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Valuing Ecosystems Services in the East of England (VEsSiEE): Lee Valley Regional Park Pilot

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17 March 2011

VEsSiEE

- A multi-partner project looking at valuing key **ecosystems services** in the East of England
- First phase explored the value of ecosystem services at five case study locations and found general support for an **Ecosystem Services Approach (ESA)**
- Recommended a second phase to test the ESA at the **local** level

Lee Valley Regional Park pilot

- Aim to test if and how the ESA can help to facilitate **public dialogue** on land use and help local people play an effective role in planning
- LVRP Authority volunteered **two sites** as case study locations



Case study sites

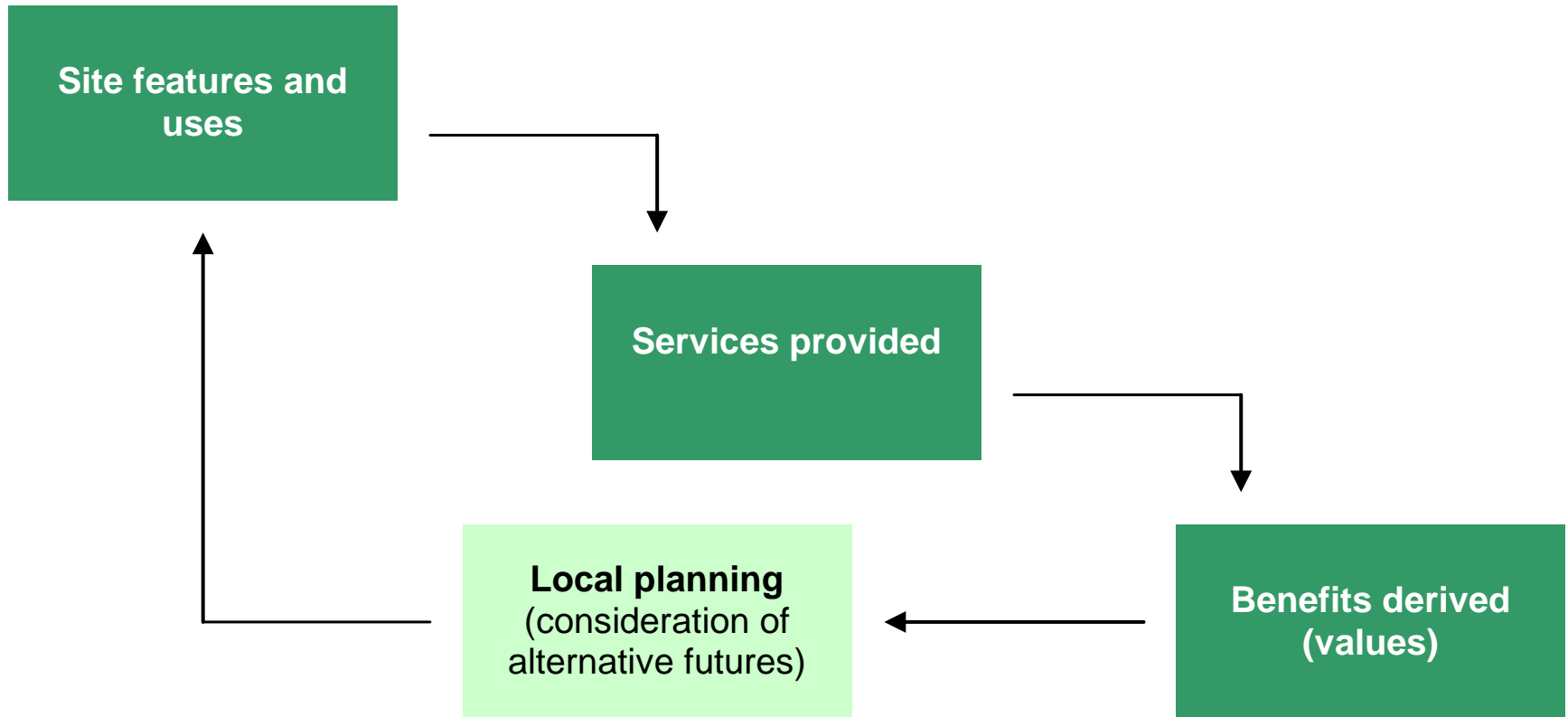
- Northern case study area



- Southern case study area



Ecosystem Services Approach



What we did

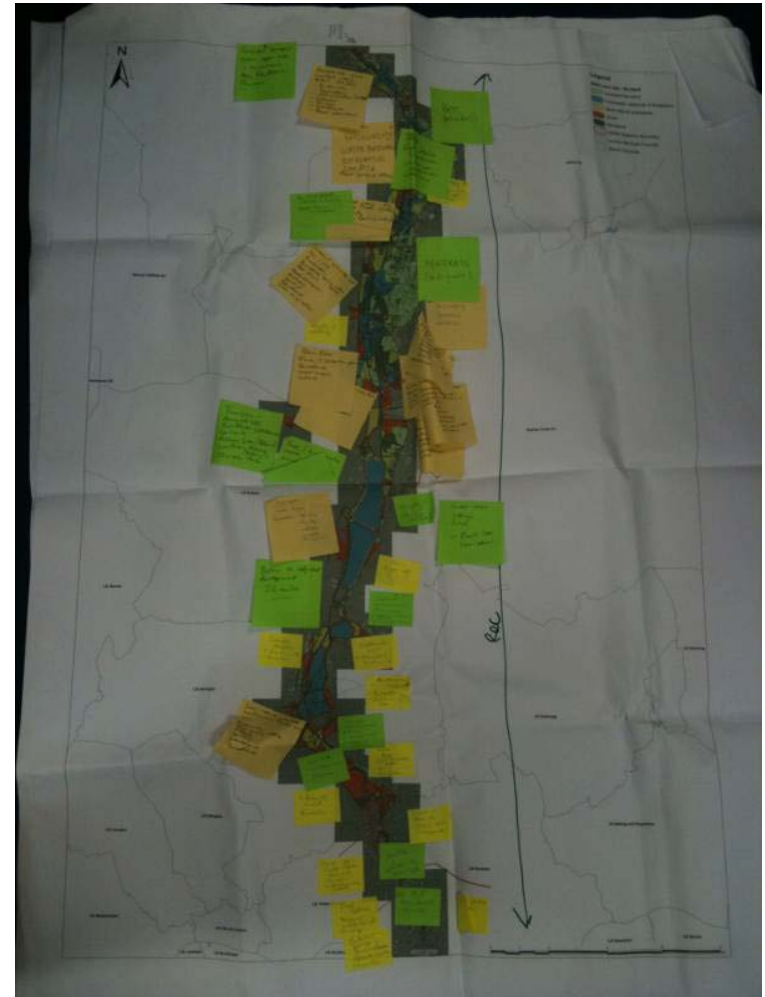
1. Developed an **Ecosystem Services Framework**
2. Refined this following a **stakeholder workshop** with specialists
3. Ran two **focus groups** to apply the Framework to the two sites

Initial ES Framework (extract)

Provisioning	Food
	Crops
	Livestock
	Fisheries
	Fibre
	Trees, standing vegetation, peat
	Fresh water
	Wild species diversity
	Medicinal
	Genetic resources

Stakeholder workshop (13/01)

- Attendees by specialists with a good understanding of the LVRP
- Three exercises:
 - Identifying ecosystem services
 - Prioritising ecosystem services
 - Considering the services provided by a site now and under two future scenarios



Final ES Framework (extract)

Provisioning	Foraged food
	Crops
	Livestock
	Supply of fresh water
	Fibre (e.g. wood)
	Fuel
	Ornamental goods (e.g. flowers)
	Fisheries
	Medicines

Focus groups (07/02)

- Two 1.5 hour **focus groups** held at a pub local to the case study sites
- Southern site discussed at the first group and northern at the second
- Attended by 27 local residents / members of local interest groups
- Some guidance provided but aimed to see how the ESA was applied intuitively

Focus groups - benefits

- Participants provided with maps and photos
- Asked to informally discuss a series of questions, e.g. is this an important site? What about the site would be missed if it was lost?
- Then formally asked what **benefits** does the site provide?

