



Charnwood

St Michaels Court Bungalow Development

Community Engagement



1 INTRODUCTION

Our Community Engagement outlines our aims for the proposed St Michaels Court development site. This report records the community engagement activity undertaken by Charnwood Borough Council during the period from January until 6th June 2023 this includes responses, concerns and feedback from stakeholders, the local community and residents.

Charnwood have been keen to communicate with the local community and have engaged in a variety of approaches, described in the sections below.

2 BACKGROUND AND SCHEME

Charnwood Borough Council is planning to create nine new high-quality bungalows to replace St Michael's Court, a sheltered housing complex in Melton Road.

St Michael's Court was built around 1970 and no longer meets the needs of older tenants. The complex comprises mainly of bedsits with shared bathrooms which are no longer fit for housing older people and are, understandably, difficult to let.

The ageing sheltered accommodation also has long corridors which are difficult for people with mobility issues. The scheme is no longer occupied and the residents have moved to other Council homes.

The Council has considered a replacement sheltered scheme however data from the housing register has shown that local people need ground floor accommodation and from a planning permission perspective it is necessary to deliver a low-rise scheme which does not overwhelm the Church next door. The proposed bungalows meet that housing need and planning requirement and have been designed to a high environmental standard and to make them easier to live in for with people with mobility issues.

2.1 St Michael's Court Development Scheme

The St Michael Court Development Scheme comprises of 9 1-bed bungalows. The scheme features dementia friendly specifications which include:

- View from living room to the shower toilet
- Large windows, corner view from kitchen to connect with goings on & help combat loneliness
- Recessed cover porch, for socialising & a covered area for scooter charging
- Level access shower – Part M4(2) layout. Tiling will be contrast with WC and floor.
- Potentially knock out panel in bedroom wall in case direct route required in the future

- Part (M4(2) space around beds and in the kitchen and bathroom.

In addition, we will be building these bungalows to the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS), they will also be built to M4(2) Standards; making the site more easily accessible to those with limited mobility.

2.2 **The below table summarises the stakeholders we engaged with and outlines the responses received during each activity.**

The activities are listed in date order.

Table 1: Summary of stakeholder engagement activity and communication

Date	Channel / Audience	Activity	Engagement / Response
Letters			
2.06.2023	Former tenants of St Michael's Court	Letter issued to former tenants of St Michael's Court to inform them of the event and encouraging them to attend.	A small number of former tenants attended the event, completed the feedback form and signed up for email updates
2.06.2023	Parish Church	Letter sent to the local church to introduce them to Director of Housing and Wellbeing and the project. Also provided artist impressions, details of the email update sign-up and the drop-in event	Members of the church attended drop-in event and responded to the letter to welcome the project and outline concerns.
2.06.2023	Thurmaston Parish Council	Letter issued to the Parish Council to provide an overview of the project, drop-in event and artist impressions.	
Digital channels (social media, email, website, press)			
January / May and June 2023	Social media	<p>Updates issued across the Council's social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram about the cabinet report and drop-in event.</p> <p>Also issued social media updates about the event while it was taking place.</p>	<p>Promotion of the event reached over 10,000 people on social media.</p> <p>Coverage of event reached over 1,500.</p> <p>A small number of comments and questions about the scheme but nothing too negative.</p>
May 2023	CBC website	Dedicated web page for the proposed redevelopment was created and is being kept up to date. Web page provided details of the drop-in event and how those interested can sign up for specific email updates	Charnwood.gov.uk/stmichaelscourt shows it had a total of 322 views by 269 unique visitors between May 21 and June 27. Avg time spent on the page was 4m 31s.

