

Our Future City Plan: 'Shaping Our City Together: Six City Themes' Introduction and Consultation

- 1.1. This note sets out the details on the Six City Themes for the 'Our Future City Plan: Shaping Our City Together' consultation, which took place between Tuesday 26th January and Friday 26th March 2021. It summarises the feedback received during the consultation period via the Council's 'BeHeard' portal, which consisted of a questionnaire covering the published Vision Statement for 'Central Birmingham 2040' and its six City Themes.

What is 'Our Future City Plan', 'Central Birmingham 2040 and 'Shaping Our City Together'?

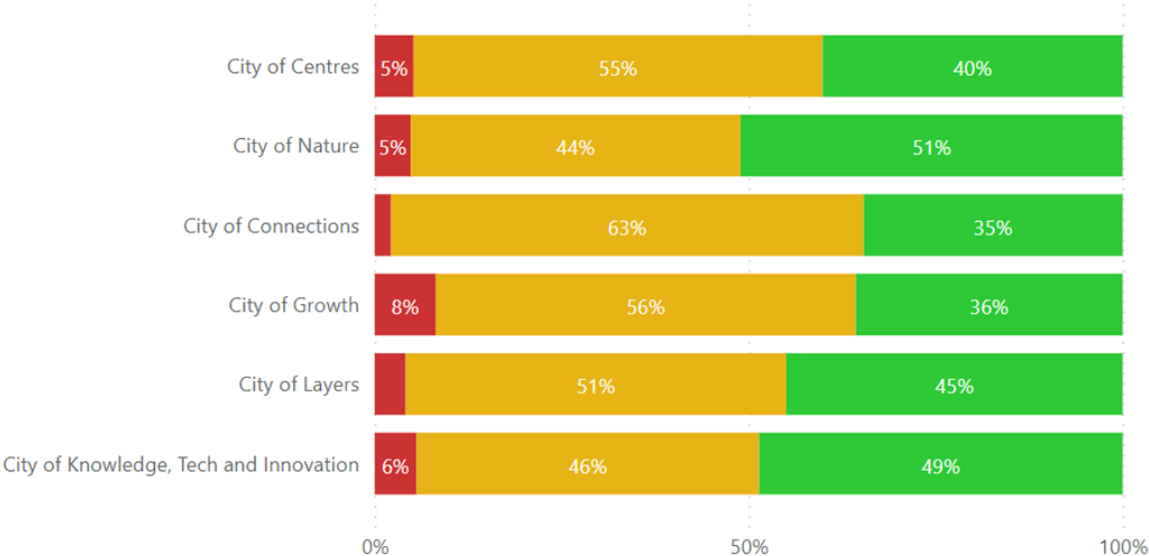
- 1.2. 'Our Future City Plan' (OFCP) marks a new direction in how Birmingham City Council will approach plan-making and place shaping over the next 20 years. It is intended to provide a new vision and strategy for investment that will stimulate green, inclusive growth to meet our diverse needs and ensure the city's many communities can reach their full potential.
- 1.3. Central Birmingham 2040 (CB2040) is the first planning document to fully embrace this new approach; covering the area defined on the map below, CB2040 intends to supersede the Council's 'Big City Plan' published in 2010 and will focus upon supporting and delivering projects within Birmingham's inner-city neighbourhoods, with the aim of creating a collection of successful, interconnected places that are able to form their own identities.
- 1.4. The 'Shaping Our City Together' Consultation marked the first stage of preparing the CB2040 Plan. It primarily sought views on the corresponding document outlining the vision and objectives of the Central Birmingham 2040 plan and introducing the key principles upon which the plan intends to act, organised under six categories branded as 'City Themes':
 - **City of Centres** – to establish Central Birmingham as an integrated collection of vibrant, distinct, and liveable neighbourhoods with a wide range of easily accessible services and amenities
 - **City of Growth for all** – to meet Birmingham's growth needs for the provision of affordable housing, healthcare, jobs, skills, and opportunities for all in our community
 - **City of Nature** – to properly adapt to changing climate and a net zero carbon society, to create a connected and diverse network of green and open spaces and to ensure the delivery of nature-based solutions to support environmental, social, and economic outcomes

- **City of Layers** – celebrate and promote the city’s different communities and become a destination city of choice for visitors by showcasing and promoting our cultural offerings.
- **City of Connections** – to provide wide reaching and efficient multi-modal transportation networks, improving walkability and active travel within neighbourhoods and reducing the need for cars
- **City of Knowledge and Innovation** – to strengthen and expand the city’s hi-tech, knowledge intensive economic sectors, improve the networking between schools, universities, and industry, and create a smart-city utilising advanced technology and data capture to solve problems.

