nature of the complex has also been identified as a potential contributory factor to the high level of anti social behaviour that takes place in the complex.

The size of households- an average two bedroom flat in the complex is 48sqm compared to a new build standard of 70sqm for a two bed flat- means that a majority of families in the complex are 'under housed'. The age of the flats and corresponding issues such as dampness and non-dependable services cause fissures in the day to day functionality of households and impact on the physical and mental health, as well as the dignity, of residents.



## **Housing Management Factors:**

Anne Power, an academic who has extensively studied housing issues, and especially estate decline, outlines housing management and the relationship between tenants and landlords as another potential contributing factor to estate decline.

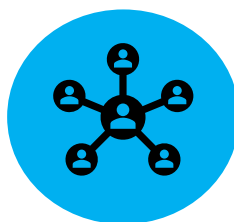
Power criticises the fragmentation of housing services across several departments, the centralisation of services in a head office and the lack of estate based services all of which contribute to a breakdown in the tenant landlord relationship.

Residents of Oliver Bond House consistently report frustrations regarding their relationship with DCC as outlined by Power. While the majority of these frustrations are historic (and perhaps best highlighted by the apparent lack of consultation regarding an earlier regeneration project in the complex) a number are persistent and ongoing and relate to the disparate nature of DCC services to tenants. A particular issue is with maintenance- both the poor state of the complex generally and the perceived unresponsiveness to issues reported by individual households- as well as the actual process of communicating maintenance issues.

These frustrations lead to a breakdown of regular communication pathways between residents and DCC as was evident with the rodent situation in 2020; residents lack of trust in DCC led to them 'going to the media' to get something done.



The disconnectedness of services provided to tenants has a direct impact on the maintenance and upkeep of the complex while the perceived indifference of DCC staff leads to a widespread sense of hopelessness among residents. Both of these have contributed to 'estate decline' in Oliver Bond House.



## Social Factors:

Stigma and anti-social behaviour are widely understood to precipitate estate decline. Research conducted by Dean and Hastings (2000) on a number of social housing estates in the UK indicates that estates that suffer from a poor public image are more likely to require regeneration measures and be more difficult to regenerate.

The case of stigma and anti social behaviour precipitating 'estate decline' was highlighted by a 'rave' party which took place in Oliver Bond House in 2020 in contravention of public health guidelines. A small number of residents, or relations of residents, organised a party which was attended by approximately 150 people- the vast majority of whom came from outside the complex. Residents reported contacting the Gardai on dozens of occasions throughout the night to break up the party but the limited response of An Garda meant that the party continued until 06.00. Media reporting initially indicated the culpability of the whole complex leading to widespread slander and abuse from the general public towards residents of the complex across social media. The social profiling of the complex is readily evident in the search results that 'Oliver Bond House' will return compared to a similar online searches for other housing developments. An ongoing cycle of anti social behaviour, stigmatisation, lowering of morale, and sense of despondency are other key contributory factors to 'estate decline' in Oliver Bond House.



Attention to addressing negative image and stigma has played an important part in some regeneration projects in Ireland, for example Ballymun in Dublin and Moyross in Limerick. The regeneration of Dolphin House and Teresa's Gardens which are currently underway also involve a considered approach towards social factors including the early establishment of a regeneration board and the appointment of appropriate regeneration workers.

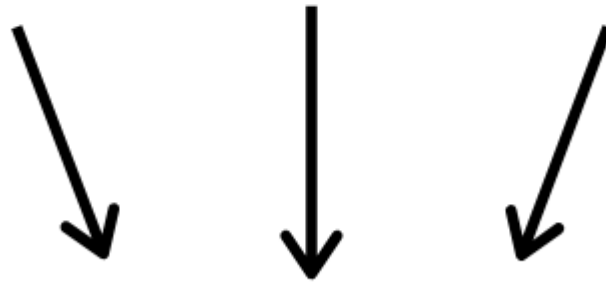
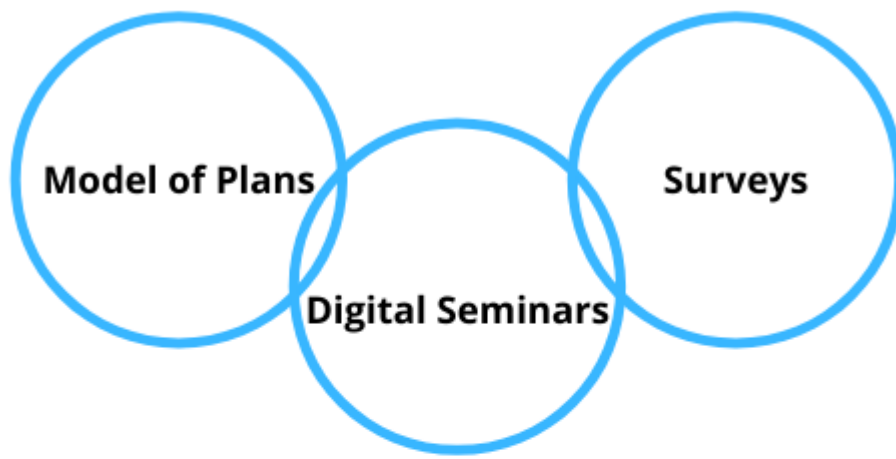


## **Economic Factors:**

Research on the economic drivers of estate decline highlight a variety of contributing factors too great to draw out in any depth here. Statistics available from the 2016 census include a 50% rate of adult male unemployment rate, a 76% lone parent family rate and a 44% proportion of population with primary education only in Oliver Bond House. These statistics, and a host of similar statistics indicate far higher levels of deprivation than the national average and indicate the requirement for a comprehensive physical *and* social regeneration of Oliver Bond House.

Only one of the four points associated with estate decline- the design of the complex- is currently being considered by DCC for regeneration. Best practice suggests that all four aspects need to be considered to realise the full potential of this regeneration project. If this does not happen all of the social and economic issues that exist for the Oliver Bond Community will continue unabated into the future.





**Consultation Methodology**



# Consultation Methodology

A comprehensive consultation and engagement plan was established to reach as great a number of Oliver Bond House residents as possible, using a range of channels and formats. As the consultation process evolved, the consultation and engagement plan also developed. This resulted in the following consultation activities.



## Model of Plans

Robert Emmet CDP hosted the model of proposed Oliver Bond House regeneration plans in our premises on 3 Usher Street from October 12<sup>th</sup> until December 11<sup>th</sup>. Residents were invited to view and provide feedback on the model which would be recorded and included in a consultation report.

The model received approximately 270 visits during this two month period. Visits averaged out over the period at seven visits per day, five days per week with an average visit lasting ten minutes. A vast number of comments and questions were received through this process- some comments received have been attached as an appendix and the main ones are explored in the body of the report.



## Digital Seminars

Robert Emmet CDP facilitated two online seminars to provide a platform for community members to access DCC senior staff and architects involved in the project.

These seminars were delivered via Zoom and streamed onto Facebook Live to ensure a professional and seamless delivery while also allowing as wide an access as possible to community members (community members were consulted beforehand and advised that

Facebook live was the preferred choice of platform for a seminar to be delivered on). The seminar was recorded and individuals who were not in a position to attend at the time had the facility to watch the session back afterwards.

The comments / questions that arose during these seminars have been attached as a separated appendix. 27 individuals attended the first seminar and 26 individuals attended the second seminar. Both seminars were viewed retrospectively by community members a total of 426 times.



## Surveys

Robert Emmet CDP distributed surveys (Appendix1) and a simple explanation of the proposed regeneration model to all 391 households in the complex. 54 surveys were completed and returned. While this number is quite low it is understandable given the larger public health risk and restrictions during the time that this consultation was delivered.

Some data from completed surveys has been collated and represented in graphs with. The remainder of the data is available in a raw form (Appendix 2) and an additional comments section is also attached (Appendix 3)

Delivering a community consultation during a public health pandemic presented a very obvious obstacle- it was not possible to physically engage with the community in any sort of effective way! It was not possible to deliver town hall style meetings, it was not possible to call door to door and provide assistance completing relevant surveys, it was not possible to consult directly with any of the relevant residents groups. It was not possible to do anything that we would normally do to deliver a consultation of this type. Communication between residents was also stymied by the impact of Covid-19- normal people could not gather to talk and build excitement about the prospect of regeneration or assess neighbour's opinion on the various proposed aspects of it.

Elements of the consultation which could be delivered online such as the digital seminar faced the obstacle of digital literacy. Not everyone is comfortable with or has capacity to attend and input into online seminars.

In order to ensure that the consultation was located in a wider context, background research was also undertaken, including a profile of the community, the history of the community and what has happened, and is happening, in other local regeneration projects such as St. Teresa's Gardens and Dolphin House. This involved:

- Developing a demographic profile of the community
- Researching to provide a brief history of regeneration
- Collating observations on what has failed and what has worked in other areas in order to understand what should be included in this consultation.



