

# Public Document Pack

## ADDITIONAL CIRCULATION



To: All Members of the Council

Town House,  
ABERDEEN, 24 June 2016

## **COUNCIL**

The undernoted items are circulated in connection with the meeting of the **COUNCIL** to be held here in the Town House on **WEDNESDAY, 29 JUNE 2016 at 10.30am.**

FRASER BELL  
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

## **BUSINESS**

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

7(f) City Centre Masterplan Project EN01 - Broad Street (Pages 3 - 72)

7(g) Heat Network Torry - Phase 1 (Pages 73 - 78)

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	29 June 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard and Marc Cole
TITLE OF REPORT	City Centre Masterplan Project EN01: Broad Street
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/16/114
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the results of the key stakeholder and public consultation undertaken for the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) Project EN01: Broad Street as instructed by Council on 11 May 2016. The report also details the recommended next steps.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the results of the key stakeholder and public consultation;
- ii) Agree that the preferred option for public realm intervention for Broad Street is Option 2 (buses, cycles and pedestrians only);
- iii) Instruct officers to work with Muse regarding the detailed design for Broad Street and to report back to the first appropriate committee; and
- iv) Instruct officers to commence the necessary legal procedures of preliminary statutory consultation for the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) as described in this report. Instruct officers to then progress with the public advertisement and report the results of both the preliminary statutory consultation and public consultation to Communities, Housing and Infrastructure in November 2016.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The detailed design of the Broad Street public realm intervention will be accommodated from the £1.12M set aside within the contract with Muse for public realm works. The TRO and detailed design costs will be absorbed within this budget.

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 If statutory objections are received through the TRO process this may trigger delays due to the need for a Public Inquiry. This could take a further 18 months. We may receive statutory objections for any option but officers anticipate that it is more likely that statutory objections may be received for Option 3 (pedestrians and cycles only).

## 5. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 Reference is made to the decisions of the Council on 11 May 2016 regarding the report entitled 'Transport Implications – City Centre Masterplan Projects'. The Council agreed that the City Centre Masterplan can be accommodated on the road network through the establishment of a new roads hierarchy and suitable enabling measure being introduced. An optimum phasing of the four key city centre transport proposals was also agreed by the Council, with Broad Street identified as the starting point. The Council instructed officers to undertake public consultation and to report back the responses from the consultation.

- 5.2 Reference is also made to the decision of the Council on 24 June 2015 in regard to the report entitled 'Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme', which was agreed unanimously. It was further resolved that each project will be subject to detailed scrutiny and the normal development control processes and to agree in principle the interventions set out in the CCMP. It was also noted that due diligence will be undertaken in relation to the financial, legal and all other implications on each project or programme of activity contained within the CCMP and that it falls to the Council to deliver, with the results of this due diligence being reported to committee ahead of any decision being taken to proceed.

- 5.3 This report provides details of a full consideration of the options, including the outcomes of the key stakeholder and public consultation. It also details the recommended next steps.

- 5.4 This report is complemented by the report entitled 'Independent Analysis Report' (please see Appendix A) which sets a summary of the responses to the consultation. The report has been prepared by an independent analyst, TONIC Consultants, and officers accept fully their analysis of the comments received.

### 5.5 **Public Consultation**

- 5.5.1 The consultation ran from May 16, 2016, to June 12, 2016. It presented indicative designs for the three Broad Street options. People were asked to comment on the benefits and challenges associated with each. They were also asked to comment on how new public realm space on Broad Street might be used; and on the pedestrian prioritisation across the wider city centre as envisaged by the CCMP. A draft version of the consultation survey was shared with all political group leaders, for comment on its design, before being issued.

- 5.5.2 Respondents could complete the survey online or by filling in a hard copy. Forms were made available at Marischal College, libraries and community centres. The consultation was also publicised on the Council's home page. It was promoted through ACC social media channels and in the media. Stakeholder groups were asked to promote the consultation through their own channels and networks. Display boards were mounted in the Marischal College Customer Service Centre. An officer was in attendance for the first two weeks to answer questions from the members of the public. A contact number for questions was posted.
- 5.5.3 In total, 1,067 responses were received, with the vast majority (83%) of these coming from city residents. Please note, when the deadline was reached the tally was 1,062. Some returns posted over the final weekend were later added to the total.
- 5.5.4 Analysis was carried out by TONIC, which has over 10 years' experience in the field and has analysed over two million responses to public consultations for Government, organisations and councils.
- 5.5.5 The analyst reports that 'there was virtually no negative feedback about the consultation process' and described the quality of responses as 'impressive'.

## **5.6 Public consultation methodology and findings**

- 5.6.1 The aim of the public consultation was not to vote on a preferred option, but to gather feedback on the benefits and challenges of all three options, as outlined by officers, to help inform the process.
- 5.6.2 Common themes were identified and the percentage of respondents mentioning that issue was recorded.
- 5.6.3 There was a high level of support for some sort of pedestrian priority, in terms of it being a better and safer space with improved air quality, as well as through the creation of a civic space that could be used for new and interesting activities and events that would improve the overall attractiveness and vibrancy of the city.
- 5.6.4 There were some concerns raised about the perceived impact of pedestrian priority on limiting traffic routes, causing congestion in other areas and limiting access to public transport.
- 5.6.5 The section below details the option analysis, which details what the respondents identified as likes and dislikes about the three options.

## **5.7 Option analysis**

### **5.7.1 Option 1 – Open to all traffic – 'status quo'**

#### **5.7.1.1 Description**

- Broad Street remains open to all traffic;
- Potential for bus stops to be relocated away from public space;
- Existing space in front of Marischal College retained; and
- Pedestrian crossing would remain.

#### 5.7.1.2 Public consultation outcomes

5.7.1.2.1 The following points were mentioned when respondents were asked what they liked about Option 1:

- Overall benefits to private vehicles;
- Maintains the current level of traffic flow;
- Maintains the route options available to drivers;
- Not a sufficiently convincing reason to change the system;
- Provides good access to Broad Street and city centre workers and those with limited mobility; and
- Maintains the status quo.

5.7.1.2.2 The following points were mentioned when respondents were asked what they disliked about Option 1:

- Does not provide a useable space for the public and events;
- Does not alleviate traffic congestion from Broad Street;
- Doesn't encourage walking and cycling, or make Broad Street a safer place;
- Doesn't improve air quality or tackle pollution;
- Merely maintains the status quo and is a missed opportunity;
- Traffic is unpleasant and noisy;
- Does nothing to benefit historic Marischal College; and
- Only benefits traffic, not users of the space.

### 5.7.2 Option 2 – Buses, cycles and pedestrians only

#### 5.7.2.1 Description

- Broad Street only open to buses, cycles and pedestrians;
- Potential to relocate the bus stops;
- Opportunity to temporarily close off Broad street to all traffic increasing the usable civic space from 1910 sq. m. to 3510 sq. m.;
- Reduce traffic and shared surfaces giving priority to pedestrians; and
- Upperkirkgate traffic island removed to increase footway widths and improve pedestrian crossing spaces.

#### 5.7.2.2 Public consultation outcomes

5.7.2.2.1 The following points were mentioned when respondents were asked what they liked about Option 2:

- Overall benefits to public transport;

- Bus routes remain as currently operated;
- Reduction in the amount of traffic on Broad Street;
- Creates more usable public spaces;
- Maintains the provision of bus routes;
- Better for pedestrians;
- Improvement in air quality and pollution;
- Better for cyclists;
- Benefits to Marischal College and Marischal Square;
- Allows Broad Street to be closed for temporary events;
- An improvement over Option 1;
- Encourages use of public transport; and
- Safer.

5.7.2.2.2 The following points were mentioned when respondents were asked what they disliked about Option 2:

- Should also be closed to buses;
- Increases traffic congestion elsewhere;
- Buses still prevent better use of the space;
- Limits driver's route options;
- Buses still very noisy and polluting;
- Buses are dangerous and cause safety issues;
- An impractical compromise; and
- Should also be closed to cyclists.

### 5.7.3 Option 3 – Pedestrians and cycles only

5.7.3.1 Description

- Broad Street fully pedestrianised;
- Civic space increased from 1675 sq. m. to 3510 sq. m.;
- New civic space with increased landscaping; and
- Unrestricted movement for pedestrians.

5.7.3.2 Public consultation outcomes

5.7.3.2.1 The following points were mentioned when respondents were asked what they liked about Option 3:

- Overall benefits to pedestrians;
- Creation of civic space;
- Improvement in air quality;
- Fully pedestrianised – cycle and people friendly;
- Calmer, quieter and nicer;
- Benefits to Marischal College and Provost Skene's House;
- Increased safety;
- Creates a pedestrianised space Aberdeen is lacking compared to other cities;
- Opportunity to introduce art, exhibitions and landscape features;

- Possibility of increased tourism and benefits to businesses; and
- Sends a positive message about the direction Aberdeen wishes to move in.

