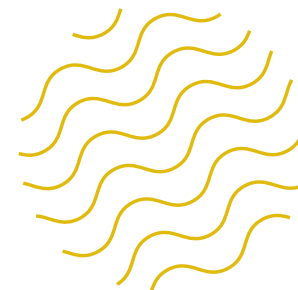# Mansfield
# Town Centre

## Engagement Report

September 2023 | Issue 01

**Mansfield**
District Council

# About this Design Code

Mansfield Design Code
This document has been prepared by PJA and Urban Design Doctor with assistance from Dave Foster and Sue McGlynn.

Created in partnership with Mansfield District Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Disability Nottinghamshire.

# Compliance Checking, Assistance and Advice

For advice on how to apply the Code, please contact Development Services:

Tel: (01623) 463 463
Email:  planningpolicy@mansfield.gov.uk

Version 01 (issue date): 18.09.23

A Design Code is a set of rules for new developments. The Government is encouraging the creation and use of codes across England.

The Code sets out a series of rules for new development within Mansfield Town Centre and was produced as part of the Design Code Pathfinder Programme funded by DLUHC.
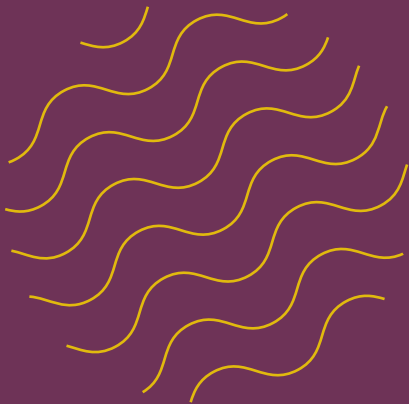
# Engagement

## Mansfield place engagement platform

### Summary

To contribute to the baseline assessment, Mansfield District Council launched a programme of public engagement, to understand what Mansfield residents, businesses and visitors like, dislike and want to change about the town centre.

In order to achieve this, a digital public participation platform was created to provide information about the project and capture place-specific comments on an interactive map, where the community could add their own suggestions and find out more about the focus areas of the Mansfield Town Centre masterplan.
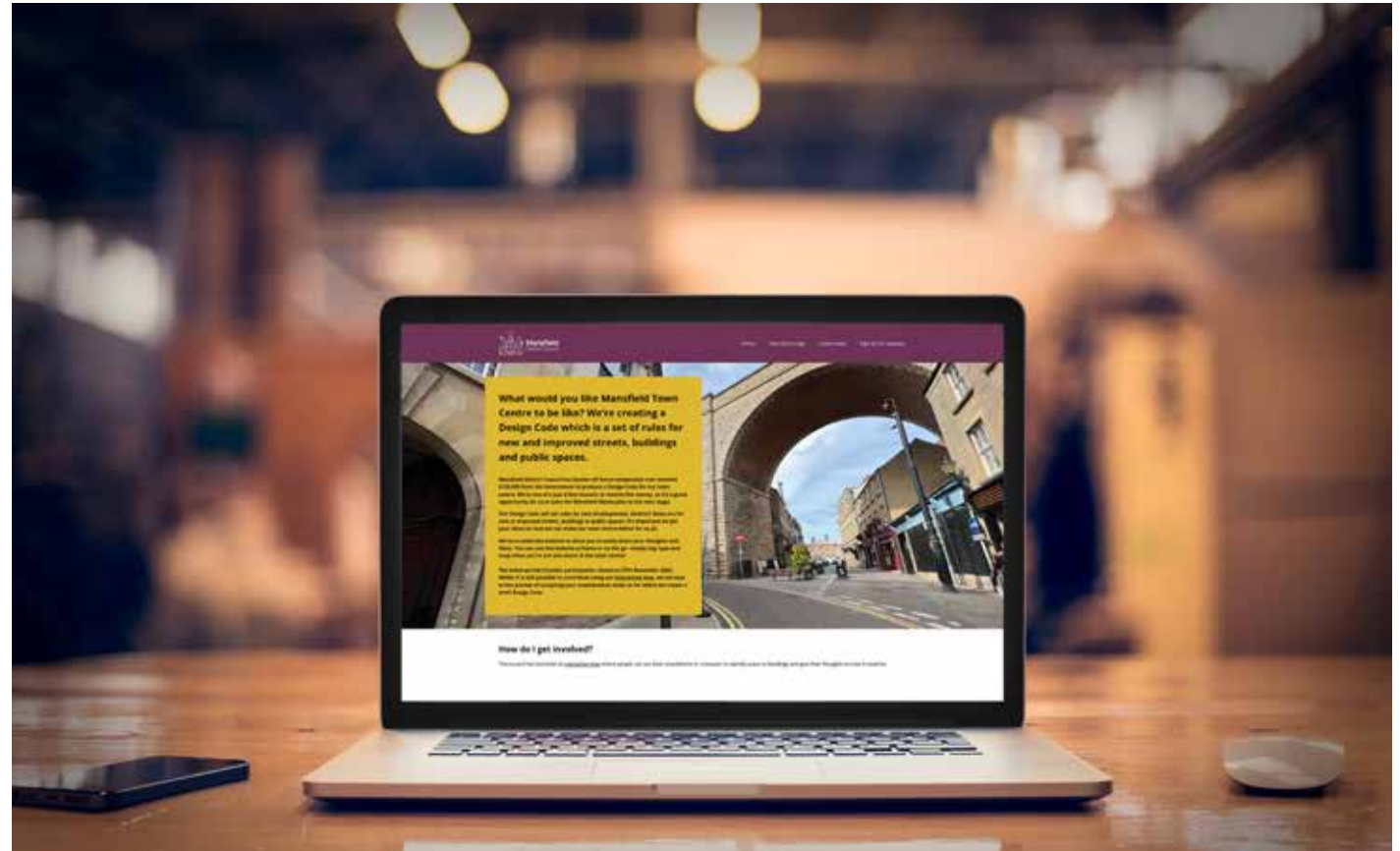
The process of contributing to this exercise was simplified as 'Tag, Type, Snap', helping convey that the process of adding comments to the map was quick and simple. Contributions (or pins) were referred to as tags, with participants given the option to give the 'thumbs up' to tags added by others.