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Date	Channel / Audience	Activity	Engagement / Response
30.01.2023 26.05.2023	Press	Press releases issued to local and regional press, councillors and parish councils. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 2023 – Cabinet report May 2023 – Drop-in event 	Shared on Thurmaston Times and Syston Town News social media account which helped increase the reach.
26/27.05.2023 03.06.2023	Email alerts	Three email alerts issued on the Council's email alert service to promote the community drop-in event.	Email alerts were sent to over 27,000 subscribers with an average open rate of 39% across the three emails.
26.05.2023	Specific email updates	Created an email sign-up form for local people, venues and businesses to register for specific updates about the project. An update was issued on June 15 following the drop-in event to thank people for attending and to advise on next steps.	Nine people have registered to receive email updates to date. It's anticipated this will increase as the project progresses.
Physical promotional materials			
1.06.2023	Leaflet	Designed and distributed 100 leaflets to local residents nearby proposed development	Feedback from the event suggests a small number of people found out about the event through the leaflet.
1.06.2023	Posters	Designed and distributed 20 posters in the area and at local venues.	Feedback from the event suggests a small number of people found out about the event through the poster.
Resident Survey			
Closing date for all	Residents (adjoining, adjacent to site,	The survey was sent to residents and was available at the consultation event. We asked a series of questions which highlighted some of	Responses to the survey details of this are in Section 3.

Table 1: Summary of stakeholder engagement activity and communication

Date	Channel / Audience	Activity	Engagement / Response
responses - 6 th June 2023	opposite to site, and close by)	the outcome's residents would like to see from the development site and what their key concerns would be.	
Face to face consultation			
Day 1 of 1	Event open to all stakeholders, local community, Councillors and residents	<p>We held the event on Tuesday 6th June from 14:00 – 19:30. This allowed flexibility to local residents and stakeholders. The consultation was held at Elizabeth Park Sports Centre which is within in close proximity to the site, allowing local residents easy access to the consultation event.</p> <p>The Charnwood team along with the Pelham and ARK Consultancy team members presented the details of our site plan and gave the opportunity for key stakeholders and the local community to ask any questions or present any feedback.</p>	Responses and feedback were given via the survey in Section 3.

3 EVENT FEEDBACK AND CHARNWOOD RESPONSE SUMMARY

3.1 Format of the Open Consultation Event

Collateral designed for the consultation event included invitations and display boards detailing our plans for St Michaels Court and a survey.

We worked with ARK Consultancy to scope out and agree the survey, residents and stakeholders were also signposted through letters and the Charnwood Borough Council website.

Display boards created for the consultation event were presented to all attendees.

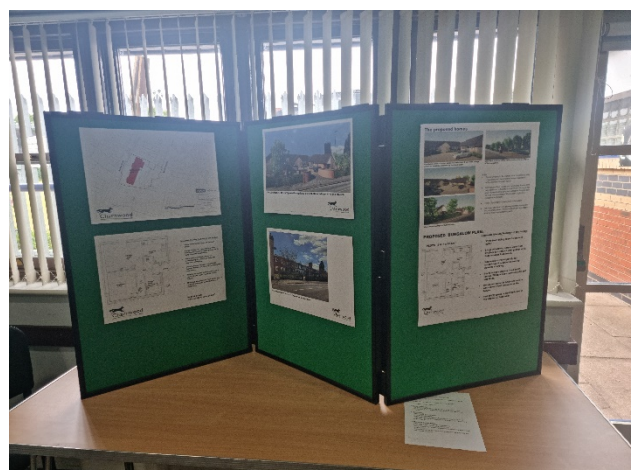
To facilitate the consultation 3 members of the Charnwood team, one member of the Pelham team and two members of the ARK Team were present at the event to answer questions and take on board feedback.

Over 17 people attended the consultation event, ranging from local residents, councillor member, local news representative, stakeholders and other members of the community.

3.2 General feedback

Overall, people were pleased with the design and type of accommodation proposed and provided positive feedback. Some of these comments include:

- “The overall scheme looks very nice”
- “I feel the proposal this evening were fantastic. My uncle was so overwhelmed and happy with the ideas provided to him.”

