

## Kettering Energy Park - Consultation response summary

This document outlines all the consultation methods and activities that have taken place in advance of the preparation for the Masterplan at Kettering Energy Park.

Consultation has been ongoing for over two and a half years, with stakeholders being extensively engaged through multiple phases of public consultation. The document will provide an overview of the feedback that has been received and how that has ultimately shaped the Masterplan today.

Additional detail regarding the proposals will be provided within any future planning application(s). The Masterplan has been prepared to respond to Policy 26 of the Joint Core Strategy and to identify requirements of a future planning application. The Masterplan is not definitive and any development will need to first secure planning permission with more detail about the proposals included in a planning application.

### Consultation process

Connect Public Affairs, a specialist community consultation and engagement consultancy, were appointed by the Applicant to organise and manage their consultation process on the proposed development of the site.

In conjunction with North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) it was agreed that given the size and significance of the development that a comprehensive consultation process would be required, at the pre-application stage.

With this, four separate phases of public consultation were planned. The purpose of this was to maximise engagement with the project and solicit feedback that would help evolve the Masterplan in a way that benefits the community.

#### Phase one – Spring/early Summer 2022

Phase one of the consultation began in Spring to early Summer 2022. This initial round of engagement specifically focused on engaging local stakeholders and preceded the launch of the project website in Autumn 2022, which was publicised through correspondence with the local Town and Parish Councils.

The main issues identified from this preliminary consultation related to the following:

- Highways and traffic
- Amount of B8 use
- Whether a Community Fund will be established (similar to the Wind Turbines)
- When will more information be available?
- Will the Energy Park connect to local houses?

The following table outlines the engagement activities undertaken to inform phase one.

Representative	Notes
Engaging parish and town councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burton Latimer (met 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022)</li> <li>• Cranford Parish Council (met 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022)</li> <li>• Finedon Town Council (met 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022)</li> <li>• Woodford Parish Council (met 16<sup>th</sup> August 2022)</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great Addington Parish Council (contacted June 2022)</li> <li>• Little Addington Parish Council (correspondence exchanged October 2022)</li> </ul>
Further engaging parish and town councils, ward councillors and local MPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further correspondence was issued to the same Town and Parish Councils, ward councillors and local MPs in October 2022.</li> </ul>

**Phase two – Public event and engaging the wider community**

After engaging local representatives and gaining initial feedback, the wider residential community of the parishes were consulted ahead of the finalisation of the Masterplan prior to the scheduled EAP in late 2023.

Importantly, residents were able to engage through the consultation process in several ways. This includes through email and the publicly available website and also using contacts from North Northamptonshire Council’s Consultation Database.

Furthermore, residents were invited to a public event where they were able to meet the project team and view the proposals in more detail.

Stakeholder	Notes
Resident engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7-week public consultation process launched</li> <li>• Began on 3<sup>rd</sup> April and ended on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023</li> <li>• Residents leafleted with information on how to engage and attend the event (this included details on how to interact with the website)</li> <li>• Consultation event at Burton Latimer Civic Centre on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023</li> <li>• Consultation event attended by over 100 members of public</li> <li>• 196 responses were received within the seven-week consultation period. A number of responses were received following this date. These were also accepted, bringing the total to 202.</li> </ul>

**Phase three**

Following the EAP in September 2023, First Renewable Developments were asked to engage further with local stakeholders and residents.

The project team took this away and planned two additional phases (phases three and four) of consultation that would run over the next 12 months.

The third phase focussed on re-engaging local representatives, as well as representatives from the organised opposition group against the development.

A timeline of engagement has been prepared below:

Stakeholder	Notes
Meeting and engaging with the local parishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burton Latimer (29 April 2024)</li> <li>• Cranford Parish Council (16 April 2024)</li> <li>• Great Addington Parish Council (10 April 2024)</li> <li>• Little Addington (Correspondence exchanged, but no date agreed)</li> <li>• Finedon Town Council (29 April 2024)</li> <li>• Woodford Parish Council (19 March 2024)</li> </ul>
Local NNC representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burton &amp; Broughton – Cllr John Currall and Cllr Jan O’Hara attended a Burton Latimer Town Council meeting (29 April 2024)</li> <li>• Finedon – Met with Cllr Andrew Weatherill and Cllr Malcolm Ward at a Finedon TC meeting (29 April 2024)</li> <li>• Ise – The team have made several attempts to engage with the ward councillors, but no response has been received</li> <li>• Irthlingborough - Met with Cllr Dorothy Maxwell at a Woodford Parish Council meeting</li> </ul>
Meeting and engaging the local campaign group: Landscape and Industrial Estate	<p>19 April 2024</p> <p>Attendees: Tom Pursglove MP, Kevin Binley, Cllr Adrian Watts (Burton Latimer), Cllr Mike Scott (Great Addington) and Cllr Andrew Weatherill (NNC and Finedon TC)</p>
Meeting and engaging the Members of Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tom Pursglove MP (November 2023 and April 2024)</li> <li>• Phillip Hollobone MP – Declined offer to meet</li> <li>• Gen Kitchen MP – 1 October 2024</li> <li>• Lee Barron – TBC</li> <li>• Rosie Wrighting – TBC</li> </ul>

#### Phase four

To compliment phase three, a robust formal consultation process was delivered which engaged **all** residents of **all** six parishes in proximity to site. The details of this process are outlined below:

