

# Statement of Community Involvement

2 – 8 Danson Road, London Borough of Bexley

September 2019

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The following Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) supports the planning application by Carebase Ltd to develop 2 – 8 Danson Road. The planning application has been submitted to the London Borough of Bexley (LBB) and the SCI is submitted in support of the application, outlining Carebase’s comprehensive approach to, and outcomes of, the pre-application public consultation and programme of community engagement. The SCI has been prepared by Curtin&Co on behalf of the Applicant.
- 1.2 The SCI details the process undertaken, the feedback gathered from the local communities and how those comments have shaped the application submitted. The appendices record all of information presented, and the materials used during the course of the consultation process.
- 1.3 Throughout the process, Curtin&Co and the Applicant have been cognisant of, and have exceeded, the requirements of the Government’s Localism Act 2011, the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 and LBB’s Statement of Community involvement 2019. Carebase Ltd is committed to continuing the consultation process and working with the local community ahead of the application being heard at Planning Committee, as well as throughout the development phases.
- 1.4 The scheme is for a 70-bed care home catering for high dependency residents with dementia and end of life care.
- 1.5 The plans have generally been very well received by the public. The feedback showed a broad spectrum of views, and a range of key opportunities, interests and concerns it raises for local people.

## 2. THE SITE



- 2.1 This site lies in the north east corner of Danson Park between Park View Road and Danson Road and to the south of a pedestrian entrance to Danson Park in the London Borough of Bexley.
- 2.2 Carebase Ltd consider every potential site carefully to ensure it provides the best quality of life for their residents. Danson Road is a residential street with excellent public transport connections and an ideal setting for a care home.

# 3. POLICY GUIDANCE

## CONSULTATION AND THE POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced “...a new requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments. This gives local people a chance to comment when there is still genuine scope to make changes to proposals...to further strengthen the role of local communities in planning.”
- 3.2 National and local policies have guided Carebase’s approach to the pre-application consultation and community engagement. The guidance encourages proactive communication between Applicants, local planning authorities and local communities to help facilitate better planning decisions.
- 3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the areas. The NPPF adds that early engagement has “significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality preapplication discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.” In addition, the NPPF acknowledges that whilst applicants are not required to do so by law, they should seek to engage with the local community, and where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees before submitting their applications. This has the benefit of ensuring that decisions can be taken by the local planning authority in a timely manner.
- 3.4 The Applicant has also considered the aspirations set out in the London Borough of Bexley’s Statement of Community Involvement (2019), which states “developers and applicants are encouraged to discuss their proposals with planning officers, statutory consultees, neighbours to the development and the wider public where relevant. Where major development is proposed discussions with officers will cover possible methods of and timescales for pre-application publicity that applicants may wish to undertake on their proposals. This may include public exhibitions or meetings which will inform residents and interested groups”.
- 3.5 Effective and genuine community consultation has been of great importance to the Applicant and engagement will continue throughout the post-submission phase.

## 4. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 4.1 The approach to pre-application consultation has exceeded the guidance provided by the NPPF and RBG's SCI.
- 4.2 Working with and on behalf of the Applicant, Curtin&Co developed a consultation strategy to engage key stakeholders and local residents. A programme of consultation with the wider community began in June 2019.
- 4.3 As encouraged in LBB's SCI, Carebase Ltd engaged comprehensively with the local community in advance of submitting its application. It was determined that this would take place as a two-stage process.
- 4.4 The first phase of consultation took place in June 2019 and involved door-door engagement with local residents. Curtin&Co conducted two iPad canvassing sessions going door to door to seek views and establish whether there was a need more older care facilities and if local residents would benefit by such a scheme. This would allow the development team to take the community's comments into consideration from an early stage.
- 4.5 A second phase of consultation took place in September 2019, inviting residents to comment on the evolving proposals and more detailed aspects of the proposed development.
- 4.6 The Applicant also held pre-application discussions with council officers and elected members. The table below provides a record of all consultation activities undertaken by Curtin&Co.

Date	Stakeholder Activity	Attendees
23 June 2019	Meeting with ward members	Cllr Teresa O'Neill and Cllr Linda Bailey
17 & 18 September 2019	iPad Canvassing	Local residents
29 August 2019	Further meeting with ward members	Cllr Teresa O'Neill and Cllr Linda Bailey
4 September 2019	Public Exhibition	71 Attendees