Focus groups – ES identification

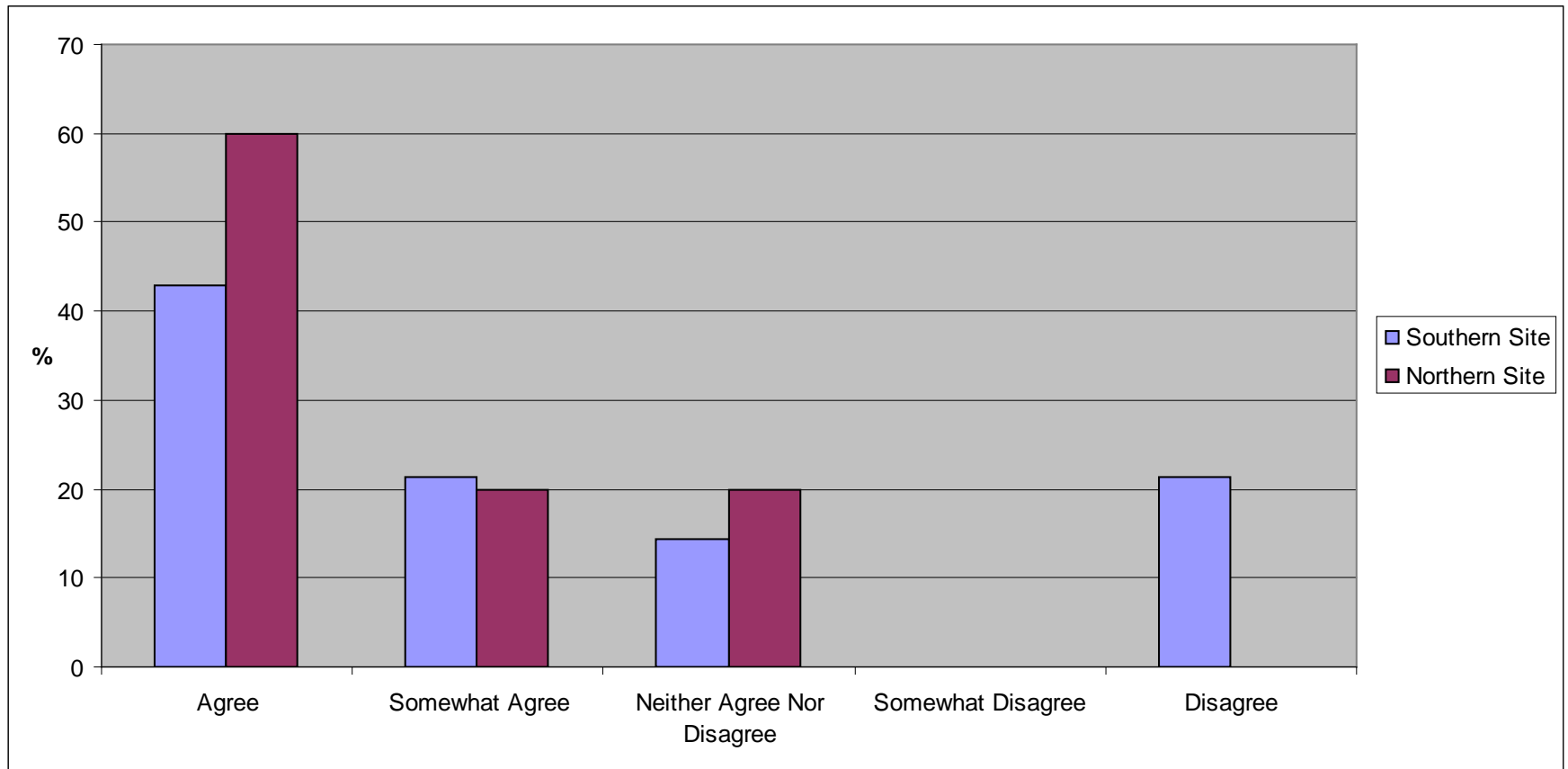
- Participants then introduced to the ESA and presented with 30 ‘**flashcards**’ each illustrating an ES
- Asked to sort the flashcards into three groups:
 - ES currently provided by the site
 - ES not currently provided by the site
 - Unsure