**192 tags added to the map of the town centre, and 65 'likes' made on others' comments.**

**10% of tags were 'Something I like'**

**24% of tags were 'An idea'**

**66% of tags were 'Something I want to see improved**
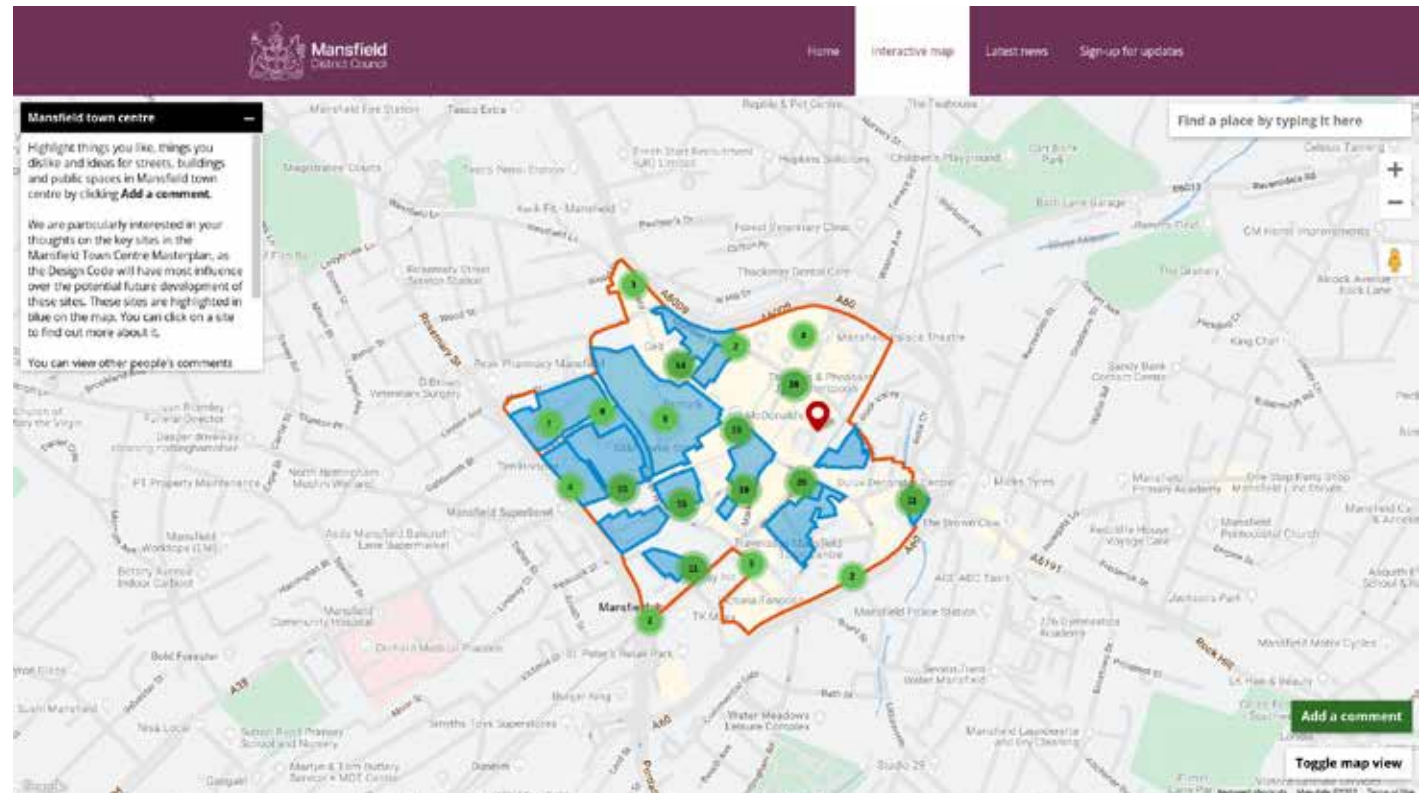
Participants were asked to categorise their tags against themes in the National Model Design Code. The most popular themes were:

The least popular themes were:

Participants were also asked to rate the overall quality of the environment in the location where they were adding their tag:

**54% of tags related to the 'Character of a building or a public space'**

**39% related to 'Walking'**

**37% related to the 'Design of public space'**

**3% 'Managing water and flood risk'**

**5% 'Building heights'**

**5% 'Biodiversity (plant, insect and wildlife habitats)**

**38% 'Not good at all'**

**35% 'Not so good'**

**15% 'OK**

**6% 'Good'**

**6% 'Very good'**

## Methodology

In addition to creating a digital public participation platform as the focus of the public engagement exercise, Mansfield District Council undertook an outreach campaign to encourage people to visit the platform and take part. Those without internet access or capability were given the option to call a dedicated telephone number to request assistance or information in an accessible alternative format.

## Digital public participation platform

The digital public participation platform was launched on 12th October 2022, and available to visit at https://mansfield.place

The home page included introductory information about the Design Code project, encouraging visitors to get involved and have their say using the interactive map. Visitors were also given the opportunity to sign-up for updates and read more about the project in the 'Latest news' section.