## Model of Proposed Plans

Robert Emmet CDP hosted the model of proposed regeneration plans from October 12<sup>th</sup> until December 11<sup>th</sup> inviting comments and feedback on the plans for inclusion in this final consultation report. The model received approximately 270 visits during this time. An amount of these visits were repeat visits by actively interested community members so it is likely that the number of unique visitors was 220. Visits averaged out over the two month period at seven visits per day, five days per week with an average visit lasting ten minutes. The total time spent delivering this element of the consultation is forty five hours.

Individuals who viewed the plans were provided with a number of documents to assist understanding- a simplified explanation of the plans document (appendix), a document provided by DCC outlining optional variations to the proposed plans and architectural drawings of both the precinct improvement plans and potential amalgamation plans. Residents were facilitated by a member of Robert Emmet CDP staff when viewing the model and also invited to provide feedback to be included in this consultation report.

The primary purpose of this element of the consultation was to gather data to be included in the consultation report. A secondary purpose was to acclimatise residents to the idea of regeneration and consultation in a safe and friendly space. A tertiary purpose was to facilitate community input and co-design of the rest of the consultation process to ensure that this was as accessible and appropriate for the Oliver Bond House community as possible.

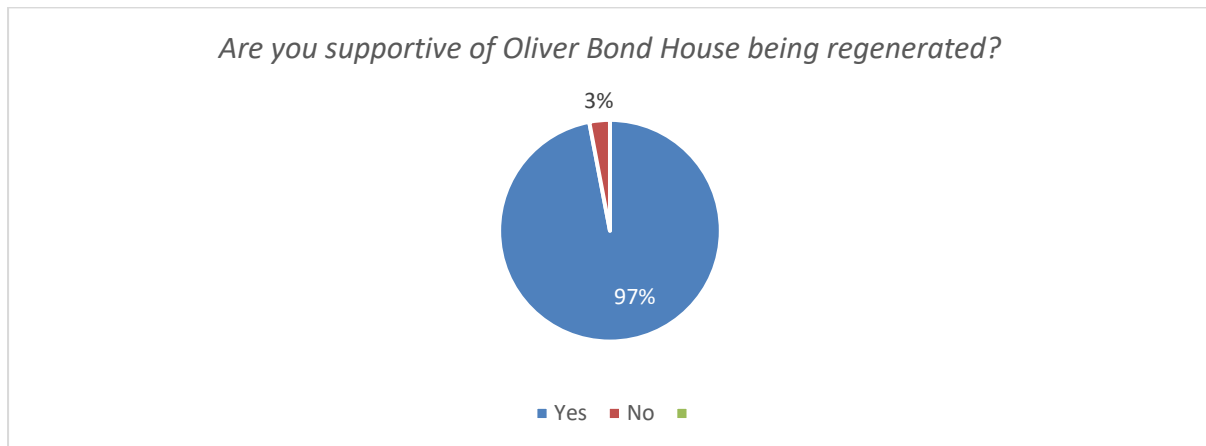
Residents were asked three general questions in relation to the plans at this stage of the regeneration. Everyone who viewed the plans was advised that there would be additional elements of the consultation involving more structured and data driven feedback mechanisms. The questions asked at this point were:

1. Are you supportive of the proposed regeneration of Oliver Bond House?
2. Do you have any issues or concerns related to anything that appears or does not appear in the plans?
3. Any additional comments?

Approximately three quarters of residents who viewed the model answered questions. One quarter advised they just wanted to have a look and would provide feedback at a later stage of the consultation process.

## Question 1

### Are you supportive of Oliver Bond House being regenerated?



An overwhelming 97% of 164 respondents advised that they were supportive of Oliver Bond House being regenerated.

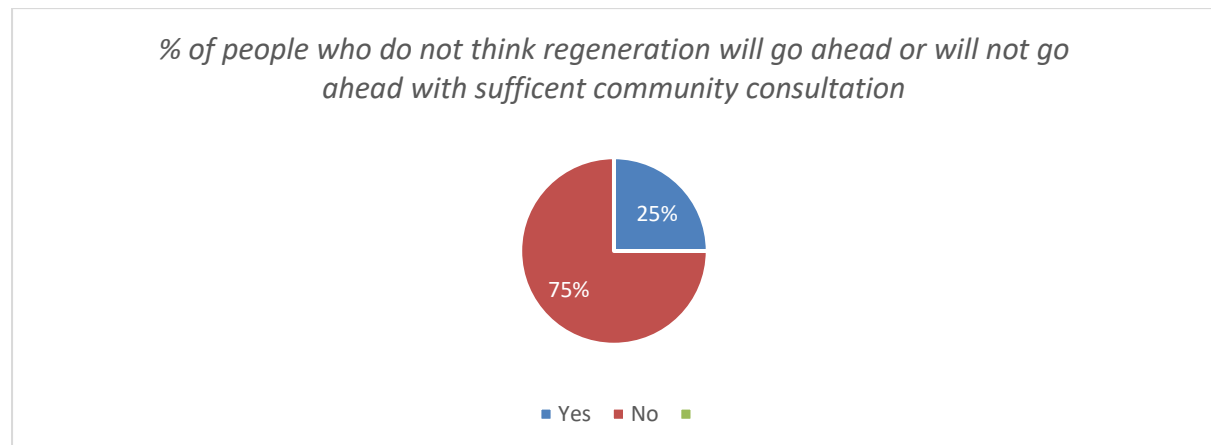
Five residents, or 3% of total respondents, expressed that they were not supportive of the amalgamation aspect of the proposed regeneration. Three individuals who expressed this point of view were middle aged or older and cited the length and the disruption of construction works- estimated to last ten to fifteen years- as the reason for giving this opinion. Two individuals who expressed this point of view cited the amount of money which they had invested in their own home over the years as the reason they did not support the idea of amalgamation.

Two of the five respondents who answered no to this question also expressed an interest in being decanted to a property outside the complex and not returning when work is completed while the three other 'no' respondents said that they did not wish to leave the complex.

97% of respondents are supportive of the idea of regeneration. One third of respondents who answered yes did not expand on their answer and expressed that they simply wanted to view the model or advised that they intended to take part at another stage of the consultation process.

Unprompted, three quarters of respondents expressed doubts that the regeneration process would actually proceed, or, if it did proceed, that community input would be duly

considered. Respondents cited a historic lack of trust in DCC related to perceived inattentiveness to maintenance issues and the lack of consultation around an earlier regeneration project which took place in Oliver Bond House in the 1990's as the reason for this doubt.



## Question 2

### **Do you have any issues or concerns related to anything that appears or does not appear in the plans?**

One third of residents who viewed the model either responded generally that the model looked good or did not respond to this question and advised they just wanted to view the model and that they would provide input at a later point in the consultation process.

The one to one nature of this part of the consultation may have been daunting for individuals who had not contributed to a consultation process before. The wider public health context is another likely contributory factor for such a high number of unsubstantive answers.

Over one hundred issues and concerns were cited- a select number of these have been distilled down into the five most frequent comments below.

- ***“I’m happy with the proposed design”***

A number of people advised they were simply happy with the design as it appears and believed that DCC appear to be serious about the idea of regenerating Oliver Bond House. The lack of specificity of this answer is possibly somewhat related to

the lack of capacity of respondents to comprehend architectural model and drawings.

- ***“How do I know I will be able to go back to my own flat?”***

The second most common comment came from respondents concerned that they would not be in a position to go back to their own flat. Individuals cited that they would require a very definite undertaking from DCC regarding their right to return to the same flat as well as a detailed description of the ‘decanting’ process before they would engage or sign a ‘letter of comfort’ - (respondents generally understood that due to an amalgamation process they might not be returning to the same front door but their regenerated flat would be in the same general space).

It would appear that the regeneration process would benefit from very clear instruction provided by DCC in relation to the de and re-tenanting process.

- ***“How are flats being extended if the outside of the buildings are protected and can’t be touched. Will there be less flats?”***

The third most common comment was in relation to the general amalgamation process. It would appear that this question was related to the lack of information about the amalgamation process that appeared in plans provided- three architectural drawings of proposed reconfiguring of L, M and N blocks. There was also widespread concern that the community felt that it might be broken up and spread to disparate locations with limited options to return to the regenerated complex.

It would appear that the process would benefit from an additional survey being conducted to understand the proportion of Oliver Bon House residents who intend to move back to Oliver Bond House after the regeneration process is complete. This figure could be set against the expected number of housing units included in the regenerated complex to understand whether there will be capacity for everyone who wishes to return.

- ***“Are the flats being split up or not?”***

The fourth most commonly asked question was in relation to the subdivision of the flats. Respondents had a variety of strong opinions related to this point and it was not possible to derive any useable data. It appears that this is a very important issue to respondents. As such every effort should be made to offer additional clear information about potential subdivision potentially creating CGI images of what this could look like. To ensure the idea of subdivision has been duly considered and has a clear mandate it is also recommended that an additional survey on the issue with a required minimum level of participation is carried out.



- ***“What Community Centre /Football Pitch / Playground facilities will be in the regenerated flats?”***

The fifth most commonly asked question at was in relation to the facilities which will be included in the regenerated complex.