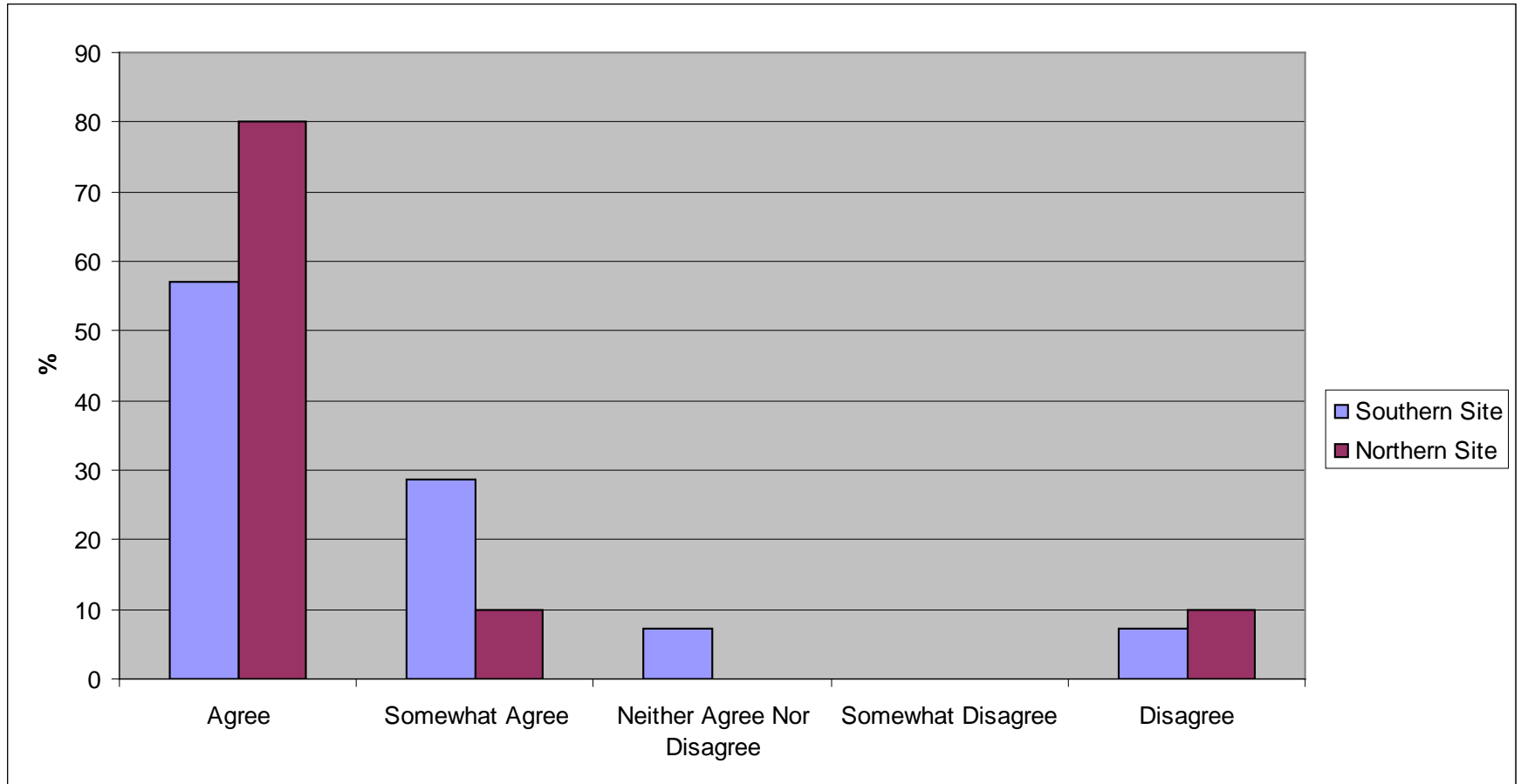
Focus groups - options

- Asked to identify ES provided by the site that are a high priority and ES not currently provided by the site that are also a high priority
- Participants then asked to identify **two alternative future visions** for the site reflecting on the priorities above
- Finally, participants asked to identify the effect that each alternative would have on each priority ES (i.e. increase, decrease or no effect)
- To evaluate the ESA participants asked to consider eight statements