On the interactive map, visitors could click 'Add a comment' to add their tag to the map, answering 6 simple questions and positioning the tag on the map at the location in the town centre that their suggestion was related to. All tags were publicly visible, and visitors were given the option to 'like' other suggestions made by clicking the green 'thumbs up' icon in the pop-up box for each tag.
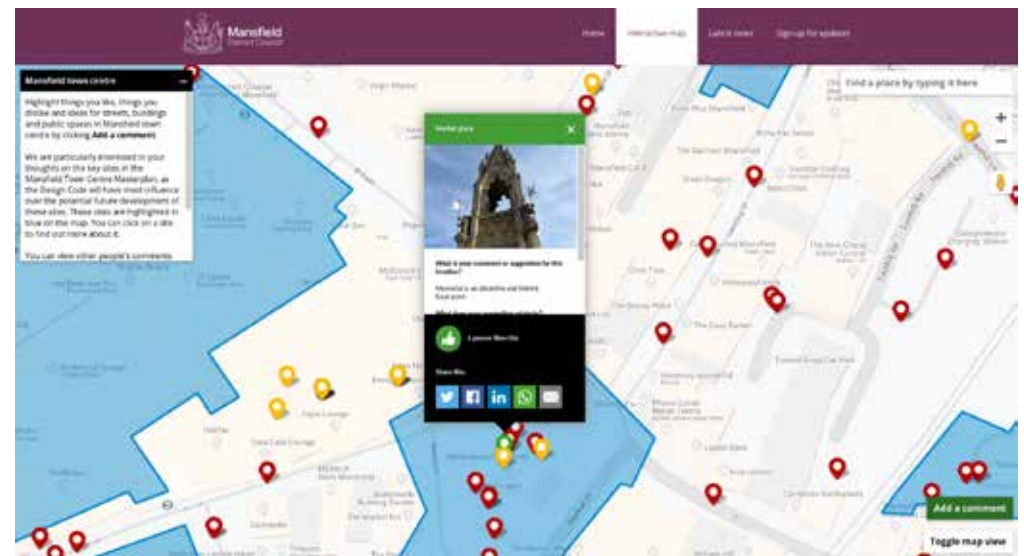
## Social media campaign

To encourage people to visit the platform and have their say, Mansfield District Council posted regularly on social media platforms Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn using branded artwork (see example to the left).

26% of platform visits we referred from the Council Facebook adverts, 16% from LinkedIn and 5% from Twitter. A further 22% of web visits came from members of the community posting a link to the platform on their personal feeds. 9% of visits came from the Council's website (https://mansfield.gov.uk)
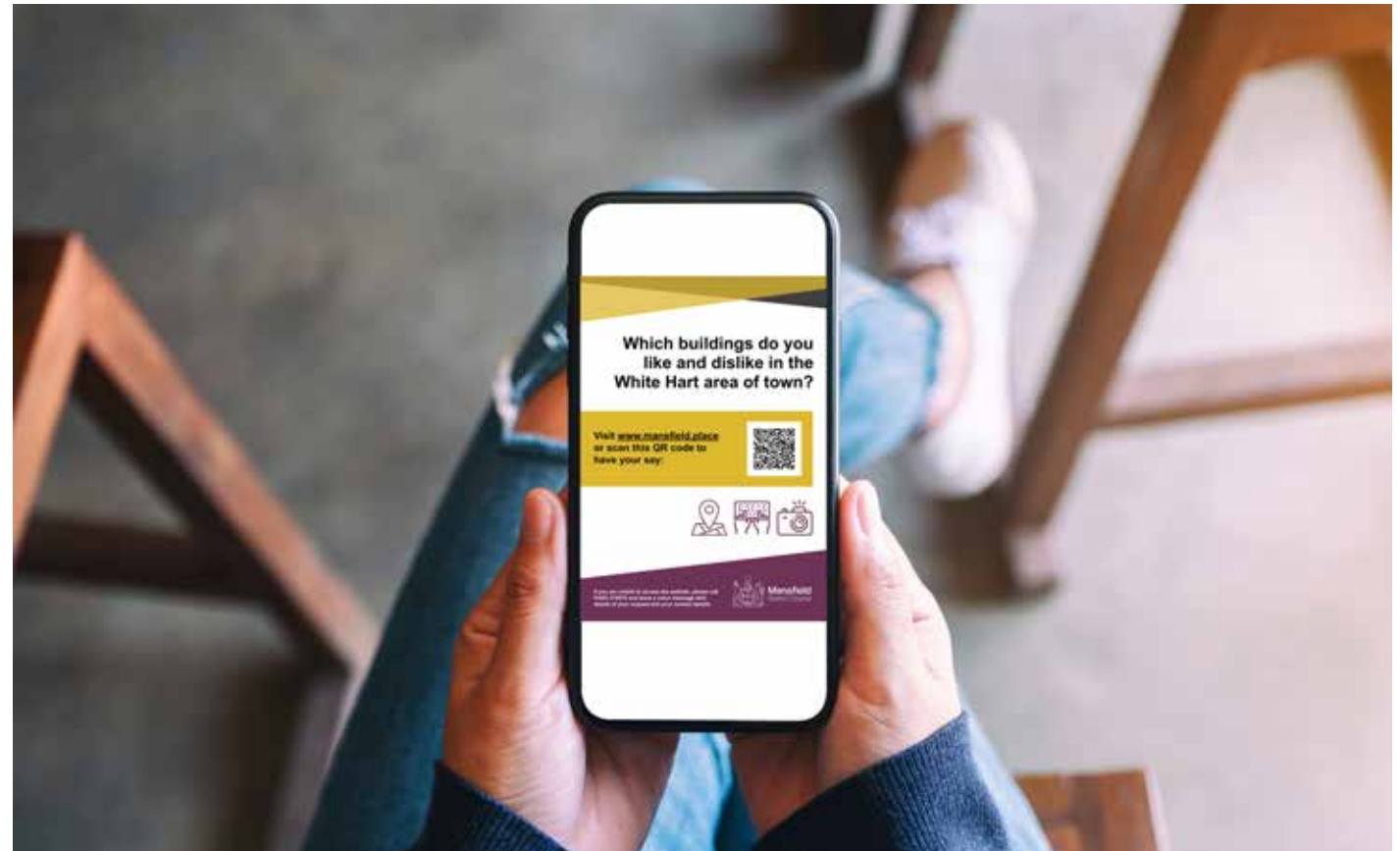
## Street signage

In addition to the social media campaign, printed A3-format posters were placed on lamp-posts around the town centre, with location-specific prompts and QR-codes which, when scanned using a smartphone, would navigate the visitor directly to that location on the interactive map.