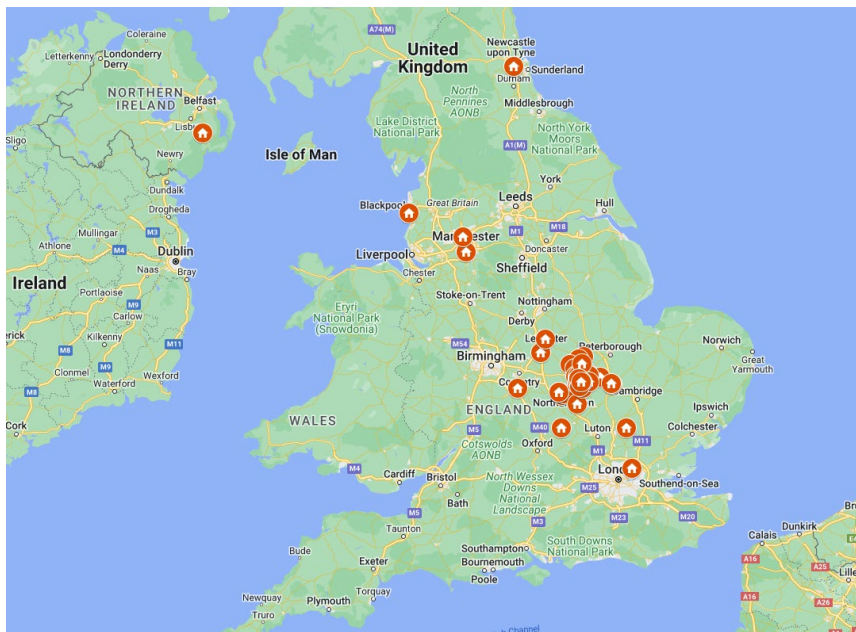
1. At the start of April, a leaflet was distributed to 8.800 addresses which provided details on a 6-week consultation process. This encompassed all residents of the six relevant parishes.
  - a. In total 647 responses were received from residents and stakeholders during the consultation period.
2. To accompany this leaflet drop, the consultation website was relaunched with further information and access to all the technical documents prepared to inform the Masterplan. The website provided further information about the proposals and a mechanism for residents to feedback their views.

- a. The website was viewed by 8,988 people during the consultation period (unique individual users).
3. A public event was held on the 20 April. 8,800 people were invited, as well as notifying the relevant parishes to publicise the consultation activity through their existing local networks. 289 people attended the event which was held in Finedon and were offered the chance to speak with the project team and share their views.
- a. Political stakeholders were invited to the event, and several attended. This included Phillip Hollobone MP, Gen Kitchen MP, Cllr Adrian Watts, Cllr Andrew Weatherill and several others.

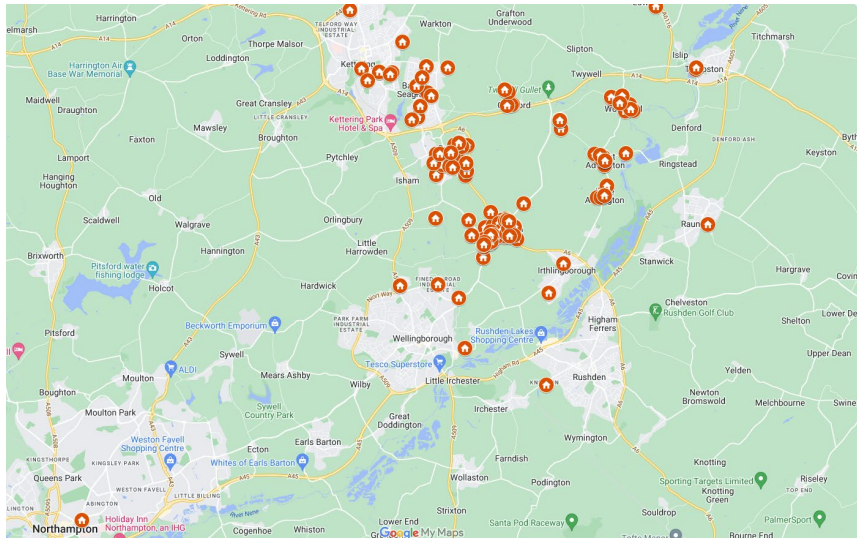
## Phase four - Feedback analysis

The feedback to phase four of the consultation process has been reviewed and analysed. In total 647 responses were received during the six-week period. 168 of these were generic responses which are outlined in the appendices of this report. The below pinpoints the geographical location of the responses received.

