

# Consultation Findings - Topic Areas

The following top ten topic areas have been identified as those generating the highest levels of dialogue and exchange during the April and May consultation events. They have been identified through canvass cards, website questionnaires and workshop records and, as they communicate those areas local people wished to discuss most, we can be sure that these topics are considered most relevant to the make-up of the concept masterplan from a local perspective.

Out of 15 topics overall, the ‘**top ten**’ have been individually reported on below in decreasing order of importance, as measured by the numbers of comments received. The percentages below are based on the fact that 906 discrete comments were logged, identifying 15 topics in all, although it must be borne in mind that the percentages used below relate only to those comments captured by the top 10 issues, which have canvassed over 90% of these comments.

## 1 – Streets, Gardens, Squares

Accounting for 29% of the 906 relevant comments, public space remains the top area of interest with 56% of all the comments received being supportive. There appears to be widespread satisfaction that the streets will be public and navigable 24 hours a day. Many comment that the scheme will now fit in well with its neighbourhood and can actively imagine themselves using the range of different spaces portrayed in the masterplan in the years ahead. Around 15% each of all responses for this topic flag up ‘concerns’ and needs for ‘clarification’ with the former mentioning the need for good maintenance and management and the latter requesting information about the tree planting and irrigation system given the preponderance of underground car parks. The productive gardens and allotments have generated excitement and a number of the suggestions (14%) propose active community engagement in looking after the gardens, including youth and school programmes.

## 2 – Affordable Housing

Affordable housing generated 18% of all comments. Although split opinion remains as to the best location for affordable housing, there is clear dissent among many Ebury Bridge Road communities to current plans and 40% of all responses express concern about the concentration of affordable housing along Ebury Bridge Road or the use of Moore House on Grosvenor Waterside for the accommodation of affordable housing. Around 8% of the comments supported the Concept Masterplan proposition for affordable housing while just under a quarter of all comments (22%) sought clarification, further suggesting that more needs to be done to properly explain ‘affordable housing’, who it is for and how it is managed. 30% of all comments offer suggestions that range from taking all the affordable housing off site altogether to seeking complete integration on the Chelsea Barracks site. It may not be possible to find a happy resolution for this area of the masterplan, based on the reactions to date.

## 3 – Highways and Parking

At 10% of all comments, highways and parking remains a strong area of interest, with just under half (46%) of all comments in this category raising concerns about the impact the development will have on parking and congestion. Mention is made of the cumulative impact that development at the Victoria Transport Interchange, Nine Elms and Battersea could have, alongside the Chelsea Barracks development, on already clogged roads and bridges, with many seeking assurances as to controlled traffic and parking. Just over a quarter (27%) wanted clarification on how the new retail outlets, sports and health facilities will be serviced and what allowances had been made for this and for associated ‘trip generation’. 20% offered suggestions ranging from lobbying for ‘green transport’ and implementing cycle lanes across the site to the use of car clubs. There were a small number of supportive comments (7%) from those who appreciated the efforts the masterplanning team had made to prevent rat runs and multiple points

of ingress, including via Ranelagh Grove. However, local people clearly feel that more needs to be done to reassure them about wider transport impacts and issues.