These posters were erected on 12th October and left in place for the initial 6-week engagement period.

## Outreach through existing organisations in the community

Mansfield District Council contacted several organisations on the existing smiling list

to provide information about the Design Code project, to encourage them to get involved directly and to encourage them to contact people in their network to encourage them to get involved. Printed flyers were also available for community-level organisations, partner organisations and businesses to distribute to customers, contacts and network members.

## Statistical outcomes of public participation

### Public contributions

118 unique participants made 272 interactions, including 192 tags on the interactive map, whilst 65 'likes' were made on existing tags to show support.

The geographical zone that participants were able to tag suggestions within was limited to the town centre boundary as indicated in the Mansfield Town Centre masterplan. The green clusters on the map below indicate the concentration of tags in certain areas, with the number within the cluster indicating how many tags were made in that broad area.

**Interaction category**

All interactions

| Place-based comment | 71% (192 interactions) |
| --- | --- |
| Comment made to like | 24% (65 interactions) |
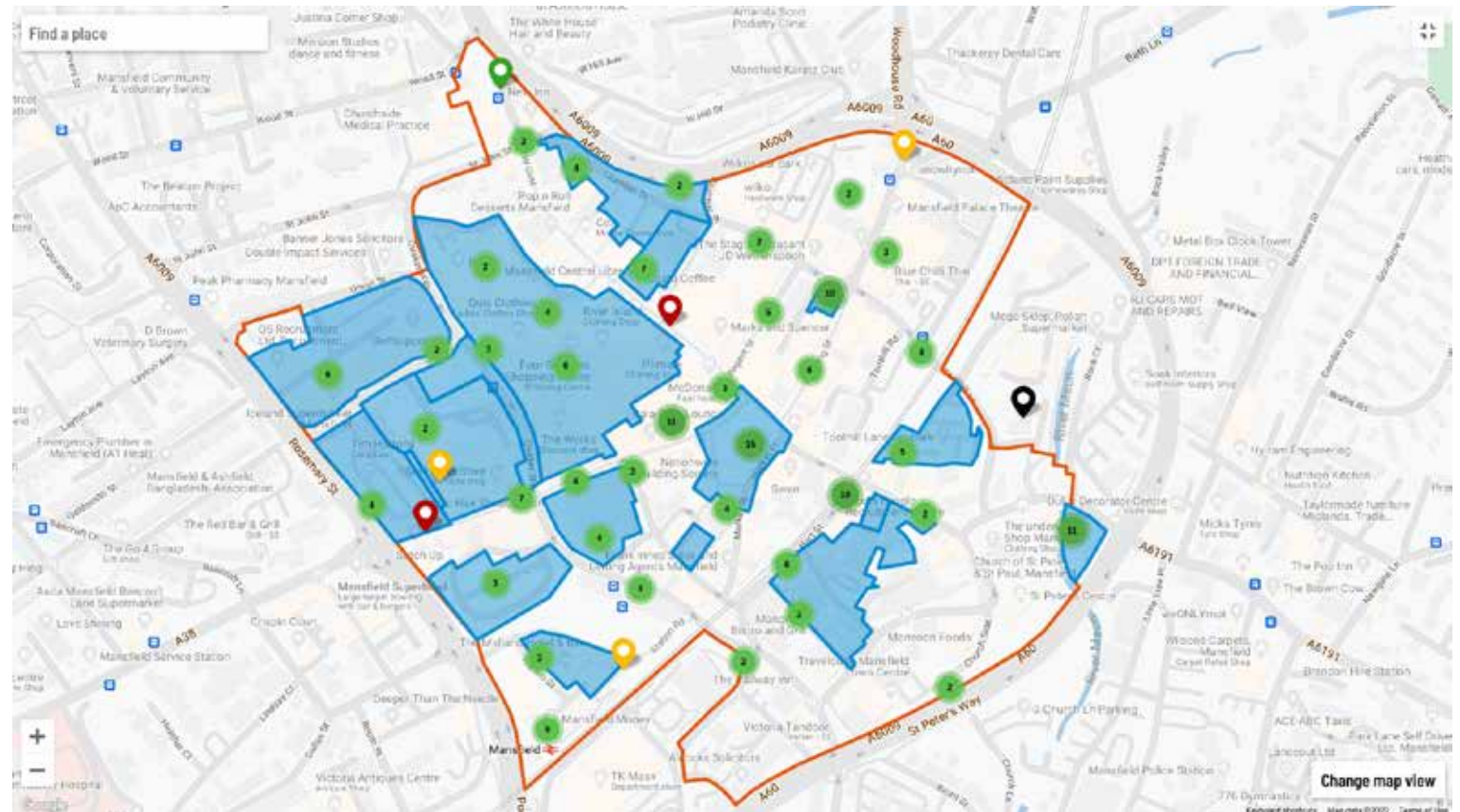
Overall, the sentiment of comments was broadly in-line with expectation, with the majority of people choosing to take the opportunity to indicate what they dislike or want to change. The chart to the right indicates the total tags received in relation to each sentiment.