### Mapping feedback to phase four



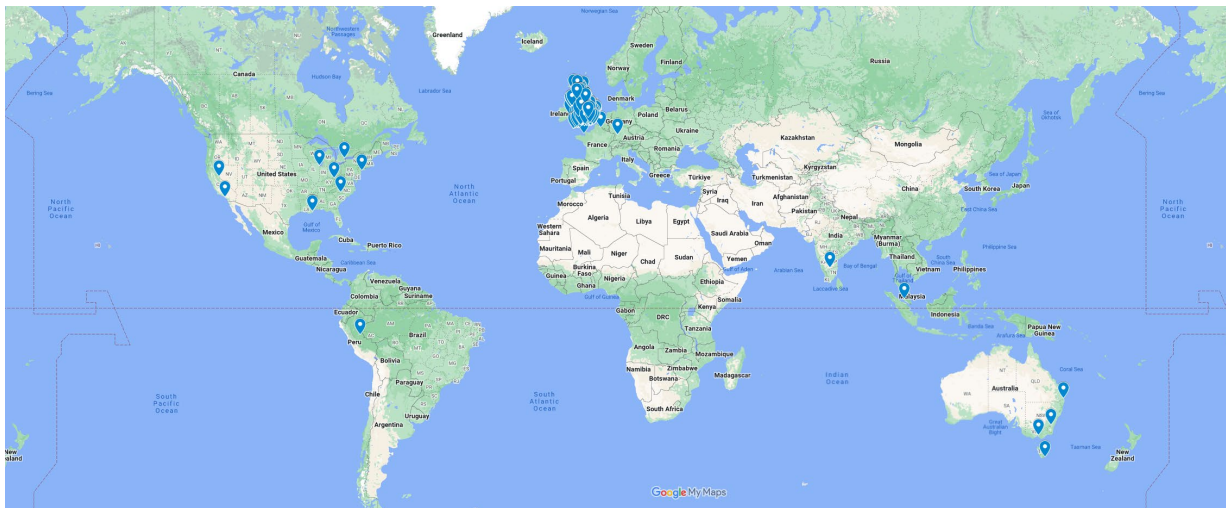
The majority of people who engaged with the consultation process were located in the six relevant parishes, with some coming from outside the local area and NNC boundaries.



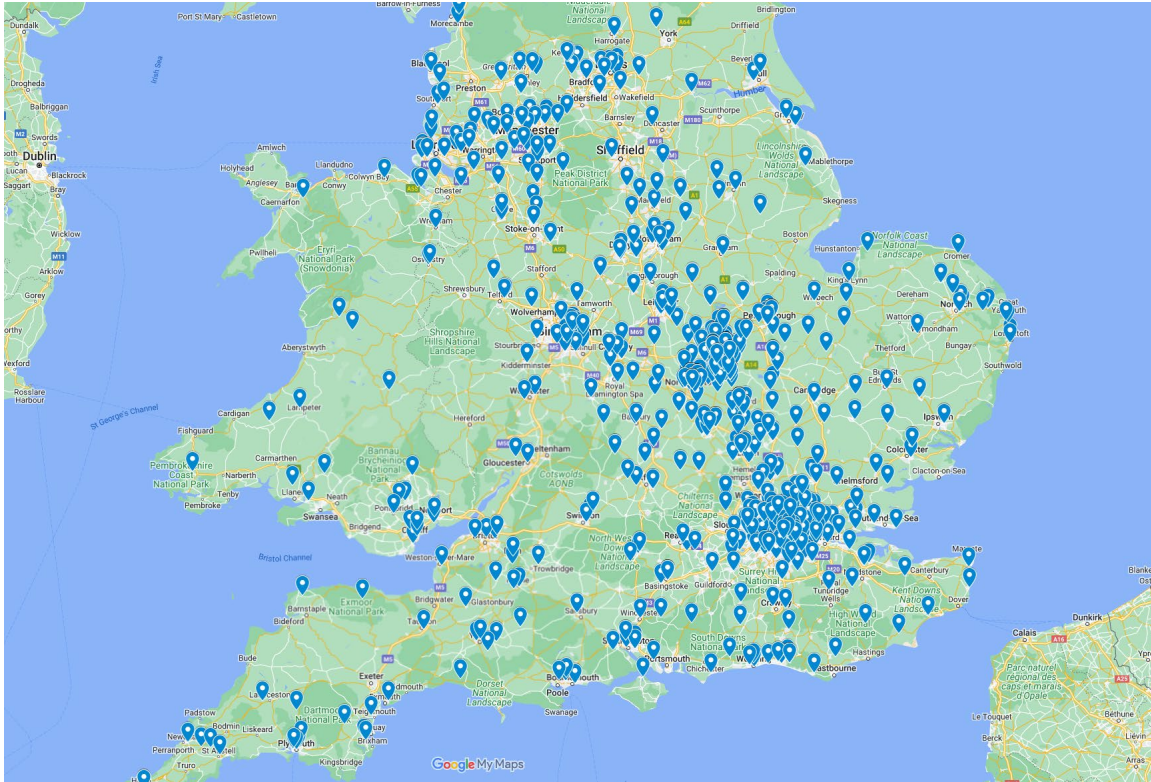
Within the locality, Finedon had the highest levels of engagement, followed by Burton Latimer.

### Mapping feedback – The petition

As part of the conclusion of phase four, the campaign group “Landscape against industrial estate” asked for the petition through Change.Org to be considered as part of the consultation process.



Engagement with the petition was largely focussed within the United Kingdom, with some signatories located across the globe.