Respondents were mainly happy with the utilisation of space in relation to the community centre being installed ‘underground’ in front of the high blocks in the complex. Residents were mainly happy with the concept of there being a playground facility in each ‘neighbourhood’ of the flats so children could be sent out to play safely while being observed by their parents. There was a mixture of opinions in relation to the proposed location of the football pitch in the regenerated complex.

- **Question 3: Any Additional Comments**

***“Do you think it’s actually going to happen” / “When will it happen”.***

There was a clear disbelief and a sense of “we’ve seen it all before” expressed by a majority of respondents viewing the plans. This disbelief was made apparent by the comparative belief and excitement in the project generated by the unannounced arrival of company conducting a a Geo Survey on site over a number of days. Seeing is believing!

Five respondents also enquired about the plans for the three houses in the complex. Three of these respondents expressed concern that current houses might be demolished. Two respondents expressed the opinion that additional houses should be built during the regeneration as a useful way of breaking up the complex without fully subdividing it. No indication of what if any works would be conducted on houses in the complex was included in proposed regeneration plans.

DCC also provided an additional document (appendix 4) outlining optional variations to the proposed plans which appeared in the 3D model and architectural drawings. A number of copies of this document were made available to individuals viewing the model and drawings. Copies were also made available for collection from Robert Emmet CDP and emailed to a number of respondents to consider and respond to.

It is understood that this was an important document as it provided respondents with an immediately obvious option of choice to what was set out in the model and architectural drawings. However the options document which was provided consisted of a number of difficult to comprehend architectural drawings and was not in any way accessible to respondents. As a result there was no feedback on this important document.

It is worth considering creating another iteration of this document using CGI images (or even drawings) of proposed variations instead of architectural drawings. Each variation of plans would be offered as a multiple choice option in a new survey. This would ensure a data driven approach to decision making and a mandate for whatever decision is ultimately made.





Ireland's European Structural and  
Investment Funds Programmes  
2014-2020  
Co-funded by the Irish Government  
and the European Union



Riailtas na hÉireann -  
Government of Ireland



# Regeneration of Oliver Bond House COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

**Two hour long community consultations  
on the regeneration of Oliver Bond  
House will take place on:**

**Tuesday 15th December  
10am-11am and 7pm-8pm**

These consultations are an opportunity  
for Oliver Bond residents to attend  
presentations and ask questions from  
senior DCC personnel involved in the  
regeneration project.

This is your opportunity to have your say  
on the future of your community.

These consultations will take place  
online - links will be made available on  
the day via our social media.

## Chapter 2 – Online Seminar

Robert Emmet CDP facilitated two hour long online seminars on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The first session was delivered at 11am and the second session was delivered at 7pm to ensure that these were as accessible as possible to people leading busy lives. Seminars were advertised on Robert Emmet CDP social media, through posters erected in the complex and through Oliver Bond residents group and local sporting clubs.

The purpose of these sessions was to allow Oliver Bond residents to access DCC senior staff and architects involved in the project and ask questions directly.

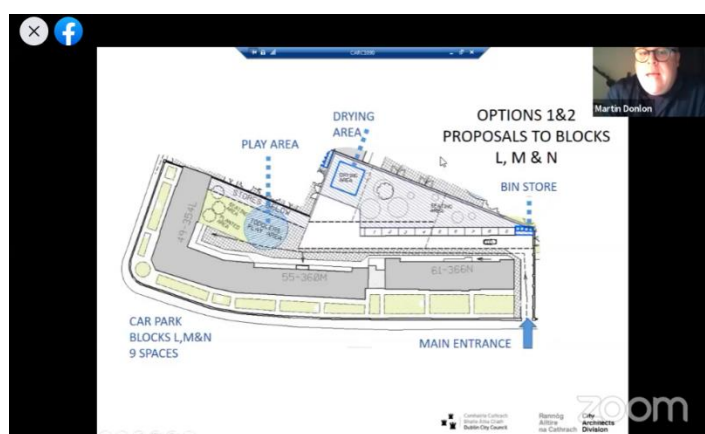
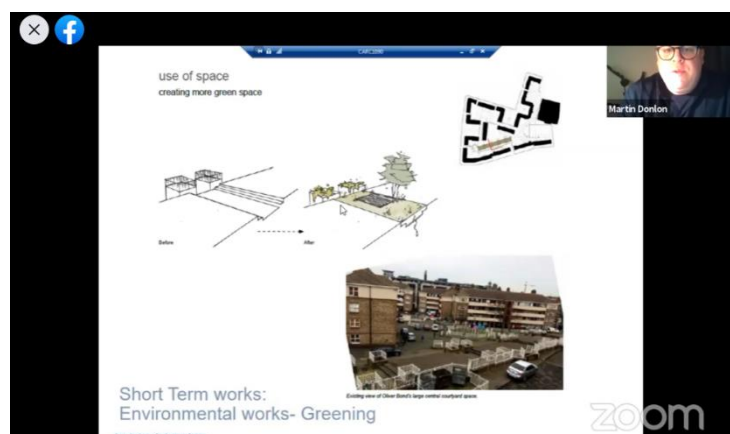
Oliver Bond House residents were surveyed prior to the delivery of the seminar to enquire what the most accessible digital platform for a seminar would be. The majority of respondents requested Facebook live. These seminars were delivered via Zoom and streamed onto Facebook Live to ensure that the process remained professional but also was very accessible for community members as it was delivered on a platform they felt comfortable with. 27 individuals attended the 11am seminar and 26 individuals attended the 7pm seminar.

The seminars were also recorded so individuals who were not in a position to attend had the facility to watch back afterwards and retrospectively share questions and comments. The seminars were watched back a total of 426 times.

The original 11am seminar can be viewed here <https://fb.watch/3ApETJeL7T/>

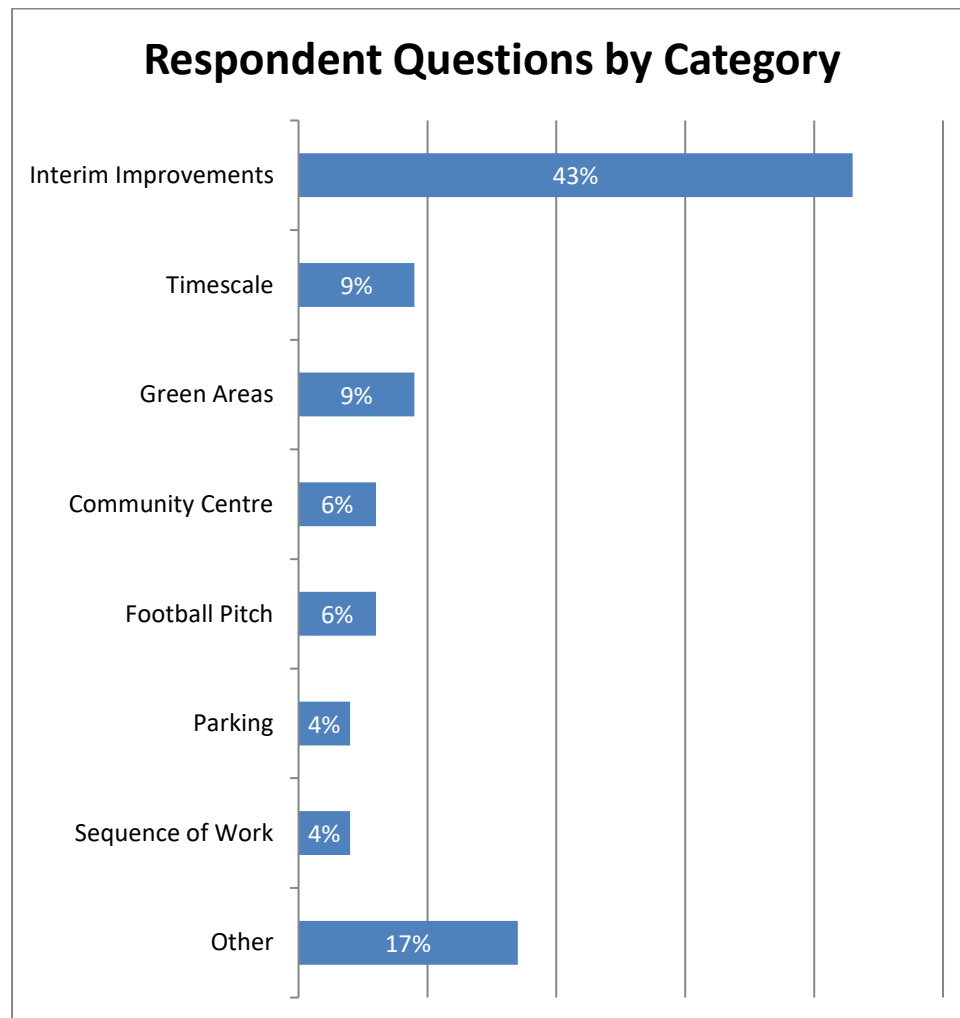
The original 7pm seminar can be viewed here <https://fb.watch/3ApI01uzg-/>

Attendees were invited to participate in the seminars by typing questions into a chat box on facebook live which a Robert Emmet CDP facilitator would then raise with DCC staff members delivering presentations. Thirty nine comments and questions were raised with DCC staff during the 11am seminar and twenty seven comments and questions were raised with DCC staff during the 7pm seminar in this manner. These were then collated down to forty seven questions and comments altogether, which have been attached (appendix5).