## 5. THE FIRST PHASE OF CONSULTATION

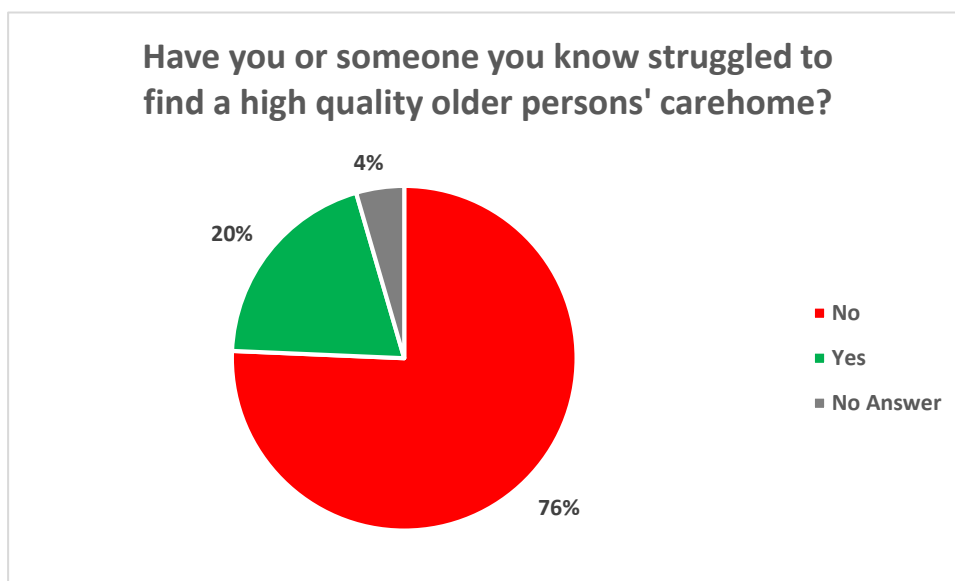
- 5.1 Curtin&Co conducted two sessions of iPad canvassing on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 close to the site. The purpose of the canvassing was to understand local views of the site, with particular attention to the attitudes towards older people's accommodation more generally in order to guide future consultation.
- 5.2 Ahead of the canvassing exercise, Curtin&Co distributed letters to the area below to inform residents that we would be in the area to engage regarding the proposals. This was well received on the doorstep and residents were familiar with the site. Following on from the letter, a number of residents called Curtin&Co asking for further information.
- 5.3 In total, consultants spoke to 111 residents, the majority of which live very close to the site.

### Map of Responses



## FEEDBACK PROVIDED

- 5.4 The following is a summary of the answers given to the questions, along with some analysis which highlights further conversations had with residents.
- 5.5 Question One asked residents if they knew anyone who struggled to find older persons' care in the area. Whilst 75% of residents stated they had not, many stated this was through absence of circumstance. A number of residents surveyed went on to state they imagined it would be difficult to find adequate local care.

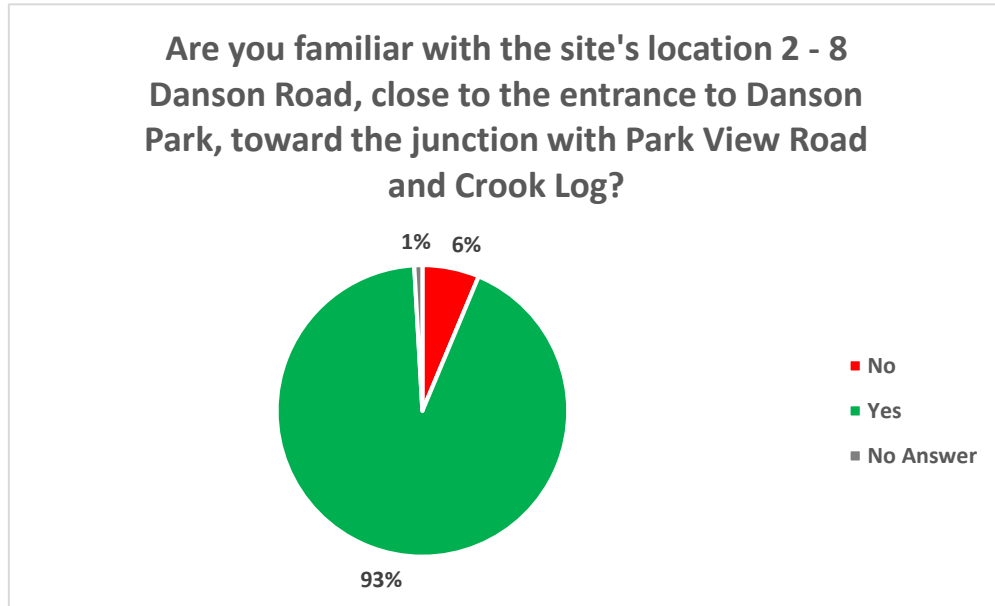


- 5.6 Question Two asked residents if they felt there would be a need for such facility in the area. Building on the point made in answer to the previous question, where many residents identified a need, nearly two thirds of residents responded that they felt that a facility of this type would be welcome in the community and would definitely be necessary.