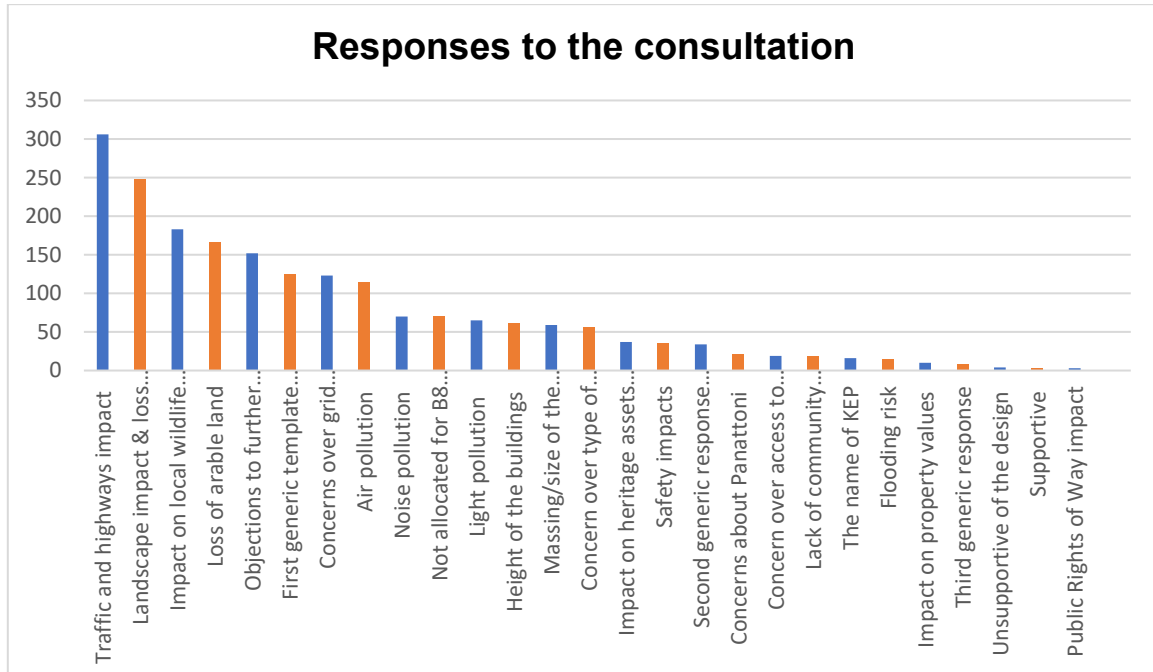
While naturally the strongest engagement with the petition was focussed within Northamptonshire; there was engagement across the entire United Kingdom, with clusters in London and in Manchester.

## Responses to questions

Six questions were asked of residents during the consultation process. The responses to these questions are outlined within this section. The questions asked are listed as follows:

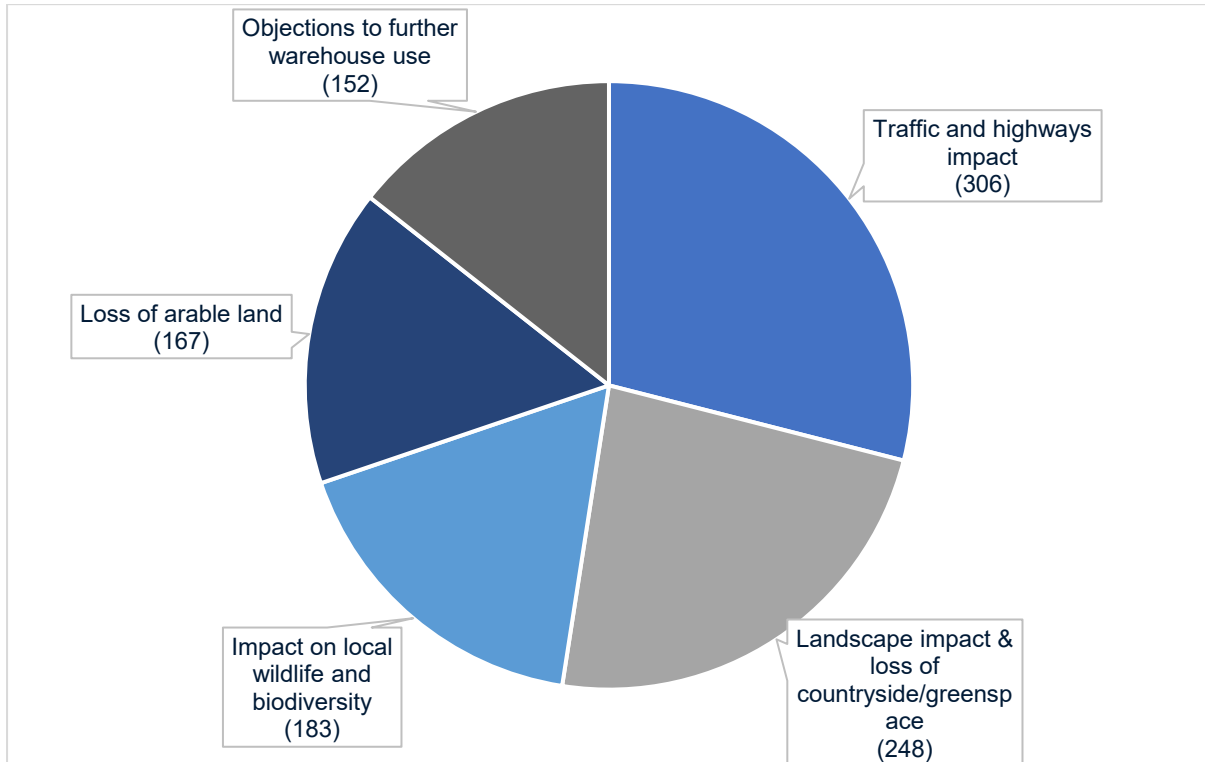
1. How favourable are you of the development on a scale of 1-5. With one being the least favourable and five being the most favourable.
2. Renewable and low carbon energy *[Are there any aspects of the scheme you feel could be improved]*
3. Environment and biodiversity *[Are there any aspects of the scheme you feel could be improved]*
4. Jobs and economy *[Are there any aspects of the scheme you feel could be improved]*
5. Development and design principles *[Are there any aspects of the scheme you feel could be improved]*
6. Any other comments

The responses to these questions have been analysed and for ease of reference the feedback to these questions have been broken down into key themes which are detailed below.