Questions / comments from respondents can be broken down into the following broad categories. These categories would appear to indicate the relative importance of different aspects of the regeneration project to this representative group of Oliver Bond House residents.



**Interim Improvements:** 43% of questions / comments were in relation to interim improvements or maintenance issues in the complex. The majority of these questions / comments revolved around dampness and condensation issues which respondents are experiencing.

**Timescale:** 9% of questions / comments asked related to the timescale within which the work would take place.

**Green Areas:** 9 % of questions / comments were related to the green areas in the proposed plans.

**Community Centre:** 6% of questions /comments related to the proposed community centre.

**Football Pitch:** 6% of questions / comments related to the proposed football pitch.

**Parking:** 4% of questions / comments related to proposed parking plans.

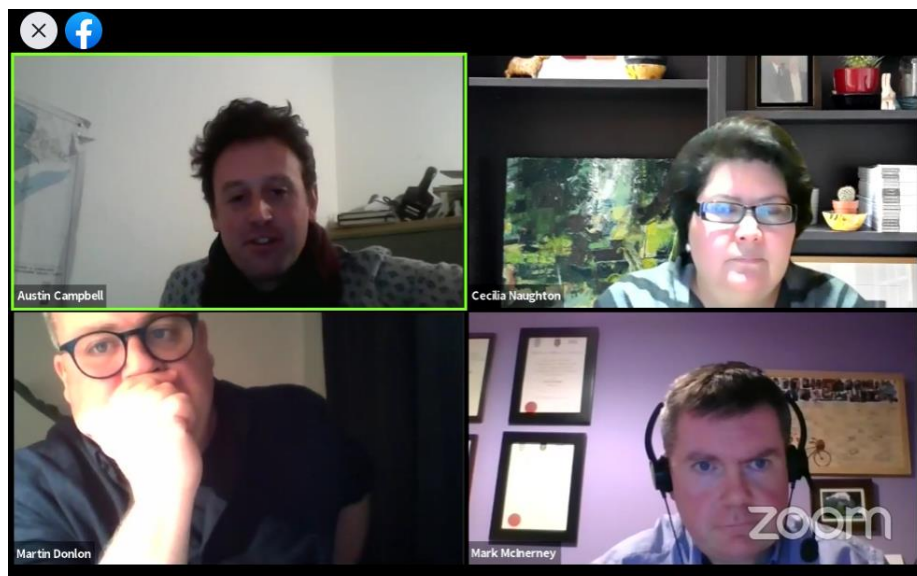
**Sequence of Work:** 4% of questions / comments related to the sequence in which work on blocks would be completed

**General:** 17% of questions / comments related to general points. A question / comment was categorised by general if it was raised by a single respondent and not re-iterated or supported by any other attendee.

Respondents clear prioritisation of interim improvements and appropriate maintenance was the most significant outcome of the seminar sessions. Respondent's comments / questions also indicate how damaging the perceived DCC inattentiveness to maintenance issues over the years has been to the relationship with Oliver Bond House residents.

Another clear outcome of the seminars was the positive impact the sessions had on the relationship between senior DCC personnel and Oliver Bond House residents. The seminars provided an opportunity for residents to connect with DCC and build a relationship with DCC personnel involved in the regeneration project. It also provided an opportunity for DCC architects to realise the human significance of their work as well as the willingness of the Oliver Bond House community to engage in appropriate consultative processes related to that work. DCC senior architect Cecelia Naughton took advantage of this opportunity to advise, dependent on Covid restrictions, her availability to meet with small groups of Oliver Bond residents to explore localised variations of plans within the complex. This opportunity was well received by respondents. The seminars also provided an opportunity for Estate Manager Mark McInerney to advertise a clinic for Oliver Bond House residents being delivered in Robert Emmet CDP every Tuesday morning.

Following the delivery of the seminars a number of attendees contacted Robert Emmet CDP facilitators to express gratitude for arranging this interface with DCC architects and to advise they felt the events were a success. A number of individuals expressed the belief that direct interaction between DCC personnel and Oliver Bond House residents was an indicator that DCC were serious about the regeneration project.





## Covid-19 Community Wellbeing and Services Required Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather data so Robert Emmet CDP as an organisation can understand what sort of programmes and support our community and partners would like us to deliver over the next three years. All of the data that is generated will be considered and collated to form a three year strategy document for the organisation which will be published in December 2020. This document will outline what the organisation wishes to achieve in the 2021- 2023 period. All the data shared in this survey is completely anonymous. Many thanks for taking part and making your voice heard. This survey will take approximately five minutes to complete

### 1) Do you have access to the following?

- ☐ Computer
- ☐ Smartphone
- ☐ Both of the above
- ☐ Neither of the above

### 2) Would you feel comfortable using a smartphone or computer to engage in classes online?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No, please state why

### 3) Which social media site do you use most frequently?

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Other, please state

### 4) What is your preferred method of contact?

- ☐ Phone Call
- ☐ Text
- ☐ Whatsapp
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Other, please state

### 5) How are you dealing with Covid-19 restrictions?

Very badly    ☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5    Very well

### 6) What are you finding the most challenging part of the current situation?

- ☐ Boredom
- ☐ Fear
- ☐ Loneliness
- ☐ Anxiety
- ☐ Other, please state

### 7) How could Robert Emmet CDP help you through this period?

- ☐ More regular contact
- ☐ More classes
- ☐ Other, please state

### 8) Other than in person classes what method of classes interest you?

- ☐ Classes through Zoom
- ☐ Classes through posted material
- ☐ Other, please state

### 9) What type of classes would you like Robert Emmet CDP to run?

- ☐ Art and Craft
- ☐ Exercise
- ☐ Cooking
- ☐ Mindfulness
- ☐ Other, please state



## General Community Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather data so Robert Emmet CDP as an organisation can understand what sort of programmes and support our community and partners would like us to deliver over the next three years. All of the data that is generated will be considered and collated to form a three year strategy document for the organisation which will be published in December 2020. This document will outline what the organisation wishes to achieve in the 2021- 2023 period. All the data shared in this survey is completely anonymous. Many thanks for taking part and making your voice heard. This survey will take approximately five minutes to complete

### 1) Do you (or your child) attend any service provided by Robert Emmet CDP?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### 2) If yes, what service do you attend and how do you find it?

### 3) If you do not attend a service can you please provide the reason why?

- ☐ I didn't know it was there
- ☐ It's not welcoming
- ☐ I don't know what activities they run
- ☐ No suitable activities for me
- ☐ Opening hours (9am - 5pm) are not accessible
- ☐ Condition of the facilities

### 4) Which services would you like to see Robert Emmet CDP provide?

- ☐ Meeting Space
- ☐ Computer Facilities / Training
- ☐ Activities for young people
- ☐ Activities for older people
- ☐ Exercise / Mindfulness Class
- ☐ Help getting Jobs
- ☐ Help with Social Welfare and Housing
- ☐ Other, please state:

### 5) Are you interested in volunteering with Robert Emmet CDP and if so what area would you like to volunteer in?

- ☐ Running an Activity
- ☐ Visiting vulnerable people
- ☐ Creating a newsletter
- ☐ Other, please state

### 6) What do you think are the main opportunities for the area in the next three years?

- ☐ Regeneration of Oliver Bond House
- ☐ Employment Opportunities related to Dublin 8 construction projects
- ☐ Education opportunities
- ☐ Development of Bridgefoot Street Park and other potential environment projects
- ☐ There are no obvious opportunities
- ☐ Other, please state:

### 7) What are the main issues that concern you about where you live?

- ☐ Not enough opportunity for community to come together
- ☐ Lack of services for older people
- ☐ Lack of services for younger people
- ☐ Lack of access to green space
- ☐ Lack of health / fitness activities
- ☐ Crime / Violence
- ☐ No opportunities for training / improving skills
- ☐ Not enough for young people to do
- ☐ High Unemployment
- ☐ Drug related issues
- ☐ Development of hotels and student accommodation
- ☐ Disproportionate number of emergency services in area
- ☐ Lack of suitable housing
- ☐ Other:

## General Community Survey

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☐ Help with Social Welfare and Housing  
☐ Other, please state:

## Survey Snippets



## Covid-19 Community Wellbeing and Services Required Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather data so Robert Emmet CDP as an organisation can understand what sort of programmes and support our community and partners would like us to deliver over the next three years. All of the data that is generated will be considered and collated to form a three year strategy document for the organisation which will be published in December 2020. This document will outline what the organisation wishes to achieve in the 2021- 2023 period. All the data shared in this survey is completely anonymous. Many thanks for taking part and making your voice heard. This survey will take approximately five minutes to complete

1) Do you have access to the following?

- ☐ Computer  
☐ Smartphone  
☐ Both of the above  
☐ Neither of the above

2) Would you feel comfortable using a smartphone or computer to engage in classes online?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No, please state why

.....

3) Which social media site do you use most frequently?

