18 • CONSULTATION WITH OLDER PEOPLE

Older people were identified as a vulnerable population of Wiri within the scoping of this HIA. Therefore it was felt it was important to complete additional consultation with elderly specifically to see what their thoughts were of the urban plan and identify the issues they felt were important. In the last census (2006) there were 306 people aged 65 years and older, but is predicted to grow significantly over the period of this spatial structure plan and hence an important population group in regards to health and wellbeing.

Some of these residents had been living in Wiri for many years and see the area through a different lens, with thoughts and feelings from Wiri’s past and present. It was hoped that the consultation would obtain some insight into the ability for the elderly to ‘get around’ Wiri, as older people may have some physical difficulties so we wanted to ensure the urban plan improvements are made with those issues in mind.

18.1 Older people’s consultation method
General information was provided covering the urban plan and the developments to date. A questionnaire was constructed. Nineteen questionnaires were distributed, nine were completed in full, eleven uncompleted due to time constraints, abilities (physical or mental), or not being available upon pick up.

Responses to questions on Wiri were both positive and negative and reflected a number of already mentioned themes and key issues or concerns for the area. There was the general feel that Wiri could be improved and could be a more popular place to live in time.

The main themes from these questionnaires included:
• Safety
• Improved access to general services and amenities, transport, activities and facilities for the youth population, parenting courses and a facility for the elderly population to meet in.
• Aesthetics of place, including housing, general aesthetics and a clean up of the stream
• The need for action and collaboration to move projects forward

18.2 Older people’s consultation key findings

18.2.1 Safety
There was an over-riding opinion that Wiri is largely unsafe for the elderly, an increase in security, lighting, maintained pathways, reduction in gangs and general anti-social behaviour was required.

"Wiri is not as safe as I would like it, where I live in a village of old people we should feel safe"

"Wiri is a suburb where you are constantly concerned about crime"

A hope for Wiri as “a better and safer place for all residents”.

General safety including additional pedestrian crossings and traffic lights for safer areas to cross the road were identified. There was strong opposition regarding the new prison, as it was felt that this could decrease safety and impact the general feel and thoughts about the area.

18.2.2 Access
Access seemed to be a very important theme that came up in most questionnaire answers. The ability to get to places safely and quickly was identified, along with the need for increased public transport to get to the Health Park, Manukau City Centre and further afield. There seems to be an ongoing issue with the lack of post boxes and the requirement of a local post office and GP.

It was interesting that the older population also indicated that they felt youth were bored and required a facility that provided activities. They indicated that perhaps parents and caregivers would benefit from courses regarding parenting and caring for the young. They felt that there were no places for the elderly or any residents to meet and congregate and this would be something that would be welcomed.

18.2.3 Aesthetics
Residents expressed the need for a general clean up of Wiri, both in attitude, social behaviour and aesthetics. To improve the look and feel of Wiri to make residents proud of their community they suggested:

“I’d like to see the Puhinui Stream developed. It could be made really inviting as it is a dumping ground for shopping trolleys etc.”

“I would like to see it as an area that people communicate, people, if not speak, they might nod and smile, not have to think “can I even go for a walk?”

“Some sense of community pride e.g. Tidy sections, litter free streets, reduction of gambling and drinking facilities”

18.2.4 The need for action and change
The elderly had strong views regarding the need to achieve the aims, aspirations and goals and make change in this community and within this urban plan. There were recommendations of better planning in general:

“I can see where things have not been coordinated as well as they could have been, e.g. a school built opposite a retirement village”

18.3 Older people’s consultation conclusion
The elderly consultation was a small sample but was very useful to reiterate and confirm the underlying themes that were felt and discussed at other consultations. It was important that their views were heard, from a different perspective or health lens, to ensure the council creates a realistic and healthy urban plan for everyone, the fit, healthy, vulnerable, disabled, aged, Maori and Pacific.
The mind map below summarises the key concerns and aspirations of older people who participated in the HIA.

**Elderly Consultation key themes and aspirations**

- Local GP
- Post Boxes
- Post shop
- Better, more frequent public transport
- More bus stops
- Local takeaways
- Increased lighting required on the streets and community wide
- Decrease in crime
- Decrease the amounts of youth loitering
- Increase police presence
- Increased pedestrian crossings and traffic lights
- Strong opposition - new prison - felt would decrease safety
- Issues with personal safety in all regards
- The need to listen and collaborate with locals
- Evaluate work through asking the community for feedback
- Community coordinator to improve placement of facilities and services - general better planning
- Youth facilities and centre
- A local police station
- Additional training for all
- Parenting classes
- Social services and support
- Facilitated activities for youth
- A place to congregate and socialise
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- A local police station
- Additional training for all
- Parenting classes
- Social services and support
- Facilitated activities for youth
- A place to congregate and socialise
- General clean up of both attitude and social behaviour
- Decrease in rubbish, take more pride in property
- Make more aesthetically pleasing housing and gardens
- Develop the Puhinui Stream