For ease of reference, the five prevailing areas of concern that were listed by respondents were:

- **Traffic and highway impact** (referenced on 306 occasions)
- **Landscape impact & loss of countryside, greenspace etc** (referenced on 248 occasions)
- **Impact on local wildlife and biodiversity** (referenced on 183 occasions)
- **Loss of arable land** (referenced on 167 occasions)
- **Objection to further warehouse use in local area / lack of further need** (referenced on 152 occasions)



Other areas identified as focal areas of feedback, include:

- Concerns over grid capacity
- Air / Noise / Light Pollution
- Impact on Heritage Assets
- Scale of development
- Type of employment offered
- Flooding Risk
- Safety Impacts
- Impact on site access



The above outlines the key themes that have been identified as a whole from the feedback during the consultation process. The below details responses to the individual questions set out during the consultation.

**1. How favourable are you of the development on a scale of 1 - 5. With one being the least favourable and 5 being the most favourable.**

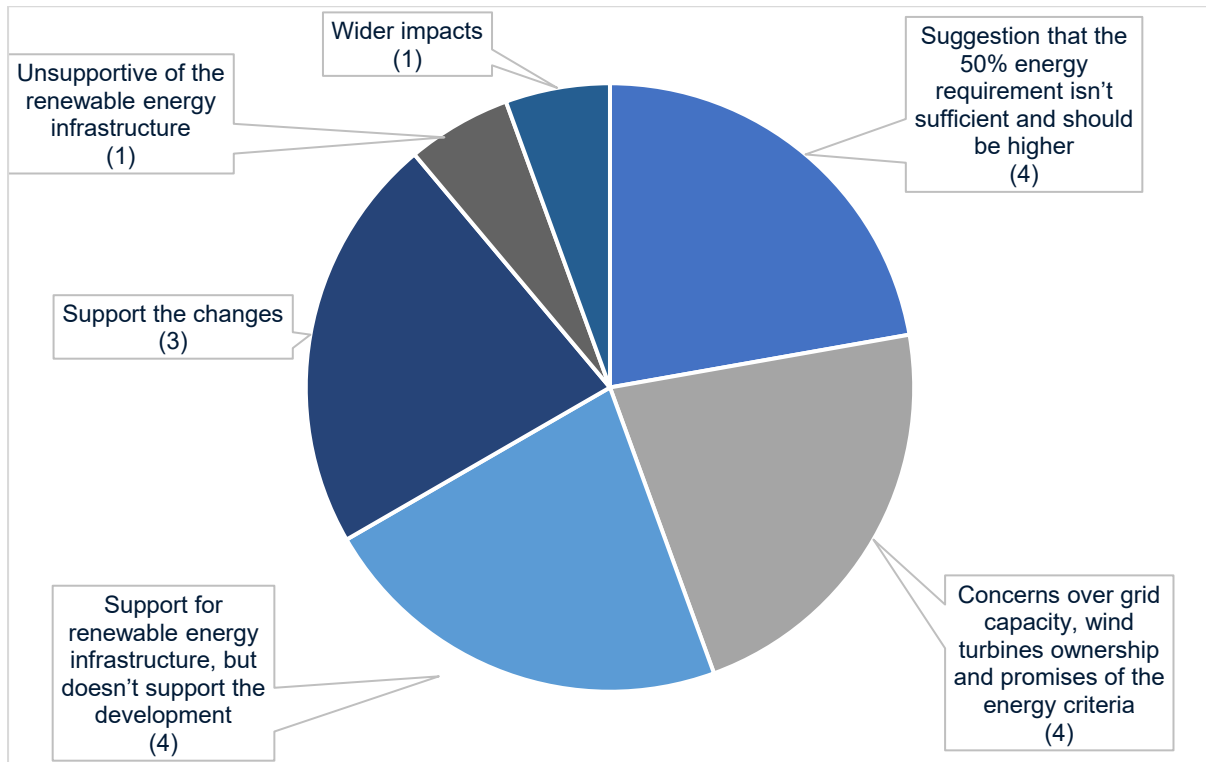
In total 94 people engaged with this question. The responses have been tallied below:

Favourability	Number of responses
1	81
2	5
3	5
4	1
5	2

**2. Renewable and low carbon energy [Are there any aspects of the scheme you feel could be improved]**

In response to the second question, 78 people engaged with the question. The majority of which responded with an in-principle objection to the development and to some of the key issues which have already been identified i.e. traffic, loss of green space etc.

