

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT Emmaus Bristol Rooftop Community

Companion and Community Engagement

Engagement with and the involvement of companions, throughout the design process, has been essential and valuable.

In 2017, at the concept and feasibility stage of this proposal, there was consultation with companions as to what kind of accommodation was needed.

There were 22 companion responses, setting out a clear case for what they would want when moving on to independent accommodation.

Critically, move on housing gained 13 votes compared to 6 for additional companion rooms and 3 votes for satellite housing.

Respondents also compiled a wish list, as follows, which has guided the design of the development:

- Own space
- Own toilet/ bathroom
- Own space, when we choose to do so
- The choice to be on your own or join in with the community
- Security (removal of stress in relation to renting on a minimum wage job)
- Stability
- Sense of having a home not just somewhere I'm staying
- Location – being central allows you to do other things outside of Emmaus, opportunities in the city
- Good state of mind, not isolated
- Living in a town or city, not just Emmaus
- It's like a family – dysfunctional! – don't get that in hostels
- Tranquillity
- Outside space (though it was acknowledged that this could come from neighbourhood green space)
- Some accessible rooms
- Room for visitors

Ongoing discussions between support workers and companions highlighted the need to be in the city centre for BAME and LGBTQ+ companions who have experienced aggression and abuse elsewhere and feel more comfortable in a diverse area.

In 2019, Agile engaged further with companions to take feedback on the emerging designs. That feedback has allowed the designs to be refined and improved, better meeting the needs of companions.

In March 2020, Agile and Emmaus Bristol held a workshop with various construction professionals. This was a high-level exploration of constructive options for improving the viability. The companions' representative also attended, so that companions' views were heard and their needs not diluted.

Between 6 – 22 November 2020 there was wider community engagement, including 400 consultation leaflets delivered to residents and businesses in neighbouring streets (Upper York Street; Cumberland Street; Wilder Street; Backfields; Backfields Lane; Brunswick Street; Cave Street and City Road).

The community was asked for its views on the purpose of the scheme to provide affordable homes, the impact of the proposal on St Pauls and the benefits of the development to the community.

In addition, there has been on-line coverage to a much wider audience. Emmaus Bristol invited people to respond through LinkedIn, FB and Twitter and its own web site.

There was also coverage in the Bristol Post: <https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/plansbuild-15-new-homes-4689329>

The response to this wider community engagement was extremely positive, with headlines as follows:

- 83% of respondents supported the proposal.
- There were 30 formal responses, of which 50% from people with a BS2 postcode.
- Of the 17% of respondents who did not support the proposal, most comments related to the principle of development (e.g. area too crowded already; too much development). There is nothing we can do to amend the scheme that will satisfy these concerns. Other more specific issues, such as residential amenity, have been addressed in the design.

This wider community engagement and responses to it are reported in more detail in the following pages.



Introduction

Between 6 November 2020 and 22 November 2020, Emmaus Bristol consulted with the local and wider community on its proposal for 15 low carbon homes on the roof of Backfields House. This is in addition to the prior consultation with Emmaus Bristol, companions and construction professions.

The community was asked for its views on the purpose of the scheme to provide affordable homes, the impact of the proposal on St Pauls and the benefits of the development to the community.

The questions asked of the community can be seen on the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf1hBfCVIag4uQ21ajBQ3xj_aUA1GPcQLPGuKA7PVcYCC D-Gw/viewform

Engagement

Four hundred consultation leaflets were delivered to residents and businesses on streets close to Emmaus Bristol, namely: Upper York Street; Cumberland Street; Wilder Street; Backfields; Backfields Lane; Brunswick Street; Cave Street and City Road.

In addition, there has been on-line coverage to a much wider audience. Emmaus Bristol invited people to respond through LinkedIn, FB and Twitter and its own web site.