Birmingham City Council ‘BeHeard’ Questionnaire – Summary of Feedback

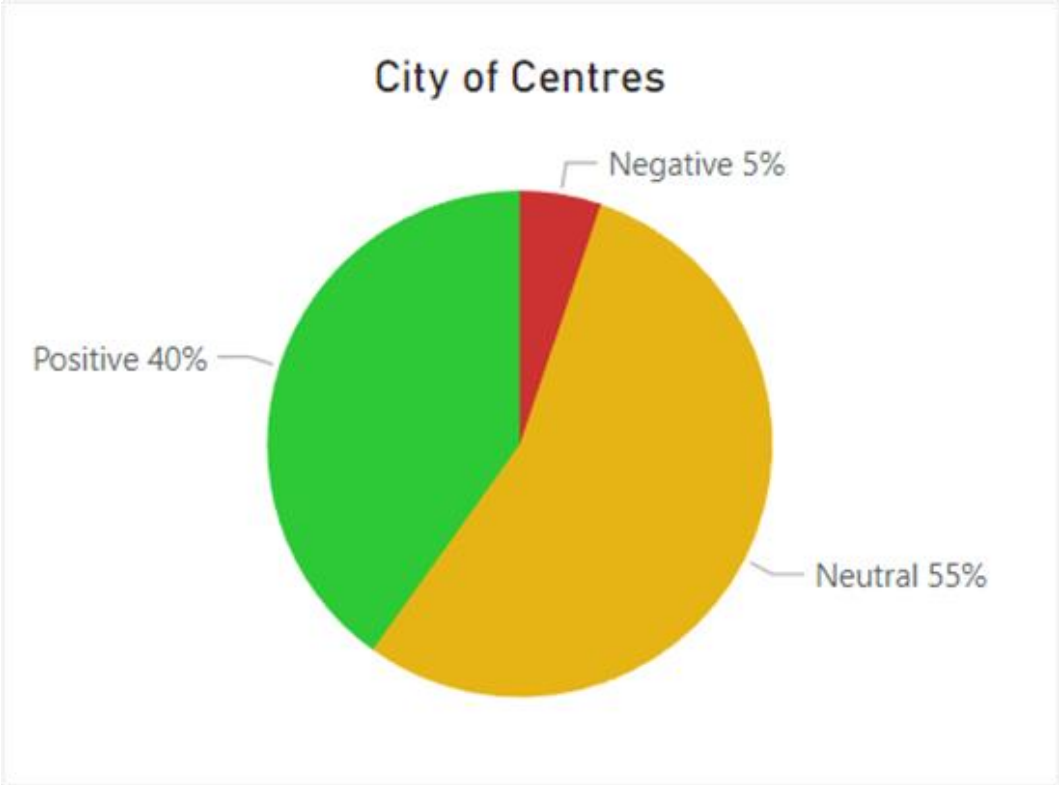
- 1.5. The BeHeard Questionnaire produced over 3,000 individual responses to a total of 20 questions on the OFCP’s vision, themes, and aspirations. Over 200 individuals completed the questionnaire. The questions asked about the six City Themes are provided below:
 - 1) *Do the goals and actions outlined in the ‘City of Centres’ support better connected, sustainable and thriving neighbourhoods? How would you improve this City Theme?*
 - 2) *Do the goals and actions outlined in the ‘City of Growth for All’ support growth, investment, and development for all of our communities? How would you improve this City Theme?*
 - 3) *Do the goals and actions outlined in the ‘City of Nature’ support green, healthy and active communities? How would you improve this City Theme?*
 - 4) *Do the goals and actions outlined in the ‘City of Layers’ support the promotion of our unique identity diverse cultures and history in our City? How would you improve this City Theme?*
 - 5) *Do the goals and actions outlined in the ‘City of Connections’ support people-centred places and active travel within neighbourhoods? How would you improve this City Theme?*
 - 6) *Do the goals and actions outlined in the ‘City of Knowledge and Innovation’ support a diverse set of innovative, digital and knowledge centres supporting the growth of our city and offering opportunities to our young people? How would you improve this City Theme?*
- 1.6. Analysis on the feedback from the BeHeard questionnaire has been undertaken by Arcadis. The sentiment of respondents, key phrases and most frequently used terms, and other aspects of the analysis were calculated using Microsoft Azure Text analytics models and other open-source text analysis services.
- 1.7. The overall sentiment shown towards each vision is shown below and the subsequent pages show more detail into each theme:

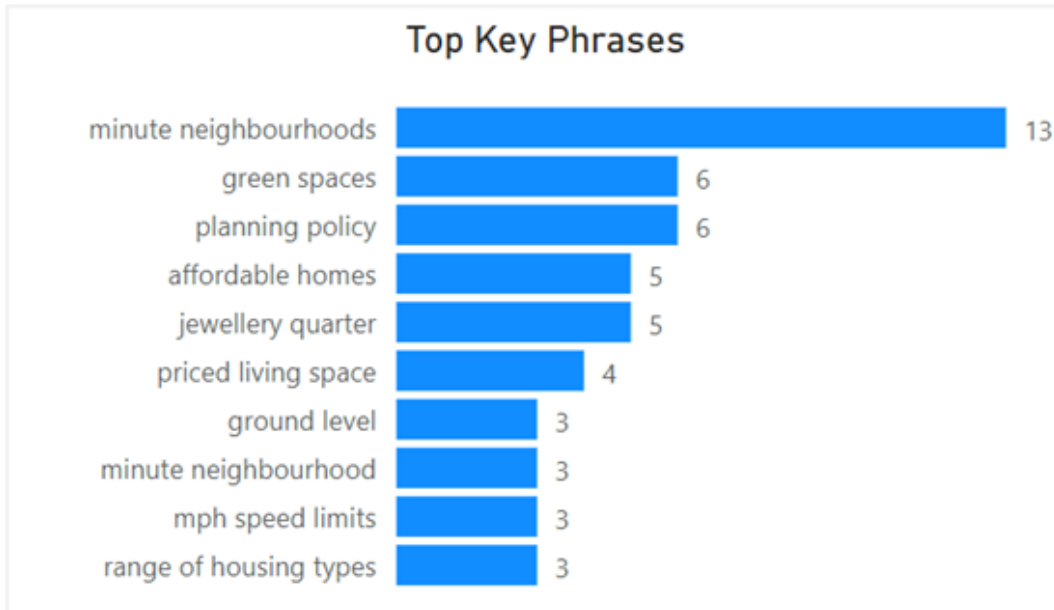
Overall Sentiment ● Negative ● Neutral ● Positive