## 4 – Non-residential uses

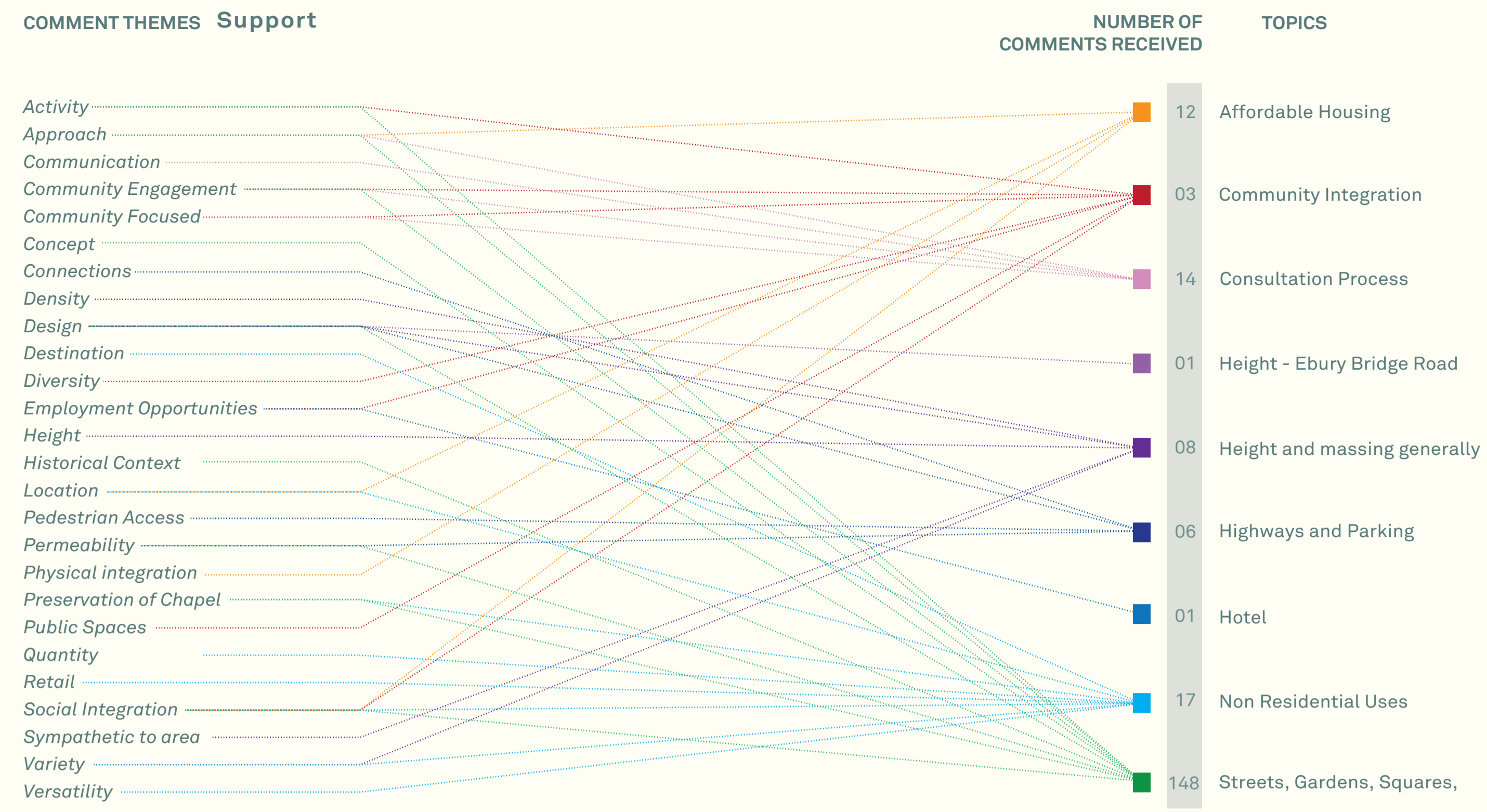
Commercial and community uses attracted 8% of all comments. With around a quarter (24%) signaling ‘support’, the local community appears to be beginning to welcome the provision of community facilities and services such as the sports hall, health centre and shops, which will help to build mixed-use areas within the masterplan, especially along Ebury Bridge Road. As for the ‘streets, gardens and squares’ item above, local people already imagine using these facilities and believe they will add to the quality of life in the area. The reuse of the old chapel is strongly supported, assuming a viable purpose can be found and there were no objections to small scale (corner) shops or a café being offered in the buildings that will help to form the square around the chapel. There was less unity over the proposition for a new boutique hotel at the intersection of Pimlico Road and Chelsea Bridge Road. Many of the 15% of ‘concerned’ comments were in respect of the hotel although there were also supportive comments, as many felt it could generate trade and local employment, support local retail outlets and generally help to keep the area populated and ‘self policed’. However, there was a great deal of concern regarding the height of the hotel, as reported below. A third (34%) of the comments sought clarification, particularly with reference to what the sports hall and health centre would offer, and in connection with the type of retail being pursued. Just over a quarter (27%) of the comments offered suggestions, with many of these attaching to the future use of the old chapel.

## 5 – Height and massing

Dropping to 7% of all comments, the treatment of height and massing now appears to be becoming less of an issue for a number of local residents. However, with half of all comments (51%) still expressing ‘concern’, there is much yet to be done, particularly along Ebury Bridge Road, where comments on heights in this area alone collected 22 comments (2.5%). Clarifications were sought in 17% of the comments. Many related to daylighting and general remarks about overshadowing, with assurances being sought that the squares and gardens would receive sufficient sunlight. Just under one fifth of the comments (19%) made suggestions ranging from setting buildings back from the street line, to dropping a level or two, or through setting the top floors above the sixth floor parapet level further back. Although only 13% of respondents expressed support for the heights overall, this is notable given the extremely high levels of concern expressed at the beginning of the consultation process. However, the feedback makes it clear that further reductions in height in critical areas, particularly along Ebury Bridge Road, will be required, to deliver a fully supported scheme.