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Response summary

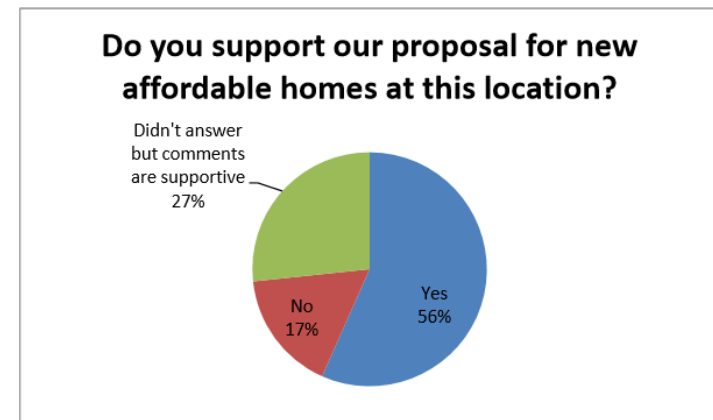
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Other more specific issues, such as residential amenity, have been addressed in the design and reflected in the Design & Access Statement submitted with the planning application.



Responses to questions

Question 1: Do you think this project is innovative and addresses the need for affordable homes in the city centre? Please explain your answer.

The positive responses to this question were as follows:

- Yes - wonderfully fit for purpose
- Yes and utilises the best of space both for a tiny home but also in location.
- Yes, we need to think innovatively to find housing solutions which this does.
- Yes, really great use of space and home design
- Love the creative thinking for providing more homes
- Yes, it ticks all the boxes. Small secure sustainable eco homes, that will increase the wellbeing of the people using them and also help the biodiversity and of the area. It will help the people needing really affordable living in an ever more expensive city, where people often fall below the wealth threshold into the bottom of society.
- Anything creative is better than nothing at all. The vast majority of housing in Bristol is unaffordable.
- Yes. The use of the roof, as a currently underused space is an important contribution to the creation of affordable housing.
- Affordable if the price cap is £160,000. A price above that will not be affordable in my view. And I mean upto £165,000 for 100% of the property. Based on a £25,000 deposit and 4.5 x earnings of £25,000. (*Comment: We intend to rent the homes and affordable in this case means LHA rate*)
- Yes. The proposed building, and individual homes, and garden space, all look great as well as providing vitally needed accommodation. The fact Companions will live there, who are well-known to the charity, rather than unknown tenants, builds the sense of community within Emmaus and also within the area. Using existing land and property, and building practices that are as sustainable as possible, is also ensuring environmental impacts are kept to a minimum.
- Yes, finding space where unexpected and making it affordable by not having to obtain more land feels key here
- Good Idea I support it!
- Yes it is innovative and there is a need for affordable accommodation.
- Yes. Project looks really good. I love the design.
- Yes. Co-creating with the end user builds in ownership, collaboration, safety. It gives residents an experience of being part of something exciting, innovative and having responsibility for its success, which can help them reimagine their life possibilities. I would really like to see residents getting involved in construction and also construction of other agile projects, skilling up, becoming enablers and helping the initiative to spread to others

who have been in their situations. This is brave and interesting, addressing a specific, very important need within a much broader, widespread need for affordable homes across the city centre and the city (and country) as a whole.

- I believe the project not only addresses the need for affordable homes in the city centre but can also provide homes for people (companions) who already live within the Emmaus Community and are preparing to move back into the general society after been helped by Emmaus, therefore allowing more vacancies in the community to help even more people who need it
- Very innovative project especially in terms of sustainability, it will add affordable homes in a highly populated area of central Bristol and which has seen house prices increase dramatically in the last few years.
- Yes. Low-impact construction and the use of existing buildings is key to building a sustainable future. The proposal is both subtle and provocative.
- Yes, very clever idea, not only affordable but also 'green'

The negative responses to this question were as follows:

- Nope -some fancy architect has persuaded a charity to spend a fortune on a bunch of expensive leaky shipping containers on a roof. Hardly innovative.
- No, because a lot of this type of apartments, flats, homes is currently being built in our area.
- No. There is no need for more homes in combusted already city centre with so much air pollution from traffic.
- I think it is a money making scheme, it doesn't address the issue of housing in my eyes
- No The area is already having many new flats built across the road, Building higher and more condensed will create a more overcrowded urban living quarter of what is presently spacious , We will feel the impact of the new flats when they are populated and this despite the excellent ethos of this project this is not the place for it.