Overall sentiment analysis for the City Themes

City of Centres

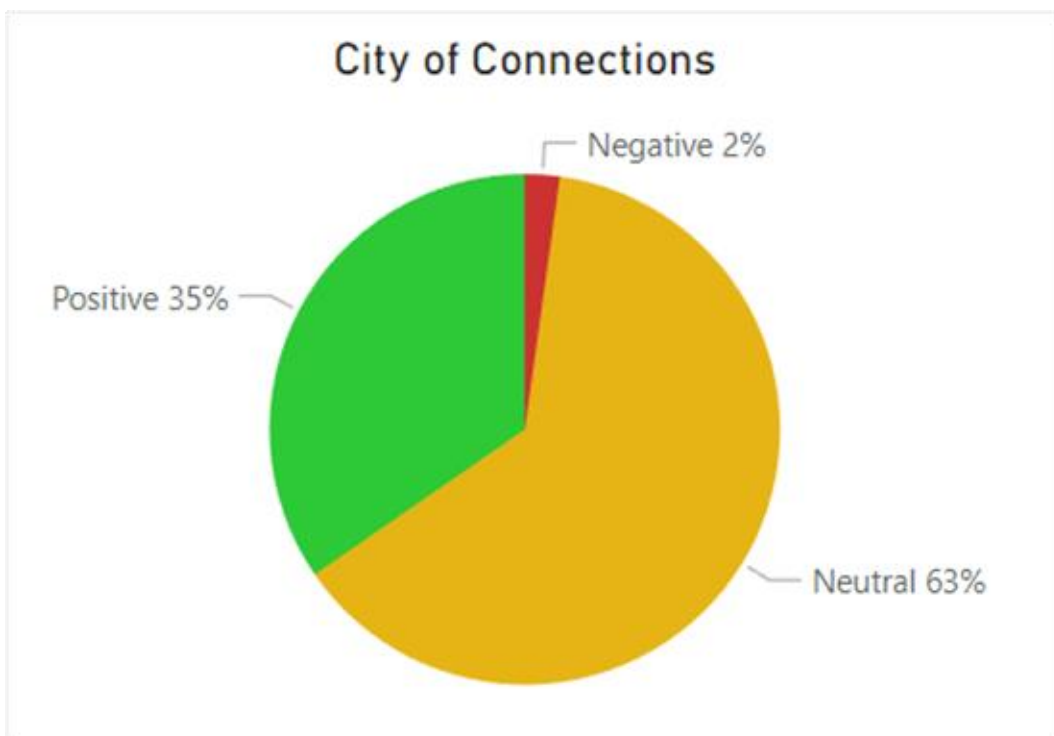


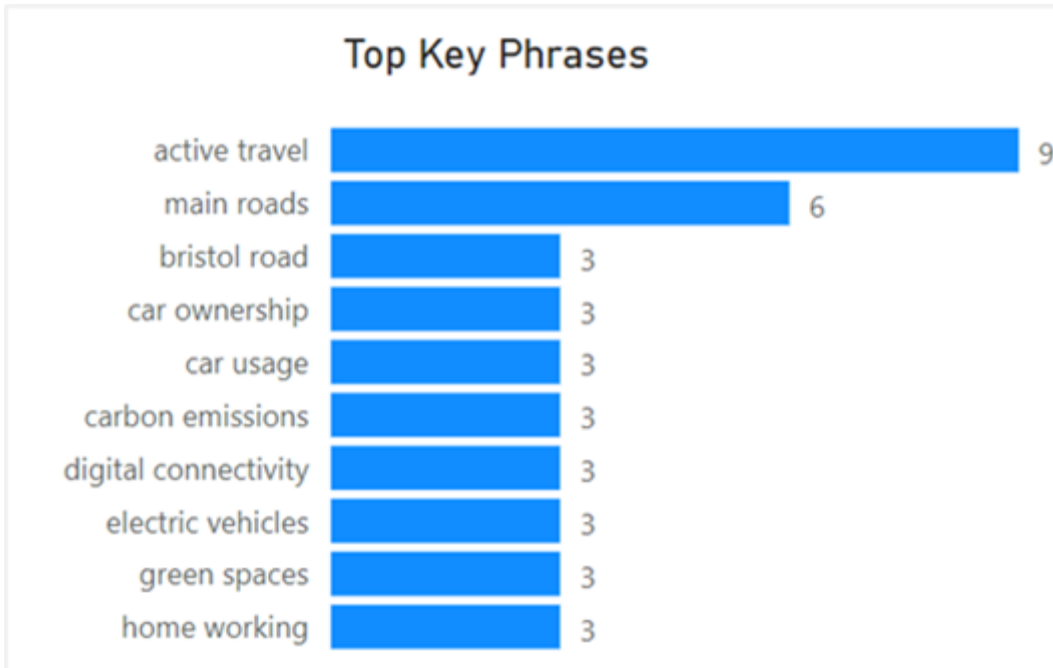


Strategic Themes:

- Many respondents in favour of 15-minute neighbourhoods
- Reduction of cars in city centres well supported
- Maximising green spaces and parks already in place a common ask
- Designated low traffic areas with enforced speed limits. Numerous requests to rethink the current A38 route
- Focus on city cleanliness needed