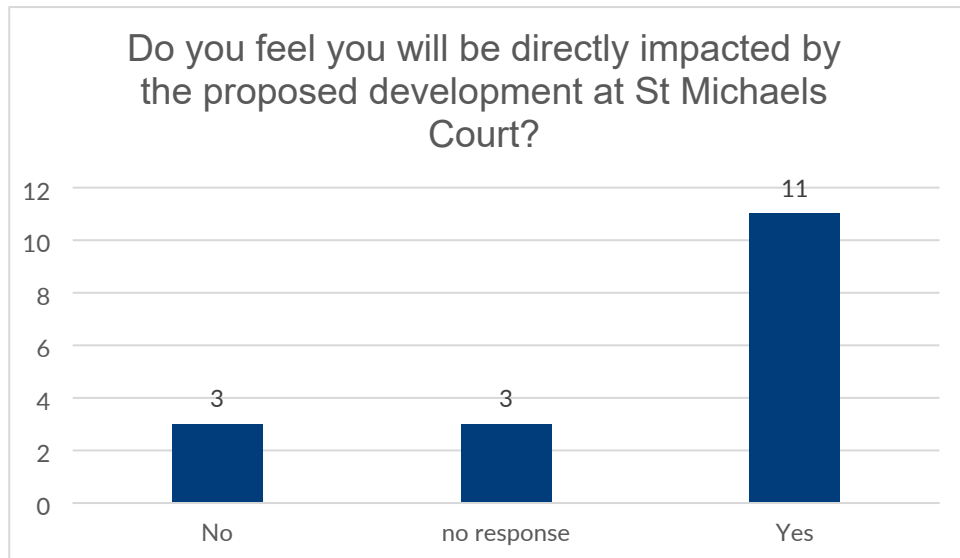




3.3 Open Consultation events – Key concerns and comments from the survey

During the consultation event, we ask attendees to fill out a survey to understand their views on the proposed development. In total we had 17 participants who completed the survey. Following this, we have found key concerns and comments that participants raised which have been highlighted below.

- 3.3.1 11 respondents felt that are directly impacted by the proposed development, whilst three people mentioned that they are not directly impacted by the proposed development.



3.3.2 Church Parking via Melton Road:

A concern for some consultee members of St Michaels Church, is that they felt that the parking outside of the church would be impacted, especially during busy periods e.g., on Sunday Service, funerals and weddings, and accessing other shopping outlets near the site. To mitigate this concern a respondent suggested to change parking restrictions on Melton Road during weekdays and on Saturdays. Whilst another resident proposed turning the complex around, so that the entrance would be via Garden Street.

Charnwood's response:

We will work with the Church during the construction phase to ensure that funerals, so far as is possible are able to progress smoothly. Once constructed we will ask residents and their guests to pay due attention to the Churches concerns and to point out that parking is restricted on Melton Road.

We do not believe that a scheme turning its back to Melton Road is a suitable solution.

3.3.3 Additional traffic and congestion (including during of construction and deliveries to site):

Residents living near the site raised concerns around the increased congestion especially during construction, which will impact the access to visitors and also limit parking.

Charnwood's response:

Were planning approval to be granted, we will include parking constraints as part of our tender and seek suitable solutions from bidders. We will monitor performance and respond to resident concerns.

3.3.4 Noise, dust and disturbance:

Nearby residents also identified a concern around the noise, dust, and disturbances that may arise during the construction stages.

Charnwood's response:

Were planning approval to be granted, bidders will be asked to set out detailed method statements around how they will mitigate against noise, dust, and disturbance - additionally, should the project receive planning permission it is also likely to have planning Conditions to make sure the neighbours aren't inconvenienced unduly.

3.3.5 Ecology

Another feedback that we can receive was that local residents wanted to keep as much as the hedgerow as possible, and would also like to keep the Cherry blossom trees along the street.

Charnwood's response:

We agree with residents and our plans include the retention of as much of the hedgerow and trees as we can under the plan.