Question 2: We want to ensure that our proposals fit with the neighbourhood and local community.

What does community mean to you?

- It means a collectivist attitude to society and resources. Not focused on personal wealth, but a shared wealth of those around you.
- Loud and creative people
- Knowing your neighbours and supporting one another
- You cannot even keep your building clean as it stands -has become an eyesore. Maybe address this first.
- Community to me means 'unity', We all chip in to help others as well as themselves.

- Local people being able to live and work together to provide mutual support and companionship - to whatever extent an individual requires. Community means having someone to turn to if you need support. It means feeling part of a place and a group - belonging. It means caring about where you are and who you are near.
- People flourishing together in a positive and healthy environment
- As a freelance film maker community and collaboration are very important to me
- Camaraderie
- It means diverse people being brought together and mixing with one another, for example by sharing meals, childcare, support networks, etc.
- The community in the St. Pauls area is a very diverse community and any project like this would probably help people to understand it a little more, therefore giving the St. Pauls area an even more diverse community where people can learn about other cultures that are in the area
- Community is a safe place where people live in harmony with those around them. It needs to offer a community space where people can engage with others around them. The community space might be an outdoor meeting area, or a hall.
- I walk down this street very often. This would be a fine addition to the neighbourhood - thoughtful design that assures that affordable accommodation can be innovative, and doesn't have to be mean.
- Socialising (making friends)
- To me, community is people interacting with each, working towards a common goal find it in themselves and support each other in the same environment.
- Collective wisdom, listening, celebration, diversity, tolerance, care, sharing, inclusion. Solving problems together, seeing the common ground, what unites, not focussing on divisions and separation, but differences and connection.
- The presence of shared spaces where neighbours can meet and socialise, helping with integrating people with a variety of backgrounds (ages, ethnics, cultures, etc), addressing isolation and loneliness, building a network where people feel safe and supported and with an increased sense of belonging.
- Community means spaces that accommodate various needs of the people living there...space to live, work, play, eat and engage with the natural world
- I live right at the corner in Ducrow court on the top floor, I have a lovely balcony that benefits from the sun in the afternoon. This project will mean building right outside my window and my balcony .The height of the buildings will block the sun and the views that I very much value. You describe how nice that the new building will provide views across the city and onto the courtyard but to do that it will block my views of the city. I work as a nurse at the hospital and treasure the times I can come and sit on my balcony and relax. To have that taken away seems unbearable. There will also be more noise as people gather in the outside areas . Again I am so very close to the building I will be unable to avoid it. This will impact my flat the most and I am extremely unhappy about it. (*Comment: We will respond to this neighbour to listen to concerns and provide more detail*)
- People, culture, family, all ages

- Community means working together to a common goal and ensuring the longevity of the area.
- It depends who you will let have the homes. If it is people from outside of Bristol or not local then this isn't a good idea.
- It means respecting the needs of the population. Also there is an over demand on phone and internet signal. O2 phone network currently has a couple of masts which need to be repaired. So currently the overpopulation in the BS2 is creating extra demand on the existing internet signal.
- NB Backfields House has its own super fast fibre broadband, which we may be able to extend to the new homes but this has not been confirmed
- People living and working together
- Respect, support and safety
- Helping vulnerable people
- Pretty quiet around here

Question 3: Do you think the project will enhance the area of St Pauls? Please explain your answer.

The positive responses to this question were as follows:

- Yes. It's providing much needed affordable housing in a new and innovative way. Hopefully it will be the start of much more development of a similar kind.
- Yes, it would
- I think it will. We need more affordable housing in Bristol.
- Yes - not just because of the low impact in terms of looks/use of land, but in terms of having a group of people who know and care about each other added to the area; they will contribute to the area.
- Yes. Affordable homes are vital in the inclusive development of a community.
- development is looked down on in stokes, but this seems the perfect solution to sustainable housing in the area that doesn't impose
- Offering tiny homes is a great way to enhance the area and promote a future forward housing.
- As mentioned in the last answer St. Pauls is a very diverse community and a project like this would help both personally and culturally ideas for the future
- Anything will enhance St Pauls so long as it is vibrant and creative.
- Yes - as above!
- St. Pauls has limped along for a long time, Coexist and PRSC have helped to create a culture of innovation, creativity and grass roots solutions that the city must celebrate and build on. This development complements and moves forward this local identity and may even help people to rethink their assumptions about ex-drug users and ex-homeless people.