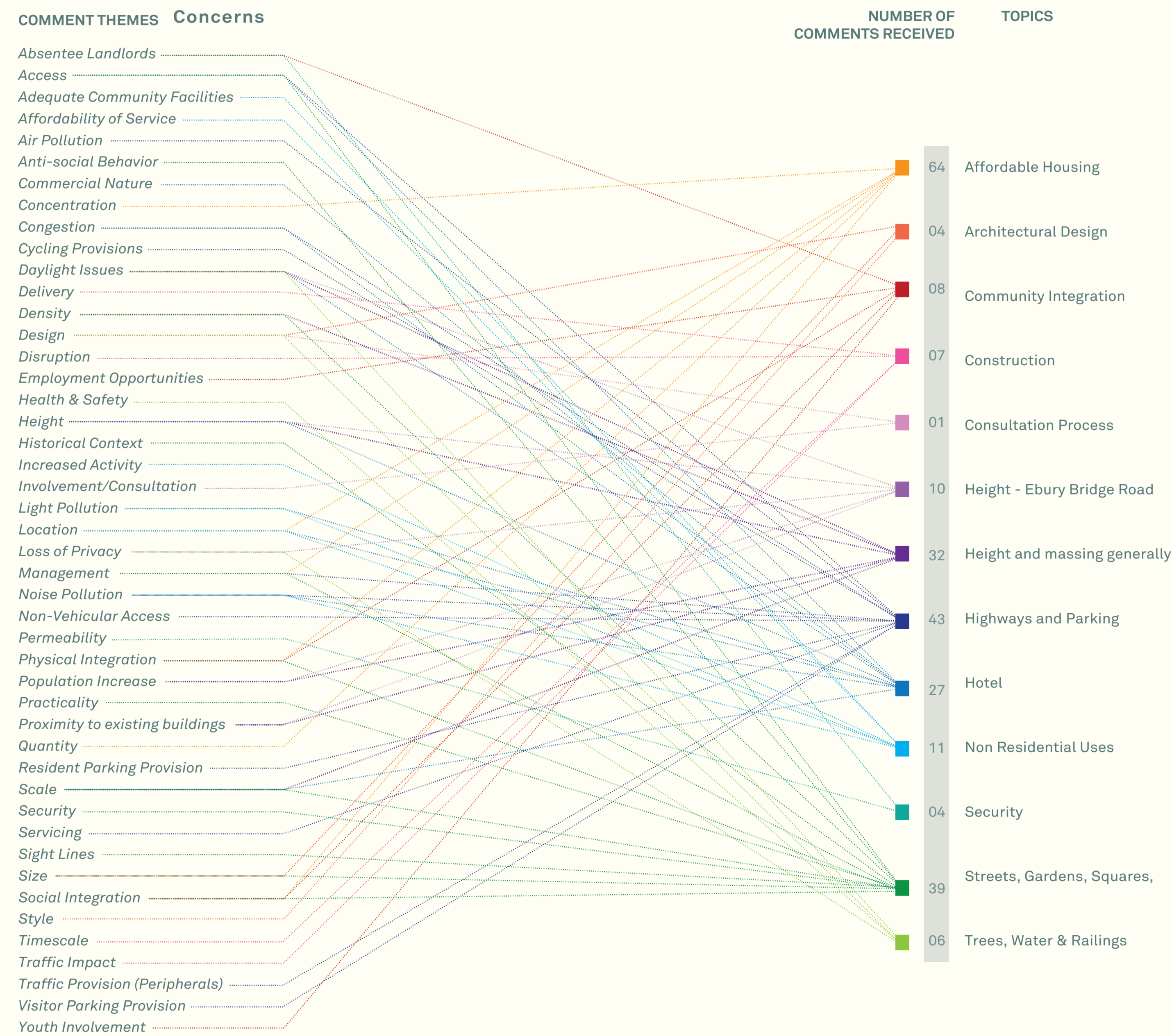
## 6 – Hotel

The hotel has generated 5% of all comments, most of which (63%) were ‘concerns’ as they were related to its height and bulk, which many clearly disapprove of, especially as the crossroads is commonly described as being a ‘cornerstone’ or a ‘gateway’ space into the neighbourhood. There are also specific concerns over noise generated by what some locals see as a 24 hour servicing environment. Some have suggested that the hotel should be re-sited altogether. However, the 2% minority of ‘supportive comments’ mask the important role that many believe the hotel could undertake, from supporting local employment to accommodating local meetings, events and celebrations. Suggestions, totaling 23% of the comment received, propose health spa’s, cocktail bars, street café’s and a host of other facilities that could be of use to the community, while more generally, many feel that the hotel could help to populate a neighbourhood that may have many absentee owners. Clarifications (12%) are sought on hours of use, means of controlling noise and use and assessments of traffic impacts.