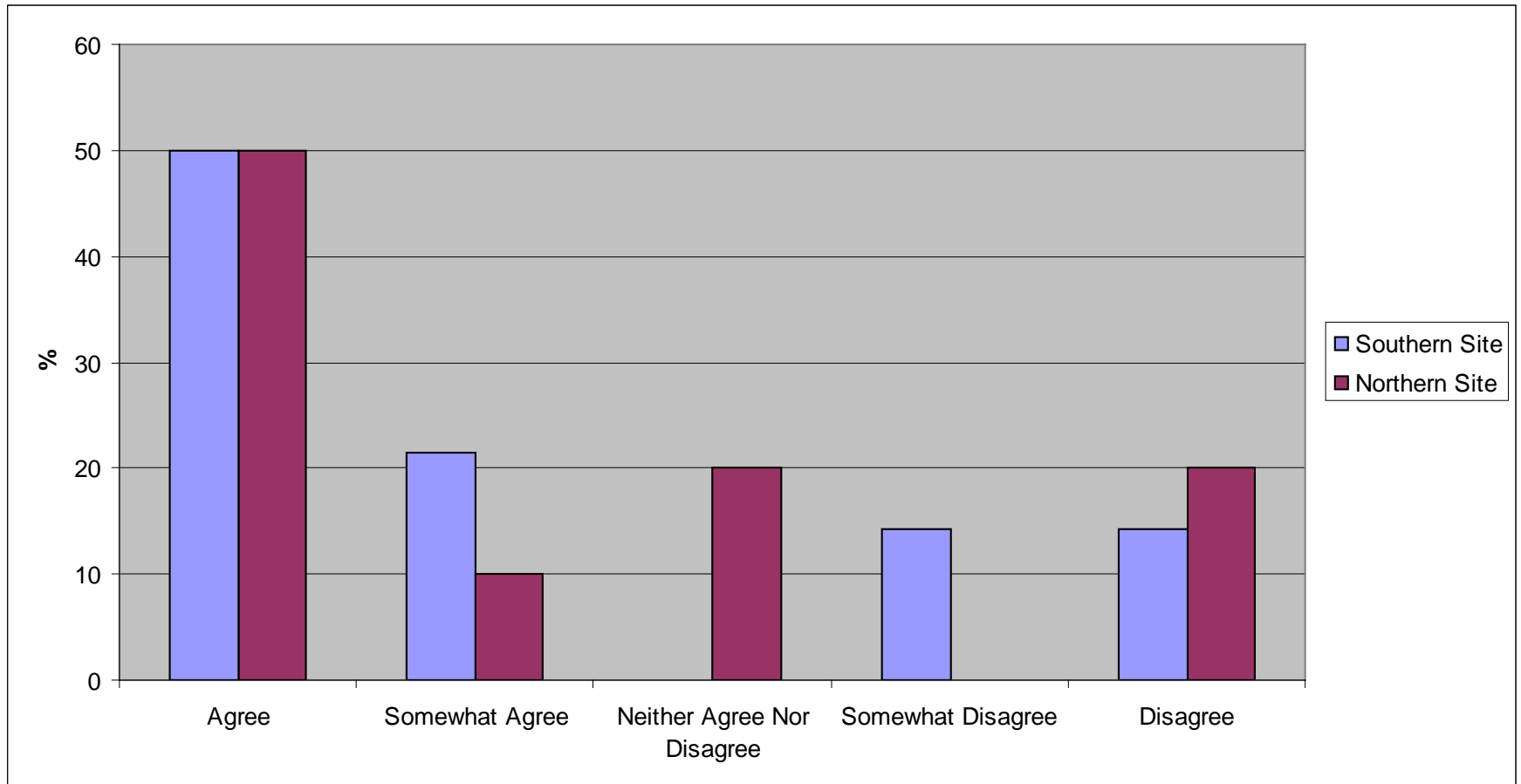
The approach made me think differently about the site



