



A COMMUNITY FARM FOR CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PHASE TWO - SPRING 2020
COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO DRAFT DESIGNS

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BACKGROUND TO PHASE TWO OF COFARM CAMBRIDGE'S COMMUNITY CONSULTATION – PUBLIC LAUNCH OF DRAFT COMMUNITY FARM DESIGNS

At the core of CoFarm's ethos and strategy is a science, practise and movement called *agroecology*. As the name suggests, agroecology is about farming in harmony with nature. But it is also about much more than this.

Agroecological farming is as much a social, a political and an economic process as it is an agricultural one. Agroecological farms are *co-created* with and for communities and respond to local cultures, customs and needs.

It was in the spirit of co-creation that we launched the first phase of our community consultation in March 2019. Around 200 households contributed their ideas, feelings, dreams and aspirations for Cambridge city's first community farm.

The results of that consultation, which generated a huge amount of rich ideas insights and data, can be found at:

www.cofarm.co/survey

Over the past year, we've used the results of this first phase of our community consultation to inform three main things:

- 1) We've designed our business model to respond to what people said they wanted. This includes the development of a subscription-based scheme for households and local employers.

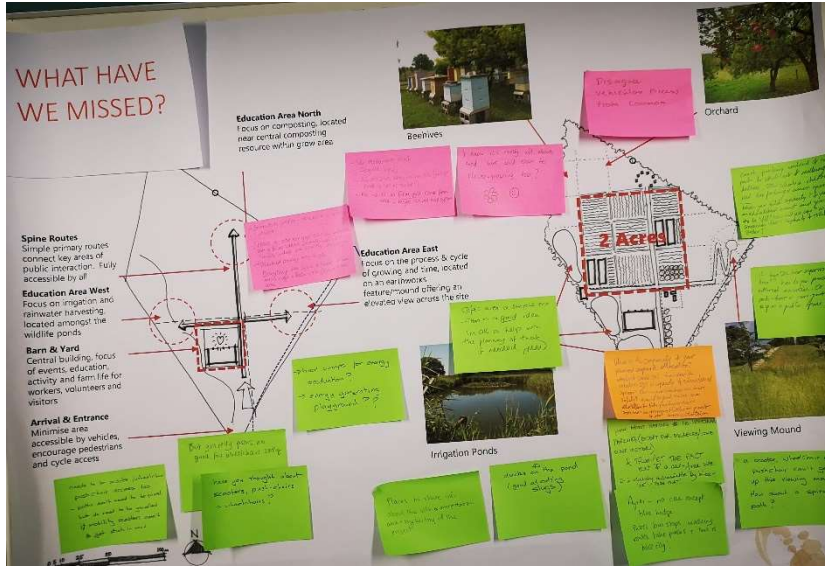
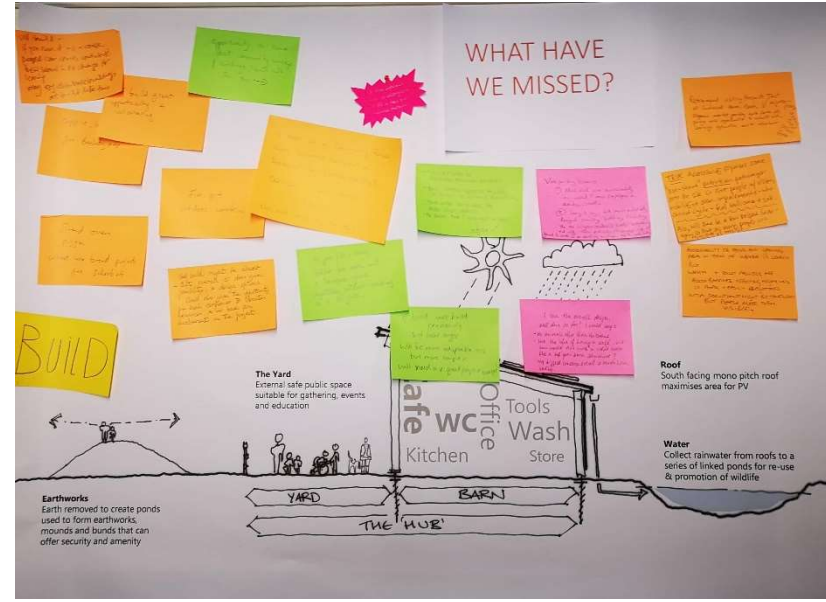
- 2) We designed our organisational structure around the views and needs expressed. On World Food Day, in October 2019, we incorporated CoFarm Foundation (a charitable entity) with a wholly owned operational subsidiary, CoFarm Cambridge, to run the farm.
- 3) We produced a Strategic Design Brief for award winning architectural practice RH Partnership to help turn a very diverse set of ideas, aspirations and needs into practical and workable design concepts for the farm.