**What are you highlighting?**

All interactions

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 10% (18 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 66% (123 interactions) |
| An idea | 24% (45 interactions) |

## Interaction categories

When adding a tag, participants were asked to select one or more themes (linking to themes in the National Model Design Code) that their comment or suggestion related to. The chart below shows the breakdown of totals for each theme. The most popular themes were:

**54% of tags related to the 'Character of a building or a public space'**

**39% related to 'Walking'**

**37% related to the 'Design of public space'**

The least popular themes were:

**3% 'Managing water and flood risk'**

**5% 'Building heights'**

**5% 'Biodiversity (plant, insect and wildlife habitats)**

**What does your suggestion relate to?**

All interactions

| Theme | Interactions |
|---|---|
| The character of a building or a public space | 54% (101 interactions) |
| The history of a building or a public space | 17% (32 interactions) |
| Walking | 39% (72 interactions) |
| Cycling and cycle parking | 10% (19 interactions) |
| Public transport | 11% (21 interactions) |
| Travelling by car and car parking | 12% (22 interactions) |
| Getting around with a disability | 24% (44 interactions) |
| Design of green spaces | 11% (20 interactions) |
| Managing water and flood risk | 3% (5 interactions) |
| Biodiversity (plant, insect and wildlife habitats) | 5% (10 interactions) |
| Trees and planting | 11% (21 interactions) |
| Where buildings are located | 9% (16 interactions) |
| Design of buildings | 18% (33 interactions) |
| Building heights | 5% (9 interactions) |
| How buildings look and feel at street level | 26% (49 interactions) |
| How easy is it to navigate your way around | 16% (29 interactions) |
| Design of public spaces | 37% (69 interactions) |
| How safe and secure a public space feels | 21% (40 interactions) |
| How buildings relate to the street | 17% (31 interactions) |
| How wide or narrow a street feels | 9% (16 interactions) |

Participants were also asked to indicate how they rated the broad quality of the built environment in the location where the pin was dropped. The breakdown of totals for each rating is detailed in the chart below.

How would you rate the overall quality of the local environment in this location?

All interactions

| | |
|---|---|
| Not good at all | 38% (65 interactions) |
| Not so good | 35% (60 interactions) |
| OK | 15% (26 interactions) |
| Good | 6% (10 interactions) |
| Very good | 6% (10 interactions) |

## Analysis of themes

### Context

The themes relating to 'Context' include 'The character of a building or a public space' and 'The history of a building or a public space'.

Key emerging issues include:

**The character of many buildings in Mansfield is in part determined by their use, and many buildings with character to be preserved often lose character because of their modern uses**

**Which many buildings have positive characteristics, there is a lack of coherence of character across the town centre**

**Many buildings require improvements to enhance their heritage value, to appear more inviting for potential patrons and customers**

## The character of a building or a public space

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'The character of a building or a public space'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 15% (15 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 66% (65 interactions) |
| An idea | 19% (19 interactions) |

## The history of a building or a public space

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.



**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'The history of a building or a public space'

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Something I like | | 19% (6 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | | 50% (16 interactions) |
| An idea | | 31% (10 interactions) |

## Movement

The themes relating to 'Movement' include 'Walking', 'Cycling and cycle parking', 'Public transport', 'Getting around with a disability' and 'Travelling by car and car parking'.

Key emerging issues include:

**A lack of signage is a big issue, particularly to and from the railway station and the Market**

**Pedestrian crossing points often feel unsafe**

**Surface treatments or pavements and kerbs can be obstructive to movement for wheelchairs and pushchairs**

**Car parking is unsightly, not attractive to use and too expensive**

**Cycling infrastructure should be better promoted and signposted**

**Street clutter has become obstructive to movement, including relative new street furniture**

## Walking

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Walking'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 84% (59 interactions) |
| An idea | 16% (11 interactions) |

## Cycling and cycle parking

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Cycling and cycle parking'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 47% (9 interactions) |
| An idea | 53% (10 interactions) |

## Public transport

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Public transport'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 75% (15 interactions) |
| An idea | 25% (5 interactions) |

## Getting around with a disability

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Getting around with a disability'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 88% (37 interactions) |
| An idea | 12% (5 interactions) |

## Travelling by car and car parking

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Travelling by car and car parking'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 64% (14 interactions) |
| An idea | 36% (8 interactions) |

## Nature

The themes relating to 'Nature' include 'Trees and planting', 'Design of green spaces', 'Managing water and flood risk' and 'Biodiversity (plant, insect and wildlife habitats)'.

Key emerging issues include:

**Many grassed/green area don't have a use or purpose, and could be enhanced with seating or play equipment to give them a purpose**

**The River Maun could be enhanced to provide more biodiversity and attractive green spaces**

**More trees could provide shaded areas and improve air quality, and break up extensive areas of hard tarmac/paving**

## Trees and planting

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Trees and planting'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 10% (2 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 57% (12 interactions) |
| An idea | 33% (7 interactions) |

## Design of green spaces

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Design of green spaces'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 5% (1 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 65% (13 interactions) |
| An idea | 30% (6 interactions) |

## Managing water and flood risk

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Managing water and flood risk'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 40% (2 interactions) |
| An idea | 60% (3 interactions) |

## Biodiversity (plant, insect and wildlife habitats)

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Biodiversity (plant, insect and wildlife habitats)'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 10% (1 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 60% (6 interactions) |
| An idea | 30% (3 interactions) |

## Built Form

The themes relating to 'Built form' include 'Where buildings are located', 'Design of buildings' and 'Building heights'.