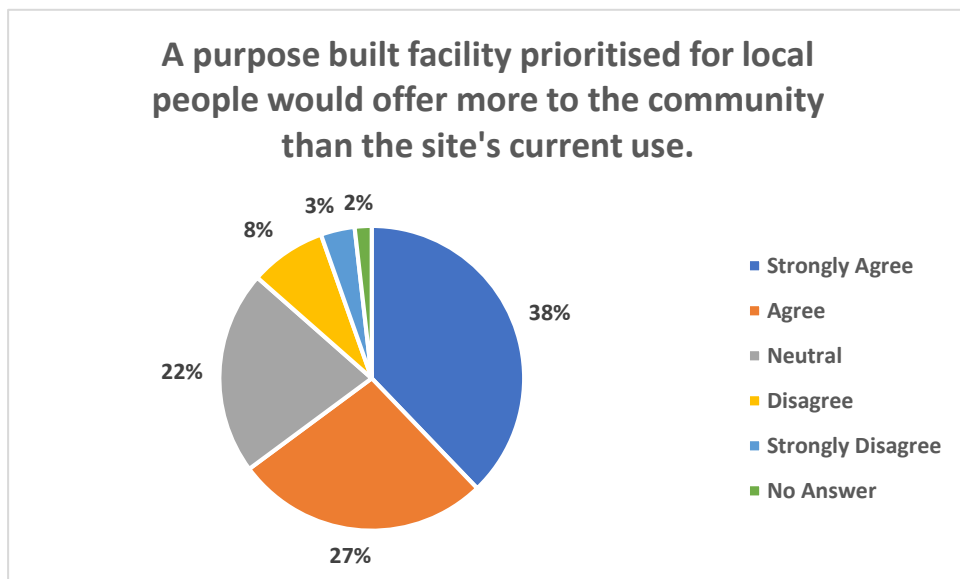




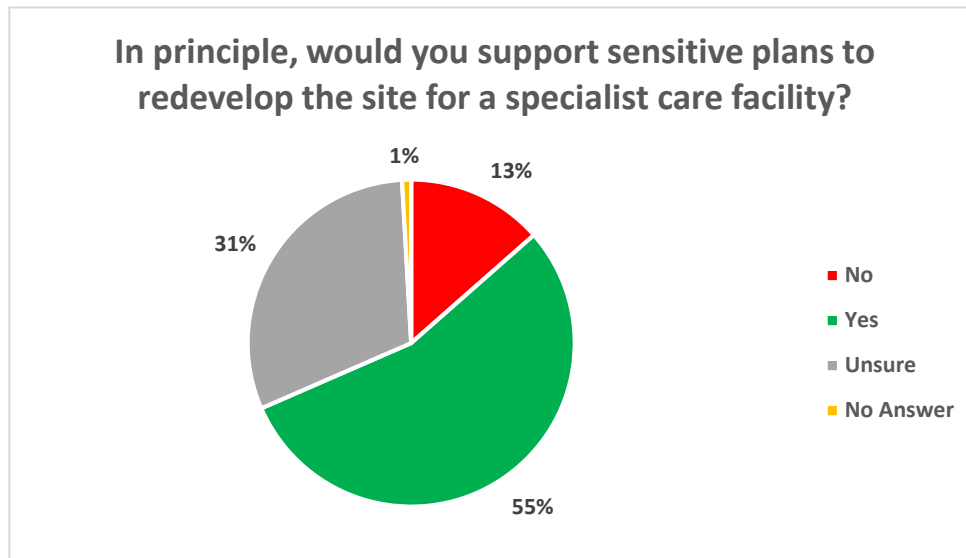
5.7 Question Three asked residents if they were familiar with the site. Unsurprisingly residents were aware of the site, as it so easily identifiable and close to the junction. It was noted that the letters sent by the project team in advance of the canvassing exercise helped residents to identify the site and created a familiarity which opened a channel for candid dialogue.



5.8 Question Four asked residents if they felt the proposals offered the community more than the current state of affairs. 65% of residents agreed that the proposals offer more of a community provision than the four existing homes. Whilst some residents did note that it seemed a shame to lose homes, the proposed facility was widely regarded as necessary and a 'good fit' for the community. Furthermore, just 11% of residents disagreed that the facility would offer more to the community than just four residential homes.



5.9 Question Five asked residents if they supported the proposals in principle. Encouragingly, 55% of residents gave the scheme a vote of confidence. By contrast just under 14% opposed. This demonstrates that there is still a sizeable proportion of the community that remains to be convinced to support the proposals however this is a positive vote of confidence for the scheme at this early engagement stage.