5.7.3.2.2 The following points were mentioned when respondents were asked what they disliked about Option 3:

- Impact on traffic flow and route options;
- Impact on times and routes of buses;
- Challenges for those with mobility issues in accessing Broad Street;
- Concerns that the space may not be sufficiently utilised;
- Cyclists still allowed after pedestrianisation, causing safety issues; and
- Concerns that Broad Street is an inappropriate space for pedestrianisation, and that there are other more suitable spaces with less shortcomings.

#### 5.7.4 Summary

5.7.4.1 The sections below show the justifications for Option 2 (buses and cycles only) being the recommended, preferred option.

5.7.4.2 City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme

5.7.4.2.1 On 24 June 2015, Council unanimously agreed the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme, which was developed following extensive public consultation and won majority support. Within this document it lists Broad Street as a project stating 'EN01 Broad Street: the space between Marischal College and the Marischal Square development will retain bus movements on a day to day basis but will be designed in a manner so that it can be transformed into an event ready space on special occasions.'

5.7.4.3 Benefits of Option 2

5.7.4.3.1 The following benefits have been recognised, by officers, for Option 2 and are considered to out-weigh the net benefits associated with Options 1 and 3:

- Improved environment from reduced traffic and an attractive route for cyclists;
- Access to public transport enhanced;
- Opportunity to close Broad Street for larger temporary events;
- Opportunity for innovative and entertaining landscape feature, such as water, art, lighting;
- Significantly improving the setting of Marischal College;
- Setting and entrance to the City Centre Masterplan Queen Square area;

- Can control how long buses wait in the area;
- Supports aim to reduce cross city centre journeys;
- Makes cycling and walking more attractive;
- Likely to contribute to localised air quality improvements; and
- Helps deliver the agreed vision of the masterplan.

#### 5.7.4.4 Transport Implications

5.7.4.4.1 It was agreed at the Council meeting on 11 May 2016 that intervention (Option 2 or 3) on Broad Street is a key infrastructure project to facilitate the ongoing investment and future development of the city centre. The following rationale was also agreed:

- Interventions have minimal impact on the rest of the network and do not require a traffic demand reduction to be able to operate;
- Bus, cycle and pedestrian only has the least impact on the travelling public;
- Cycles and pedestrians only will impact significantly on bus users.

5.7.4.4.2 The modelling previously undertaken and noted by Councillors, shows that Broad Street is the natural start point for the City Centre Masterplan transport proposals because it has the least impact on the strategic road network and the displaced traffic can be accommodated on the wider city centre road network.

#### 5.7.4.5 Public consultation outcomes

5.7.4.5.1 While there is no definitive answer to what option the respondents preferred for Broad Street, certain themes emerged. These being a desire for:

- Improved air quality;
- Less traffic congestion;
- Creation of public events space; and
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist's safety.

5.7.4.5.2 In response to the question about general pedestrian priority across the city centre, a desire for the following was noted:

- Improvement in safety for pedestrians and cyclists;
- More relaxing, quieter and friendlier spaces; and
- Improved air quality.

5.7.4.5.3 Option 2 (buses, cycles and pedestrians only) was described by some respondents to be a 'successful compromise' that still allowed public transport access and benefited the public space.

#### 5.7.4.6 Air Quality Management

5.7.4.6.1 An assessment on air quality was undertaken by transport consultants, AECOM, in 2014. The assessment showed that buses, cycles and pedestrians only was predicted to lead to a larger number of properties experiencing a decrease in nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particles (PM<sub>10</sub>) concentrations than an increase. A full closure of Broad Street predicted a larger number of properties experiencing an increase in concentrations than a decrease.

5.7.4.6.2 It should be noted that both a full closure and a part closure (buses, cycles and pedestrians only) predicted a deterioration at the King Street / East North Street junction where current levels exceed the national and European air quality objectives. A deterioration in air quality at this location will make compliance with the air quality objectives more challenging. However, the implementation of other interventions in the life time of the masterplan and the existing Air Quality Action Plan, together will support the improvement of air quality across the city centre. It should also be noted that there has been an improvement in air quality over the past two years across the city centre area.

#### 5.7.4.7 Economic Benefits

5.7.4.7.1 The following economic benefits were recognised in the CCMP, for Project EN01: Broad Street:

- Improved perception amongst investors – business and developers;
- Greater footfall leading to an increase in business turnover;
- Increased investor confidence; and
- Increase in visitor numbers and spend.

### 5.8 Proposed Timeline for Delivery

5.8.1 If the Council agrees that Option 2 (buses and cycles only) is the preferred option, the following table shows the proposed outline project plan for the delivery of the public realm intervention:

Task	Date
<b>Traffic Regulation Order</b>	
Preliminary statutory consultation	30 June – 4 August 2016 (35 days)
Public consultation	11 August – 8 September (28 days)
Officer time to consider objections / comments received	30 June – 30 September 2016
Report to Communities, Housing and Infrastructure	1 November 2016
<b>Detailed Design</b>	
Prepare detailed design	July / August 2016

Report to the first appropriate committee	August / September 2016
<b>Construction</b>	
Appointment of contractor	December / January 2017
Construction finished	June / July 2017

## 5.8.2 Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)

5.8.2.1 The Traffic Regulation Order process can be started on 30 June 2016. Officers will follow the normal process for TROs of a statutory preliminary consultation followed by a public consultation. Any objections received during the preliminary stage will be held over until the wider public advert and considered with any other objections received. We will then report to Communities, Housing and Infrastructure (CH&I) on 1 November 2016 on the TRO with the consideration of the comments and objections received through both the preliminary statutory consultation and public consultation.

## 5.8.3 Detailed Design

5.8.3.1 Officers will work with Muse regarding the detailed design throughout July and August. The responses ACC received from the key stakeholder and public consultation will be taken into consideration when drafting the detailed design. The detailed design will then be reported to the first appropriate committee once it has been completed.

5.8.3.2 Through the public consultation, respondents were also asked to share how they would like to see public realm space on Broad Street used, the following suggestions were made:

- Markets;
- Farmers' Market;
- Art exhibitions and installations;
- Music concerts;
- Cafes and restaurants with outdoor dining;
- Green space;
- Seating;
- Performance space;
- Cultural events;
- International market and festival;
- Street performers;
- Christmas / winter village;
- Educational and informative displays, and tourist information;
- and
- Pop-up cafes, food retailers, and other businesses.

5.8.3.3 These suggestions will be taken into consideration when working with Muse on the detailed design for the public realm intervention.

## 5.8.4 Construction

- 5.8.4.1 Officers will engage with Muse once the detailed design has been approved by the appropriate committee. Muse will procure a contractor, with work commencing early 2017.

## 6. IMPACT

### 6.1 Improving Customer Experience:

- 6.1.1 The contents of this report and the recommendations relate to the delivery of the CCMP, which is aimed at improving the City Centre for all those who live in, work in and visit it. This would include the following benefits:

- Quality of life – Residents, workers and visitors increasingly demand a high standard for the places they are in. Under the proposals, they could feel more content in a more attractive and vibrant environment; as reported in other competing cities with similar projects.
- Health – with more people walking in the area there could be a reduction in inactivity-related illness.
- Environmental - positive impact on air quality due to a reduction of emissions from vehicles in the area. Noise levels would be lower too.

- 6.1.2 The proposals will also have a positive impact on the Council's business customers – city centre employers themselves, and also those operating in the retail, tourism and leisure sector. For Aberdeen to be globally competitive, the quality of the 'place', the commercial space and the public realm around it all have a role. Developers and subsequent occupants / employers base their location decisions on being able to attract the best talent and skills to work in their businesses, and they recognise the positive correlation between their business competitiveness and the quality of the public realm.

### 6.2 Improving Staff Experience:

- 6.2.1 A defined, fully resourced programme of delivery for the CCMP with key stage decision making, committed to by the Council, will enable staff, with stakeholders and the public, to confidently and timeously realise the Masterplan. The recent appointment of the City Centre Director, Programme Manager and Engagement and Communications Officer will assist this process.

### 6.3 Improving our use of Resources:

- 6.3.1 Internal resources and partnership working with developers have already been identified to continue to deliver the instructions of Council in December 2015 and March 2016. Further resources will continue to be required for the wider delivery of the transport network plan to

support the successful delivery of the CCMP, which has identified a range of benefits for citizens and business across the City. Internal resources will also be used to undertake the TRO for Broad Street and to inform and support the design process and implementation.

#### 6.4 Corporate:

6.4.1 Positive decision making informing the progressive implementation of the CCMP directly supports a range of policies and strategies including:

#### 6.4.2 Aberdeen – the Smarter City vision:

- We will encourage and support citizens to participate in the development, design and decision making of services to promote civic pride, active citizenship and resilience.
- We will improve access to and increase participation in arts and culture by providing opportunities for citizens and visitors to experience a broad range of high quality arts and cultural activities.
- We will provide a clean, safe and attractive streetscape and promote bio-diversity and nature conservation. We will encourage wider access to green space in our streets, parks and countryside.
- We will invest in the city where that investment demonstrates financial sustainability based on a clear return on investment.
- We will encourage cycling and walking.
- We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.