- ☐ Facebook  
☐ Twitter  
☐ Instagram  
☐ Other, please state

.....

4) What is your preferred method of contact?

- ☐ Phone Call  
☐ Text  
☐ Whatsapp  
☐ Email  
☐ Other, please state



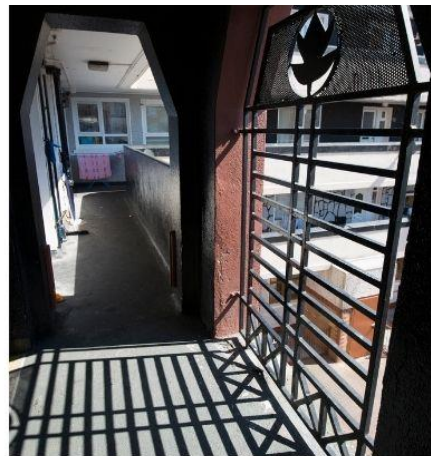
## Chapter 3- Surveys

Robert Emmet CDP distributed surveys to all 394 households in the complex in order to allow for an anonymous and data driven aspect to the consultation process. Surveys were fourteen pages long and consisted of a simplified explanation of the planned model and process as well as seventeen simple multiple choice questions. These multiple choice questions were based around the most frequently asked questions and most frequently expressed concerns which arose during the first two elements of the consultation process.

Fifty four surveys were completed and returned by residents in total. While this number is quite low in relation to the number of overall households in the complex it is understandable given the larger public health context and very quick turn around time on this aspect of the consultation. Of the fifty four surveys which were completed and returned fifty three were completed and returned by hand and one was completed over the phone.

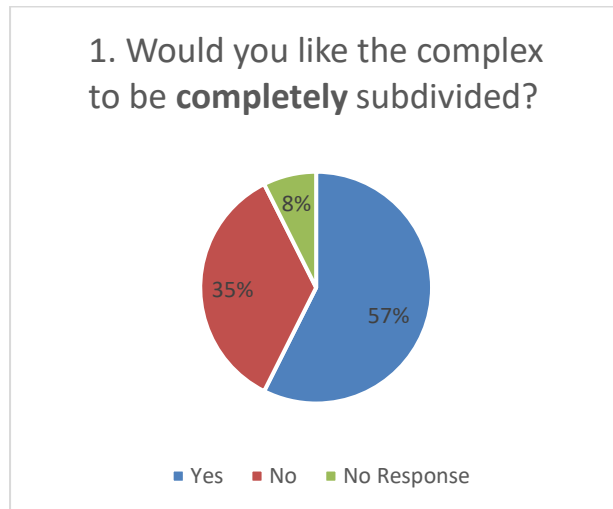
The primary purpose of the survey was to create data indicating residents preferences for various aspects of the proposed regeneration plans. The secondary purpose was to provide respondents an anonymous space to provide feedback and additional comments without having to defend their position or enter into debate with other residents.

The importance of these surveys to the overall consultation process was communicated by the Oliver Bond Residents Group and sporting groups operating in the complex and also advertised on Robert Emmet CDP social media. Due to Covid-19 health concerns and restrictions it was not possible to assist residents with completing surveys door to door as had originally been the plan. This obstacle was always going to result in a far lower completion rate of surveys. Waiting in vain for incidences of Covid-19 to lower to the point where it was safe to complete surveys door to door also slowed down the entire consultation process for a number of weeks. In place of providing assistance with completing surveys face to face a facility was established where residents could be assisted with completing surveys over the phone.



**Robert Emmet CDP distributed surveys to all 394 households in the complex**

The survey consisted of seventeen questions in total- raw data from all seventeen of these questions as well as a 'additional' comments document appear in Appendixes () and (). Answers to eight of the most important questions- judged by the level of take up on these points in other parts of the consultation process- were converted into graphs and a brief run down is provided on each of these below.



The potential subdivision of the complex would appear to be the most hotly debated point in the proposed regeneration plans. This was also the most widely responded to question in terms of individuals adding additional comments.

Overall 57% of respondents advised that they would like the complex to be completely subdivided. While a simplified explanation of the proposed plans accompanied the survey it would appear that there may have been some confusion around this question based on:

- a) The number of people who answered yes to "Would you like the complex to be completely subdivided" and also answered yes to "Would you like the complex to be partially subdivided".
- b) The disproportionate level of verbal support for the complex remaining open expressed both by members of Oliver Bond Residents Group and individual respondents to the model.

Typical comments in favour of keeping the complex open are as follows:

- **"A lot of families have extended family in and around the flats. To divide the flats would cut off access to grandchildren to from block to block in safety"**
- **"Because we are a community. Division is not conducive to community living"**

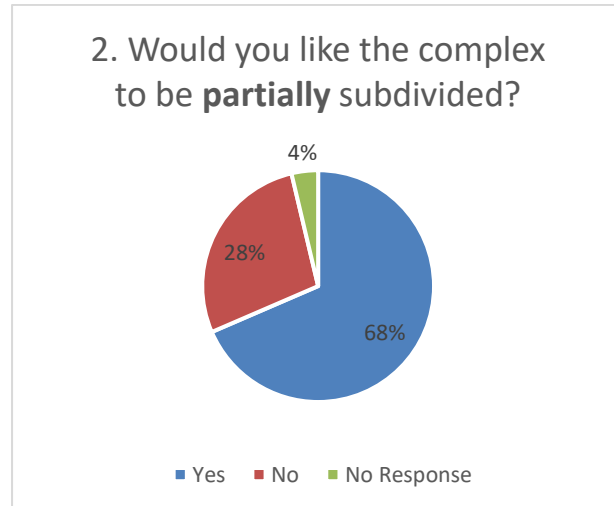


Typical comments in favour of subdividing the complex are :

- **“The more control each neighbourhood has in their separation will be much better if anti-social behaviour occurs. This will mean people won’t be able to run through different blocks if guards are called”**
- **“More peace, less conflict, tidier”**

Other respondents identified the reasons why the subdivision was being considered but also suggested an alternative:

**“I think this would break up the community spirit. I understand why they are separating the blocks due to anti social behaviour but I think they and the police together should tackle this more in other ways. Deal with it head on. Get rid of the drug dealers.”**



68% of respondents answered yes to ‘Would you like the complex to be partially subdivided’ providing a slightly clearer mandate than the previous question.

A number of additional comments were also provided for this questions which are somewhat similar to question 1.

These are:



**“No, [subdivision] makes dividing walls or barriers useless”.**

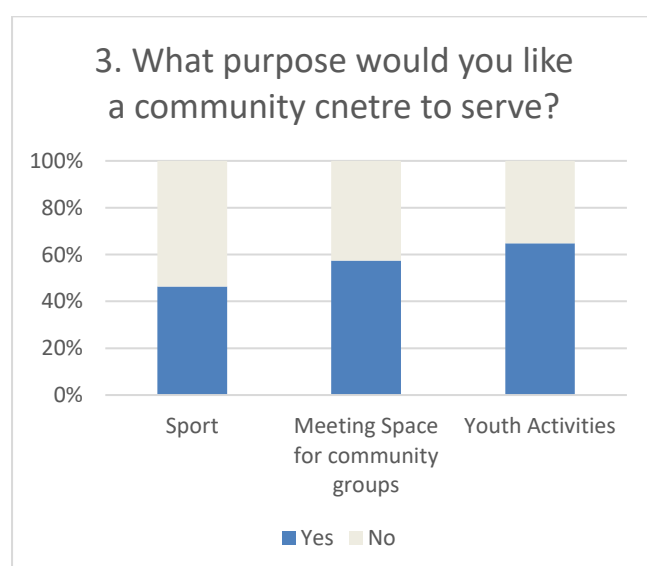
to



**“[Yes,] I think it’s important for children and the elderly to be able to move between the neighbourhoods without leaving the estate”.**

However it is possible that a small number of respondents understood subdivision as referring to the complex being closed off to through traffic from cars but remaining open for people to walk through.

The potential lack of clarity around the questions related to the proposed subdivision of the complex, the relatively low number of respondents to the survey (54 households out of a total of 394) and the volume of latent opinion around subdivision would suggest that further surveys are required here to understand community wants in more details. The variation in opinion to the issue would also suggest that a tailored approach could be considered according to the needs and wishes of specific areas and neighbourhoods across the complex.



The majority of respondents chose all three options offered regarding the potential purpose that a new community centre in the regenerated complex will serve. This would suggest that the community would be best served by a multi use space. This space would have capacity to serve as a large hall with options to sub divide the space into rooms for use by a number of groups simultaneously.