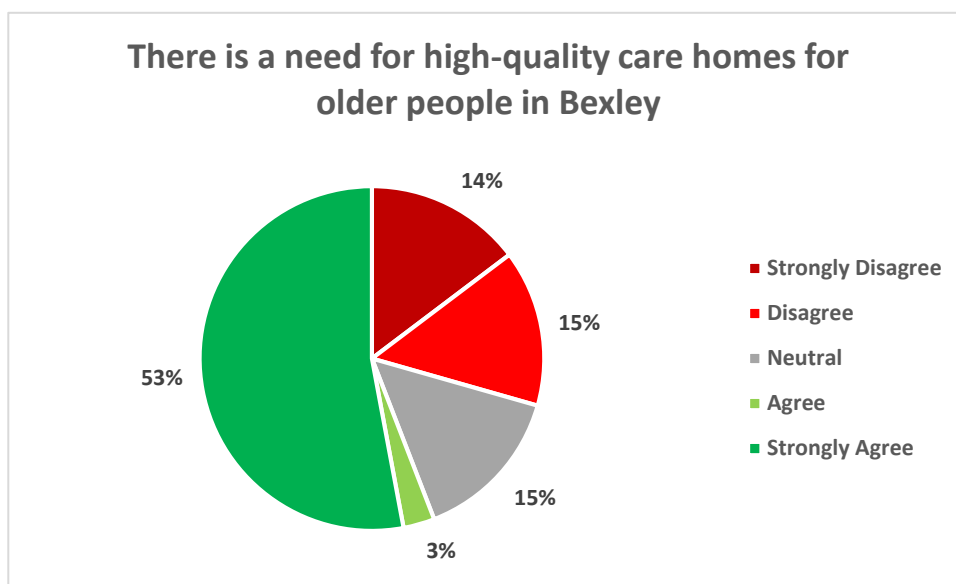


## 6. THE SECOND PHASE OF CONSULTATION

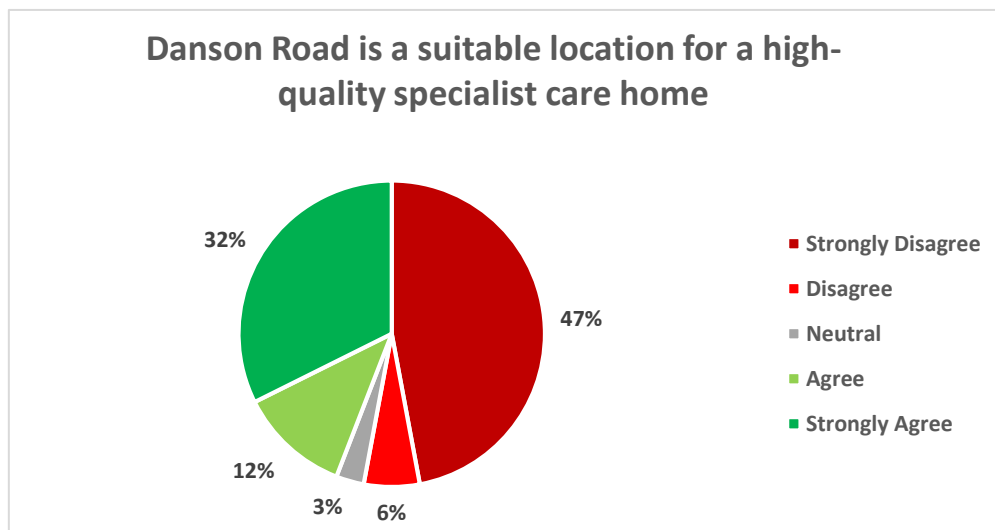
- 6.1 To engage further, Curtin&Co organised a public exhibition event where members of the project team would be present to answer any questions which residents might have. 2565 addresses were written to as seen in the appendix, Figure 1.1, Area Map of leaflet distribution.
- 6.2 As part of the consultation plan local ward councillors for Crook Log ward, Cllrs Councillors Linda Bailey, Sybil Camsey and Teresa O'Neill were invited to a pre-exhibition preview.
- 6.3 The exhibition was held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019 from 3pm to 7pm at the Veterans Club of Bexley, 23 Danson Road, Bexleyheath, DA6 8HA. On the day, the proposals were on displayed on banners and members of the project team attended.
- 6.4 Overall, 71 people attended and 34 left feedback and comments on the feedback forms, the comments can be seen in the appendix, Table 1.1. The vast majority of residents in attendance came from inside the immediate area having been notified of the event by the advertising the leaflet distributed ahead of the event. The appendix, Figure 1.2 shows the leaflet distributed.