#### 6.4.3 Regional Economic Strategy

6.4.3.1 “Securing the Future of the North East Economy – A 20 Year Vision for the Well-being of the Place & Our People” was approved by the Council in December 2015. A key objective of the Investment in Infrastructure Programme is to enable the city to realise the development opportunities in the City Centre Masterplan. These proposals, and development of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century public realm are a vital component of the ‘development mix’. High value jobs and skills are globally mobile, and competing for these high value ‘clusters’ of activity is a key part of the Strategy, and the Council’s inward investment plans. In doing so, it becomes easier for Aberdeen to maintain and attract world class talent and business, which in turn delivers positive indirect and induced impacts across the city economy as spend supports jobs in retail, tourism, leisure and other services.

#### 6.4.4 Strategic Infrastructure Plan:

6.4.4.1 Stakeholder engagement which informed this Plan revealed that the ‘poor state’ of the City Centre is one of a number of issues identified as a common theme *‘In terms of the attractiveness*

*and marketing of the city to attract workers, visitors and investment...'. This Plan also states that 'A high quality of life is integral to attracting and retaining the talent and investment needed to grow the economy. This sense of place, with a key emphasis on the city centre, is crucial in underpinning economic growth and essential in underpinning the necessary infrastructure requirements.'* One of the key goals of this Plan is City Centre Regeneration and the delivery of the CCMP will contribute significantly to achieving this. Specific wider benefits would include:

- Improved safety as a result of less road traffic;
- Improved access - as a result of easier access and parking for cyclists, bus passengers, pedestrians and the vehicles that remain on the roads in the area, the cumulative reduction in journey times would be used more productively elsewhere.
- Economic growth - The project could provide a more pleasant environment which would increase the footfall in the area increasing retail sales, spending, employment and the number of businesses operating in the city centre, and, in due course, increasing residential opportunities in the city centre.

6.4.4.2 This Plan also recognises that a range of traffic management and transport network improvements in and around the City Centre would aid the delivery of improved air quality, road safety and economic benefits and also support the key strategic priority around City Centre Regeneration. The development and delivery of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for the City Centre, as part of the wider Masterplan, are also recognised as key to improving accessibility to all, increasing walking and cycling opportunities and improving public transport.

6.4.5 Local Transport Strategy

6.4.5.1 The vision of the agreed Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategy (LTS) is to develop 'A sustainable transport system that is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, accessible to all, supports a vibrant economy, facilitates healthy living and minimises the impact on our environment.'

6.4.5.2 The aims of the LTS are:

- A transport system that enables the efficient movement of people and goods;
- A safe and more secure transport system;
- A cleaner, greener transport system;
- An integrated, accessible and socially inclusive transport system; and
- A transport system that facilitates healthy and sustainable living.

6.5 Public

6.5.1 The contents of this report are likely to be of public and media interest as it relates to the City Centre, a significant economic asset for the City and Region. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme presented to Council on 24 June 2015. A Privacy Impact Statement is not required for this report.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

7.1 The risks inherent in not addressing the regeneration of the city centre are set out in the Strategic Infrastructure Plan. In view of the fact that the regeneration of the city centre is widely supported, there is a reputational risk to the Council if no improvements are made.

7.2 Traffic modelling identified Broad Street as a natural starting point for the City Centre masterplan's four major transport proposals. There is a risk that the Optimum Delivery programme, which identified this start point, would have to be reviewed.

7.3 If statutory objections are received through the TRO process this may trigger delays due to the need for a Public Inquiry. This could take up to a further 18 months. It is possible statutory objections could be received if Option 2 is agreed by Council but it is more likely statutory objections will be received if Option 3 is preferred.

7.4 Officers have been made aware that the contractors need a 52 week lead in time to deliver the public realm works for the scheduled completion of the Marischal Square development in July 2017. If a decision is not made to pursue one of the three Broad Street options by July 2016 then there are the following risks:

- Reputational risk – the public/ stakeholders could perceive that the Council is unable to deliver improvements to the city centre on time or deliver the projects within the Masterplan;
- Cost of delivery – although the £1.12M is safeguarded for works on Broad Street it would cost more and take longer to work through an agreement with another contractor at a later date;
- Reduced tenancy levels – the lack of a decision on Broad Street and how this will tie in with the Marischal Square development could lead to a risk of spaces not being let, and so undermine the Council's investment in Marischal Square;
- Traffic disruption – traffic disruption in the city centre, during later works, is likely to be worse because Marischal Square will be in use; and
- Aesthetics – when Marischal Square is opened, Broad Street will look as it does at the moment as there will have been no improvements to the public realm.

## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix A – Independent Analysis Report

## Appendix B – Benefits and Challenges of Options

Report to Council – 11 May 2016 – Transport Implications – City Centre Masterplan Projects – CHI/16/061  
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s56493/Transport%20Implications%20City%20Centre%20Masterplan%20Projects.pdf>

Report to Council – 2 March 2016 – Transport Implications – City Centre Masterplan Projects – CHI/16/006  
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s54704/Transport%20Implications%20-%20City%20Centre%20Masterplan.pdf>

Report to Council – 16 December 2015 – Transport Implications – City Centre Masterplan Projects – CHI/15/299  
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s52773/Transport%20Implications%20-%20City%20Centre%20Masterplan%20Projects.pdf>

Report to Council – 24 June 2015 – Aberdeen City Centre masterplan and Delivery Programme – OCE/15/021  
<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s48645/City%20Centre%20Masterplan%20and%20Delivery%20Programme.pdf>

Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme -  
[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/council\\_government/shaping\\_aberdeen/City\\_Centre\\_Masterplan.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/council_government/shaping_aberdeen/City_Centre_Masterplan.asp)

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# BROAD STREET PUBLIC CONSULTATION

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## INDEPENDENT ANALYSIS REPORT

A summary of responses to the public consultation on proposed improvements to Broad Street, as part of Aberdeen City Council's Masterplan



**ABERDEEN**  
CITY COUNCIL

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**TONIC**

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# Executive Summary

## Broad Street Consultation



## Key Findings

Over 1,000 responses were received, offering a variety of likes and dislikes for the three options put forward in the consultation

Aberdeen City Council's City Centre Masterplan is a 25-year regeneration programme. As part of this, proposals for improvements to Broad Street were put forward in a public consultation run by the Council from 16 May to 12 June 2016. The consultation sought views from the public, organisations and businesses on the benefits and challenges associated with three options for enhancing Broad Street as a public realm space:

Option 1: Keeping Broad Street open to all traffic

Option 2: Making Broad Street buses, cycles and pedestrians only

Option 3: Making Broad Street pedestrians and cycles only

There was a high response rate from local residents, with 1,067 consultation responses being received, the vast majority (83%) of which came from people living in the City area.

These responses have been independently analysed by TONIC on behalf of Aberdeen City Council. The findings in this document will form part of a report for the Council, which will help to inform the decision on the next steps in progressing this part of the Masterplan.

There was a high level of support for some form of pedestrian priority in Broad Street and across the City as the Masterplan advances. This support was based on the potential benefits it could bring for pedestrians and cyclists in terms of more pleasant and safer civic space with improved air quality, for interesting activities and events, and for introducing new businesses and leisure opportunities that would serve to improve the overall attractiveness and quality of life in the City.

There was also a high level of support for retaining Broad Street as a thoroughfare, with significant concerns voiced about the possible impact of full pedestrianisation on limiting route options, causing congestion in other areas and limiting access to public transport, as well as the potential loss of existing bus routes in Broad Street which would limit access to public transport within the City centre.

In addition to the positive high response rate from local residents, we found virtually no criticism of the consultation process within responses, which, in our experience, is unusual for a public consultation of this size and level of public interest.

# ANALYSIS

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

In June 2015, Aberdeen City Councillors approved the City Centre Masterplan, following extensive public and stakeholder engagement with over 4,000 people living and working in Aberdeen, with the vast majority of those supporting its vision.

The proposed regeneration of Aberdeen City Centre is a 25-year programme, including 12 community-based initiatives, 13 infrastructure proposals, 13 economic outputs and 11 environmental developments across the City. These programmes address key housing, building, transportation and public realm concerns raised during that consultation.

The Masterplan aims to transform the City Centre, incorporating four major transport projects that could deliver new public realm space, including pedestrian priority: Broad Street, Guild Street, Union Street and Schoolhill.

Extensive traffic modelling showed that improvements to Broad Street would have the lowest impact on traffic movement across the City, and could be delivered without the need for supporting measures. This resulted in it being the chosen focus of this consultation.

A series of options for enhancing Broad Street have been put forward as part of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan proposals. The public were consulted on the benefits and challenges associated with three options for enhancing Broad Street as a public realm place:

1. Keeping Broad Street open to all traffic
2. Making Broad Street buses, cycles and pedestrians only
3. Making Broad Street pedestrians and cycles only

The consultation also sought general comments on the provision of public realm space in the area. The consultation ran from 16 May to 12 June 2016.

The responses have been analysed by TONIC on behalf of Aberdeen City Council. The findings in this independent consultation analysis will help to inform the decision on the next steps in progressing this part of the Masterplan. A report is expected to go to Full Council on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

## 1.2 METHODOLOGY

After the responses were received, each answer to the nine consultation questions was analysed, and the issues raised were captured and explored. Through this process, certain themes emerged with regard to the likes and dislikes of each option. This enabled us to build a picture of the sentiment and ideas of the public. Figures are recorded for how frequently a certain issue is raised, and this is used to identify the most common and strongest arguments around an issue.