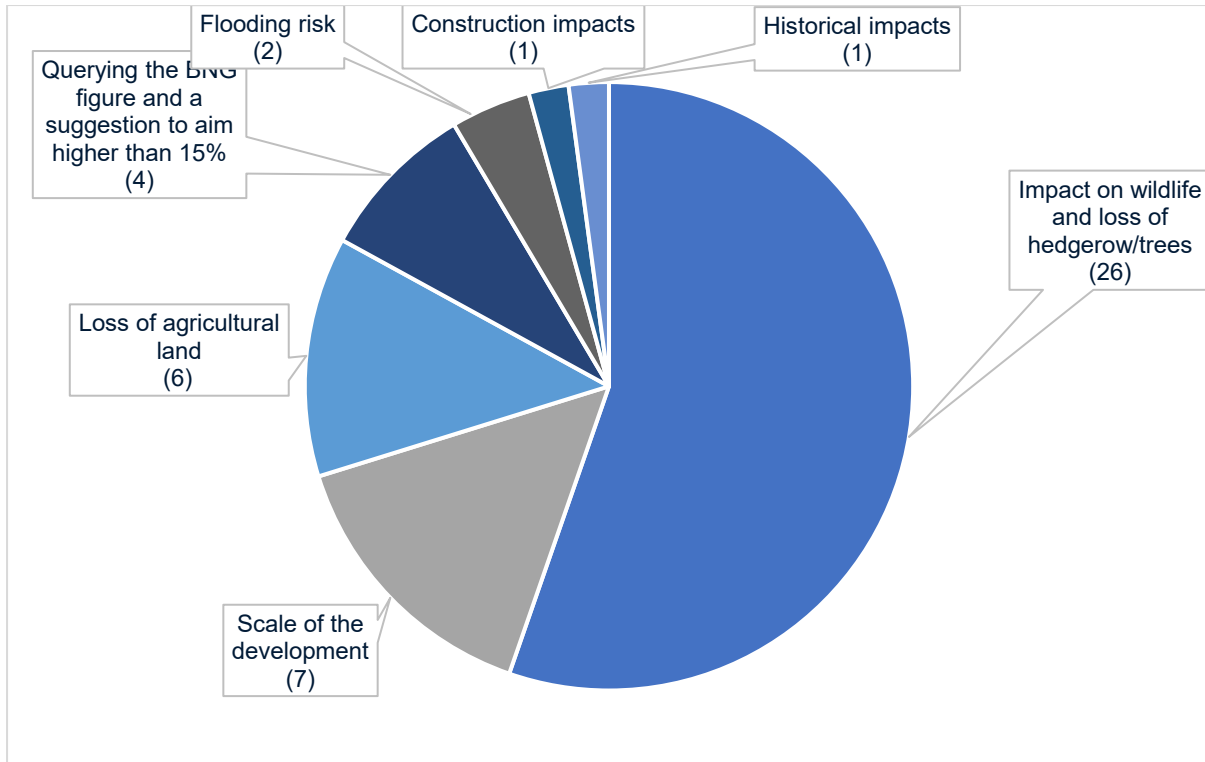
However, the below outlines the specific areas of feedback that relate to the question asked.



**3. Environment and biodiversity [Are there any aspects of the scheme you feel could be improved]**

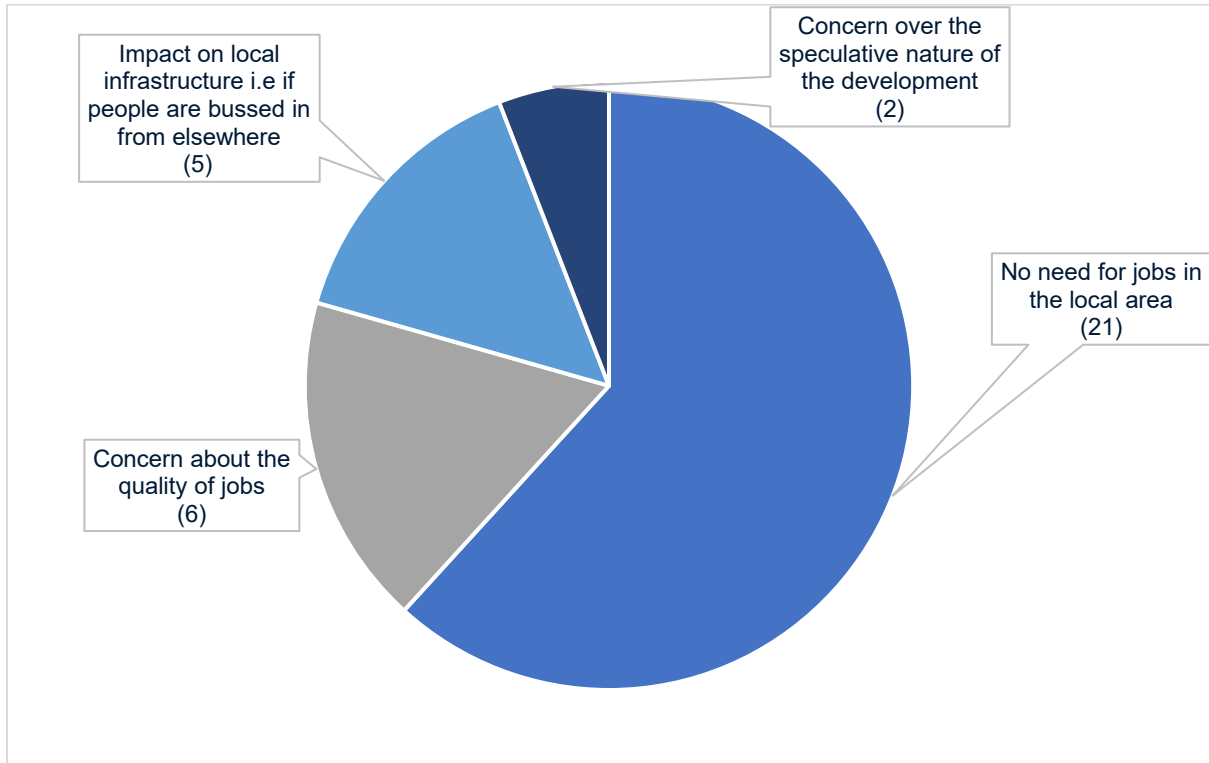
The third question received engagement from 66 residents. A majority of which expressed an in-principle objection to the development.