Key emerging issues include:

**Many buildings create dark, dingy and uninviting spaces that could be better used, such as outside the library**

**The streets leading up to the Market should have a fine grain and higher density to create a more inviting route, rather than a shopping centre**

**Four Seasons Shopping Centre and Car Park is in need of improvement**

## Where buildings are located

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Where buildings are located'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 50% (8 interactions) |
| An idea | 50% (8 interactions) |

## Design of buildings

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Design of buildings'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 3% (1 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 70% (23 interactions) |
| An idea | 27% (9 interactions) |

## Building heights

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Building heights'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 11% (1 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 56% (5 interactions) |
| An idea | 33% (3 interactions) |

## Identity

The themes relating to 'Identity' include 'How buildings look and feel at street level' and 'How easy it is to navigate your way around'.

Key emerging issues include:

**Many buildings create dark, dingy and uninviting spaces that could be better used, such as outside the library**

**The character of many buildings and their frontages in Mansfield is in part determined by their use, and many buildings with character to be preserved often lose character because of their modern uses**

**A lack of signage is a major issue, particularly to and from the railway station and the Market**

## How buildings look and feel at street level

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'How buildings look and feel at street level'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 4% (2 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 68% (32 interactions) |
| An idea | 28% (13 interactions) |

## How easy it is to navigate your way around

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'How easy is it to navigate your way around'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 82% (23 interactions) |
| An idea | 18% (5 interactions) |
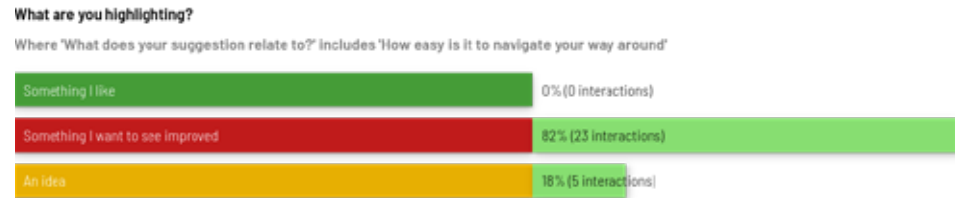
## Public space

The themes relating to 'Public space' include 'Design of public spaces' and 'How safe and secure a public space feels'..

Key emerging issues include:

**Many public spaces could be better used and more widely used with seating, planting and/or play equipment**

**Many 60s/70s buildings create awkward outdoor spaces that are uninviting, with little passive surveillance and that could be better used**

**Many public spaces could benefit with better lighting**

**Better signage and legibility of streets would give people more confidence to move around safety**

## Design of public spaces

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'Design of public spaces'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 4% (3 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 67% (45 interactions) |
| An idea | 28% (19 interactions) |

## How safe and secure a public space feels

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'How safe and secure a public space feels'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 3% (1 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 83% (33 interactions) |
| An idea | 15% (6 interactions) |

## Uses

The themes relating to 'Uses' include 'How buildings relate to the street' and 'How how wide or narrow a street feels'.

Key emerging issues include:

**Pedestrian and cycle ways could be better highlighted and marked, with more space given the cyclists**

**Streets and pedestrians routes leading to the Market should be narrow and have a fine grain, creating a sense of arrival at the Market**

**Many streets and public spaces feel inviting because of the buildings' relationship with the street, poor lighting and a lack of passive/active (CCTV) surveillance**

## How buildings relate to the street

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.



**What are you highlighting?**
Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'How buildings relate to the street'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 73% (22 interactions) |
| An idea | 27% (8 interactions) |

## How wide or narrow a street feels

The most common words used in responses under this theme are included in the graphic below in larger text and the least popular in smaller text.

**What are you highlighting?**

Where 'What does your suggestion relate to?' includes 'How wide or narrow a street feels'

| | |
|---|---|
| Something I like | 0% (0 interactions) |
| Something I want to see improved | 75% (12 interactions) |
| An idea | 25% (4 interactions) |

# Evaluation of initial public participation stage

## Contribution rate

The platform attracted 172 contributions from 118 participants, representing a 12.9% contribution rate. We would typically expect a contribution rate of between 10% and 15%, based on our experience of similar public participation processes.