City of Connections

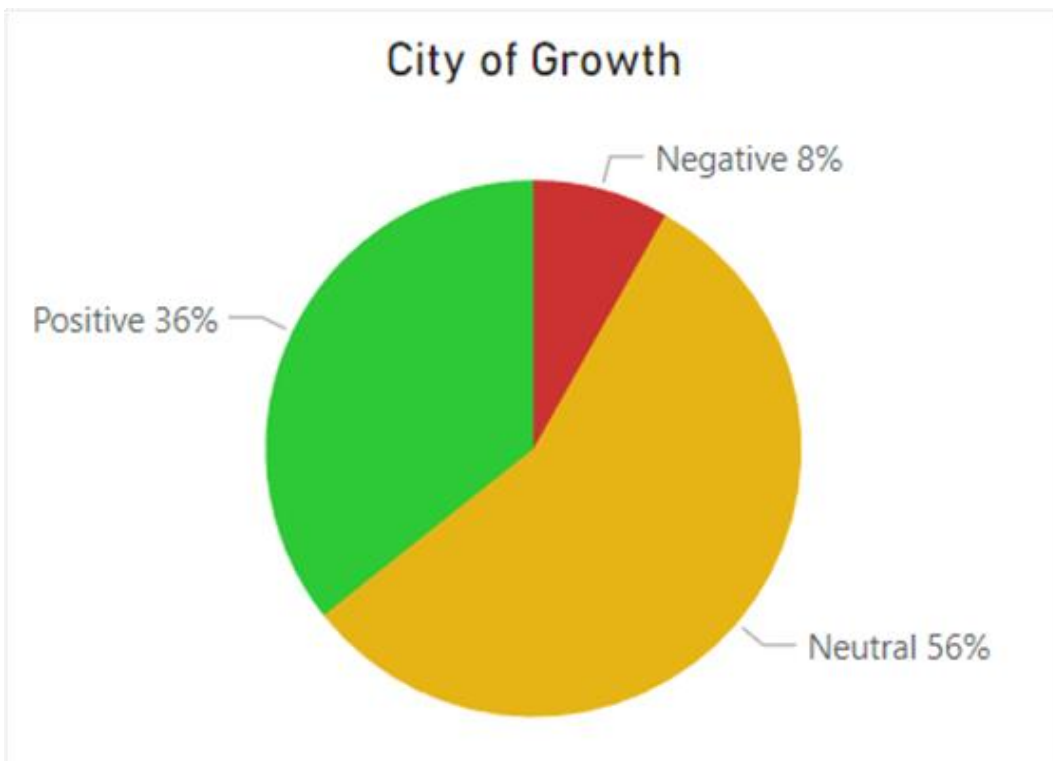




Strategic Themes:

- Improved wayfinding and lighting at night mentioned by respondents
- Better digital connectivity is supported and needed
- Encouraging cycling and creation of segregated cycle paths welcomed
- Greater focus on transport plans for disabled residents highlighted by respondents
- Bus routes seen by most as the best way to travel if consistent, clean, and timely