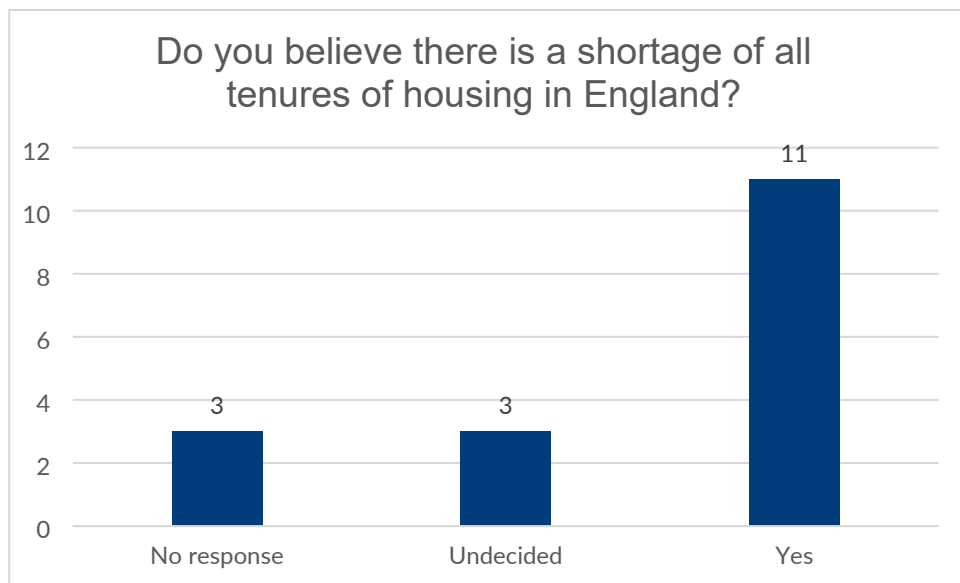
3.3.6 Priority and allocation for the bungalows:

Some consultees presented the need for this type of accommodation, either for themselves or for a relative. One person stated that there should be a priority for those who live locally and have a disability and whilst another mentioned that there should be a priority for those living in Thurmaston.

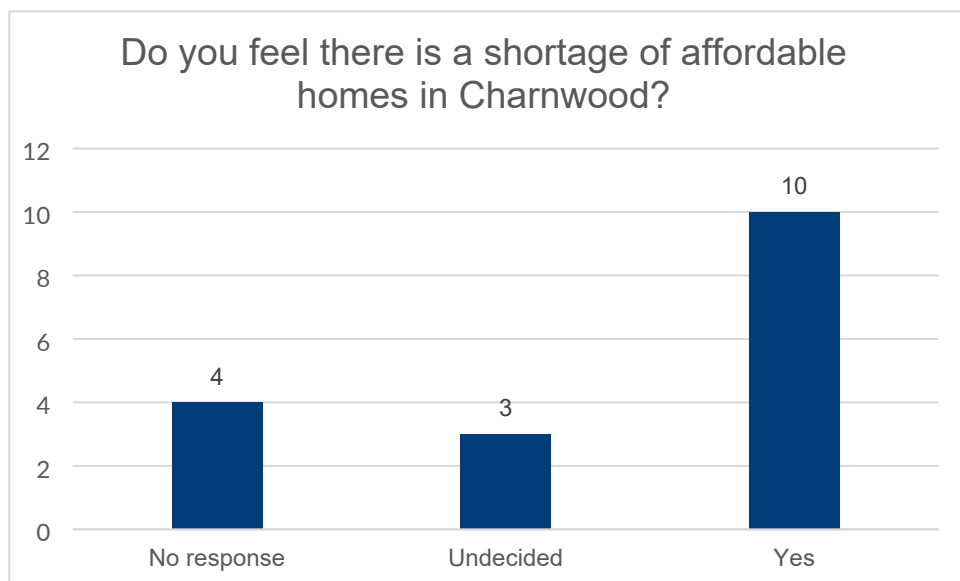
Charnwood's response:

Whilst we do not think this is a specific planning issue, we are concerned to ensure that the scheme, of all social rented homes, is allocated equitably under the Council's housing policies.