There were only three additional comments to this question which were as follows:



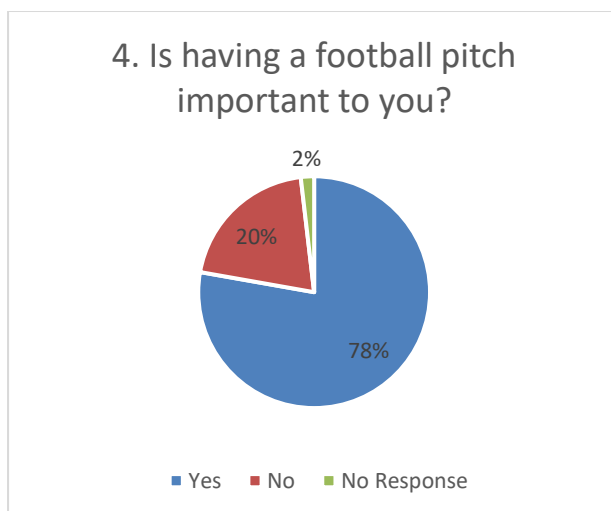
**“Hope even if underground daylight can enter”**



**“Other- classes of music, art etc”**



**“Entrepreneurship Classes”**



The response to the inclusion of a football pitch in the regenerated complex was a comprehensive ‘yes’ with 78% of respondents answering that this was important to them. There was only one additional comment provided by respondents to this question

**“We have always had a football pitch”**

A secondary question was also asked in relation to the position of the football pitch in the regenerated complex-

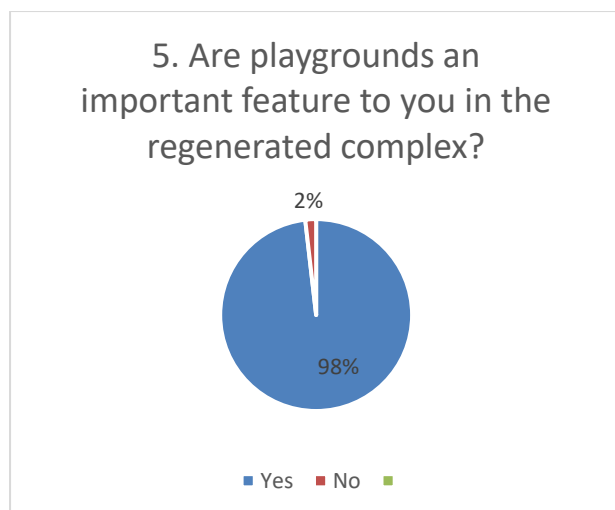
**“Would you rather the football pitch in the location shown in the plans or it’s current location?”**

Out of a total fifty four survey respondents, thirty one respondents advised that they would like the football pitch to remain in its current position, twenty respondents advised they would like the football pitch to be placed as it appears in regeneration plans and three survey respondents did not answer this question.



A third question in relation to the football pitch facility was an invitation to respondents to suggest a football facility managed by DCC in another location as a positive example of what can be achieved in Oliver Bond House. The following four comments were made in relation to this:

- **“Bluebell Community Centre run a fabulous all weather pitch. I know it’s not on a housing complex as such but if we had a proper community centre and locals giving job opportunities to run it like Bluebell it would be great”**
- **“Near the fruit market is a good example. Greek Street Flats”.**
- **“Yes- Greek Street has their pitch at the side of their complex which is great”**
- **“I think having a more 5 a side pitch style that can be opened up to a bigger pitch is the best. I think this is what ballybough has”.**



The response to “Are Playgrounds an important feature to you in the regenerated complex” was a resounding ‘yes’ with 98% of respondents advising that they are an important feature for them.

Respondents were also asked what age they would like play facilities to cater for;

**70% of respondents answered 0-6**

**81% of respondents answered 7-10**

**54% of respondents answered 10-13**

**24% of respondents answered 13-17**

Once again it can be noted that a number of respondents answered yes to more than one category here highlighting the need for play and recreation areas that serve the needs of a variety of age groups.

Additional comments for this question are as follows:



**“Playgrounds to include outdoor gym equipment like whats in some parks”**

**“Also need areas for older children to play”**

**“To see a centre cater for 10-17 age groups; art workshops and weekend retreats”.**

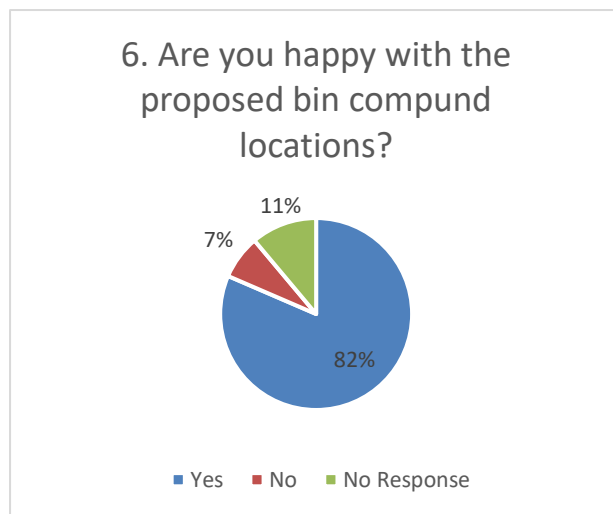
**“There should be opportunities for all ages to play on so they should do a baby, toddler and older stuff for the kids”**

Respondents were also asked to suggest playgrounds currently managed by DCC in other locations as examples of what could be achieved in Oliver Bond House. The following three comments were made in relation to this:

**“More facilities like rock climbing”**

**“Blessington Street area for example stationary exercise equipment”**

**“Skate Park like Weaver Square”**



At 82% the vast majority of respondents answered that they are supportive of the proposed bin compound locations in the regenerated complex.

However a relatively high 11% of respondents did not answer this question and a number of additional comments suggested that respondents were not aware of the plans for proposed bin compound locations. A number of respondents to other elements of the consultation process also advised they were unaware of proposed bin compound sites and had to be emailed information in relation to these.



**“Unable to answer due to not knowing where locations are situated”**

**“No bin plans visible”**

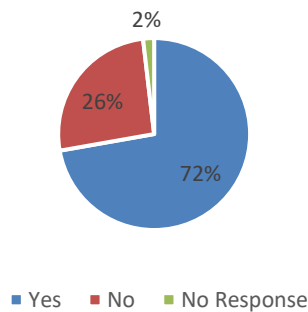
Two respondents who are not supportive of the proposed bin compound sites provided the reason that they are closer to each block in the proposed plans.

**“No- bins closer to each block”**

**“They seem to be closer to peoples homes. There is a lot of other places they could be put along walls etc”**



7. Are outdoor communal clothes dryig facilities important to you?



At 72%, almost three quarters of respondents advised that outdoor communal clothes drying facilities are important to them.

There were also eight additional comments provided in response to this question which included opinions on alternative uses for these spaces:

**“No [to outdoor drying areas]- outdoor gym machines would be good but I don’t really know. A lot of people dry their clothes inside now”**

**“Bike Parking Facilities Instead”**

or suggested complementary uses for this space:

**“No harm in putting a couple of benches in around the complex for people to sit”**

Three respondents also suggested alternative clothes drying solutions.

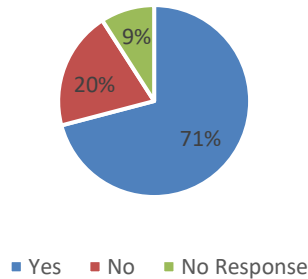
**“Perhaps a clothes drying facility in a communal area at a reasonable price”.**

**“Why not put a launderette in each complex”**

**“We have no needs flor clothes lines- most blocks don’t use them”**



8. Are you supportive of proposed parking plans as they appear in plans?



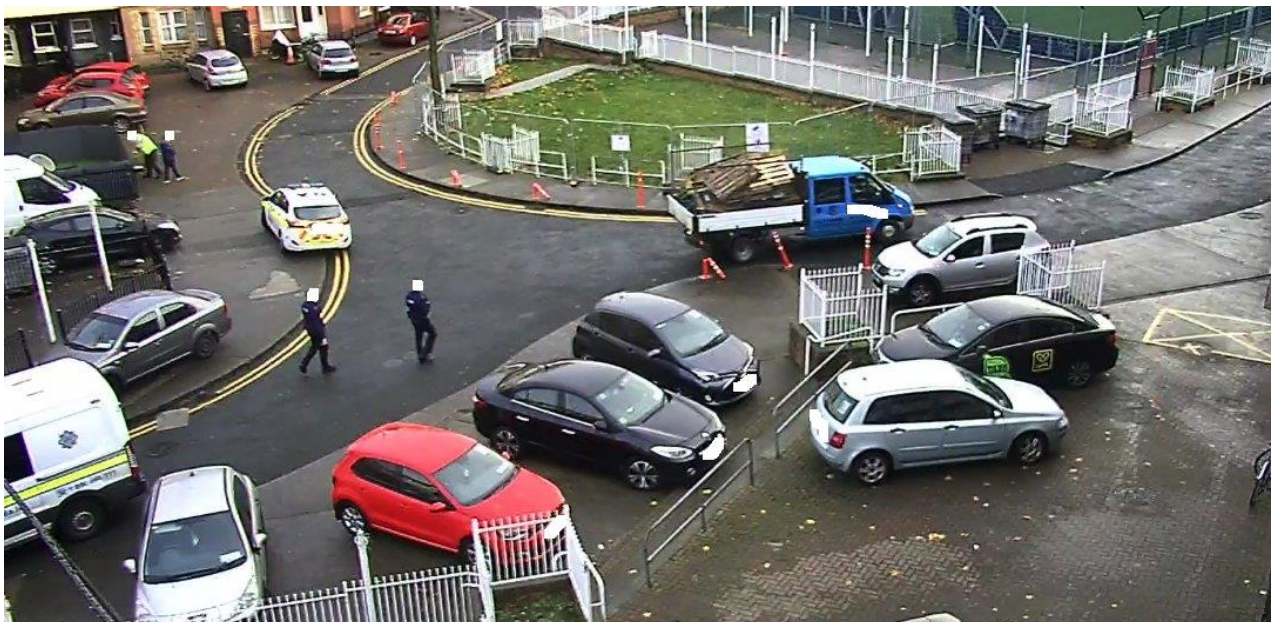
At 71% a relatively clear majority of respondents expressed support for the proposed parking plans for the regenerated complex with one notable and understandable exception- residents who live on the ground floor facing onto proposed parking sites. Eleven additional comments were provided for this section and a disparity in support between ground floor and non-ground floor residents is evident in these responses.