However, the key areas of specific feedback are detailed below:



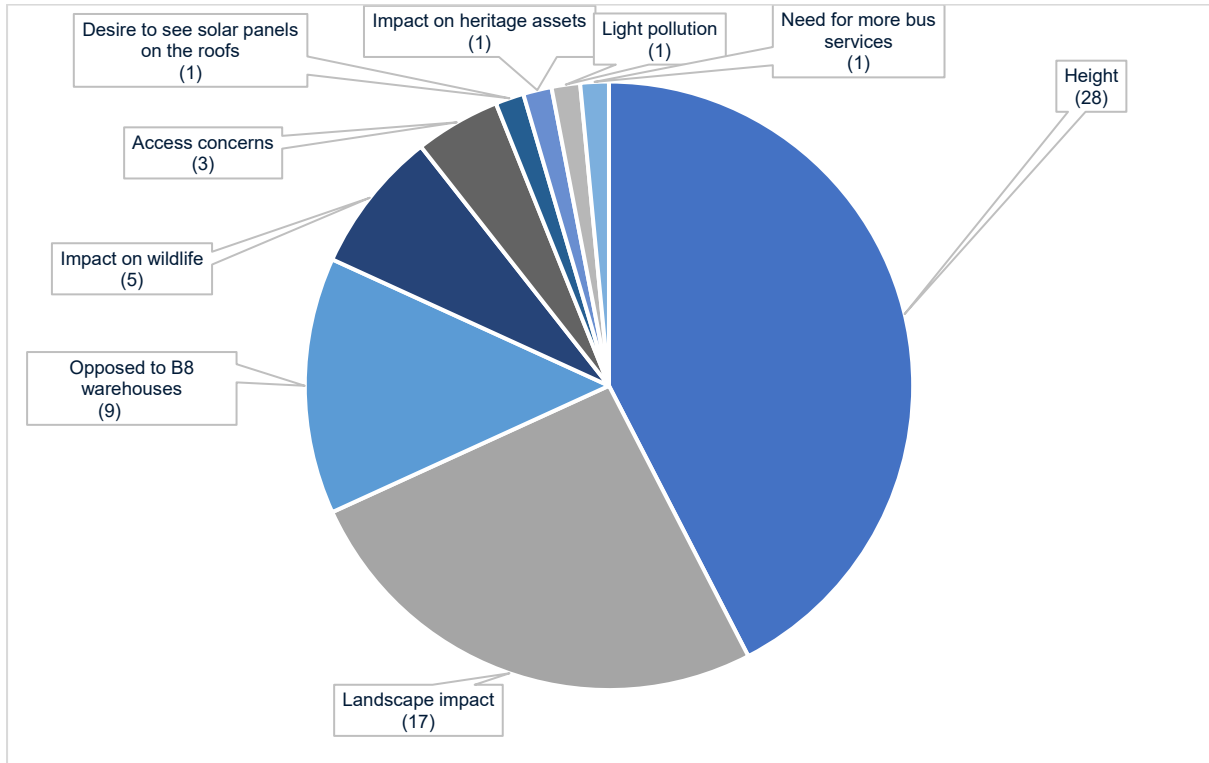
**4. Jobs and economy. [Are there any aspects of the scheme you feel could be improved]**

The fourth question received engagement from 78 residents. The key areas of specific feedback are detailed below:



**5. Design and development principles. [Are there any aspects of the scheme you feel could be improved]**

The fifth question received engagement from 78 residents. The key areas of specific feedback are detailed below:



## Evolving the scheme in response to feedback

Having undertaken a significant and comprehensive consultation exercise, the Masterplan has evolved to reflect the feedback received.

This has led to significant changes within the scheme. Notably:

Issues	Before	After
<b>Scale of development</b>	Explored potential to create circa 390,000 sq m of new employment space	The employment floorspace has decreased by circa 22% to 302,000 sq m
<b>The proposed uses</b>	Proposed split of 70:30 for B8 and B2 uses	Proposed B8 has been reduced by 44% to no more than 50% and occupiers must meet all three energy criteria
<b>Landscape and visual impact</b>	Maximum building heights of up to 30m	Maximum building heights reduced to 25m, with units opposite the roundhouse reduced further
<b>Biodiversity</b>	Initial target of at least 10% BNG	50% increase in BNG target to 15%
<b>Highways and transport</b>	Previous modelling work identified that the network could accommodate the development traffic, with local improvements	Reduced floorspace means fewer traffic movements, but local improvements will still be funded
<b>The extent and reach of consultation</b>	Initial consultation between November 2022 and May 2023, including: website launch, meetings with local councillors and stakeholders and a public exhibition	Additional consultation carried out in Spring 2024, with councillors, parishes, campaign group and 8,800 residents consulted

## Appendices

### APPENDIX 1 - First generic response

The first generic response that was received is outlined below. This response was sent in by 125 people and references concerns with the height, traffic, grid connection and the provision of battery storage.

*The “new” plan for Kettering Energy Park still:*

- *Includes 50% of land for 25m warehouses*
- *Does not consider traffic*
- *Will not connect energy to the grid or local area*
- *Still includes significant batter storage*

## APPENDIX 2 - Second generic response

The second generic response that was received is outlined below. This response was sent in by 34 people and references concerns with the conflict with the Joint Core Strategy and the NPPF, impact on the highway network, concerns over the ownership of the wind turbine, impact on wildlife and biodiversity, landscape impact, flooding risk, impact on heritage assets and pollution impacts.

