

Bent Lane and Balcarres Green

An overview of consultation workshops and analysis of findings

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Section 1: Background and Overview

1.1. Background

South Ribble Borough Council are currently in the process of carrying out a six-week consultation period for the proposed Green Links programme. This consultation exercise aims to gauge resident's opinion and input from all across South Ribble, looking at how new and current leisure facilities both indoor and outdoor can be linked together across the Borough via green links suitable for walking, running or cycling, whilst optimising the use of our already prestigious parks.

This consultation consists of drop-in 'roadshow' like events held in each of the Council-run leisure centres across the Borough, more comprehensive workshops in different localities using a 'Planning4Real' engagement methodology, and a survey available to all residents.

In early stages of this consultation period it became clear that special attention was needed for both Bent Lane and Balcarres Green. As a result of this, focused Planning4Real workshops were organised and undertaken by the Council.

1.2. Overview

Through the feedback received across consultation sessions undertaken, it is clear there is a diverse range of views and opinions expressed by residents. It is also evident that residents had significant reservations and concerns regarding housing developments on these sites. As part of any next steps to be undertaken, the Council would like to further identify potential uses and continue to work with residents.

This report aims to provide an overview of the consultation events that were carried out, along with the key themes that were identified in regard to improvements residents would like to see in their local areas.

This report does not conclude any outcomes or areas of priority for residents, as further analysis and consultation will be carried out with residents to develop and build on identified key themes.

Section 2: Consultation Events

2.1. Times and Dates

The consultation workshops were carried out on the below dates at the stated times:

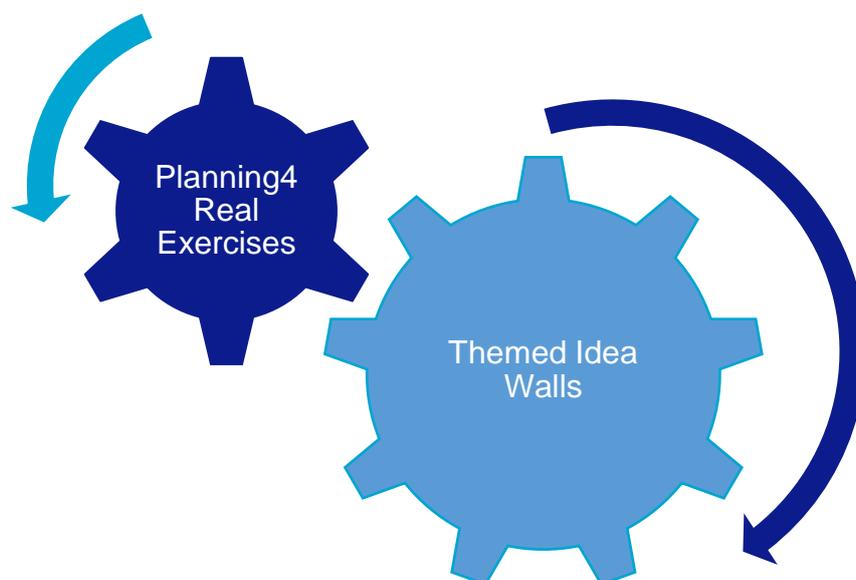
Workshop Event	Date	Time	Location
Bent Lane	28 th February 2018	6pm – 8pm	Civic Centre, Leyland
Balcarres Green	11 th March 2018	6pm – 8pm	Civic Centre, Leyland

Although the below consultation event was not held primary for resident of Balcarres Green or Bent Lane, conversations and quotes provided during that session have also been taken into account amongst the analysis due to the volume of Balcarres Green residents that attended.

Drop-in Event	Date	Time	Location
Bent Lane	18 th February 2018	4pm – 8pm	Leyland Leisure Centre

2.2. Consultation Methods

During the consultation events there were two key methods that were used to gather insight from residents, and these were:



2.2.1. Themed Idea Walls

This consultation method was used in both ‘drop-in’ and ‘workshop’ consultation sessions. This is a simple concept where residents are encouraged to use coloured sticky notes to add their ideas, suggestions, or even concerns to ‘A0’ sized boards (that look like brick walls).