City of Growth for All

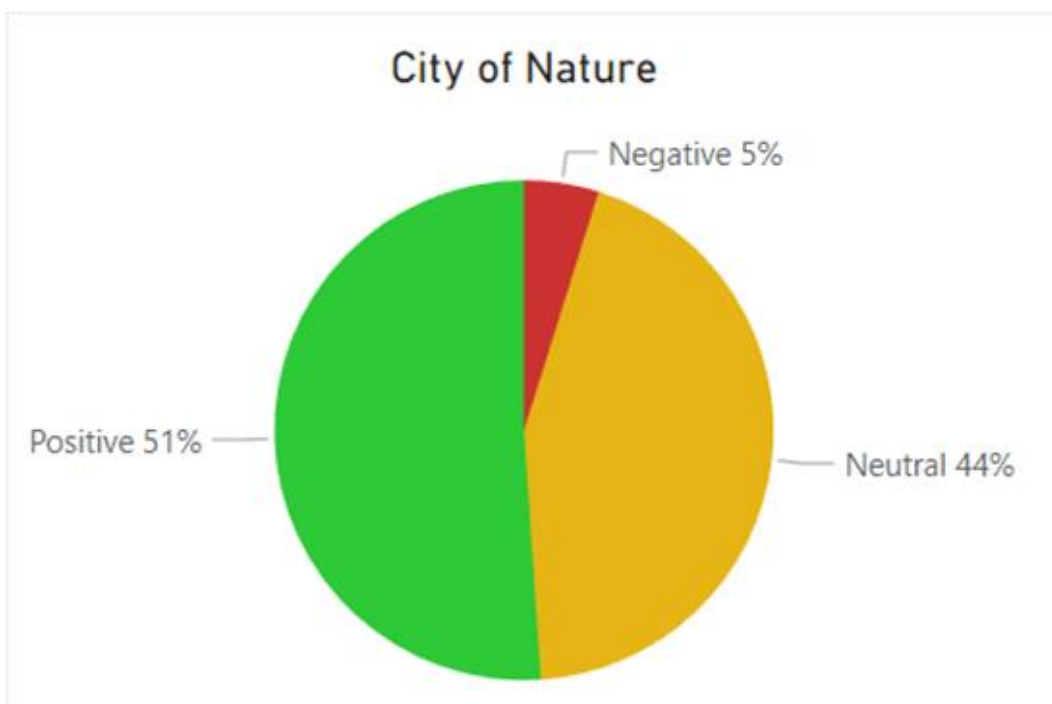


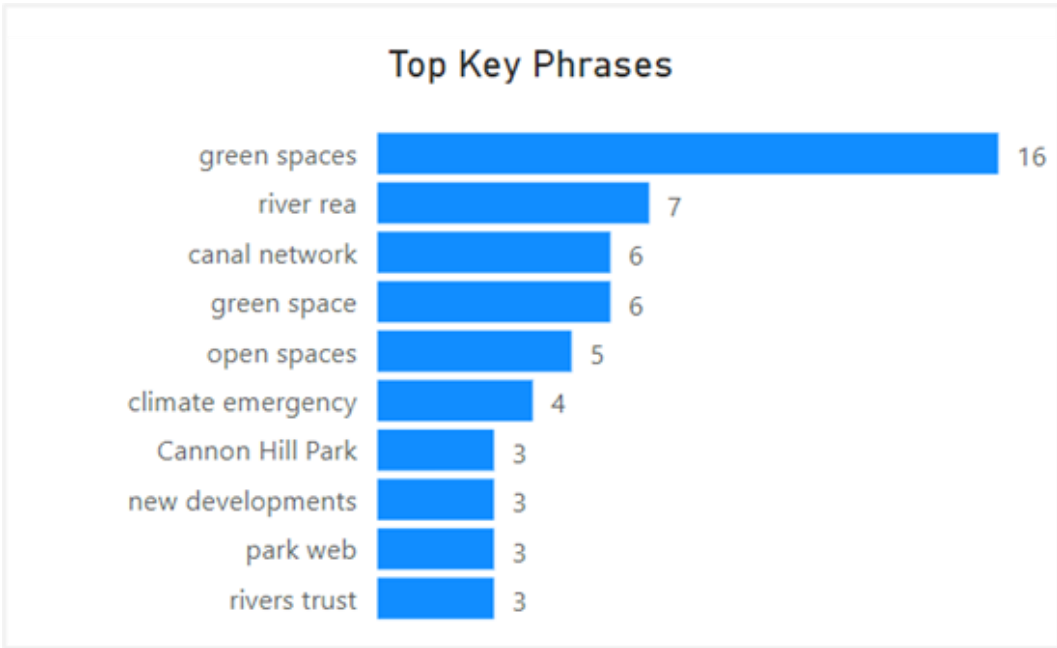


Strategic Themes:

- Respondents were largely supportive of redevelopment aspirations and the positive effects on local business and industry, but had conflicting views on tall building focus
- Greater support and promotion of places like the Jewellery Quarter are mentioned by residents
- Engagement with residents encouraged for this specific theme to gain greater insight to key areas
- Conflicting views from residents around the ring-roads and their importance to growth in the city

