

Future Oswestry Plan

Postcard Feedback 2021



The Future Oswestry Plan has been supported by a comprehensive programme of engagement activity designed to involve members of the public and key stakeholder groups based in Oswestry and beyond. One of the methods used to encourage feedback was the development of feedback postcards. These were used through May/June 2021 in Oswestry Library and at the Marches School to obtain feedback from library users and children and young people living locally. This summary report presents key findings from the feedback provided.

58 Postcards completed

137 Comments

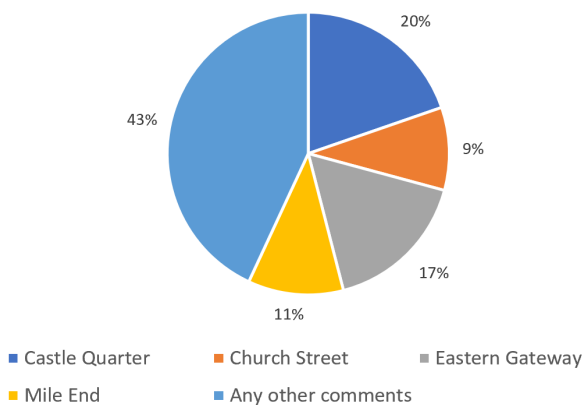
55% of the postcards were returned from Oswestry Library and 45% from the Marches School. There was a good balance of feedback across the two main sites and the respondents took the time to add comments and explain their views.

Oswestry Library provided display material to allow visitors to the library to better understand the background to the Future Oswestry Plan, its partners, ambitions and proposals before providing feedback.

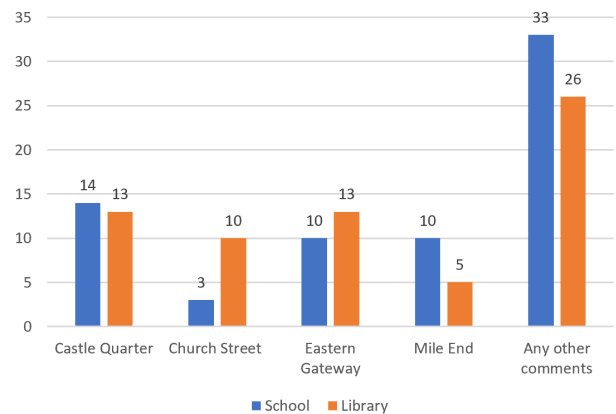
The engagement within The Marches School was varied, both using a display to allow comment but also supporting feedback via discussion with pupils in a lesson-based approach. This provided important learning for those interested in learning more about public engagement in economic planning.

Feedback was varied across the four locations with slightly less feedback for Church Street and Mile End compared to greater interest in the Castle Quarter and Eastern Gateway. More library users commented on Church Street than school respondents and more school respondents commented on Mile End.

Comments by location



Feedback by postcard completion site



Castle Quarter

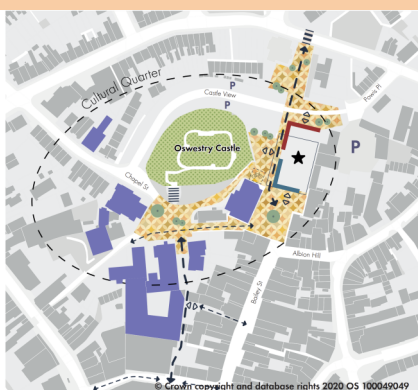
Top themes

41% Of comments for the Castle Quarter relate to entertainment and culture (cinema, trampoline park and other ideas).

26% Of comments are on the theme of retail opportunities.

Other themes within the comments included the need to improve existing facilities, traffic management and pedestrian access.

Action plan
Castle Quarter



Example comments

- “Redevelopment of the market is a must.”
- “Better signage to direct people from the supermarkets to this area, otherwise people shop and go.”
- “Very keen to see this area developed as a cultural quarter. An improvement in arts provision will be a great enhancer for the town both for residents and visitors.”
- “Great idea to brand this area the cultural quarter. Would like to see big screen used on Bailey Head for business/heritage promotion/ positive messages and events e.g. live screenings/outdoor cinema.”
- “Make it so the floor isn’t on a slant.”
- “More disabled parking for easier access.”
- “Swimming Pool and Trampoline Park.”
- “I like the idea of a fountain.”
- “Excellent looking forward to it.”

Church Street

Top themes

31% Of comments asked for improvements in pedestrian access for Church Street

23% Of comments for Church Street were on the theme of more/ improved retail options.

Other themes within the comments included:

- Seeking environmental improvements through the developments.
- Improved traffic management.
- Provision of bicycle lanes.
- Entertainment and cultural opportunities.

Example comments

- “This is the most attractive part of town and small independent businesses should be encouraged and more pedestrianisation to make it more customer friendly.”
- “Great plan to close off from traffic and make it pedestrian and social. What happens on Red Square at the moment is such a great idea.”
- “Stop cars from driving up the road.”
- “Close from Park Gates to the cross 10am to 4pm giving businesses some opportunity as Red Square and enhance the town.”
- “Festival square has to be a public space not a car park. Something missing here is the importance of integrating traffic and pedestrians on English Walls. Must be easier for pedestrians as the key entrance into the commercial area.”
- “Feels like atmosphere of festival square is already changing thanks to Square One and Quality independents. Good thing to enhance seating/street furniture here.”





