

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Focus Groups - Report
Date: 17 September 2021 12:04:35
Attachments: [AECOM NLWA Qualitative Research Report 2021-09-15.docx](#)

[REDACTED]

I have now received and have attached the Focus Group report that was commissioned by NLWA earlier in the year, to give a better understand of how NLWA is viewed by the wider community and stakeholder partners and why people feel the way they do.

As you know the research was split into two groups, including residents and stakeholders. All residents lived in one of the seven boroughs and were divided into groups at varying distances from the EcoPark. The list of stakeholders was provided by NLWA and comprised borough officers, ward councillors and external charitable organisations in the environmental sphere that had worked with NLWA previously. In the report they are differentiated as environmental and borough stakeholders. The purpose of the resident focus groups was to understand local people's perceptions of the NLHPP, while the purpose of the stakeholder sessions was to benchmark NLWA's corporate reputation.

We spoke to 26 residents and 14 stakeholders. Of those 14, nine were borough stakeholders and five were environmental stakeholders. I have provided a summary for each below.

Residents

- Across the residents groups, as we have mentioned before only a few individuals were aware of the EcoPark.
- Generally 2/3 were unaware of NLWA and the further away they lived from the site the less they were aware. By extension it also meant the greater the distance from the site the less they were affected or likely to be impacted by the construction of NLHPP according to them.
- When asked about any concerns they might have about NLHPP those closest to the site cited traffic, noise during construction, smell and also the cost of constructing the facility, wondering if the cost would impact their council tax payments.
- Following discussion around the employment and training opportunities and the potential benefit NLHPP will bring to the local economy, respondents were surprised by their lack of awareness of NLHPP, especially given these positive news stories.
- The report shows a lack of awareness about recycling with some people not understanding what can be recycled or even how to recycle. Some felt recycling is still a relatively new concept (in some sections of society) and felt there is a need for general information about recycling to be made available. They also said publicity about the new recycling facilities will be key to its success. We were reminded that not everyone is online and people may not look at the NLWA website for information about recycling.

- Respondents felt there was a need to engage with young people at school and educate future generations about what happens to waste when it leaves the house.

A clear action to discuss is how NLWA better communicate messages alongside those of NLHPP to these groups and educate people about the benefits of recycling.

Stakeholders

When asked what it was like to work with NLWA environmental stakeholders were positive and said their objectives are aligned with NLWA's objectives. They felt NLWA has clear expectations resulting in positive and collaborative relationships and hoped to collaborate further. Borough stakeholders said NLHPP is currently dominating most meetings and are concerned other NLWA issues are being side-lined as a result.

The report shows that communications and particularly the transfer of information to the Boroughs needs to improve. When asked about the information stakeholders receive from NLWA, communication was mentioned by all groups who said for example:

- NLWA communication channels are not always clearly defined with different people attending different meetings resulting in inconsistencies.
- Borough stakeholders highlighted that information was not always passed down the chain of communication from NLWA to the local authorities in a timely fashion.

When asked how NLWA compares to other organisations in the same sector the response was mixed. One borough stakeholder said they were not receiving the same level of information as they expected whilst an environmental stakeholder said their organisations were aligned in terms of the messages they wanted to convey.

This is just a snapshot of the research gathered and we have arranged a meeting during the morning of Monday 27 September to discuss this jointly, allowing time to consider the findings in the meantime and identify actions that are required as a result.

Best wishes,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Principal Consultant, Stakeholder Engagement Services

E: [Redacted]

Tel: [Redacted]

AECOM

The Colmore Building
Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham, B4 6AT, United Kingdom

T [Redacted]

aecom.com

Delivering a better world