These Idea Walls were broken down into the below four key themes throughout the consultation sessions. The colours below mirror the coloured sticky notes that were used within each consultation sessions for each theme.



The table below provides an overview of what we mean by each of these themes:

Theme	Meaning
Green Links and Spaces	This theme looks at a proposal to develop Green Links between leisure facilities, parks and open spaces, which residents can use for activities such as walking, running, cycling or dog walking. Discussion here consists of where these links could be and what could be added to them to improve them.
Parks	For this theme discussions include what residents currently like about their parks, what barriers prevent them from using them, and what could be done to improve them.
Health, Leisure and Wellbeing Campus	Likewise, discussions include what residents currently like about their leisure facilities/centres, what barriers prevent them from using them, and what could be done to improve them.
Burning Issues	Burning issues relate to anything that does not naturally fall into any of the above categories, however residents would still like to provide their views and insight (for example, all types of development including housing).

2.2.2. Planning4Real

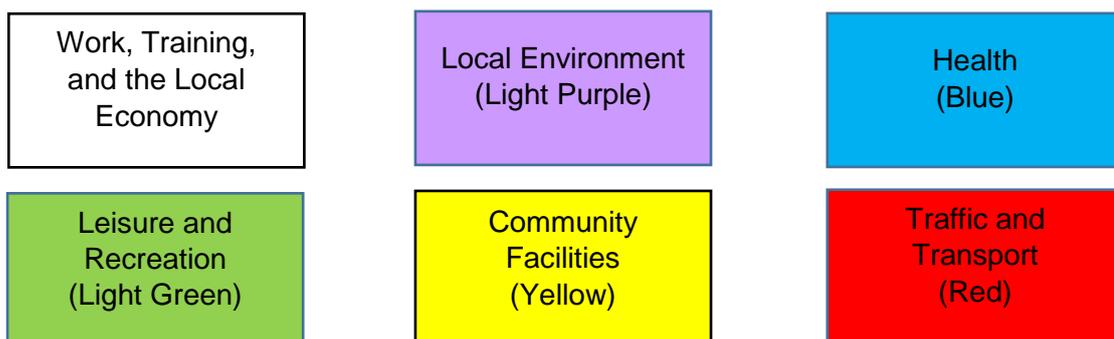
Planning4Real has been used as the centre-piece to our consultation workshops and has been received well by residents, to date.

What is Planning4Real?

- ▶ This is an interactive approach to local planning consultation, which allows both individuals and groups to provide their input into plans for their local area.
- ▶ This approach encourages individuals to express both their current concerns and ideas for improvement.

How does Planning for Real work?

- ▶ Using a 3D model/map of a local neighbourhood or town, those involved in the Planning4Real exercise are able to gain a clear view of the current buildings, facilities, infrastructure, and open spaces in that particular area, through a birds eye view.
- ▶ Small cards with are positioned around the model/map and are used to plot ideas and concerns in specific locations.
- ▶ The majority of these cards are pre-written, although there is also the option for free writing on plain cards.
- ▶ These cards are broken down into different categories, each represented by a different colour (shown below).



These cards were put down by residents throughout the consultation sessions and officers would collate the results, both as the session is ongoing and afterwards to ensure that everything is captured accurately.