### Thematic Analysis

We performed quantitative analysis of the qualitative questions and have set out the response rates by stakeholder type as well as the overall totals for preferred options. Percentage figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number for the majority of questions, therefore as a result not all numbers will add up to 100%.

We also conducted a qualitative thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a simple and flexible form of qualitative analysis that is commonly used in social research. We have chosen this approach as it provides a way of summarising patterns in a large body of data, highlights similarities and differences across the data set, and can generate unanticipated insights<sup>1</sup>.

Our use of thematic analysis is driven by the consultation questions; all data that is relevant to the consultation questions is coded. The analysis is not guided by theory, but rather is data driven, providing an overall analysis of themes relevant to the consultation. Our analysis comprises of six steps:

- Step 1: A detailed reading of the data to become familiar with the text
- Step 2: Initial codes are then manually ascribed to the data, organising the data into meaningful groups relevant to the consultation questions
- Step 3: Codes that are conceptually related to one another are grouped together, and identified as themes. A theme is defined as capturing something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set
- Step 4: The themes are reviewed to determine whether they are internally coherent (i.e., all data within them are conceptually linked) and distinct from each other
- Step 5: We then define and name the themes with the aim of capturing the essence of the data they comprise. This stage also involves the identification of subthemes, which help to provide structure to the analysis. The relationship between the codes, subthemes and themes is

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<sup>1</sup> Braun and Clarke (2006)

then captured in a thematic map and coding book

- Step 6: We then write up the results, providing a narrative summary of the relationship between codes, subthemes and themes, including examples from the data to illustrate the essence of each theme

## Data Cleansing

It was noted that there was often strong correlation between individuals' stated "likes" for one option and "dislikes" for another option, or between their "likes" for more than one option. For this reason, some data cleansing was required, as set out below, in order to ensure fairness in the treatment of all responses and to make sure that all views were recognised equally. For example:

- There were occasions where respondents answered that what they liked about Option 1 was that traffic congestion would not increase, and that what they disliked about Option 3 was that traffic congestion would increase. However, not all respondents highlighted this issue in their response to each question. For statistical purposes, therefore, it was considered logical and more accurate to consider that those who disliked an increase of traffic congestion due to Option 3 would also support the corollary issue in Option 1
- In submitting answers to why people liked Option 2, some highlighted an improvement in air quality. A number of those respondents, however, did not go on to highlight an improvement in air quality when expressing their likes for Option 3, to the extent that fewer respondents cited improved air quality as a reason for liking Option 3 than Option 2
- Likewise, it was considered practical to combine data for those who liked Option 1 because it continued to provide access for those with mobility issues with those who disliked Option 3 for the opposing reason

In combining data across answers, great care was taken to ensure that only those viewpoints which were clear and directly related to another option were combined.

It was also noted that there were occasions when an answer to the question of why an option was “liked” had, in fact, been mistakenly entered into the “dislike” section, and this was therefore transposed to the relevant section.

Finally, answers such as “n/a” and blank responses were removed from each individual question analysis total, to more accurately reflect the correct percentage of responses for each individual question.

### **Report Structure**

This report provides an overview of the responses received, setting out the main themes that emerged.

Given the number and variety of consultation responses received, in order to present our analysis in a way that reduces duplication and makes sense to the reader, we have grouped themes together in the most logical locations in this report.

We have used anonymised quotations throughout to illustrate key points raised by respondents.

## Findings

It is important to state that the Broad Street public consultation was not a vote on the preferred option, but rather an opportunity for the public to inform decisions around how the project is taken forward. This can be highlighted by the understanding that it was possible for an individual to furnish a variety of likes and dislikes for each option, regardless of their own personal preference. Attempting to ascertain the level of support for one option over another, therefore, was not intended to be the purpose of this consultation.

The findings do reflect the strength of feeling around particular issues, and by analysing such a large number of responses, certain key themes have clearly emerged.

## 2. WHO RESPONDED TO THE CONSULTATION?

1,067 consultation responses were received, via the following methods:

- 1,023 online responses, through the Citizenspace platform hosted on Aberdeen City Council’s website
- 41 paper form responses
- 3 email responses

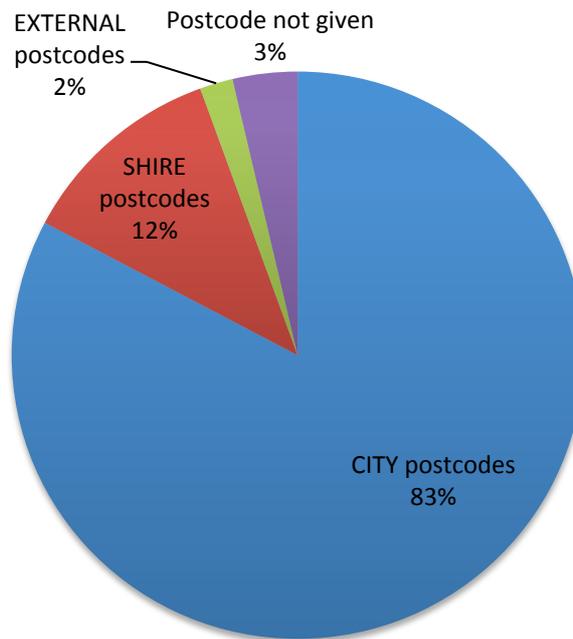
### 2.1 RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Respondents supplied postcode information, whilst other demographic information (such as gender, ethnicity and age group) was not requested.

This revealed that the vast majority (83%) of responses came from people who lived in the City area.

Postcode	Responses received
CITY postcodes	882
SHIRE postcodes	125
EXTERNAL postcodes	21
Postcode not given	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,067</b>

## Responses received by postcode



These areas were defined as:

- CITY postcodes – those beginning between AB10 and AB26
- SHIRE postcodes - all other AB postcodes (in this case, AB30 - AB56)
- EXTERNAL postcodes - those outside the AB area

The different postcode groups were analysed for any significant statistical variation in responses, such as a strong preference for a particular issue, or a marked highlighting of a certain theme, and no statistically significant differences were found.

### 3. FULL ANALYSIS

The following section sets out a summary of responses to the consultation on a question-by-question basis.

Where we have used percentages, we have generated these figures from the number of respondents who answered each specific question rather than from the overall consultation completion number of 1,067. These figures are shown in each of the graphs used in this report (e.g. n=836).

We have illustrated some points with anonymised quotations taken directly from responses where they represent and add further insight into the themes identified.

### 3.1 OPTION 1: OPEN TO ALL TRAFFIC

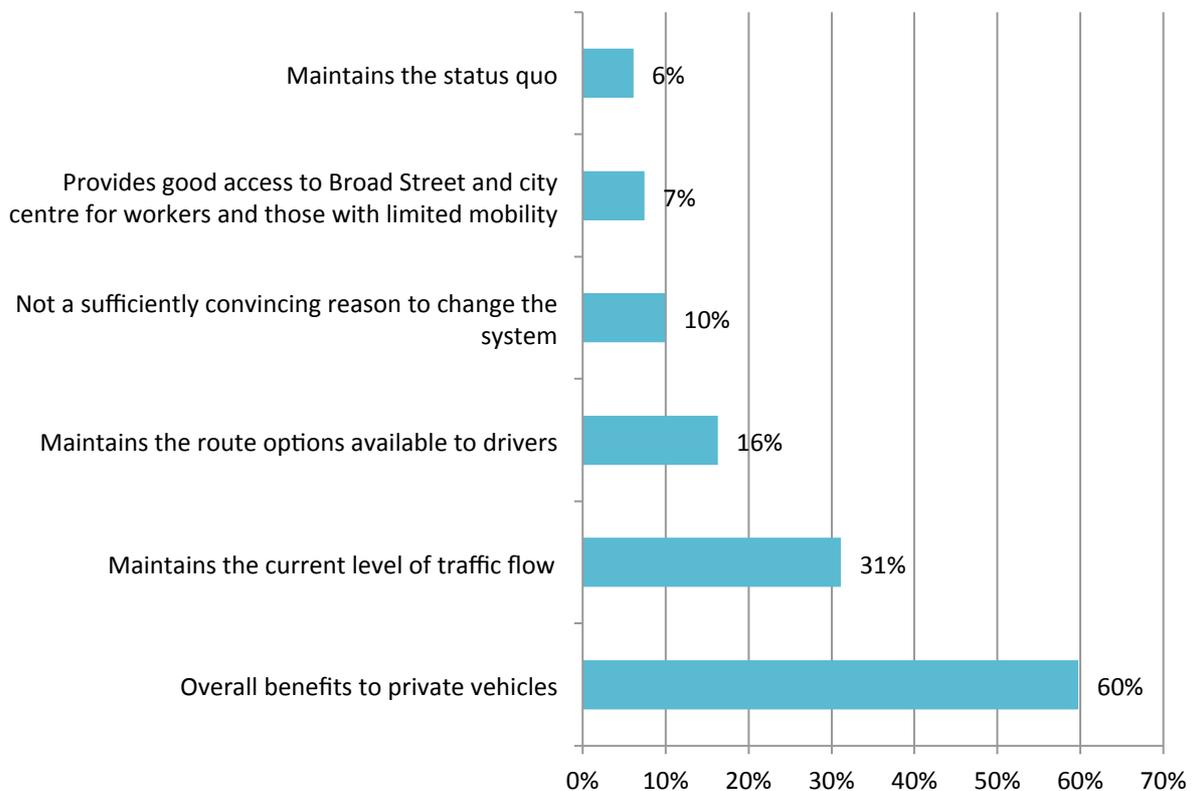


#### Description of Option 1

- Broad Street remains open to all traffic
- Potential for bus stops to be relocated away from the public space
- Existing space in front of Marischal College retained
- Pedestrian crossings would remain