## FEEDBACK PROVIDED

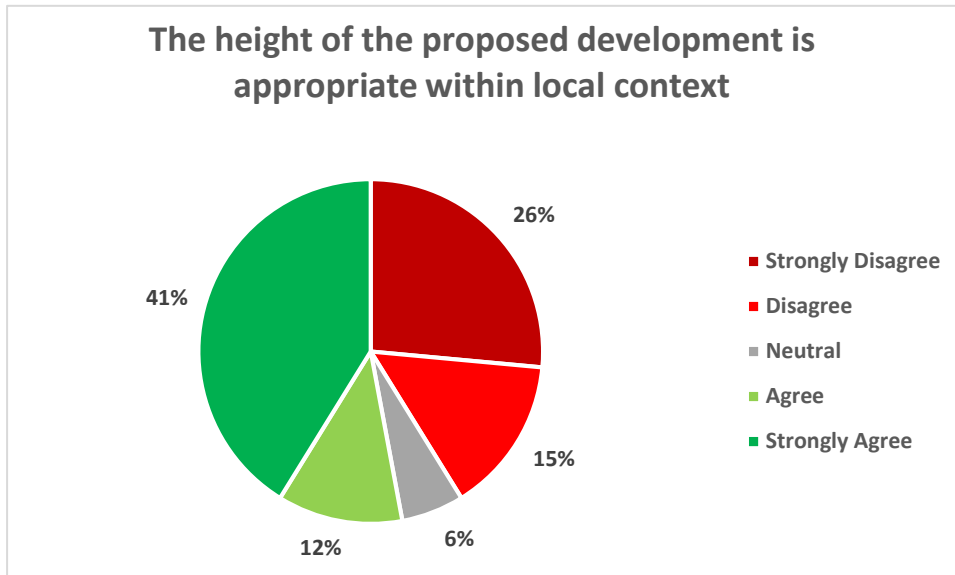
- 6.5 The feedback questions were designed to complement the proposals which were on display at the exhibition, to ensure that residents had a clear understanding of what was being proposed. Respondents were asked to rate statements. The following is a summary of the answers given along with some analysis which highlights the feedback provided.
- 6.6 Of the respondents, 56% strongly agreed or agreed that there is a need for high-quality care homes for older people in Bexley. 15% were neutral because they were unsure or had no view. 29% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed there was no need for high-quality care homes. One respondent commented that *"Sounds very interesting – there is a need in this area for a care home"*



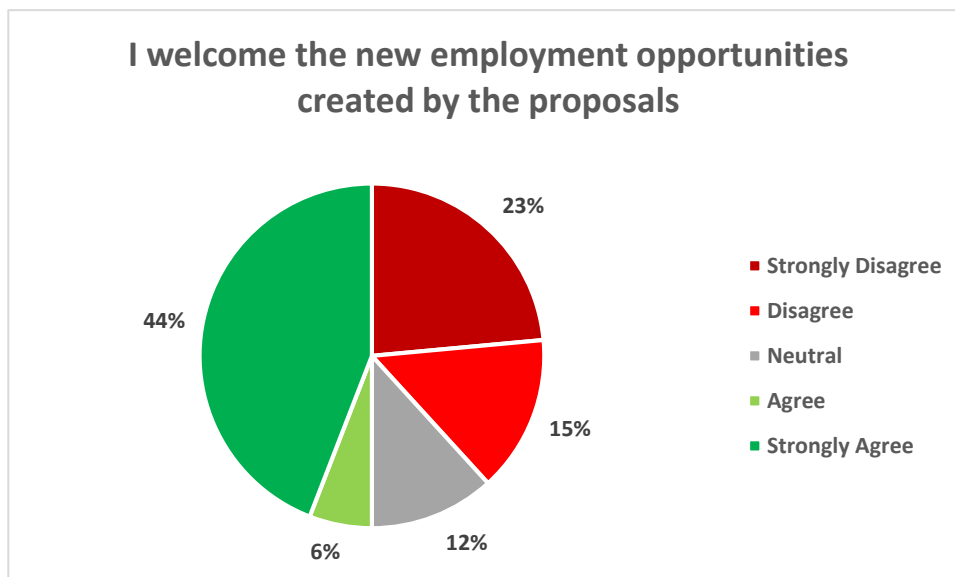
- 6.7 Of the respondents, 44% agreed or strongly agreed that 2 – 8 Danson Road is a suitable location for a specialist care home. 3% were neutral because they were unsure or had no view. 47% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the site was a suitable location for a specialist care home. There was a mix of views on the suitability of the site location, the main concern was the site's proximity to the Danson Road and Crook Log junction.