### Support

Matrix analysis of Comment Themes and how these formed the Topics.



### Concerns

Matrix analysis of Comment Themes and how these formed the Topics.

## 7 – Architectural Design

The Masterplanners have constantly stressed that architectural design is not relevant to a Masterplan, leading to an Outline Planning Application. Accordingly, it is not surprising that architectural design only accounted for 4% of all comments. However, the responses do suggest expectations of a more sympathetic architectural approach based on the design work to date. This is borne out by the spread of responses, with 48% containing suggestions and 42% seeking clarifications. Of the former the general thrust is that the architectural style should be in sympathy with its surroundings without being ‘over historical’ or ‘pastiche’. There is a desire to avoid the use of ‘glass and steel’ which many believe would look out of place, with a preference for the use of traditional materials. Those seeking clarifications have been informed that the masterplanning team will be compiling a ‘design code’ and that this will act to guide detailed design at the next stage when it is likely that a number of architectural firms will be commissioned to see though the project. It is planned that the design code will be consulted on in the next stage, during the June and July events.

The last three topics, though fairly small in number terms signal the beginning of a shift of interest away from the purely physical aspects of the masterplan toward wider concerns and issues. This suggests that the key elements of the masterplan are increasingly finding support, allowing people to ‘look ahead’ at other issues which, though outside the direct remit of the masterplan are still of importance to local people, and can help to inform forthcoming tasks.

## 8 – Construction

Construction has witnessed growing interest in the past two months and now accrues 3% of all comments. Just under a quarter of these (23%) are concerns around the noise, dirt, dust and disruption that construction can potentially cause. 60% of the comments seek clarification as to basic construction techniques and protocols covering such matters as piling and monitoring effects locally. Suggestions are also beginning to mount across a range of issues related to construction, from ideas about using the Thames or the local rail network for the delivery of materials and goods to requests that local people and youth benefit through employment opportunities and training schemes. Many seek assurances as to keeping the area clean and tidy, including meeting the costs of window cleaning and removing dust etc. from window sills where this has been caused by the construction works. In this connection it is planned that the Residents’ Liaison Group will continue to report through Soundings on matters of local concern.