**“I think parking in the green areas out the back of my flats (S block) is not a good idea as it can be dangerous at night, I don’t want lights going on and off or through my windows at all hours of the night”**

**“Intruding peoples privacy- most bedrooms are facing onto the proposed car parks. Prefer to be a communal garden. Creating traffic**

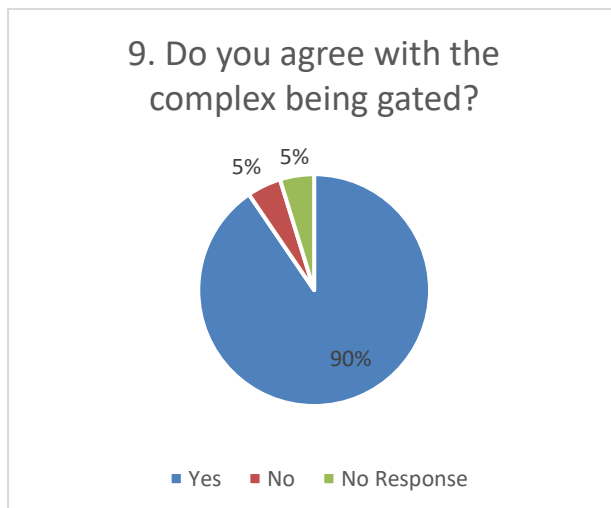
Another respondent requested identified the problem of individuals from outside the complex taking up parking spaces and offered a solution.

**“Too many people not living here parking. Need a designated parking or parking permit”.**



Another respondent worried that cars would be parked further away from the owners households under the new plans and worried this would have a negative impact as people grow older.

**“Our worry is that as we get older bags of shopping etc become difficult to transport if we are not allowed to drive close to the flat. Although in the grand scheme of things this is not the most important detail it is of passing interest”.**



There is nothing set out in current plans regarding access into the complex either for pedestrians or motorists. A majority of residents have requested that the complex be gated and there be fobbed gates for motorists (with one fob being provided to each car owner in the complex) at each road into the complex to prevent non residents parking their cars in the complex. In addition to this it had been suggested that there be gates which can be accessed by key for pedestrians to enter and exit the complex. As such a question was included in the questionnaire to understand overall support for the concept of including external gates in the plans for the regenerated complex.



**An overwhelming 90% of respondents advised that they would like the complex to be gated.**

An overwhelming 90% of respondents advised that they would like the complex to be gated.

Three additional comments were also provided to this question. One supported the complex being gated:

**“It’s a much safer environment then”**

And two cited potential issues with the complex being gated:

**“How would a family visit if you have no fob to give them if they are driving and you as a tenant do not drive”**

**“Although I agree I can also see a lot of problems with gates also I don’t drive but what about relatives visiting? Would I get a fob?”**

A secondary question was also asked in relation to the potential gating of the regenerated complex:

**“Is there an access model in any other DCC managed complex which you think provides a good example”.**

Two additional comments were provided in response to this question:

**“In Mary Aikenhead gates can be opened if people in flats release the gate”.**

and

**“I don’t know of any DCC operated places but if you look at any private apartments having a fob access the block is essential. This would also avoid the disgusting state that the outdoor stairs have. I cannot emphasise this enough. Having a main door that you enter and then go up the stairs would improve the quality of life ten times”**

The second answer would suggest that the question was not asked clearly enough and the respondent understood that the gating referred to was doorways into individual blocks of flats.





## Recommendations Based on Consultation

Delivering this consultation process has revealed valuable learning in terms of the feelings, concerns, ideas and preferences of the Oliver Bond House community. Behind the limited quantitative data which has been generated to date lie the deep seams of meaning and significance. The act of engaging in this consultation process alone, and the level of that engagement, indicates the courage this community has to be hopeful about its future. It is vital that this hope is respected and the residents of Oliver Bond House are appropriately consulted and involved in decision making processes related to the regeneration project.

The following are a short list of key pathways forward based on learnings from this consultation process:

- 1** A level of trust and optimism has been developed between the residents of Oliver Bond House and DCC . This has been carefully achieved and hard-earned and should be consciously developed through an ongoing consultation process and the development of formalised communication processes.
- 2** Technical assistance should be provided to Oliver Bond House residents in order to ensure an effective consultation process in which residents have the capacity to provide logic based and actionable input. The lack of technical assistance provided to date was made apparent by the complete lack of response to the options document provided by DCC during this phase of the consultation.
- 3** It is vital that funding is provided for a regeneration worker to assist residents develop capacity to effectively participate in appropriate consultation and decision making processes related to the regeneration project. The regeneration worker would also have a responsibility for establishing and managing communications among stakeholders, identifying and responding to emerging community needs and developing appropriate arts and culture projects designed to build community cohesion.
- 4** It is vital that the regeneration is a social as well as a physical one as the issues present in Oliver Bond House are inter related, multi layered and mutually reinforcing. The needs which have arisen in this consultation indicate the need for an integrated needs-based regeneration strategy which encompasses quality designed homes and facilities and high standards of housing management, along



with measures to tackle social exclusion issues such as community development, employment, education, health, community safety, and youth work. A regeneration programme that does not address these issues poses a very strong risk that low income tenants in poor housing simply become low income tenants in new housing.

**5**

The establishment of an Oliver Bond House Regeneration Board (involving DCC and all relevant government and community sector interests within an accountable, transparent 'new partnership' structure) to assemble the financial package and deliver an integrated regeneration programme in Oliver Bond House. It is vital that members of the Oliver Bond Residents Group have a strong representation on this group.

**6**

It is vital that interim improvements are made to the complex and that both shared areas and individual households are appropriately maintained to ensure the cycle of physical decay discontinues. It is vital that additional play areas are provided. It is also important that community safety continues to be prioritised and residents and DCC work with stakeholder such as An Garda to achieve shared objectives.



## Acknowledgements

Developing this report would have been futile, worthless and boring were it not for the co-operation, belief and practical input of the Oliver Bond House community. I hope you find this report to be a true reflection of the consultation process and it serves your purpose well.

Developing this report would have been similarly futile if DCC had not agreed to receive and consider it- many thanks for allowing Robert Emmet CDP to deliver this piece of work and progress our goal of developing resilient and empowered communities in the South West Inner City. Special thanks are due here to Senior DCC Architects Cecilia Naughton and Martin Donlon and estate manager Mark McInerney for your professional input into elements of the consultation.

Many thanks to Peter Dorman of CAN for consistently showing how community consultation and advocacy work should be done.

Many thanks to the very talented local architect James Kelly for picking up the phone to a stranger and agreeing to work for free. Things like this give me faith.

Many thanks to Josephine Henry for sharing your knowledge, networks and intelligent energy as generously as always.

And finally, thanks to Doireann Breathnach in equal parts for your intelligent energy and persistent support.



## **Robert Emmet CDP- About Us**

Robert Emmet CDP are a team of seven community development and citizen participation experts who are passionate about building resilient and empowered communities.

We currently run several practical services to meet the needs of the South West Inner City including an afterschool programme, a programme for migrant women, social enterprises and pilot employability and education programmes.

We consistently engage the local community to identify emerging need and to co-create solutions using a design thinking methodology that is respectful, enjoyable and effective.

We also work strategically and collaboratively to achieve our goal of building empowered and resilient communities in the South West Inner City and deliver a variety of consultations and research projects, individually and with academic partners, to achieve this objective.

Robert Emmet CDP is a founding member of Dublin City Community Cooperative, a group of thirteen inner city community development projects, and a founding member of Community Organisations and Residents Network (CORN), a group of 43 voluntary organisations based in Dublin 8. We have been managed by a voluntary board of directors since our establishment in 2003.