*I object to the above for the following reasons:*

*The proposed site sits in an area that has not been designated for B8 development and if approved would be in direct conflict with the current Joint Core Strategy.*

*The proposed development is not in line with NPPF regarding sustainable development as there is very limited access for walking or cycling to the site and no existing public transport. The site would actually encourage more traffic on the existing road network. This is in clear contravention of the Standing advice local planning authority The Climate Change Committee's 2022 Report to Parliament which notes that for the UK to achieve net zero carbon status by 2050, action is needed to support a shift away from car travel.*

*The type and scale of the site is inappropriate for a rural area, with its size requiring parking for over 5000 cars and HGVs.*

*It is inappropriate that this site, which has not been assessed for its merits from a B8 perspective previously, should proceed in isolation given a review of the Local Plan is underway and the fundamental concerns which remain; including the carbon emissions associated with the significant vehicle movements the site is projected to generate at a time the UK needs to be reducing emissions from transport.*

*The site is not located near to a rail junction which is contrary to the current Joint Core Strategy for B2/B8 type developments.*

*The wind farm and the electricity they generate are not owned or controlled by the proposer, therefore any claims regarding the use of generated power from the wind farm to power the developments are misleading and incorrect; and fundamentally call into question the whole basis of the proposal and is a constraint to delivery of the Masterplan.*

*The plan would result in irreversible damage to a designated rural area in direct conflict with the current joint Core Strategy.*

*The plan would result in irreversible damage to a designated area in direct conflict with the current joint Core Strategy.*

*The loss of natural habitats and historical biodiversity contained within its fields, hedgerows and trees, and the loss of Historically Important Hedgerows.*

*The cumulative impact on the local and strategic road network particularly the A6, A510 and A510 and the associated junctions.*

*The impact upon Findon where the A6 and A510 meet would have a long lasting impact on the town and the wellbeing of its residents due to increased traffic movements, and air noise and light pollution.*



*The site would have a detrimental visual impact on the area and would impose on the landscape across a wide area due to the height of the site and the proposed buildings.*

*The risk of increased flooding particularly of Burton Latimer and Cranford; and water course pollution of tributaries of the river Nene. Impact upon the Upper Nene SPA which is within 3km and 4kms of the proposed site and which the designated site is both a source of a number of water courses supplying the Nene and is also functionally linked land for protected bird species, both in terms of foraging and nesting.*

*There is insufficient local workforce to fulfil the number of potential jobs that the proposer claims will be generated by the development.*

*The development will produce unacceptable increases in levels of noise, air and light pollution.*

*The site is home to a number of at risk and endangered species (including those protected by the Protected in the UK under Wildlife and Countryside Act) whose rearing, nesting and feeding would be irrevocable destroyed by the development causing a direct threat to survival and leading to local extinction.*

*The developers have confirmed that the development would create significant harm to heritage and cultural assets, notably the Roundhouse, as such the development is not a public benefit.*

*The scale of the proposal exceeds the ability of the consented solar farm to provide renewable energy on a 24 hour x 365 day basis and therefore would be reliant upon the import of electricity from the National Grid, in direct conflict with the Joint Core Strategy.*



### APPENDIX 3 - Third generic response

The third generic response that was received is outlined below. This response was sent in by nine people and references concerns with the impact on the local environment and wildlife, pollution, employment opportunities, traffic, impact on local services and the provision of industrial B8 space.

*I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed development of the Kettering Energy Park in our community. As a concerned resident, I believe that this project poses significant environmental, social, and economic risks that outweigh any potential benefits.*

*First and foremost, the construction of the Energy Park would have adverse effects on our local environment. The destruction of natural habitats, disruption of ecosystems, and increased air pollution associated with such a large-scale development are unacceptable. We must prioritize the preservation of our natural resources and biodiversity for future generations.*

*Furthermore, the Energy Park could have detrimental effects on public health. The increase of pollutants and emissions from increased traffic levels and the production processes from the proposed 302,000 sq m of employment space. There is potential for this to lead to a significant increase in respiratory problems and other serious health issues, particularly for vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly in our community.*

*In addition to environmental and health concerns, the Kettering Energy Park may also have negative impacts on our community's social fabric. The influx of construction workers and transient residents could strain local infrastructure and services, leading to overcrowding, traffic congestion, and increased demand for housing and utilities. This could disrupt the quality of life for current residents and exacerbate socioeconomic inequalities.*

*Moreover, I am unconvinced by the economic arguments put forth in support of the Energy Park. While proponents claim that the project will create jobs and stimulate economic growth, the long-term sustainability of these benefits is uncertain. We must consider the potential for job displacement in other sectors, as well as the risks of relying on volatile energy markets and outdated technologies.*

*In conclusion, I have significant concerns regarding the construction of large scale B8 sheds, subsequent highway issues and the lasting adverse impact this would have on residents and our natural environment locally. North Northamptonshire is already taking more than its fair share of industrial development and I feel strongly that brownfield sites should be developed first and foremost for these purposes. I urge you to reconsider the proposal for the Kettering Energy Park and explore alternative, more sustainable approaches to meeting our energy needs. We must prioritize the protection of our environment, the health and well-being of our communities, and the long-term prosperity of our region.*

*Thank you for considering my concerns.*