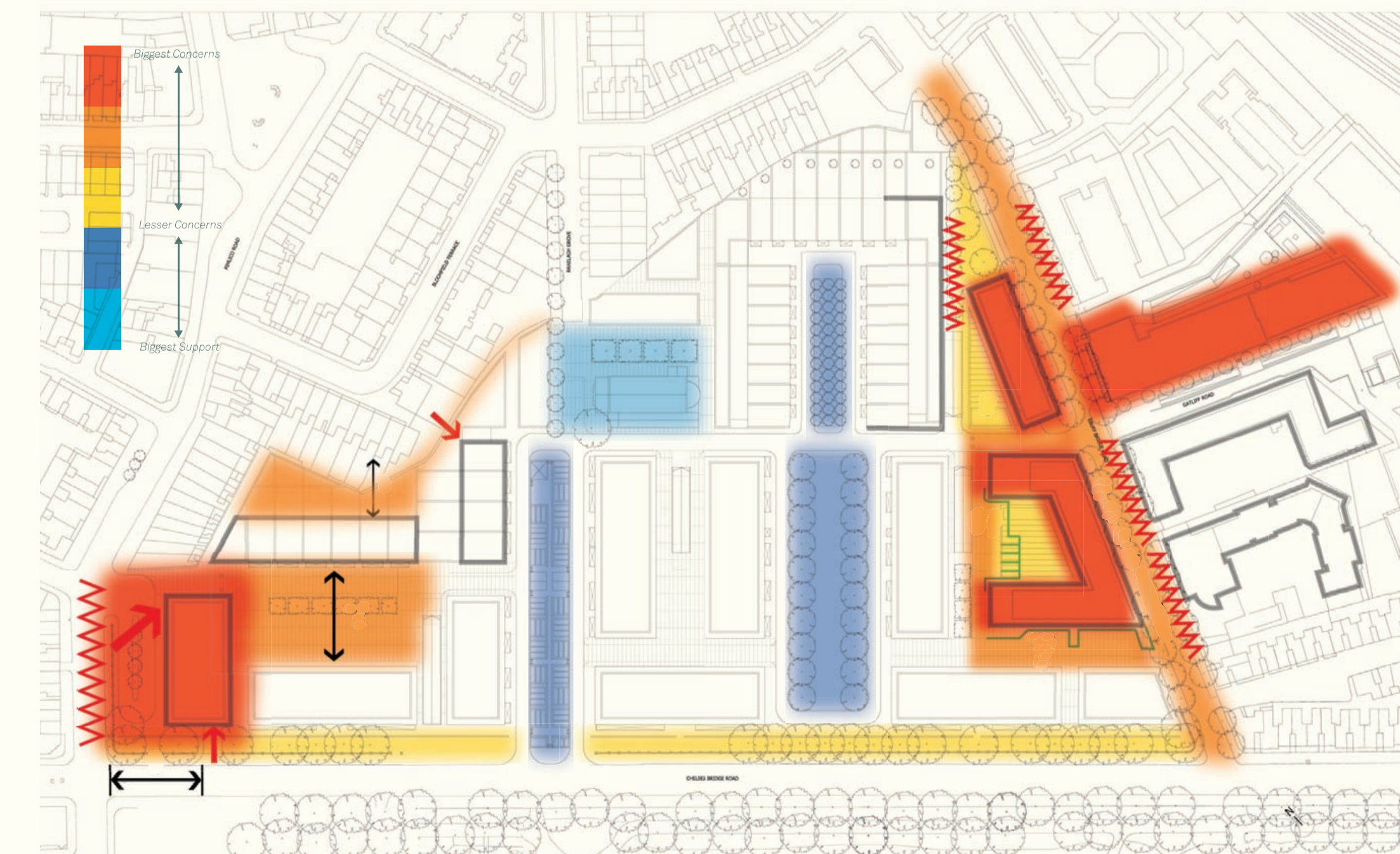


Diagram showing range of supports and concerns established through the consultation events. The image uses warm colours to depict areas where there is concern and cooler colours for areas that are popularly supported.

The diagram provides a synopsis rather than an extensive elaboration of all comments. It seeks to provide a clear snapshot of spatial issues for the further consideration of the masterplanning team.

## 9 – Trees and Water

Representing 3% of all comments, ‘trees and water’ flag up desires to see these elements of the scheme being further tested in design terms and developed in terms of maintenance. The interest signals the fact that although there are nearby greens and gardens, few are freely public and are usually open only to license holders - Burton’s Court - or through permission of the owners - Ranelagh Gardens which is owned by the Royal Hospital Chelsea. The supportive comments (22%) generally envisage free use of the new spaces within the masterplan whereas the concerns (21%) are generally in respect of maintenance and management issues, with many as yet unsure of the water features and irrigation systems, due to their innovative nature. Clarifications generally address either questions as to the degree of public access across the scheme (only ‘Orchard Court’ where the townhouses are to be located will be a garden for key-holders only) or in terms of how the gardens will be maintained (there will be estate gardeners). The high proportion of suggestions at just under half of all comments (46%) is healthy, as it suggests that a solid level of ‘ownership’ is beginning to attach to the area’s new green spaces. There have been suggestions for the water feature along Chelsea Bridge Road to explore a curvilinear or more playful feature. However, visualisations of this will be needed at the next stage to ensure that local people understand what is proposed. Some have suggested the incorporation of the pool or pond to extend the water narrative tied back to the main feature along Chelsea Bridge Road.

## 10 – Community Integration

The final ‘top ten topic’ gathering 3% of all comments, relates to ‘community integration’ and questions as to how this can be best achieved. Currently, at 29% ‘concerns’ versus 12% ‘support’, those who are not convinced by the masterplan in this respect outweigh those who are satisfied with by nearly two and a half to one. As has previously been touched on, this may well be related to the fact that it is only recently that residents have begun to appreciate the mixed use offer that is being developed for Ebury Bridge Road. As the masterplan is suggesting a link from the Thames, through Grosvenor Waterside and on to Pimlico Road, it is clear that the intention is to make the Chelsea Barracks site ‘a piece of London’. This message may not yet have been widely understood. With 19% seeking clarification, it is also likely that the uses that would support integration - the sports hall, the health centre and community facilities at the old chapel - are not yet fully appreciated. As for the above topic (‘trees and water’), the high percentage of suggestions (40%), many of which are related to the chapel and to initiatives to involve young people and youth, signal a healthy appetite for on-going involvement.