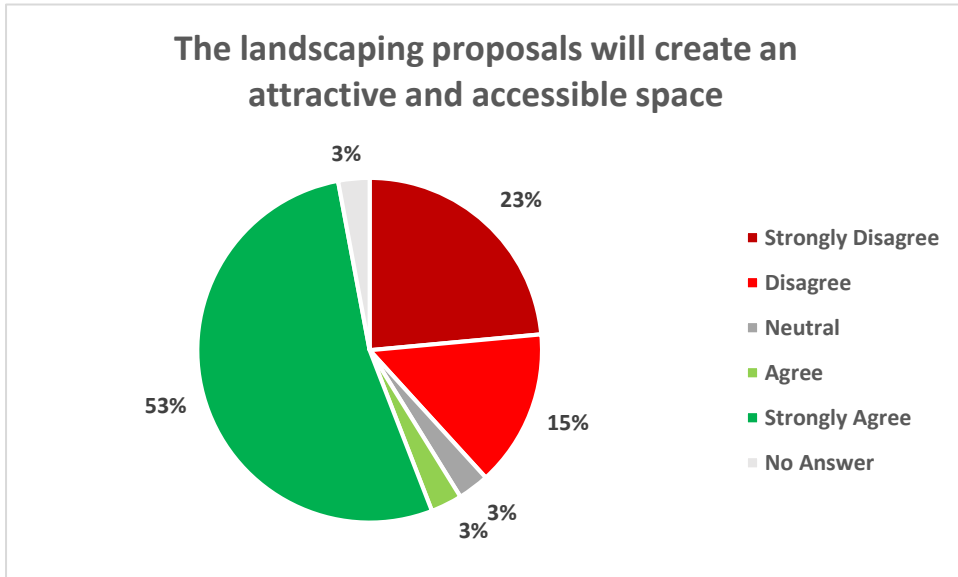
6.8 Of the respondents, 53% agreed or strongly agreed that the height of the proposed development is appropriate within the local context. 6% were neutral because they were unsure or had no view. 41% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the appropriateness of the proposed height. During the consultation process we have taken on board comments and significantly amended the design in response, most noticeably the reduction in height and massing of the plans.



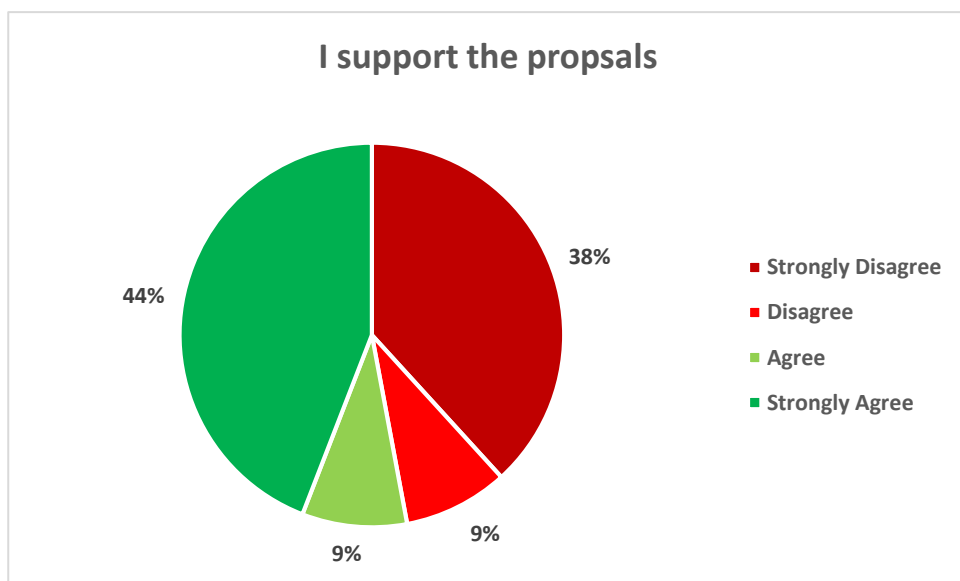
6.9 Of the respondents, 50% agreed or strongly agreed that they welcome the new employment opportunities. 12% were neutral because they were unsure or had no view. 38% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the employment opportunities to be created as a result of the development.



6.10 Of the respondents, 56% agreed or strongly agreed that the proposals for landscaping would create an attractive and accessible space. 6% were neutral or did not answer the question because they were unsure or had no view. 26% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposals would create an attractive space.



6.11 Of the respondents, 53% agreed or strongly agreed that they support Carebase’s proposals. Although there are mixed views regarding the proposals, the results show the vast majority of residents support them.