#### What do you like about Option 1 (open to all traffic)?

**What do you like about Option 1 (open to all traffic)?**  
Percentage of those who answered this question (n=836)



### **(i) Overall Benefit to Private Vehicles**

60% of those who responded to this question highlighted that keeping Broad Street open to all vehicles was a potential benefit by facilitating travel by car through and around Aberdeen City centre. Among specific reasons given, the most common were: to enable traffic flow and avoid expected congestion in adjacent streets (31%); and to provide the largest amount of route options to drivers (16%).

Some respondents provided details of streets and routes they expected to be adversely affected by the closure of Broad Street to private vehicles, which included:

- Union Street
- Schoolhill
- Market Street
- Upperkirkgate
- King Street
- Loch Street
- Gallowgate
- George Street
- Mounthooly roundabout to Union Street
- North/south routes across the city centre

*“I like Option 1 as it retains options for driving through the city centre which has been restricted a lot in recent years with the pedestrianisation of Belmont St and Carnegies Brae, and also the restrictions on Back Wynd.”*

*“This keeps an important access route open between Gallowgate and Union Street. If Broad Street is closed the traffic will have to go elsewhere.”*

*“Closing Broad Street to cars and buses together with the closing of Union Street from Market Street to Union Terrace would mean there is no straight forward way for traffic coming from Marischal Street and the Fittie area of the harbour attempting to get to Schoolhill, Gallowgate and the Hutcheon Street areas. There are already frequent blockages and delays in traffic travelling from King Street into Union Street, and on into Market and South Market Street. Closing Broad Street would exacerbate the problem.”*

*“Removing Broad Street as a thoroughfare to areas of the town northeast of Union Street will cause further traffic black spots on King Street and Union Terrace through Schoolhill and Upperkirkgate. Upperkirkgate especially will cause major problems given the pedestrian crossing between the Bon Accord and St Nicholas Centre.”*

*“This allows the free flow of traffic from north to south as there are very few roads in this direction in Aberdeen.”*

*“Since the closure of St Nicolas Street and George Street, in 1985 and 1990 respectively, the available main traffic routes northwards from the city centre were reduced to only two – Broad Street/Gallowgate and King Street/West North Street. This obviously increased the volume of traffic on both these routes which are now regularly congested.”*

*“When other streets are closed, such as Union Terrace for the International Market, the whole city grinds to a halt and traffic is gridlocked. Closing Broad Street will only do the same.”*

## **(ii) Not a Sufficiently Convincing Reason to Change the Current System**

10% of respondents to this question supported Option 1 as they felt there was not enough reason to change the current system, and that the proposal to pedestrianise Broad Street had not been thoroughly or convincingly thought through and presented.

Reasons given for this viewpoint include:

- Broad Street not being a suitable place for pedestrianisation, as it was not felt to offer many attractions to pedestrians, and that it is often too shady and windy
- Other open and/or pedestrianised spaces already exist and are underused, such as Castlegate and Union Terrace Gardens
- Other streets are more suitable to being closed to cars and buses, such as Union Street
- The building of Marischal Square, which was felt to have impinged on the proposed civic square in terms of attractiveness and space
- Not enough information provided as to how traffic would be rerouted

Some also felt that time should be allowed for current development projects, such as Marischal Square and the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) to be completed before any new major changes were made.

*“There is no reasonable plan in place for where traffic is supposed to go. It may be useful to wait until the AWPR and the new building are built.”*

*“There will never be as many events as the council imagines, there are much more suited places in any case, e.g. Castlegate, Union Terrace Gardens, St Nicholas Centre.”*

*“Broad Street is a street, not a public space. There is nothing on Broad Street to attract hordes of pedestrians warranting its closure as a transport route.”*

*“Broad Street is one of the windiest and least sheltered areas of the city. No one is likely to want to sit there.”*

### **(iii) Provides Good Access to Broad Street and City Centre**

7% of responses to this question felt that keeping Broad Street open to private vehicles was necessary for those with limited mobility, as well as others, such as workers at Marischal College. Without access for private cars or taxis, it was felt that convenient drop offs would no longer be possible.

Some also queried how delivery vehicles would access buildings such as the Bon Accord and St Nicholas Centre, Provost Skene’s House, and the new development at Marischal Square. Others were unsure as to how the Queen Street car park would be accessed.

With regard to Marischal Square, a number of respondents wondered how guests and visitors to the hotel would arrive and depart without the option of driving private vehicles or using taxis.

*“My husband cannot walk far, therefore whenever we can, we go by car. Marischal Square is currently accessible for him, plus there is parking for disabled people nearby.”*

### **(iv) Maintains the Status Quo**

6% of respondents felt that Broad Street should remain open to traffic because it was the current system and they felt it worked well, or at least as well as it could, and was likely to be more effectively than the proposed alternatives.

Some also expressed that they liked Option 1 because it was the least expensive of the proposals and the easiest to implement.

*“Probably less disruption since it is essentially a continuation of what already exists.”*

*“This would be the cheapest option as not a lot of changes would be required. It would be the least likely to cause disagreement from citizens.”*

*“It maintains familiarity. This is how I know Aberdeen city centre to be.”*

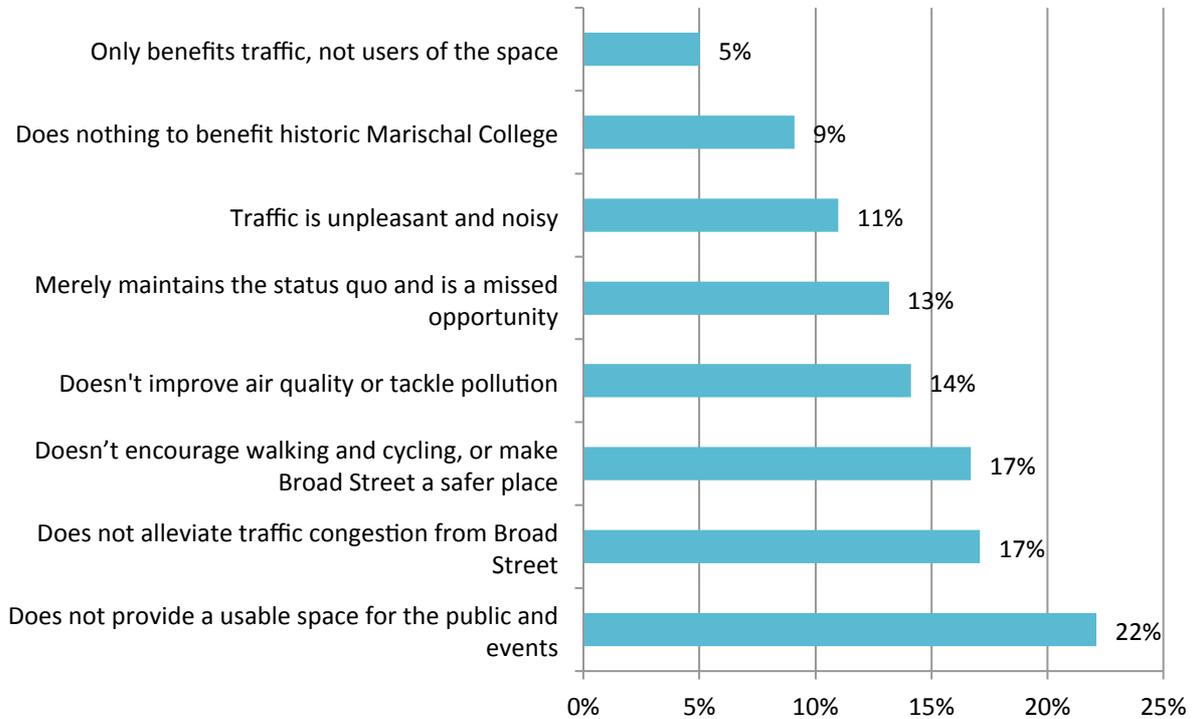
### **(v) Other Issues Raised**

Other reasons for liking Option 1 raised by a small number of respondents (fewer than 2%) included:

- Benefitting Aberdeen’s traffic flow when other streets are closed, due to events, emergencies, or road works
- Relocating the bus stops away from public space
- Maintaining the option to close Broad Street temporarily

## What do you dislike about Option 1 (open to all traffic)?

**What do you dislike about Option 1 (open to all traffic)?**  
Percentage of those who answered this question (n=737)



### (i) Does Not Provide a Usable Space for the Public and Events

22% of responses to this question disliked Option 1 because it did not provide any public and pedestrianised space. Among those, there were many who felt the provision of public space was a necessary condition of the building of Marischal Square, and that a traffic-free area was much needed in this part of Aberdeen.