- St Paul's has been a neglected area in central Bristol for decades, a project like this will attract the right form of attention to this neighbourhood, and hopefully influence how affordable homes are built in the city.
- Yes, St Pauls is a creative place - with street art, independent shops, cafes, bars so I think it is in keeping with that ethos
- Yes, adding more housing that isn't priced out of everyone ranges will allow better community and therefore 'feel'
- Yes. It will add to the vibrant community at Backfields House, and provide attractive and conscious living for people that need it
- Yes, St Pauls is known for community factor and this will help locals stay local.
- New affordable homes are needed in the area.
- Hopefully it will inspire other home builders to be more innovative
- It will help

The neutral responses to this question were as follows:

- It's hard to tell.
- Perhaps the project management will consider joining The St Paul's Forum which details can be arrange through Councillor Mike Davies.

The negative responses to this question were as follows:

- No. Plans and street view don't even match.
- I think it will price people out of St Pauls. This doesn't add anything to the area
- No. At Paul's doesn't need more homes we are already overcrowded and more homes are built on every street!
- No we have all waited so long for the Lakota to close and still live in hope as its supposedly been sold. There is a peacefulness to the area when it is not open which is wonderful, The new flats on wilder St will change that but building 2 stories up will feel like we are all crushed together. We don't need higher buildings that block out the sunlight for the residents already living in the area that is totally unfair. How can that be an enhancement.
- I think St. Paul's does not need more living space at all but more green outdoor spaces, community gardens. *(Comment: This proposal adds green outdoors space by adding a shared garden to the roof)*

Please tell us any other thoughts you have on our proposal

- It is successful because it combines communal living, modest home ownership and sustainable construction. I'm 100% in support of it.
- It would be interesting to see the structure of the building. Also access to the building and parking?
- We need more of this type of project otherwise people living in St Paul's now will have to leave this area as they won't be able to afford paying their rent

- Pretty poor.
- Yes it will brighten the area up massively, it will be a great addition to the area
- Looks great. There is a need for creative thinking like this. I like the roof top layout. The outdoor space is very important, particularly at the moment. High quality, genuinely affordable homes. Love it!
- Interested in living in a tiny home. *(Comment: These are not "tiny homes" as such as they meet planning space standards)*
- Excellent proposal, it has 100% of my support
- Initially I was impressed. I need to read through the pdf document now.
- It would be great if this goes ahead, and is replicable.
- There is no need to start another construction. City Centre of Bristol needs more space and a clean air.
- The project is in the heart of a big community of users and homeless people. I hope that there is sufficient support for residents to maintain for themselves something of a haven, and for it not to be a magnet for those in that community they are wanting to leave behind.
- I'm impressed with the new houses in St George park carpark - I didn't think they would look very good but am amazed at how they have turned out. We just need to start thinking differently about how we use space in this city
- Please, please don't do this, it is a worthy wonderful project but please find another site. I beg you.
- Would be amazing if this promoted other businesses to think in the same way about their unused space
- It is marvellous
- Be aware of structural requirements, also whether they are to be let or sold, I can imagine mortgage companies may be reluctant to lend on this sort of property. *(Comment: We intend to rent the properties out rather than sell them)*
- I don't like the design, the area is too cramped already, this is just going to be overkill on the area and community.
- It looks very energy efficient, slightly hippy initiative, but do they have the skills from the corporate side of housing developments? Because a building project is a huge investment and there are many pitfalls even to the best intentioned plans.
- Given the recent increase in domestic violence experienced by partners living together. I am wondering what will be done to make this accessible to single people. As I'm finding it difficult to access housing without a second income earner.
- Overall, I think it sounds really exciting.
- I think is a good idea so others can learn about other cultures
- Great investment