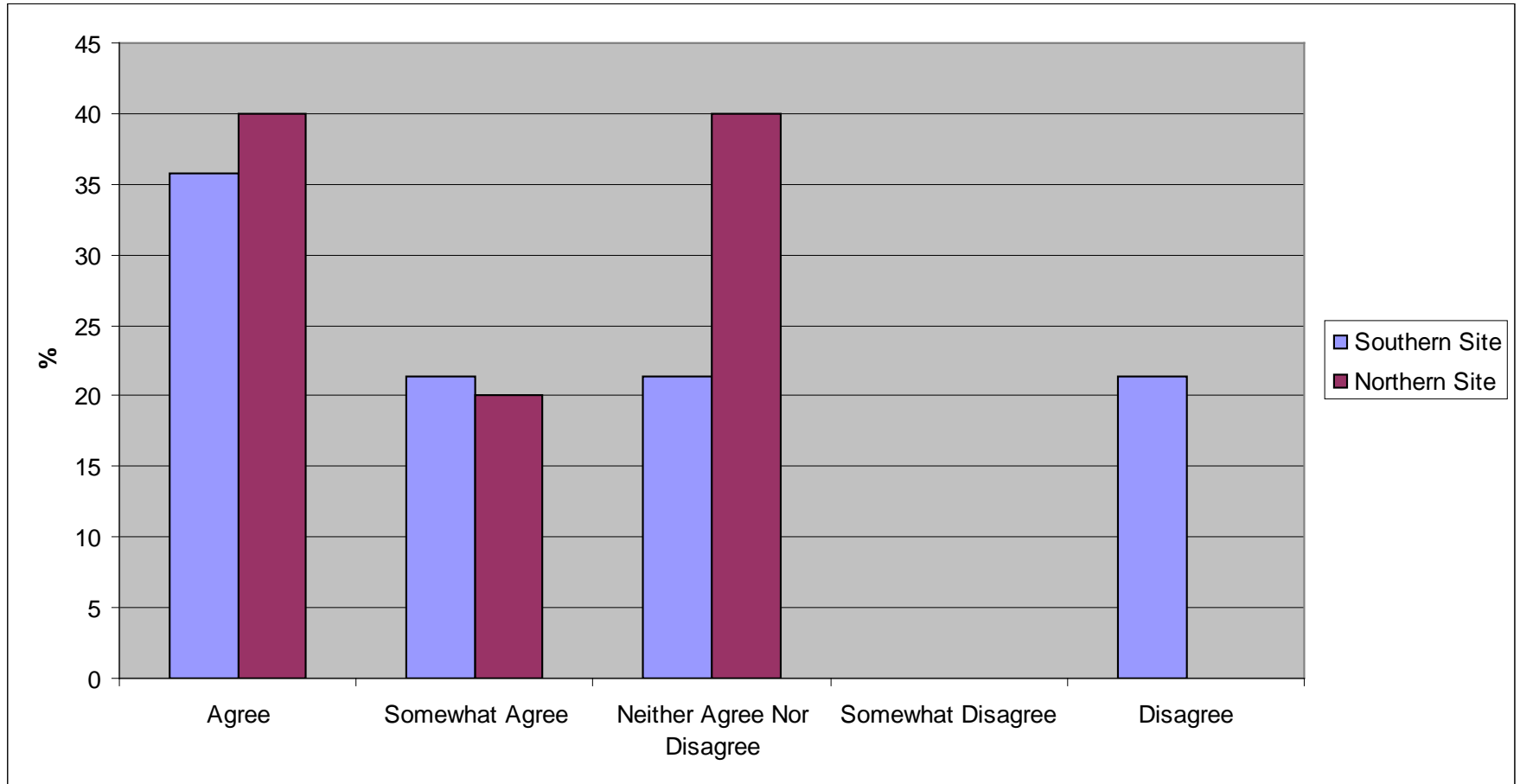
This process has helped me to think about the best future use of the site