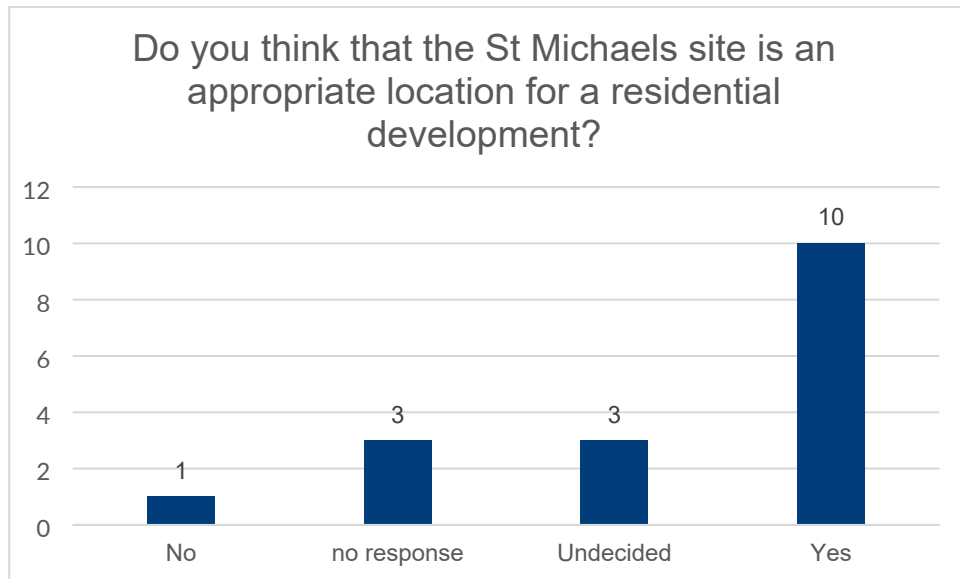
4 HEADLINES FROM SURVEY



Of those who attended the consultation majority (65%) of respondents did believe there is a shortage of housing for all tenure types in England. However, three respondents were undecided about the shortage of housing in England.



A similar number of respondents also felt that there is a shortage of affordable housing in Charnwood.



10 respondents felt that St Michaels Court was in the right location as a residential development. One person however felt that this location wasn't appropriate and three respondents were unsure as to whether St Michaels Court's location was appropriate as a residential development.

5 ST MICHAELS PCC CONCERNS

Since the event the Council's Director has received a letter from the Parochial Church Council (PCC) reiterating the comments of Church Members made at the open event. The letter, dated 17 June, whilst welcoming the provision of Bungalows as an improvement to the visibility of the Church raised concerns including:

The "clearly inadequate parking on Melton Road"

But that after 1800 and on Sunday that it is currently possible to park along the Full length of Melton Road in front of St Michaels Court

They are "concerned that the proposed new vehicular access to the development will be detrimental, reducing quite significantly the number of on-street parking spaces available in an area where demand routinely exceeds supply".

Additionally, the PCC "understand that parking spaces within the proposed development are to be undesignated, hence demand might exceed supply, leading to those living in or visiting the development parking along Melton Road or in the immediate vicinity"

Our submission includes detailed transport surveys and plans for the scheme. We believe the scheme meets the Council's criteria for a positive determination. Melton Road already contains parking constraints for the busier 0800-1800 Monday to Saturday time periods.

The PCC suggested an alternative layout turning the scheme's back to Melton Road. We do not think this is a suitable solution.

The PCC asked “If your proposed development goes ahead, we ask that consideration be given to the following, please:

- The perimeter wall between St Michael’s Court and St Michael’s Church be appropriately protected from damage.
- Measures be taken to protect the church building – and particularly windows - from vibration, flying debris and dust. • Noise be managed to ensure that worship is not interrupted (in addition to weekly Sunday worship, we have regular funeral services in church on weekdays and occasional Saturday weddings – we would be happy to pre-notify these by email if that would be of assistance to your site management team).
- Arrangements be put into place to ensure that access and egress from the churchyard is not restricted by parked vehicles / deliveries, and that funeral vehicles are able to stop at the church gate without hindrance.
- Traffic flow through the village is not impeded”.

We are very happy to confirm our intention to work with the Church, were permission to be granted, to address their concerns about the scheme during it’s construction phase.

We have included these comments as we promised to ensure that the PCC’s concerns were included in our submission.