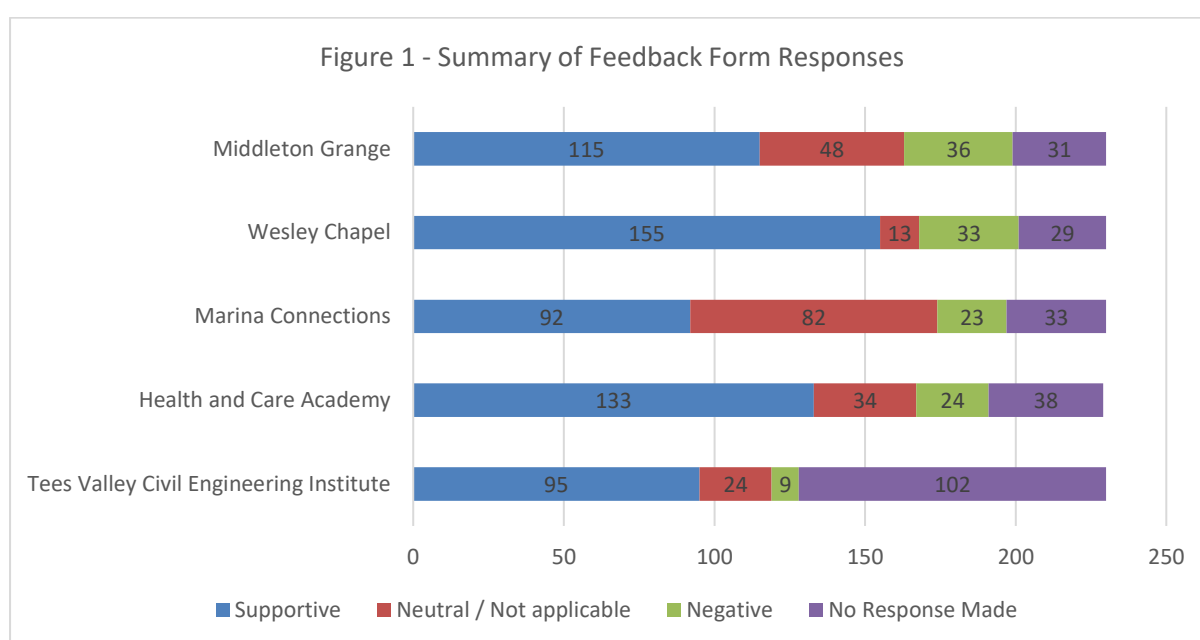


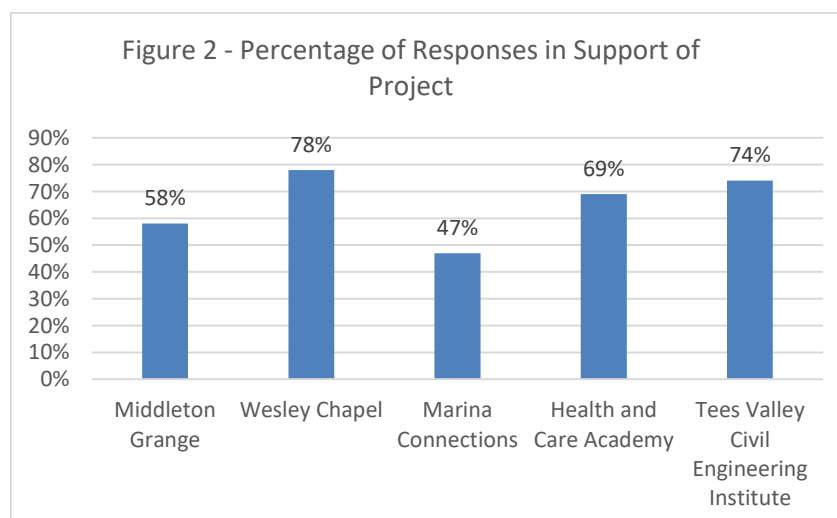
## Hartlepool Town Investment Plan – Consultation on TIP Priorities

Views were sought from members of the public on the priority projects agreed by the Town Deal Board for inclusion in the TIP. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, proposals were exhibited on the Town Deal Board website between 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021. HBC publicised the information via social media and their own Voluntary Sector database and the Federation of Small Business distributed it to their members. A link to an online feedback form seeking comments on individual projects was also circulated.

A total of 230 online responses were received during the period the consultation was live, in addition to individual responses received from Thirteen Housing Association and CHAT (Communities of Hartlepool Alongside and Together). The feedback form asked described each of the five priority projects in turn and asked for comments in relation to each. An overarching summary of the responses is provided in Figure 1. Each individual response was coded as to whether it was deemed supportive, neutral or not applicable (for example a proportion of comments made in relation to Middleton Grange or marina proposals related to town-wide parking issues rather than the proposals being made), negative, or where no response had been made. Figure 1 shows that, for each priority project, responses were predominantly supportive.