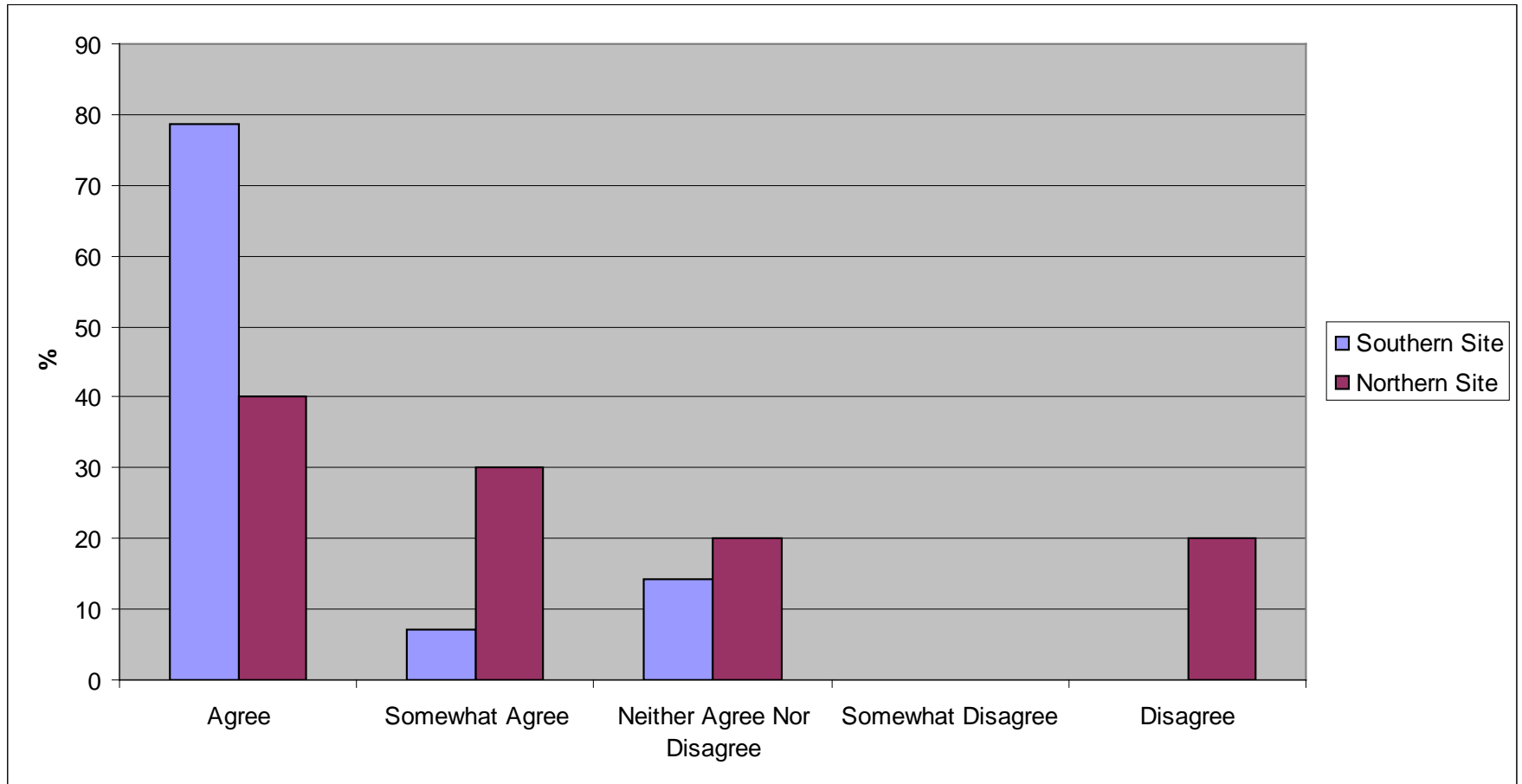
The approach could help me to communicate my views and get involved in land use planning