*"I don't like option 1. The local authority has committed to plans, policies and strategies that encourage alternative modes of travel, support health and wellbeing, green space and emissions reduction. Maintaining traffic through the city centre actively goes against these."*

*"When cars are present, it will never become a pleasant public space, because of noise, potential danger, and pollution."*

*“It doesn't take advantage of the opportunity we have now to improve the space is used, and the way the space feels to help make broad street part of a city centre focal point.”*

*“Detracts from the ambience of what should become Aberdeen's showpiece development and ACC's own HQ.”*

*“The impression given when Marischal Square was given the go ahead was that that street will be pedestrianised, thus the public expect it.”*

## **(ii) Does not Alleviate Traffic Congestion on Broad Street**

Many felt that Broad Street currently suffered traffic congestion, which not only caused issues for drivers, but also made the area unpleasant to pedestrians and cyclists, as well as detracting from what many described as Aberdeen's most beautiful building, Marischal College.

*“There is already a very large volume of traffic on Broad Street, and with buses currently stopping at the Marischal Square side of the road, this prevents traffic from running smoothly. The junction of Broad Street and Union Street is particularly bad at peak times, with drivers on Union Street sitting on the yellow hatched area which prevents other drivers on Broad Street turning right. Similarly, exiting Queen Street to turn right is problematic as drivers block the opening.”*

*“Long waits at the pedestrian crossings cause people to run out into the road to try getting across faster.”*

*“To keep traffic and the heavy bottleneck [at Broad Street] is not only awful for pedestrians and cyclists but cannot contribute positively to free flowing traffic.”*

*“Central Aberdeen is already filled to the brim with traffic with few quiet spaces, and this street is already busy enough that most traffic tries to avoid it if at all possible.”*

### **(iii) Does not Encourage Walking and Cycling, and does not Make Broad Street a Safer Place**

17% of responses highlighted that Option 1 did nothing to encourage residents and visitors to walk or cycle through the area. These responses also highlighted that the proposal did not make Broad Street a safer place for pedestrians and cyclists.

*“It is not encouraging people to get out of their cars. We are trying to make the city centre a nicer place and this is one of the biggest parts of it. Aberdonians need a push in the right direction to start using public transport – or dare I say walk?”*

*“Pedestrianised areas are inviting spaces and they're excellent for community events and tourism. People can walk along freely without needing to keep an eye on traffic. If Broad Street remains open to all traffic, then it'll be tricky to achieve these benefits.”*

*“Option 1 shows absolutely no progress whatsoever. Large cities the world over are making bold and brave statements about the kinds of places they want to foster – people places, not car places. This option is a do nothing option that achieves nothing.”*

*“This does nothing to keep traffic out of the city centre, and leaves pedestrians as third class citizens.”*

### **(iv) Does not Improve Air Quality or Tackle Pollution**

14% of responses to this question disliked Option 1 because it did not have a positive impact on improving air quality and did nothing to help reduce pollution levels from traffic.

*“The local authority has committed to plans, policies and strategies that encourage alternative modes of travel, support health and wellbeing, green space and emissions reduction. Maintaining traffic through the city centre actively goes against these.”*

*“Too much traffic, pollution, noise and overall it removes the chance to do something exciting in front of Aberdeen's greatest building.”*

*“Air quality is poor in Aberdeen and a positive/strong move by the council to make one area of the city pedestrianised would help portray a more positive image of the commitment the council have towards improving air quality.”*

*“When cars are present, it will never become a pleasant public space, because of noise, potential danger, and pollution.”*

### **(v) Merely Maintains the Status Quo and is a Missed Opportunity**

13% of responses indicated that choosing not to pedestrianise Broad Street represented a missed opportunity to make positive change, and that Option 1 lacked *“vision, imagination and courage.”* It was also felt that retaining traffic in Broad Street would have wider implications and ramifications for further and future development of the City centre.

*“Aberdeen City Council's report on the transport implications of the City Centre Masterplan projects showed that improving Broad Street is absolutely necessary in order to set other parts of the masterplan in motion. Retaining the status quo in Broad Street will raise questions about whether the plan is deliverable at all.”*

*“Option 1 lacks any sort of inspired thinking or leadership.”*

*“We need to take the lead with a green, sustainable vision for our city. This option is outdated and backwards.”*

*“What is there already in Broad Street is bland and doesn't support the design you are trying to create for this area. Bold steps must be taken in order to ensure that this city has a bright future and staying with what people are used to is not going to get us there.”*

*“No vision, no improvements. A missed opportunity for Aberdeen.”*

### **(vi) Provides No Benefit For Marischal College**

There was strong support and feeling for what many described as “*Aberdeen’s most beautiful building*” across the responses. Across the questions, many felt the need to maximise the potential and attraction of Marischal College, and believed that creating a pedestrianised civic space in front of it was the best way to do that. It was also noted how much the restoration project completed in 2011 had improved the appearance of the building, and fears were expressed that not reducing traffic in Broad Street would lead to its discolouration again. 9% specifically mentioned that they disliked Option 1 due to it providing no benefit to Marischal College.

*“Marischal College is an important historical landmark of great beauty located at a natural vantage point over the city and every effort should be made to show it off. Pedestrianising the area would reduce air and noise pollution and make it more attractive to visitors and residents alike, as well as maintaining the sparkle of the granite for longer.”*

*“Marischal College is an absolute gem in the heart of the city and a pedestrian area in the front of the building would allow both visitors and locals to enjoy it, which of course has potential economic benefits in terms of tourism.”*

*“Marischal College is an iconic building, and there is a unique opportunity for Broad Street to be the focus of a vibrant ‘new’ Aberdeen, providing a public space in the heart of the city. This would not be possible if all traffic were to be maintained.”*

*“Marischal College is a stunning building, recently cleaned. Although, as a driver, I don’t normally agree to blocking areas off, Marischal College should be allowed to sparkle for as long as possible in an area free from all fuel emissions.”*

### **(vii) Only Benefits Traffic, Not Users Of The Space**

5% felt that Option 1 represented a preference of cars over people, and that in making this choice Aberdeen City Council would be making a statement about which it felt was more important to the City.

*“Option 1 sets out the wrong precedent. Other cities are moving towards recognised world trends that car ownership will go down and making them more pedestrian friendly. Not recognising that within this development sends out a signal that Aberdeen is living in the past. It should be treated as an opportunity to create a quality public space which Aberdeen sorely lacks.”*

*“Option 1 offers no real improvements to make city more attractive to people, only cars.”*

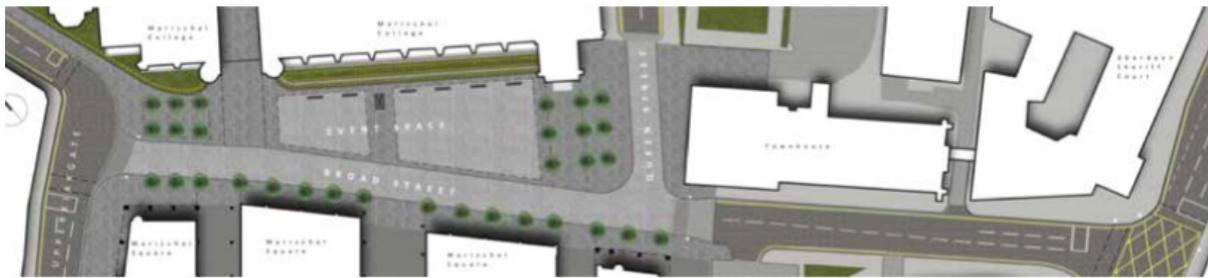
*“Option 1 promotes cars over people, and all the negative things that come with cars, like pollution, congestion, and obesity.”*

### **(viii) Other Issues Raised**

Other reasons for disliking Option 1 raised by a small number of respondents (fewer than 3%) included:

- The belief that it is not in accord with the City Centre Masterplan
- Doesn't benefit public transport, and in particular bus waiting times
- Fails to work towards attracting tourists
- Doesn't help local business