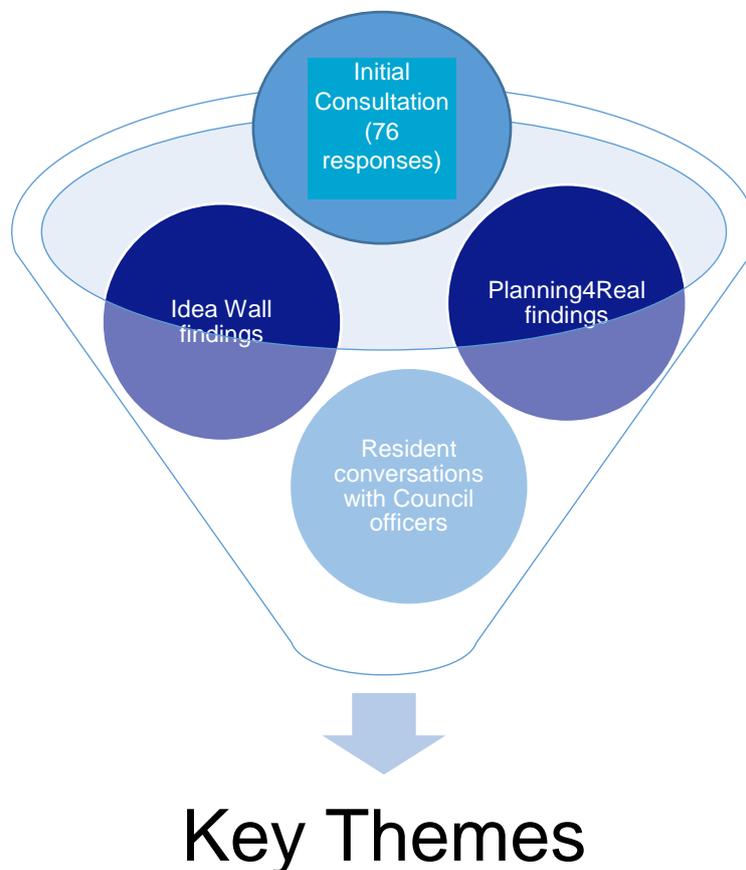
2.3. Collating and Analysing the Data

When collating the information gathered during the consultation events input from Planning4Real exercises, Idea Walls, and conversations with officers have been taken into account. As the Idea Walls were primarily focused on themes relating to the wider Green Links events, not all comments are relevant to this analysis, therefore only appropriate quotes have been captured. As a result of this, input from the Planning4Real exercises are the primary source of input and form the identified key themes, although these are supported by quotes throughout. In addition to this, equal consideration was also given to the initial consultation that was carried out, which received 76 responses.

The collation and analysis of the data has been carried out manually by Council officers to ensure that no comments are missed, therefore ensuring that all comments are given equal consideration.

As a listening Council we committed to carrying consultation events at both Bent Lane and Balcarres Green (with the Balcarres Green workshop taking place on the 11th March 2019). The analysis from these events has been completed very quickly in order to bring forward a paper to Cabinet on the 20th March 2019.

Clearly further investigation and analysis will need to be undertaken as the Council commits to continuing to work with residents going forward.



Section 3: Bent Lane

At this consultation session approximately seventy to eighty residents attended, all of which were actively involved in the Planning4Real exercise, Themed Idea Walls, and discussions with the Council officers at hand.

3.1. The Area

For reference, the site in question on Bent Lane is shown in the image below:



3.2. What Residents have told us

The following tables provide a summary of the Planning4Real cards that were added to the 3D model by the residents that attended the Bent Lane workshop.

The below table outlines the ranking of Planning4Real category cards that were placed on the site on Bent Lane (with 1 being the category receiving the highest volume of cards placed down).

Rank	Categories
1	Local Environment
2	Traffic and transport
3	Blank (free text)
4	Leisure and Recreation
5	Work training and local Economy
6	Community Facilities
7	Health

From these responses it clear to see that residents are primary focused on both maintaining and improving their local environment, whilst also being heavily concerned regarding the traffic in the area.

To be more specific the individual cards that were placed on the green space on the model the highest number of times were:

- ▶ Trees to be planted here
- ▶ Wildflower meadow
- ▶ Planting to encourage wildlife
- ▶ Community orchard wanted
- ▶ Street flower beds wanted
- ▶ Play area for children
- ▶ Football/kick about area wanted
- ▶ 6 – 12yr olds adventure playground
- ▶ More exercise opportunities for children
- ▶ Footpath for disabled needed here
- ▶ Lighting needed here
- ▶ Seating needed here

Section 4: Balcarres Green

At this consultation session approximately fifty to sixty residents attended, all of which were actively involved in the Planning4Real exercise, Themed Idea Walls, and discussions with the officers at hand.

4.1. The Area

For reference, the site in question on Balcarres Green is shown in the image below:



4.2. What Residents have told us

The following tables provide a summary of the Planning4Real cards that were added to the 3D model by the residents that attended the Balcarres Green workshop.

The below table outlines the ranking of Planning4Real category cards that were placed on Balcarres Green (with 1 being the category receiving the highest volume of cards placed down).