I'm happy to report that 120 people (and 2 dogs) turned up to an open drop-in session at the Horizon Resource Centre on Saturday 7th March to view the draft design concepts for the farm and to give us their feedback. This input, as in the first phase, was both overwhelmingly positive and very useful.

We're enormously grateful for RH Partnership's support and generosity with the design work and to everyone who has contributed to the design process.

We now enter perhaps the most exciting phase yet – finalising the designs and working with and for the community to co-create a farm!

Gavin Shelton, Founder, CoFarm Foundation
Cambridge, March 2020





1. THIS IS WHAT THE MAIN COMMUNITY HUB OF THE FARM MAY LOOK LIKE. IT'S WHERE PEOPLE WILL COLLECT THEIR FRESH FRUIT AND VEG, LEARN NEW SKILLS, COOK, EAT AND SOCIALISE TOGETHER. IS THIS A PLACE YOU'D LOVE TO SPEND TIME?

1.1 Support for the 'The Barn' design concept.

72% of respondents gave the draft designs a '10 out of 10 hearts' - the highest possible score – indicating they would love to spend time at the site if these designs were implemented.

18% scored the designs '9 out of 10 hearts.'

10% gave the designs '8 out of 10 hearts.'

No respondents gave scores any lower than 8 out of 10.



1.2 Could we improve on these designs? What's missing?

"I love the overall designs so far! I would say: - no animals other than chickens. Love the idea of having a café, but how would that work in what looks like a half-open barn structure? My biggest concern overall is vandalism, sadly."

"Café: even a simple one. This is a good idea. I'm OK to help with the planning of that if needed. (Name?)"

"Bread oven. Pizza. Wheat to bread projects for schools etc." "Fire pit. Outdoor cooking."

"A fire pit-lovely. And/or an area with a barbeque space. Vegetable outdoor cooking is a delight."

"Heat pumps for energy production?" "Energy generating playground?"

"Is it more sustainable to recycle an existing structure or build a new one with sustainable materials?" "Tank under earthworks for added water capacity."

"Compost loo? Keep all onsite – use for fertility – (it's safe if treated properly.)"

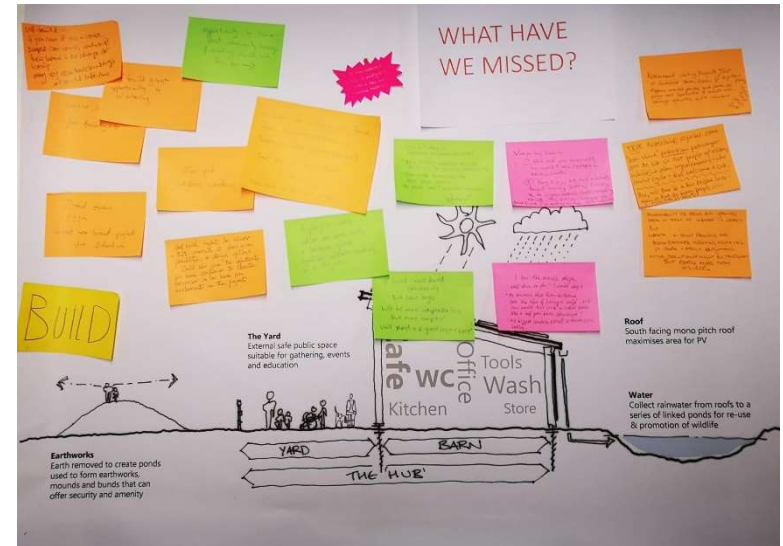
"Circular economy for reclaimed structural materials."

"Omit concrete wherever possible, as priority to minimise embodied CO2."

"Use reclaimed stuff. Recycle stuff. All outputs stay within site (except food to eat, of course!) All inputs as far as poss come from site – recycle/closed loop system."

"Something to make the building look less industrial, e.g. creeping plants, more natural materials, more than just a cube, green roof."

"PV (photovoltaic cells) payoff time? Green roof instead?" (Ticked with 'agree' by another respondent.)



2. BUILD VERSUS BUY?

2.3.1 Build

“Self-build involving the community is a lovely idea!”

“Self-build great opportunity 4 volunteering.”