City of Nature

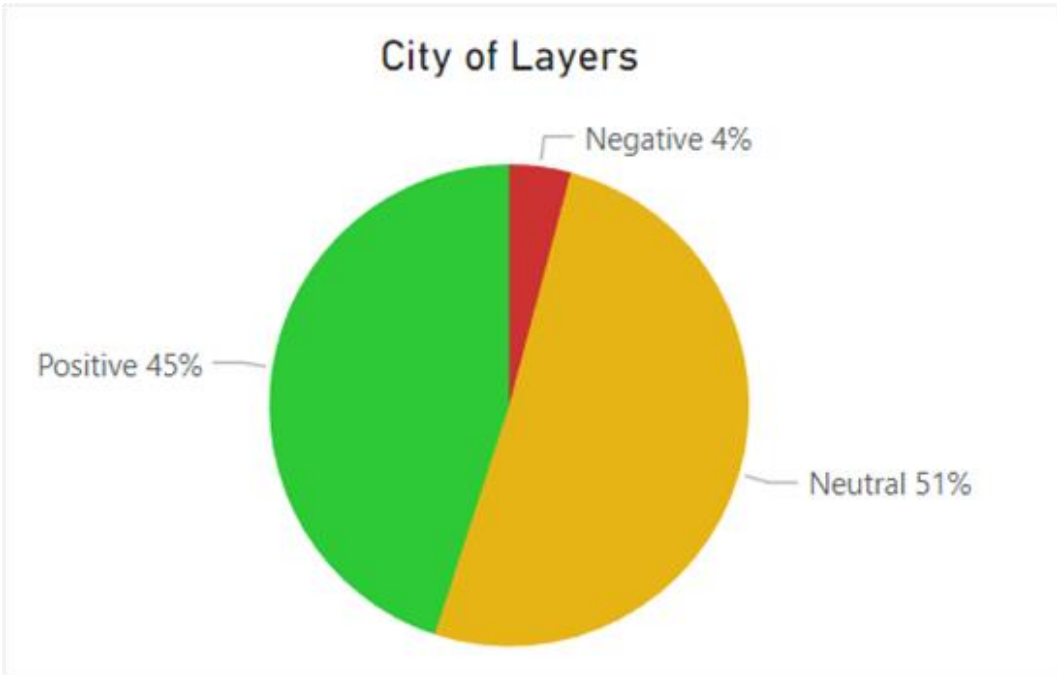




Strategic Themes:

- Theme with the most support from respondents, with many neutral comments being supplementary considerations
- Respondents reacted very positively to the bigger vision around green spaces
- Interconnected green spaces and cycling routes had strong support
- Improved transport links to green spaces were requested
- Investment in access and navigation of River Rea was mentioned by numerous respondents