## RESPONDING TO FEEDBACK

- 6.12 Carebase Ltd welcomes the extensive feedback it has received throughout the consultation on its plans for 2 – 8 Danson Road. The plans have generally been very well received by the public. The feedback showed a broad spectrum of views, and a range of key opportunities, interests and concerns it raises for local people.
- 6.13 The table below outlines Carebase Ltd’s responses to the various issues and queries raised. The responses explain how the application addresses the points raised in the feedback and comments.
- 6.14 The following responses are intended as a summary only. The technical documents submitted with the planning application provide a comprehensive analysis and justification for the proposal, dealing with each of the issues and considerations that are relevant to the nature of the development.

KEY COMMENTS/ ISSUES RAISED	CAREBASE Ltd’S RESPONSE
Parking spaces	The parking provision is in line with the typical amounts provided for older care developments. Typically, from our experience care home employees tend not to drive to work. Also care homes usually attract a limited number of visitors.
Location of the site	Having considered the needs assessment, it is clear the site is a good location for a care home given the lack of other alternatives.
Traffic and road pressure	Carebase Ltd are in discussion with the highways authorities and amendments have been made to the highways plan. Please see the transport assessment for the detailed proposals.
Construction disruption	Carebase Ltd has not appointed a contractor for development of the site. However, if planning consent is given the Construction Management Plan submitted as part of the application will be fully implemented.
Not in keeping with the local environment	Careful consideration has been used in the development of the proposals in order to respect the neighbouring Danson Park. During the consultation process we have taken on board comments and significantly amended the design in response, most noticeably the reduction in height and massing of the plans.



## 7. CONCLUSION


- 7.1 This SCI demonstrates that the Applicant has conducted a programme of pre-application consultation aimed at spreading awareness of its proposals to develop 2 – 8 Danson road.
- 7.2 The Applicant has considered and responded to the feedback received by making appropriate changes to its plans, by ensuring that the issues and concerns raised have been fully addressed in its planning application, or by identifying the appropriate mechanism to address issues in during the construction process, or once the development is complete.
- 7.3 Overall, the local community appear to be supportive of the proposed scheme to develop a high-quality care home for residents to receive the best quality of life. Residents also recognise the employment benefits the proposal would bring to the Bexley.
- 7.4 The Applicant will maintain an open dialogue with the local community as its proposals for the site progresses.



Figure 1.2: Leaflet Distributed

**2 – 8 Danson Road**

**PUBLIC EXHIBITION FOR CARE HOME PROPOSALS**



Carebase would like to invite you to a public exhibition to view the proposals to redevelop numbers 2 to 8 Danson Road into a new high-quality care home. The development will provide for a mixture of nursing, dementia and residential care.


The exhibition will allow local residents to view the proposals ahead of the submission of a planning application. Members of the project team will be on hand at the exhibition to answer any questions you may have.

**Where:**  
Veterans Club of Bexley  
22 Danson Road  
Bexleyheath  
DA6 8HA

**When:**  
Wednesday  
4th September 2019  
3pm to 7pm

**2 – 8 Danson Road**

**How to find The Veterans Club of Bexley**



If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact David Shetcliffe at Curtin&Co:

[davidshetcliffe@curtinandco.com](mailto:davidshetcliffe@curtinandco.com) 0207 399 2296

**Table 1.1: Comments Received**

<b>COMMENTS RECEIVED</b>
Inappropriate location. Too close to the traffic lights and it is an already extremely busy road. The access in and out of the location will be a problem. There will be a lot of coming and going with staff, medical services, general deliveries and visitors.
I wish you all the best in your endeavours to open the care home and hope that it is high-quality care you will provide, because in my experience care is normally very mediocre because the elderly with dementia cannot speak their minds.
I definitely agree that there is a need for care homes in this area and I truly think that Carebase will do a wonderful job as they have experience of these matters.
This is badly needed for the borough as long as local residents have first refusal hopefully it will free up beds in the hospital.
Looking forward to the opening day.
We have looked at the proposed layout for a new care home at 2 – 8 Danson road and I feel it fits in with other homes on the road.
Totally inappropriate site. Inadequate parking, extra traffic from delivery vehicles, emergency services etc. Who will afford this type of care home? I would not want live next door with all the noise. Family homes should be kept as such what happened to the conservation area? The developer contributions sound like a bribe.
Sounds very interesting, there is a need in this area for a care home.
Please send me the information when completed.
The scheme blends in well with the houses in the street and it will be good for the area.
While I agree there is a need for care homes in Bexley, I am worried about the position of this home. It is very near to several busy roads and cars turning right into homes and this will cause traffic chaos. However, this building is quite attractive and not too tall and the proposed landscaping, if carried out, should be quite attractive. I hope the building work will not disrupt the wildlife in the park.
This is about the worst possible location for a building needing access day and night it is on a busy junction where there is no parking, it is noisy and busy. There are queues of traffic constantly and frequent sirens from emergency vehicles because of the traffic lights. Bexley Council do not lock the park gates at night so there is little security. There are several old established trees, which I have no doubt will be felled during the building process. If you go underground, it would jeopardise the stability of neighbour's houses. I live opposite the site and do not want to look over onto this building, nor hear the inevitable cries of the dementia patients who get on a loop. 17 parking spaces does not seem much for deliver vehicles, staff and visitors. I am not looking forward to the building process as this will be disruptive for all local traffic which is horrendous anyway. I am against the 'care home' ethos as only shareholders benefit to the detriment of families. I will be opposing this with all my energy.
I simply cannot see how this is the best location for a development of this type. The park is a jewel in Bexley borough, and this simply does not enhance the area. Despite the information on the traffic control, this is a big junction and what will be regular in and out flows of traffic which will not work
The design of the building is not in keeping with the local properties. Access in and out of the homes will be very difficult due to it being too near to the traffic and Danson road is a very busy road at all times.