**Visit type**

| | |
|---|---|
| Returning | 76% (2950 visits) |
| New | 24% (914 visits) |

## Geographic spread of participants

The map below shows the geographic location of participants, demonstrating that the project has attracted attention beyond Mansfield District.
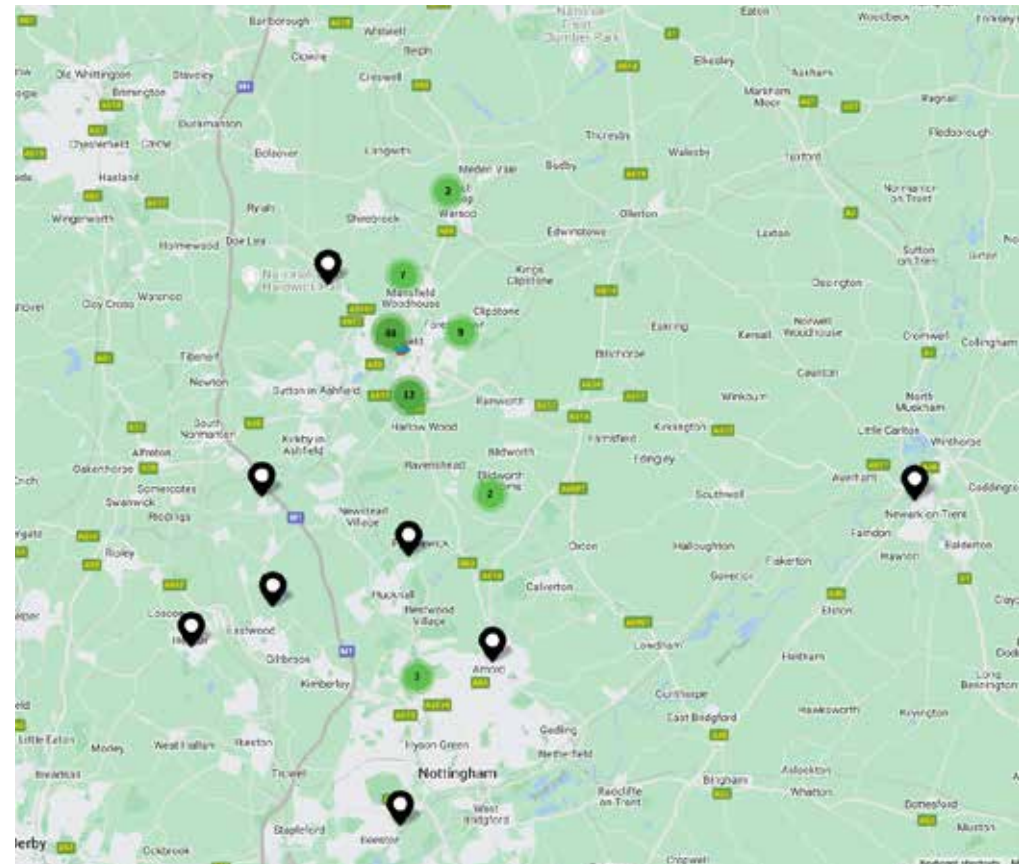
The public participation process attracted contributions from several neighbouring local authority areas in Nottinghamshire and beyond, as demonstrated by the chart below:

The overwhelming majority of participants live or work in the NG18 and NG19 postcode areas in Mansfield:

**Top local authority areas**

All stakeholders

| Area | |
|---|---|
| Mansfield | 85% (71 stakeholders) |
| Gedling | 4% (3 stakeholders) |
| Nottingham | 4% (3 stakeholders) |
| Broxtowe | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| Ashfield | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| Amber Valley | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| Newark and Sherwood | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| Bolsover | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| Belfast | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| South Kesteven | 1% (1 stakeholders) |

**Top postcode zones**

All stakeholders

| Zone | |
|---|---|
| NG19 | 53% (49 stakeholders) |
| NG18 | 28% (26 stakeholders) |
| NG6 | 3% (3 stakeholders) |
| NG16 | 2% (2 stakeholders) |
| NG20 | 2% (2 stakeholders) |
| NG21 | 2% (2 stakeholders) |
| NG5 | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| NG9 | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| NG | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
| DE75 | 1% (1 stakeholders) |
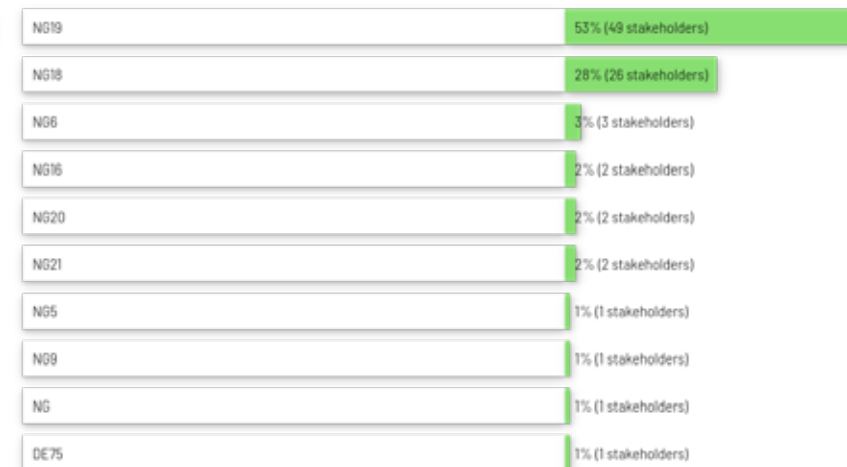
## Outreach Campaign

### Contribution rate

The majority of platform visits came through Facebook, with 28% coming from the Council's promoted social media posts (via mobile and desktop versions of the social media platform) and 18% through members of the community posting the link to the platform on their feed. 18% of visits came through a combination of other social media platforms Twitter and LinkedIn.

Whilst the social media campaign and other web-based sources of information accounted for a significant number of visits, nearly 60% of visits overall were direct (the website address typed into the browser). It is assumed that these came from the sight of flyers or on-street posters or scanning the QR-codes on printed materials.

### Device type

47% of visits were made from mobile devices, which is roughly what we would anticipate for a public participation exercise of this nature, where the majority of visits come from social media platforms or scanning QR codes.

**Top referral web pages**

| | |
|---|---|
| Facebook Mobile (tracked link) | 23% (127 visits) |
| Facebook Mobile | 18% (100 visits) |
| LinkedIn | 13% (74 visits) |
| www.mansfield.gov.uk | 12% (69 visits) |
| Google Search Engine | 9% (49 visits) |
| Twitter | 6% (34 visits) |
| Facebook (tracked link) | 5% (29 visits) |
| Google UK Search Engine | 4% (22 visits) |
| com.linkedin.android | 2% (14 visits) |
| com.google.android.googlequicksearchbox | 2% (12 visits) |

**Device type**

| | |
|---|---|
| Desktop | 53% (2055 visits) |
| Mobile | 47% (1809 visits) |

## Time of day

The busiest time of day for the public participation platform is around lunchtime, which is common for a public participation exercise of this nature.