The percentage of responses in support of each priority project are shown in Figure 2 (responses left blank were not included in this calculation). The figure shows that proposals for the Wesley Chapel and the two training projects (Health and Care Academy and the Tees Valley Civil Engineering Institute) achieved the highest degree of support from local residents.



## Middleton Grange

Supportive comments made by respondents include:

*'I used to love the town centre, however I feel it is now run-down, most shops are closed, and most people drive out of town to local areas i.e Middlesbrough to access 'better' shops. I feel a regeneration and re-imagining would be brilliant'*

*'the old high street is dead. Trying to go back in time is a waste of time. look to using the area as a place for people to use for recreation and local businesses to sell their goods online and physically'*

*'Definitely necessary. Lots of large empty shops, no scope for small independent businesses. People actively avoid the town centre unless absolutely necessary. A new hub would bring people back into the town centre and smaller units with more reasonable rent would support local businesses better'*

Other issues raised by respondents related to the cost of parking within the town centre, anti-social behaviour and support for out of town shopping centres.

## Wesley Chapel

Support for Wesley Chapel was divided between respondents who were supportive of the proposal to redevelop the chapel as a hotel (59% of supportive responses) and those who were supportive of redevelopment in theory but felt that an alternative use was more appropriate (41%).

Comments made by respondents in support of the project include:

*'This is a must! The Wesley Chapel is adjacent to Middleton Grange and alongside access to the Centre from the north. The building in its current state does not give a good impression of the town at all. If this is not possible within a reasonable timeframe then the council should look to demolishing the building which would be a shame but better than looking at the building in its current state!!'*

*'Go for it - but aim for a high quality establishment that enhances the reputation of Hartlepool'*

*'This is a very good idea. Hartlepool needs more Hotels bringing in employment and making it easy to find a place to stay overnight especially when visiting family'*

Issues raised by respondents relate to:

- Viability of a new hotel business – references made to the adjacent Grand Hotel going out of business this year and what this might mean for demand within Hartlepool.
- The chapel is currently in private ownership and whether public sector funding should be used in this instance.
- Desire to see the chapel reused in some form – if not as a hotel whether an alternative use could be sought. Ideas included office space, student accommodation, community space, homeless accommodation.

## Marina Connections

Supportive comments made in support of this project include:

*'The marina is lovely in parts.....better links between the town and the marina or changes to parking/access would be beneficial. Areas are currently too separate to easily walk between them'*

*'Improve the routes from all areas of the town by for and bicycle. More people will use it if they can get there safely'*

*'The marina is easily accessible. A pedestrian and cycle bridge from the marina to the headland is a brilliant idea'*

This project received the lowest number of supportive responses; this may have been due to a variety of other perceived issues relating to the marina area which people referred to (principally relating to the visibility of car parking for users of the restaurant / bar areas, the appearance of areas of waste land / issues relating to litter picking, and a perception that a considerable amount of investment has already been made in the marina area.

## Health and Care Academy

Nearly 70% of respondents expressed support for the Health and Care Academy. A selection of comments made in relation to this project are as follows:

*'A training academy for health and care would expand the teaching offer in the region providing a wider range of opportunities for those leaving education and would enable them to progress to the jobs market'*

*'I completely agree. Hartlepool needs jobs and a skilled workforce. Anything that can make effective and efficient use of the large hospital building would be money well spent'*

*'This would be great for the young people of this town and in Teesside in general. It would attract a lot of aspiring doctors, nurses, healthcare workers etc. It would also be a good coup for the FE college and the hospital, who both do a lot of work in the town for young students'*

*'What a great innovation for the North East, a new and exciting proposal ..... bringing the workforce of Hartlepool up-to-date'.*

The majority of responses which were coded as 'not applicable' or 'neutral' related to comments made in relation to the hospital / additional healthcare facilities.

## **Tees Valley Civil Engineering Institute**

Nearly three-quarters of responses to this project were supportive. Comments related to the importance of training for both Hartlepool and the wider region, implications for job readiness and job creation and links with business. Sample supportive comments include:

*'Excellent idea. We need training and teaching centres. This will help Hartlepool grow'*

*'Our youth are our future, and any training/ apprenticeships provided especially for engineering, IT etc should be encouraged'*

*'Excellent idea especially if it provides career opportunities for the younger generation'*

*'Fully support, think of specifically aligning to green energy and technologies to align with future societal developments and demands to create a unique selling point founded in traditional skills base of the Tees Valley'*

*'Strongly agree investment, need to retain highly skilled people in the town with better qualification and job opportunities'*

## **Comments from other Organisations**

Comments received outside of the online feedback form related to:

- The need to work alongside HBC and individual communities to enable positive change based on an acknowledgement of the skills, abilities and assets in the town as well as it's difficulties
- The importance of continuing to engage with VCS groups going forward to ensure that the impact of projects could be increased and extended through collaboration and joint working
- Outside of the priority projects, there is a need to address poverty, homelessness and physical and mental health and wellbeing for the residents of Hartlepool
- A requirement to see that investment is used to support the town towards net zero carbon commitments, reducing environmental impacts and increasing biodiversity.