Rank	Categories
1	Local Environment
2	Traffic and transport
3	Leisure and Recreation
4	Blank (free text)
5	Health
6	Community Facilities
7	Work training and local Economy

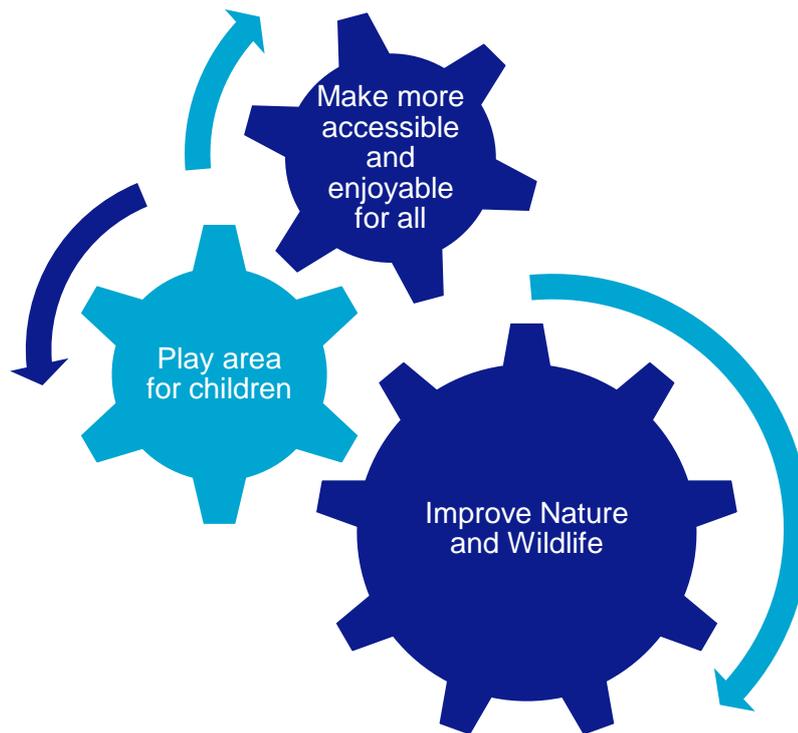
Like with Bent Lane residents, these responses clearly identified that residents are primary focused on both maintaining and improving their local environment, whilst also being heavily concerned regarding the traffic in the area.

To be more specific the individual cards that were placed on the green space on the model the highest number of times were:

- ▶ Plant more trees
- ▶ Wildflower meadow
- ▶ Planting to encourage wildlife
- ▶ Play area for children
- ▶ Playground for under 5s
- ▶ 0 – 12 outdoor adventure playground
- ▶ Outdoor GYM
- ▶ Seating
- ▶ Traffic fume problem

Section 5: Key Themes

These Planning4Real responses (including those that were free written), along with comments added to Idea Walls have helped to identify three key themes which were aligned between residents from both Bent Lane and Balcarres Green areas. These are shown in the graphic below.



Although these three broad themes are aligned between both areas, there are still distinguishing differences. Each key theme will be discussed and key differences will be outlined.

5.1. Improve Nature and Wildlife

This key theme was the theme which received an overwhelming majority of responses, with the key message coming through being that residents would like to see these spaces stay green, and encourage both nature and wildlife to thrive.

It was a shared view from both area's residents that these green spaces are currently well used and would be a loss to those within the community.

Quotes to support this from the workshops included:

"Bent Lane and Balcaress Green are much loved green spaces and great community assets".

"Green spaces are very precious for our quality of life, mental health, and for providing recreational spaces for young children to exercise together".

"The nature and wildlife within these green spaces were one of the most valued aspects, and residents felt that rather than this being destroyed, this should be a strength that is built on".

Furthermore, residents felt that this land would complement the Green Links programme:

"The Green Links programme is a great idea, however green spaces such as Bent Lane and Balcarres Green would complement this rather than Green Links being an alternative".

This theme did not significantly differ across both localities, however there were quotes captures that were specific to each area.

5.1.1. Bent Lane

"We need more trees on Bent Lane! This will not only add value to the attractiveness of the area, but it is also necessary as we have a high amount of traffic therefore we need fresh air".

"Bent Green is a social space for dog walkers, and a great space for families to meet before and after school".