## COMMENTS RECEIVED

Horrible design and it will lower the value of our properties.

I strongly oppose the proposed development as this location for the following: the appearance of the proposed development does not fit in with the surrounding properties, many of which date back to the early twentieth century. The proposed development is unattractive and would have a detrimental impact on the character of the local area. Suggesting that 17 car parking spaces is sufficient for staff, 70 residents and their visitors is preposterous. Danson road and surrounding roads are extremely busy with virtually no room for on-street parking. The entrance to the development, so near a very busy road junction would have a detrimental impact on traffic flow and could be potentially dangerous. Provision for care for the elderly is important but it is low-cost care that is required for people who cannot afford the high cost of moving to a care home such as this.

You will be facing strong opposition to this proposal by all residents and local Councillors. Go somewhere else!

I am very unsure about the area being sustainable for a development such as this. I disagree with placing this development next to a park which is a 'Jewel' in Bexley's crown. In addition, whilst I understand there will be a no right turn into the home, I still believe this is adding pressure to an already busy junction.

Our main concerns are traffic disruption during construction and ongoing parking provision. During construction it is inevitable that there will be major disruption as such a busy junction. On a relatively compact construction site vehicles are likely to have difficulty accessing the site, which is likely to result in the junction being blocked and or vehicles being stacked along Danson road. This will cause even more traffic being forced to use the Grove, Sydney and Dallin road to avoid what is the always Danson – Crook Log junction. There is a primary school in the Grove/Sydney road. At peak school start and end times it is almost impossible now for cars to stop lawfully because of the weight of traffic. More traffic pressure in the area will just exacerbate the situation and increase pollution levels in the area. Having only 17 parking spaces on the site, for a 70-bed care home will mean there will be additional cars that must be parked in the local area. The current parking situation is far from ideal. The Grove/Sydney road have parking restrictions where only a number of free bays are available. During the week these bays are usually taken by commuters either on their way to Bexleyheath Station or those who work around Bexleyheath and look to park for free. As a resident if you use one of the free bays and move your vehicle, usually in the morning, you will be unable to park on your return. Staff and visitors to the home will also be competing for limited spaces available.

This is a residential area, not a commercial area as you want to make it. This will cause long term traffic problems on Danson road, during the demolition and construction phases. The park is for leisure and pleasure this building will make it an eyesore as its adjacent to the entrance of the park.

I strongly disapprove of Carebase's intrusive, unsolicited and disruptive approach to the local community. I do not agree that this area is suitable location for a care home given the busy and often noisy nature of the junction at the end of Danson road.

Thin end of the wedge- once a carrot is dangled in front of homeowners, properties will be sold willy nilly and all sorts of developments will take place.

Concerns about the access and egress for vehicles. One of the entrances/exits (unclear from presentation) is close to traffic lights. There is invariably a queue at the lights. Are you proposing vehicles to turn right across two lanes of traffic? What about ambulances? How do you propose refuse and deliveries vehicles to access the site? 17 spaces are similar to nearby residential homes which is full of cars every day and overflows in to local streets.

## COMMENTS RECEIVED

The building on major junction (which at times is majorly disrupted). There will be major traffic build up due to entering and exiting care home. The first (two homes) is being built higher than the original buildings and six windows are overlooking private gardens. The Design and appearance are not ecstatically pleasing or sympathetic to the natural surroundings of Danson Park and the original properties. As stated, 17 car parking spaces for visitors and staff (70 beds how many staff or visitors or major deliveries), if the car park is full where are the visitors and staff going to park- there will be additional traffic problems for residents nearby, Crook Log school and leisure centre, and Danson road. The proposals do not show impact on Danson Park for visitors inside the park or at the rear.

Traffic management need to be a priority – and access as agreed per the plan.