Eastern Gateway

Top themes

30% Of comments for the Eastern Gateway relate to improvements in cycle and pedestrian routes.

Other themes mentioned by only small numbers of people (no more than 4 people for each) were:

- Increasing opportunities for retail within the area.
- Concerns about the bus station proposals.
- Requests for improvements in traffic management.
- Concerns over proposals for housing developments.



Example comments

- *“Leave the bus station (bus can turn around in a safe manor and children and parents, elderly people can get off safely) not on a 2 way traffic system.”*
- *“Not sure about 2 way traffic. Would people like to live on the end of the island?”*
- *“I don’t think Morrisons should be housing. Although we do need housing it’s a large area at the entrance to the town. It should be a cinema, cultural centre etc. Bus station should be moved.”*
- *“Making traffic two way here very positive move. Hate having to give people directions to Oswestry from this direction. It has looked shabby/unloved for too long. Improvements long overdue.”*
- *“Bike lane for safer biking.”*
- *“Need to upgrade train station, would help people transport and is better for the environment.”*
- *“Make road safer for people to cross.”*
- *“More crossings and fix up shops.”*

Mile End

Top themes

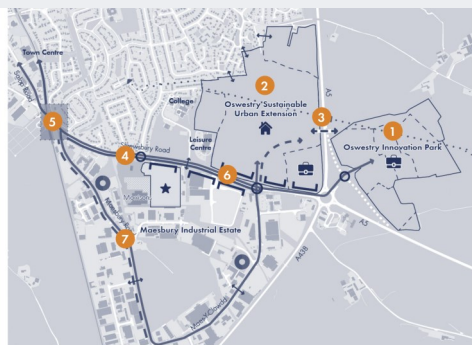
40% Of comments for Mile End related to opportunities for improved highways and traffic management.

20% of comments highlighted the need for improvements in pedestrian access and access for those with disabilities and accessibility needs. Other themes mentioned only by one person each included:

- Disagreement with proposals for housing.
- The importance of considering the environment throughout.

Action plan Mile End

- 1 Oswestry Innovation Park
- 2 Sustainable Urban Extension
- 3 A5 crossing
- 4 Mile End bus connection
- 5 Mile End cycle connections
- 6 Shrewsbury Road streetscape
- 7 Maesbury Industrial Estate enhancement



Example comments

- *“Fill pot holes and make pavements wider.”*
- *“Traffic lights.”*
- *“Moving bus interchange from the bus station into a 'hub' on a main 2 way street is dangerous thing to do. Do not sacrifice lives for a little bit of development land.”*
- *“New tiling on the leisure centre would improve the entrance to the town- the awful blue is an eyesore.”*
- *“Gasworks bridge is already a bottleneck. Unless traffic use is cut down this will only get worse.”*
- *“Old Smithfield site - no vision. Needs to be mixed use - live to work - ideal for young professionals and couples to live in the town centre. McDonalds and car showroom do not benefit town centre.”*
- *“Accessibility for disabled people everywhere, not just here.”*
- *“Excellent.”*

Other comments

25%

Of other comments requested investment in cycle lanes.

20%

Of the other feedback included requests for wider pavements and improved access.

15%

Called for consideration of entertainment opportunities.

5%

Of comments identified opportunities for improved public transport, 5% also asked for more support for business.

8% of the comments were focused on the Future Oswestry Plan process. Comments included requests for more opportunities to participate as plans develop over time.

- *“Much more input from town people required.”*
- *“I believe (I am not a business) that the rates small businesses pay are quite high for buildings- any chance of reducing so more chances for survival for these businesses.”*
- *“Why spend so much money on the railway when you could have a shuttle bus to Gobowen Station, Orthopaedic hospital and Park Hall - Oswestry. Also old trains are not good for the environment.”*
- *“There should be a bus that travels round the whole of Oswestry.”*
- *“Improve the railway to discourage car travel which is better for the environment.”*
- *“What measures are in place to ensure omissions from cars and lorries do not exceed prescribed limits alongside new housing developments off the A483/A5?”*
- *“Safety of students (1,500) has not been considered for Morda Road. Paths are not wide enough for students to walk or cycle and there is no designated space for students to travel safely.”*
- *“Make the pavements on Morda Road wider and add a bike path. This is because the pavement is narrow and I tripped off and nearly got run over.”*
- *“Make a bike lane all down Morda Road, and also make the pavements wider.”*
- *“There should be cycle paths, bigger pavements, hedges and vegetation should be cut so you can walk on the pavements, all of this will build our community, be sustainable and will help our environment.”*
- *“How can those who need a car get as close as possible to the main shops (Blue Badge holders)?”*
- *“Use the castle mount for summer concerts; crowds would gather below. Concerts could be a whole range of music from classical to pop to Jazz.”*
- *“I think that a bowling alley or a cinema would be great economically and socially as it would bring a good income of money and more jobs for people in the area. On the other hand it would improve young peoples lives with a space to go at weekends.”*
- *“Great display - very clear. Makes me feel optimistic about Oswestry’s future.”*