### 3.2 OPTION 2: BUSES, CYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS ONLY

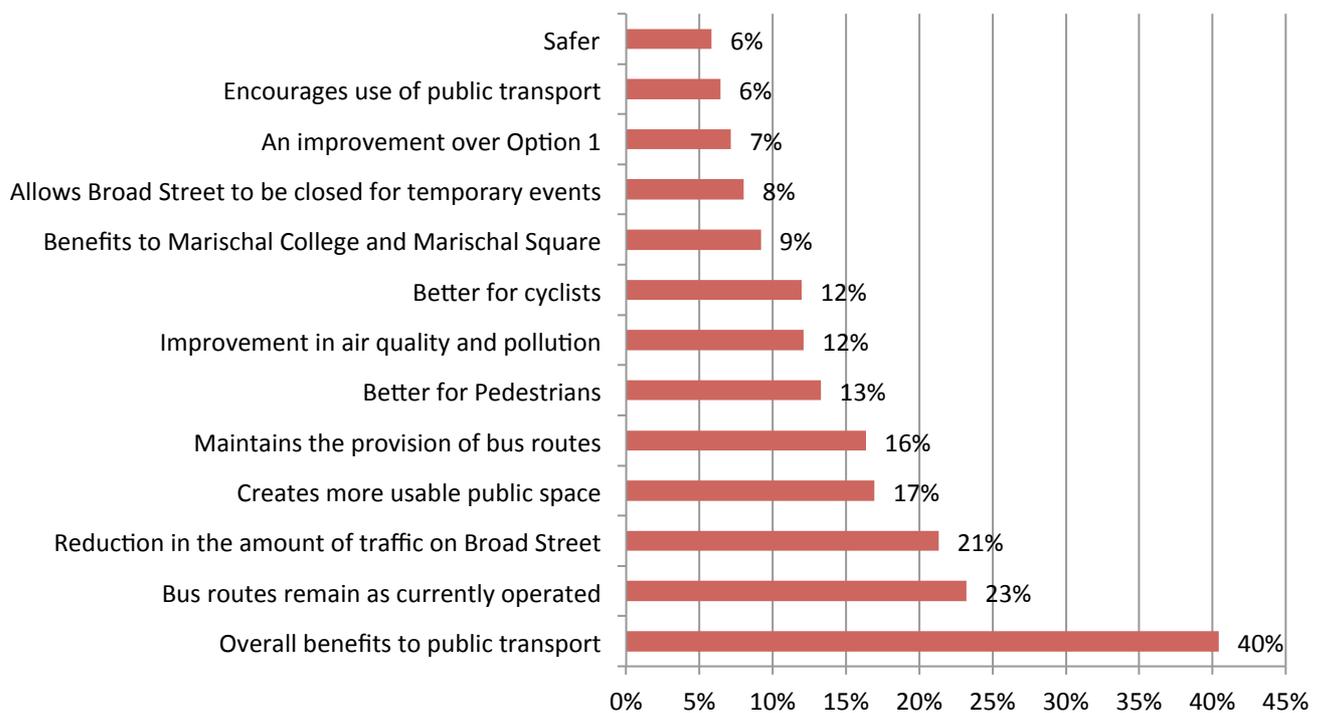


#### Description of Option 2

- Broad Street only open to buses, cycles and pedestrians
- Potential to relocate the bus stops
- Opportunity to temporarily close off Broad Street to all traffic increasing the usable civic space from 1,910 square metres (sqm) to 3,510 sqm
- Reduced traffic and shared surfaces giving priority to pedestrians
- Upperkirkgate traffic island removed to increase footway widths
- Improved pedestrian crossing places

#### What do you like about Option 2 (buses, cycles and pedestrians only)?

**What do you like about Option 2 (buses, cycles and pedestrians only)?**  
Percentage of those who answered this question (n=686)



## **(i) Overall Benefits to Public Transport**

40% of responses to this question felt Option 2 to benefit public transport, with a variety of reasons given, including:

- 23% felt that bus routes would remain as they are currently operated
- Encourages use of public transport
- Possible reduction in bus journey times
- Opportunity to control the waiting times of buses

*“Option 2 would decrease congestion and make it easier for buses to get through, speeding up the service. It can take 15 minutes to get from Union Street to Gallowgate at present.”*

*“This option maintains public transport access and gives competitive advantage over private vehicles. ‘A developed country is not a place where the poor have cars. It’s where the rich use public transport’ – Mayor of Bogota.”*

*“Broad Street is an essential thoroughfare for buses and it would cause traffic chaos if they were rerouted to Upper Kirkgate. Also, it would be extremely inconvenient for passengers, especially those who are older or disabled, who wished to access the lower end of Union Street.”*

*“Retains buses through Broad Street which at peak times are about one every 4 minutes. Allows access to central Aberdeen especially from the North and Tillydrone (and Bridge of Don when new bridge complete), and also from the South (Kincorth bus) and West (Great Western Rd & beyond Bus)”*

*“Option 2 maintains what is a hub for public transport, and also offers the ability to reduce bus waiting times, which can only be a good thing. Though there doesn’t seem to be an indication of how this will be achieved, nor why it cannot be achieved otherwise.”*

Also relating to public transport, some felt:

- The service offered by First was poor, and overpriced
- A move towards hydrogen fuel and more environmentally-friendly buses should be encouraged

## **(ii) Reduction in the Amount of Traffic on Broad Street**

21% of responses to this question felt that the implementation of Option 2 would result in fewer vehicles and reduced traffic on Broad Street.

*“Without the cars clogging up Broad Street, as well as freeing up a very important bus route it will also be nice as a pedestrian not to be forced to breathe in car fumes. It will create a much nicer and more relaxed atmosphere as well as not interfering with the bus routes.”*

*“Removing traffic makes more sense of Broad Street as a public space following the Marischal College refurbishment and Marischal Square development, and according to traffic modelling it appears to be feasible without significant impact on traffic flow.”*

*“Removing the cars will open the area up and is a start to the pedestrianisation of Broad Street. Hopefully it will discourage car use. We don’t need masses of cars with one person in them.”*

### **(iii) Creates More Usable Public Space**

17% of responses specifically mentioned liking Option 2 because it generated a greater amount of public space that could be made positive use of.

*“Option 2 allows for the creation of a temporary open space within the city and at the heart of it a civic space that can become a focal point for events, which is something that this end of the city needs.”*

*“The open area gives a more friendly contour, something that Aberdeen desperately needs.”*

*“People will feel more comfortable sitting and enjoying the area. The area will provide the opportunity for the city to improve upon its creative and artistic events.”*

*“This reduces emissions and creates an adaptable public space in front of a public building Aberdeen should be shouting about is a good idea. This could also be a great place to meet, socialise, and hold events such as Spectra.”*

### **(iv) Better for Pedestrians**

As outlined above and in other places in this report, 13% felt that the removal of traffic from Broad Street would be better for pedestrians and encourage walking due to increased safety, improved air quality, less noise, less traffic, and more space.

### **(v) Improvement in Air Quality and Pollution**

12% highlighted improvements in air quality that would arise from a reduction in traffic, and the corresponding positive effects this would have on the attractiveness of the area, as well as preserving the appearance of important buildings, such as Marischal College.

There were some, however, who felt that improving pollution issues in Broad Street would only move traffic and pollution to other areas, rather than eradicating them completely.

**(vi) Better for Cyclists**

As mentioned in reasons to like Option 3, although in smaller number, 12% felt that removing private vehicles from Broad Street would make cycling within the City centre more attractive.

*“I like this idea because it allows for people to use public transport should they want to and it's safer for cyclists. I would purchase a bike and cycle everywhere in the city but I'm too scared to just now because of the volume of traffic. It doesn't seem safe to me.”*

Others, however, pointed out that Broad Street represents only approximately 200 metres of road surface, and that people would need to cycle through traffic to get there in the first place.

It was also mentioned that more cycle racks would be needed.

**(vii) Benefits to Marischal College and Marischal Square**

As outlined above (in Option 1 dislikes and in Option 2 likes point (ii)) about creating better public space, 9% chose to highlight the benefits to Marischal College, and also the new Marischal Square development which was felt would be best served by at least partial, if not full pedestrianisation.

**(viii) Allows Broad Street to be Closed for Temporary Events**

8% supported and agreed with the consultation document’s idea that a benefit of Option 2 would be that it could be closed for temporary events. Others, however, were unclear why this could not also be the case under Option 1

**(ix) An Improvement over Option 1**

7% stated a liking for Option 2 on the grounds that they felt it was better than Option 1, though without further elaboration.

**(x) Safer**

6% felt that Option 2 would make the Broad Street area a safer place for pedestrians and cyclists.