“Self-build – if you run it as a course people can come, contribute their labour in exchange for learning. Many e.g. straw bale buildings are built like this.”

“Opportunity to think about community ownership of buildings/land with this too.”

“BUILD.”

“Self-build might be slower but overall it does give flexibility and design options. Could also give the opportunity for local companies to donate resources and so have an involvement in the project.”

“If build will build community but take longer. Will be more adaptable too but more complex. Will need a v. good project manager!”

“Is there 24 hour supervision? A ‘farm house’? How do you prevent unwanted nocturnal activities? Or is that an (word illegible) & you’re just opening it up as a public space like a plaza?”

“V. keen on a community build, using reclaimed materials & borrowed tools (where possible). Can’t wait to get started – v. exciting!!! Well done in getting this far!”



1.2 Could we improve on these designs? What's missing?

"Will there be a children's play area e.g den building, picnic area and area for children to try farming. (Child's name.)" (Ticked with "Like all these".)

"Places to share info about the site or interpretation about the history of the project?"

"Please keep max number of elder trees around the edge – good for elderflower cordial."

"Did someone do a sunshine/wind/seasonal survey to get an idea of what would grow happily where?"

"Coppice, hazel/willow for basketing etc." "Planting of hazel (and sweet chestnut if soil suitable) for future coppicing."

"I know it's really all about food but will there be flower growing too? 😊"

"Place for seed saving/preservation." "Ducks on the pond (good at eating slugs)."

"DUCKS! Slug control, nitrogen, adorable. See 'Why every vegetable garden needs ducks' on YouTube.)"

"Were there is the grazing I think there should be a few more animals because the chickens would have a lot of space that wouldn't be used and I think there should be a little more space to grow crops."

"For diversity/wildlife- have pond in wild area too?"

"Have a local compost collecting scheme using bike trailers (already happens in France) – don't use vehicles. Don't buy in."

"Everything very square & linear. It minimises edge which is the fertile & diverse area."

"Coffee table. Armchair. Painting!" (This note was accompanied by lovely drawings of these things!)

"Car! House. Dunno what this is. (This note was also accompanied by lovely drawings of these things!)"

4. ACCESS AND ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

“Accessibility of paths and growing areas is lovely. BUT, warmth and toilet facilities are access barriers affecting higher no’s of people and easily forgotten. Initial solutions might be temporary but please make them visible.”

“Hope you will have gender neutral and fully accessible toilet facilities.”

“Recommend visiting Prospects Trust at Snakehall Farm, Reach. Organic market garden, herb farm etc. giving work opportunities to adults with learning disabilities and to volunteers. (Ticked with “Agree. Please involve these social firms”.)

“TRUE accessibility requires some “non-shared” pedestrian pathways onto the site so that people w/vision, mobility and other impairments – who cannot cycle – feel welcome and safe. Also, will there be a few raised beds – again so that as many people can participate as possible...”

“Coach parking instead (?) of car parking for schools out of walking distance, SEN schools and children need close parking and own (?) space. What’s your toilet capacity? If you have an educational event and you happen to be “full”, how will you cope? What constitutes “full”? Capacity of toilets and shelter?”

“But gravely paths not good for wheelchairs sadly.” “Have you thought about scooters, push-chairs and wheelchairs?”

“A scooter, wheelchair or pushchair can’t get up this viewing mound. How about a spiral path?” (Note: Comment was next to a photo of an example mound with steps, though the layout design shows a wheelchair accessible zig zag design.)

“Needs to be scooter/wheelchair/pushchair access too. Paths don’t need to be paved but they do need to be gravelled if mobility scooters aren’t to get stuck in mud.”

“Disabled access (inc. wheelchairs) to all the growing areas? And to chickens/grazing?”

“Disabled parking only on site.” “Agree – no cars except blue badge. There’s bus stops, walking routes, bike parks and this is bike city!”

“How about having no-vehicular parking (except for disabled/some older visitors) and TRUMPET THE FACT that it’s a car free site. It is easily accessible by bike – let’s PUSH THAT!”

“What is the capacity of your planned car park allocation? What is it based on? How does it relate to size of educational spaces? Can we put coaches in there safely? Would be good to see an allocation for bike parking too and some more transport links as part of the consultation.”

“Disagree vehicular access from common.”

“There’s a right of way path here. (Arrow pointing to existing right of way on South boundary of site.) And also ‘dogwalker etc’ type paths on the other 3 sides. Hope they will be kept...”

“Allowance for permissive path on SW boundary adj to railway line for dog walkers, to link with existing paths/common land.”

ENDS