City of Layers

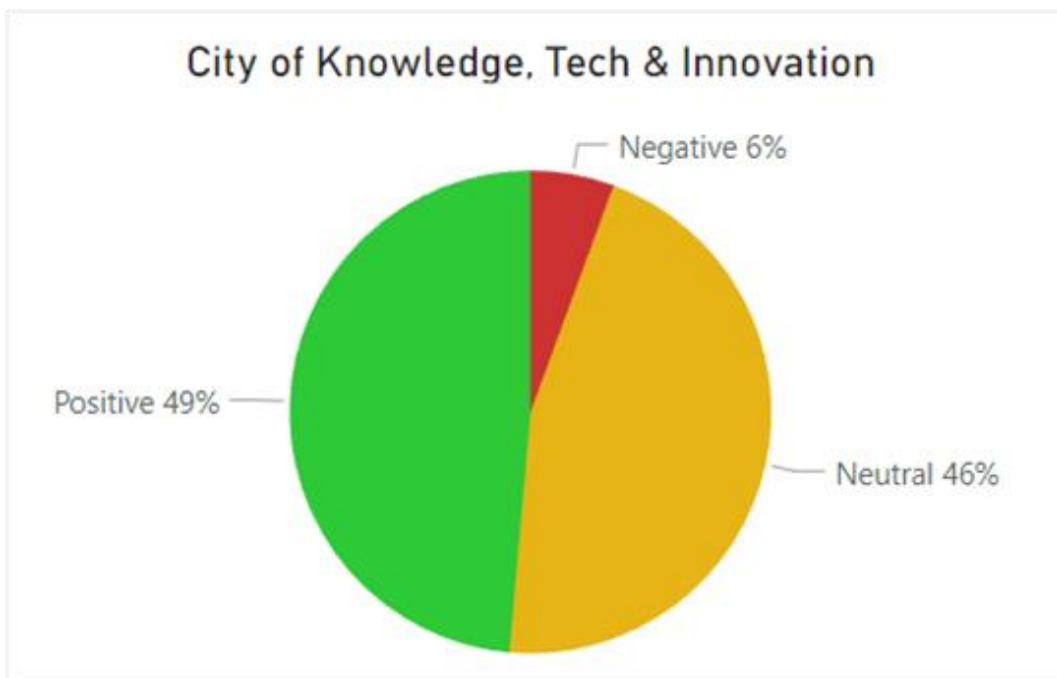


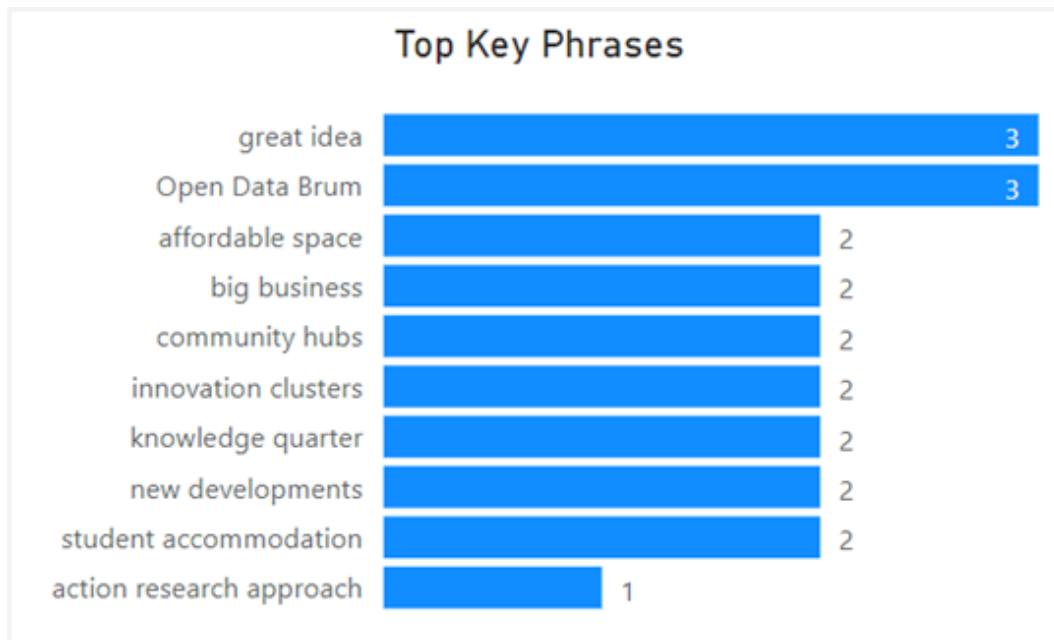


Strategic Themes:

- Respondents would like more focus on the rich heritage in Birmingham and welcome the proposed review
- Visitor destination plans encouraged with greater focus on interactive tools
- Some feel the canal network should have greater prominence throughout the plans
- A few respondents would like to see Birmingham's cultural history celebrated through new museums and galleries

City of Knowledge and Innovation





Strategic Themes:

- Respondents agree with the big vision and goals
- Some respondents mentioned the need for improved education provision to help fulfill these aspirations
- Both greater data protection and more open data initiatives encouraged
- Greater connections from industry into colleges and schools
- Greater focus on education for younger and older residents to utilise new technology

Conclusion

- 1.8. In summary, the six City Themes were well supported and endorsed by the respondents to the 'Shaping Our City Together' consultation. There were particularly strong levels of support for the 'Nature' and 'Knowledge and Innovation' themes. For all six themes, respondents provided many useful suggestions on how each theme could be improved with further aspirations, objectives, and principles.
- 1.9. Since the 'Shaping Our City Together' consultation, the Council has embedded the 'City of Nature' theme into the Birmingham City of Nature Delivery Framework, setting out a plan for the sustainable provision, maintenance, and use of green and blue spaces across the city. The document specifically references the 'Shaping Our City Together' vision document as the foundation for the delivery framework.

October 2022