5.1.2. Balcarres Green

"Balcaress Green is a wildlife haven, with many birds, flowers and trees. An idea could be to add to this, plant more trees and add more seating to enjoy it".

5.2. Play area for children

Once again, this was a theme that received a lot of attention across both localities, although there were differences in regard to suggestions that were made.

5.2.1. Bent Lane

Residents at this workshop expressed a wish for a play area that is suitable for children of all ages, and also suggested that this could be combined with sports facilities to be used by older children.

A quote to support a play area for children on Bent Lane is shown below:

“The green space is already used a lot by children to play and that is without a play area. Having a play area would make this a great space to play”.

Furthermore, a resident from Bent Lane carried out a Facebook poll on local community pages where they asked residents to vote on the use for the green space of Bent Lane. This vote provided options between a new playground or new buildings. Based on the snapshot of this poll that was handed to Council officers at the workshop, the option for a new playground won every poll, for example achieving 662 votes to 28 votes on the ‘Leyland Memories’ page.

Conversation between officers and resident who attended the workshop also suggested that although there is a desire for a play area for children, it is important that the equipment is functional for the ages that would use it. It was pointed out that play areas often contain certain pieces of equipment that is either impractical or never used.

5.2.2. Balcarres Green

Quotes to support a play area for children on Balcarres Green are shown below:

“Play areas on Balcarres Green would be great, for example swings appropriate for toddlers and more adventurous things for older children”

“A lot of children stay inside rather than playing outside as there isn’t as much for them to do as there once was, this is a contributor to mental health problems starting in early years. Green spaces are key to help overcome this challenge”.

Council officers facilitating the Planning4Real exercise also recall numerous conversation with residents, where residents favoured the idea to have equipment targeted at teenagers as there isn’t as much for them to currently do in the area.

Furthermore, interestingly the Balcarres Green Planning4Real exercise received a lot of suggestions favouring an outdoor gym on Balcarres Green. The quote below also supports this.

“An outdoor gym would complement a play area for children”.

5.3. Make more accessible and enjoyable for all

These green spaces are seen as valuable community assets, in particular for those in the area that are limited to accessing other green spaces, such as the elderly and those with disabilities.

5.3.1. Bent Lane

The Bent Lane Planning4Real exercise receiving a high number of suggestions relating to improving footpaths and seating, in particular to make the space more accessible to those with disabilities. Council officers also recall having a conversation with a Bent Lane resident about how these improvements could help those living with dementia to enjoy the green space.

Quotes that support this theme from the Bent Lane workshop include:

“Bent Lane would love a community space for locals to gather, as we are short of community spirit and every person needs to have a community. This is especially important for the older generation”.

“Better footpaths etc. would be really helpful for disabled and elderly residents, this would help them enjoy the green spaces more, which is important as it is often harder for them to access places such as Worden Park”.

5.3.2. Balcarres Green

There was quite a lot of suggestions for seating areas to be added to the Balcarres Green space. A Council spoke with a resident at the Balcarres Green workshop who suggested that a bench would be an appropriate memorial for the Balcarres Green area being the original site for the Leyland Cross.

Quotes that support this theme from the Balcarres Green workshop include:

“Balcarres Green could may be have more trees (they do improve the air quality). Possible a path right round the park. May be some more seating for us old residents!”

“Green spaces are much needed for mental and physical health and wellbeing. Outdoor exercise facilities for abled and disabled people would be beneficial”.

“A seating areas would help people enjoy the area more”.

“Provide seating areas (recycled benches and park furniture)”

5.4. Other issues raised

It is also worth noting that although infrastructure, traffic and parking does not fall under the remit of South Ribble Borough Council, there were significant concerns raised regarding road safety and air quality in both areas.

Section 6: Summary and Next Steps

6.1. Summary

In summary, South Ribble Borough Council has carried out numerous consultation events and have listened to both ideas and concerns from residents. From the consultations carried out to date it is clear the Council needs to continue working with residents to take forward ideas and potential opportunities for the sites, which can then be further considered by Cabinet.

6.2. Next Steps

If you are a resident and do want to be kept up to date with these advancements, please ensure that you have signed up to our mailing list. You can request to do this by emailing greenlinks@southribble.gov.uk.