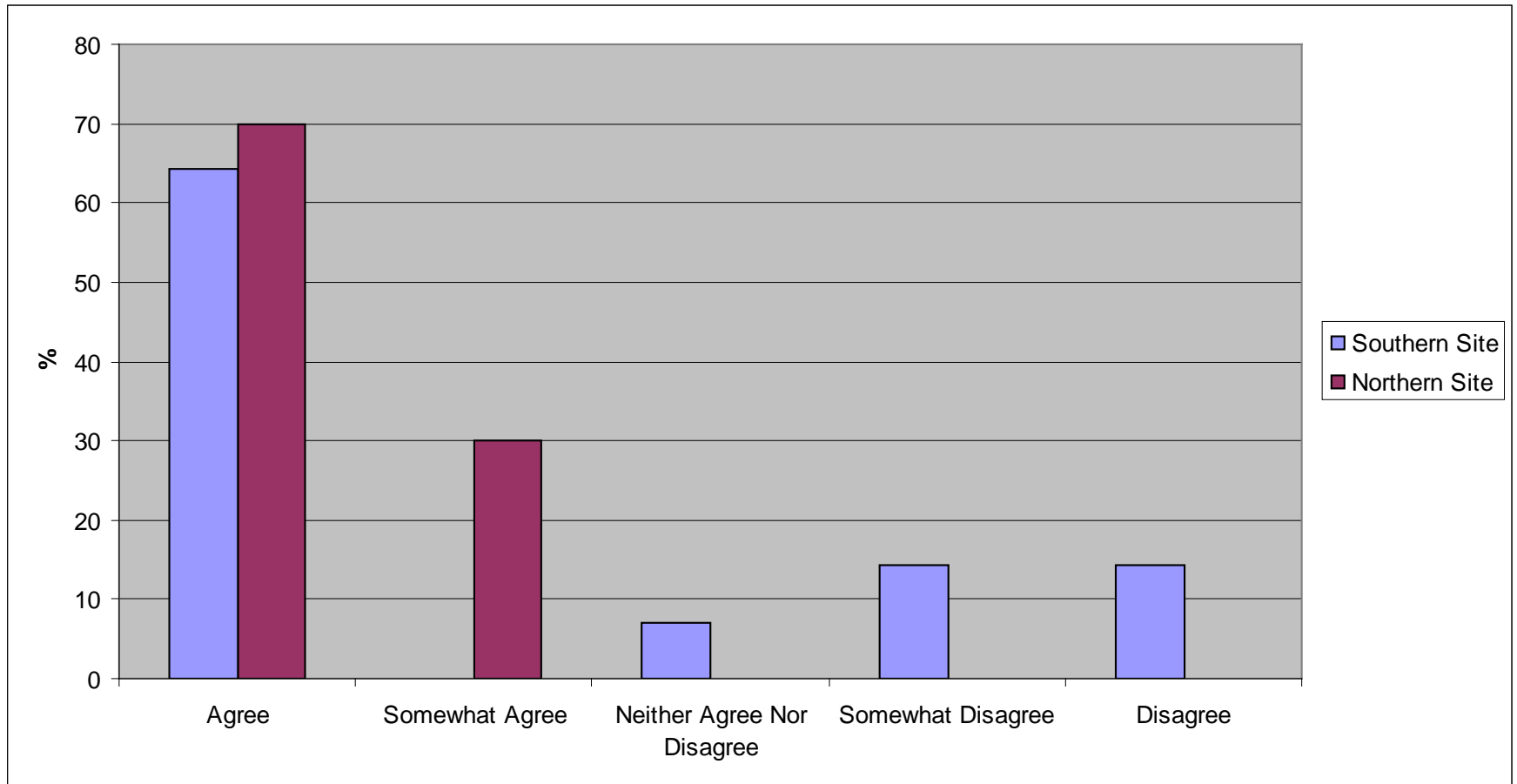
*It is possible to understand the language
and the concept relatively quickly*



A more in-depth training session would be required before being able to apply the approach to a real life land use planning situation



The LVRP should integrate the ESA into its land use planning



Recommendations

- Pilot the ESA in 'real life' planning decisions
- Pilot the ESA as part of the Neighbourhood Planning Vanguards scheme to test its application as part of the localism agenda

Thank you

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