**Time of day**

| Time | Percentage (visits) |
|------|---------------------|
| 12AM - 2AM | 1% (20 visits) |
| 2AM - 4AM | 0% (7 visits) |
| 4AM - 6AM | 1% (21 visits) |
| 6AM - 8AM | 2% (95 visits) |
| 8AM - 10AM | 9% (329 visits) |
| 10AM - 12PM | 19% (746 visits) |
| 12PM - 2PM | 15% (594 visits) |
| 2PM - 4PM | 16% (627 visits) |
| 4PM - 6PM | 13% (494 visits) |
| 6PM - 8PM | 11% (409 visits) |
| 8PM - 10PM | 9% (348 visits) |
| 10PM - 12AM | 5% (174 visits) |
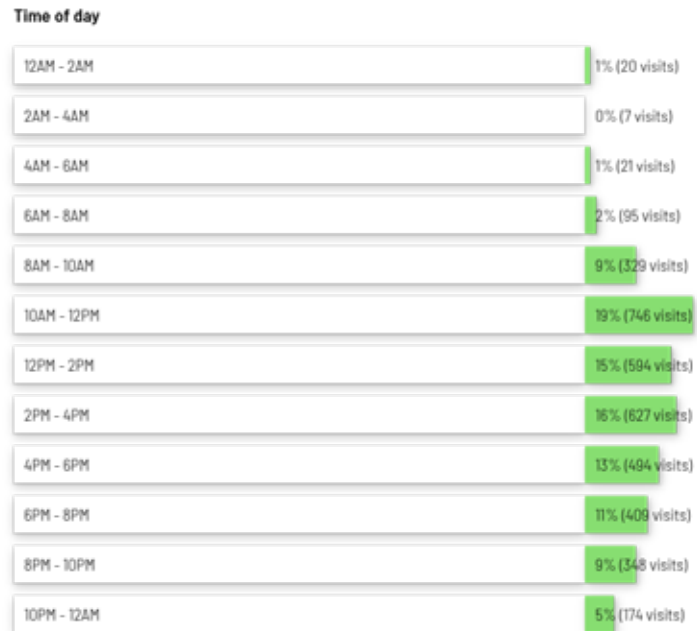
## Inclusive Design Audit

As part of re-examining, testing and validating the baseline, we engaged the services of David Foster, a lifelong wheelchair user and former access officer at West Berkshire Council. Dave's auditing of the town centre identified a number of barriers to movement and inclusivity, primarily within the public realm.

Key issues were:

- Street clutter
- Unlevel surfaces
- Changes of level
- Hazards to wheelchair users such as linear (as opposed to grid faced) drain cover
- Lack of 'sight lines' for cane users
- Narrow or missing pavements; (easy) carriageway crossings and tactile paving

- Inaccessible routes and broken connections
- Provision of toilets.

Subsequent work involved Dave meeting with representatives from Disability Nottinghamshire, One Conversation and Mansfield CVS and discussing their experiences. There was a strong consensus that the town centre's regeneration would be supported if Mansfield could become the most accessible town centre in the East Midlands; capturing the 'Purple Pound'. To realise this, a series of ten 'top issues' were identified:

1. Flush and level surfaces; including level crossings with carriageways meeting the level of the pavement, rather than pedestrians having to change their level of movement*.

2. Removal of street clutter and codifying any new furniture to avoid hazards and obstructions such as grates that can trap wheels or canes*.

3. Making businesses more accessible to wheelchairs from entrances, store layouts to toilet provision*.

4. Providing a reliable pair of Changing Place toilets in a council owned or controlled space within the town centre*.

5. Car park machines that were accessible for wheelchair users (height and by accepting contactless payment)*.

6. Accessible car parking bays on level surfaces and clearly marked*.

7. Quieter and low light/stimulation shopping hours.

8. Providing a clear route for cane users throughout the town centre, drawing inspiration from a particular example of good practice in Copenhagen*.

9. Requiring new buildings to have at least two lifts*.

10. Requiring new buildings to have accessible toilets integrated into main toilets; creating a more inclusive place*.

Some of these issues are beyond the scope of a design code, however those marked * can be codified into the Mansfield Code.

It is clear from spending time with members of the local community that experience mobility challenges that the town centre is full of barriers to movement and that aside from coding there needs to be greater awareness of how people with mobility limitations experience places; and how different their experiences can be to the experiences of others.
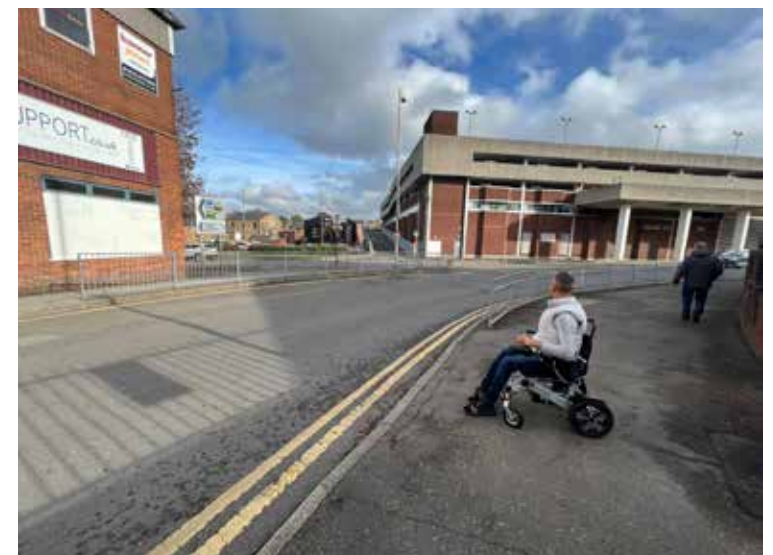
A Design Code is a set of rules for new developments. The Government is encouraging the creation and use of codes across England.

The Code sets out a series of rules for new development within Mansfield Town Centre and was produced as part of the Design Code Pathfinder Programme funded by DLUHC.

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