# Appendix 1

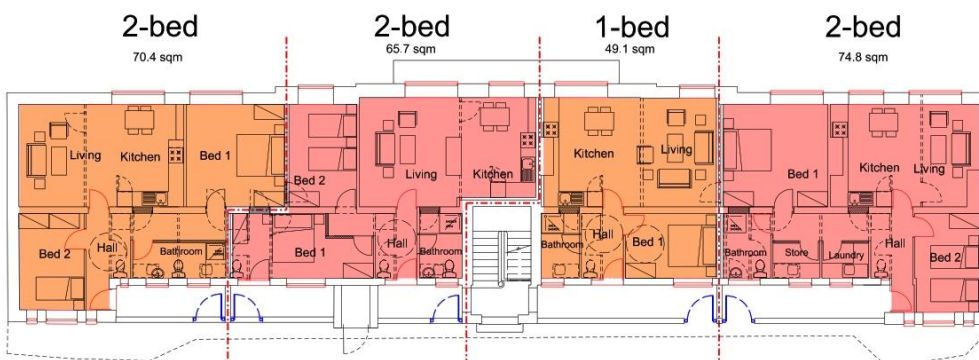
## Simplified Explanation of Plans and Survey



### Simplified Explanation



FIRST TO THIRD FLOOR PLANS



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

BLOCK N

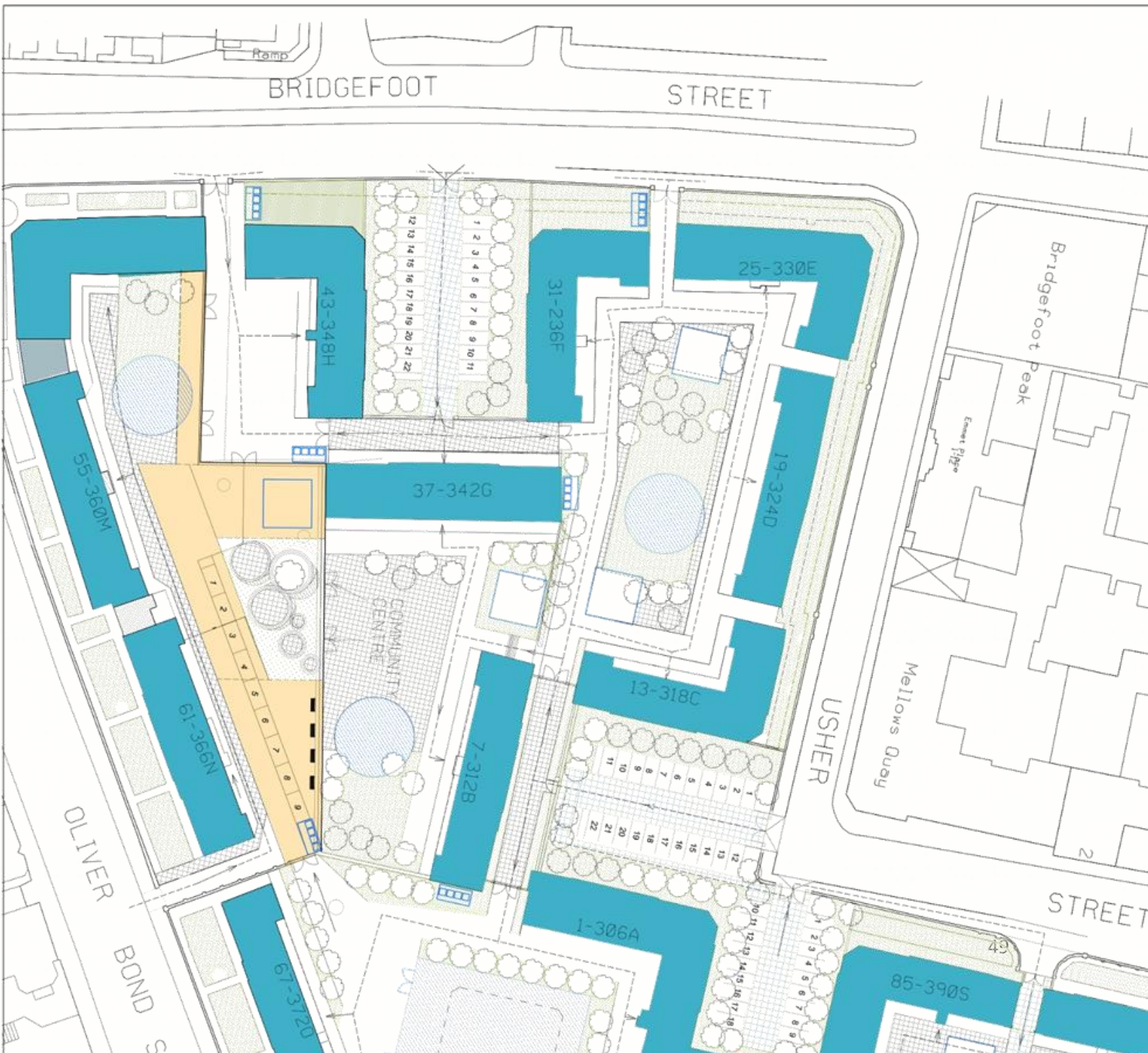


## Appendix 2

### Copy of Data Results

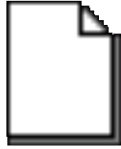


Copy of Results



## Appendix 3

### Consultation Booklet Oliver Bond



## Consultation



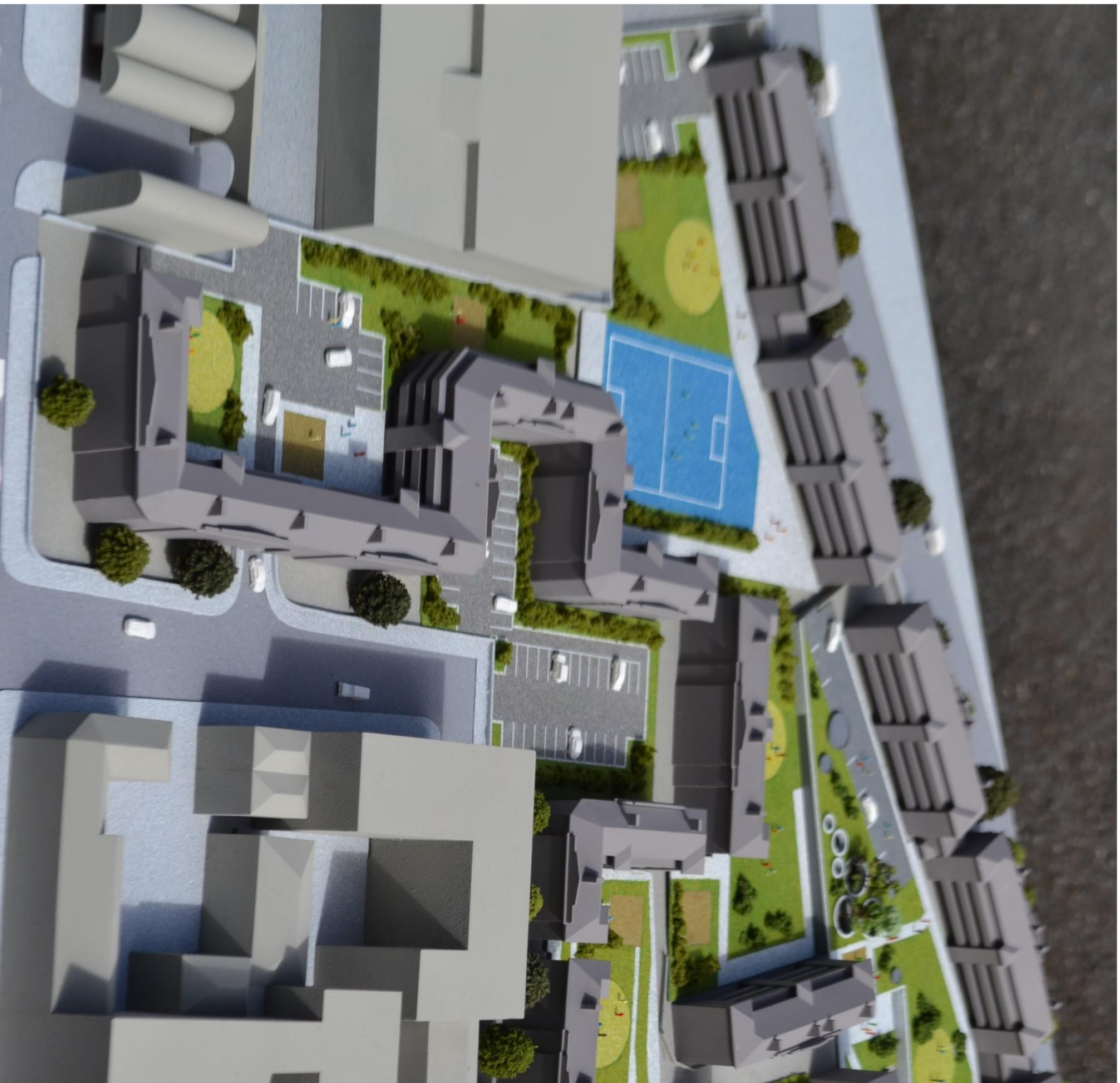


## Appendix 4

### Survey Graphs



Survey Graphs.pdf



# **Appendix**

**Add additional comments form here. Sent as separate document.**

**Add seminar questions here. Sent as separate document.**