*“Pedestrians and cyclists are safer where only buses are allowed than where cars are also present. This mix is present in the city centre in Dundee and seems to work well.”*

*“Less traffic in pedestrian heavy zone makes it safer for families.”*

*“Option 2 provides a good balance between overall mobility, getting people in and out of town using public transport, and providing a safe space for pedestrians. Comparable with areas of Exeter and Cambridge (among others).”*

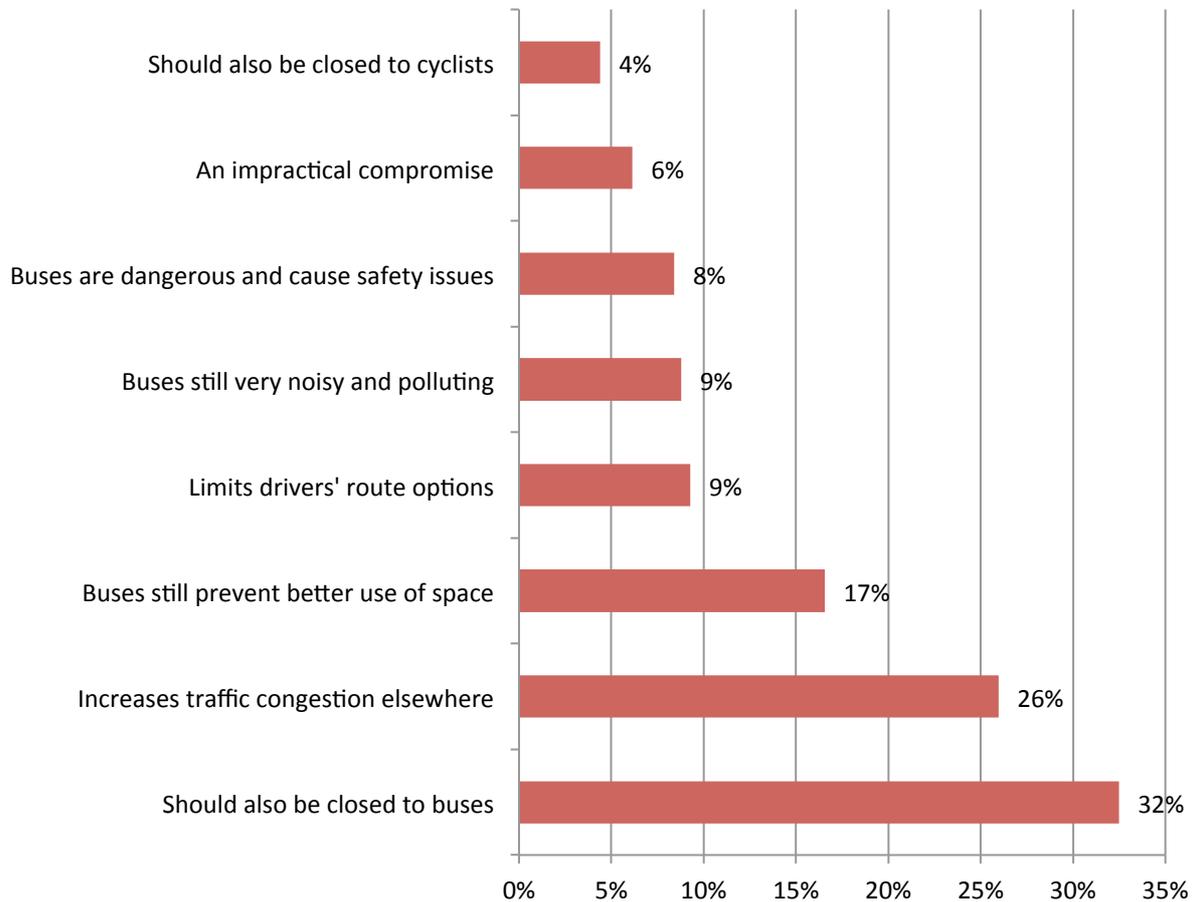
**(xi) Other Issues Raised**

Other less frequently mentioned reasons (< 3%) for liking Option 2 included:

- Some who felt it a good blend of Option 1 and Option 3
- The ability to install innovative features
- Some who felt Option 2 a better choice than Option 3
- Some who felt Option 2 was in accordance with the Masterplan

## What do you dislike about Option 2 (buses, cycles and pedestrians only)?

**What do you dislike about Option 2  
(buses, cycles and pedestrians only)?**  
Percentage of those who answered this question (n=797)



### (i) Should Also Be Closed To Buses

The chief dislike for Option 2 (32% of responses to this question) was that it still allowed buses to use Broad Street, and did not create full pedestrianisation.

*"I don't think this option goes far enough. I would like to see this area for cycles and pedestrians only, no buses. Lots of other cities have bus networks that take you to the periphery of the city centres only, and have welcoming pedestrian and cyclist friendly central areas. This is our chance now. Keeping buses wouldn't change the feel of the area, only getting rid of all vehicles will do this."*

*"I don't see how we could promote a 'café culture' with the noise and fumes of buses preventing this from being a nice, relaxing area."*

*“Buses stop and queue up outside Marischal at present. This would continue and adversely affect the environment compared with what would be achieved if it was a pedestrian area only.”*

*“Why do we need buses on Broad Street? Why can't people walk anywhere from Union Street? It's not far.”*

*“Although we have hydrogen buses the vast majority belch out diesel fumes, I don't really see how this makes walking and cycling more attractive - my own experience of cyclists sharing bus lanes is that it is not pleasant.”*

*“Most of the traffic through that area is buses. Continuing to have buses defeats the point of opening up the space.”*

## **(ii) Increases Traffic Congestion Elsewhere**

26% felt that closing the road to private vehicles would increase traffic congestion elsewhere (as outlined in section 2.3, Option 3 – Likes).

## **(iii) Buses Still Prevent Better Use Of Space**

As mentioned above, there were a number (17%) who felt that buses should also be removed from Broad Street, and that allowing buses meant that the roads would necessarily have to be maintained – as well as bus stops and lay-bys – thus preventing more extensive use of the development of the public space.

*“Aberdeen city centre is heavily dominated by noisy traffic and very lacking in quiet civic space. Whilst this option will be much better than Option 1 it still does not give a totally traffic free area in the city centre which Aberdeen is so lacking. With Marischal College as a beautiful backdrop full pedestrianisation would give the city the heart it needs, yet buses would not create a truly civic space for the people to unwind and enjoy the city.”*

*“With buses going through the public space area is bisected. There will be less room for trees, greenery and landscaping. It will not produce a safe space for public events and families.”*

#### **(iv) Limits Drivers' Route Options**

9% raised the impact on limiting routes for drivers. The points raised here have been set out in section 2.1, Option 1 – Likes.

#### **(v) An Impractical Compromise**

While some praised Option 2 as a workable compromise between maintaining the status quo and full pedestrianisation, others (6%) described Option 2 as *“an unworkable half-way house”* that was *“neither here nor there.”* Mixing bus traffic and pedestrians was seen as unwise. Reducing pollution, noise and issues of danger, rather than effectively removing them, was seen as lacking in ambition and direction.

*“Option 2 is a timid half-way house solution which shows a lack of commitment to a new civic space at the heart of Aberdeen.”*

*“This is a foolish compromise position. Pedestrians will not walk in the middle of a street where they can be hit by buses or by careless bicyclists. See the George street experiment tried many years ago.”*

*“The MUSE development was “sold” to the public as part of a pedestrianised development. If this is not carried through with the public will have been deceived.”*

*“Broad Street would remain a street and the use of the space would be inhibited. If it is proposed that the street would be closed for buses at certain events to allow full pedestrianisation then, in my opinion, the council should show strong leadership shown, and Broad Street fully pedestrianised.”*

*“It is as easy to plan for full closure and re-routing of buses on a full-time basis as on a temporary basis. Such a proposal is an abrogation of decision making and has no useful intent other than a failure to make a better decision.”*

*“Either have a pedestrianised public space, or don't. Allowing buses completely eliminates the benefits of pedestrianisation or the creation of a public space for outdoor events, but still causes general disruption to the flow of traffic around the city centre. This option is plain stupid.”*

### **(vi) Should also be Closed to Cyclists**

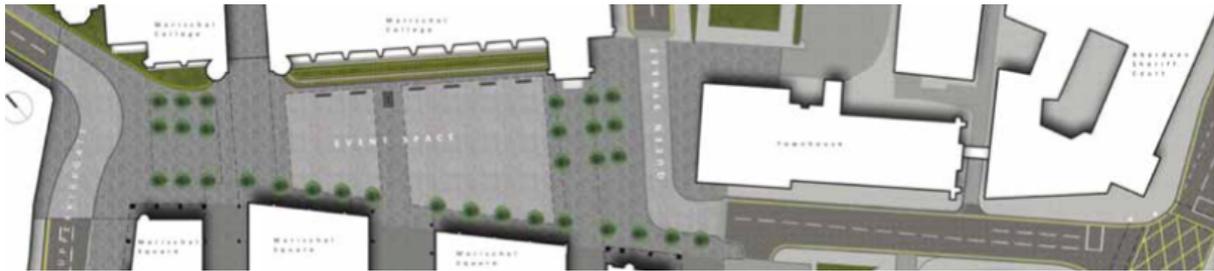
4% felt that any pedestrianisation of Broad Street should also include closing it to cyclists. Also see section 2.3, Option 3 – Dislikes.

### **(vii) Other Issues Raised**

Other less frequently cited reasons (<3%) for disliking Option 2 were:

- Restricted access for those with mobility issues to Broad Street and Marischal College (see also Option 1 – Likes and Option 3 – Dislikes)
- That buses were receiving priority over private vehicles
- Does not really encourage cycling, given that: a) cyclists have to cycle through traffic to reach Broad Street; and: b) despite the absence of cars, buses still pose an obstruction and danger to safe and pleasant cycling
- Some felt that taxis should also be allowed – especially for those with mobility issues – and that in some ways they should be viewed as public transport
- Some disliked the relocation of the bus stop as outlined in the consultation document
- Some expressed concerns over whether cars would abide by the restriction to enter Broad Street - stating previous examples of restricted access roads which they felt private motorists had ignored

### 3.3 OPTION 3: PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLES ONLY



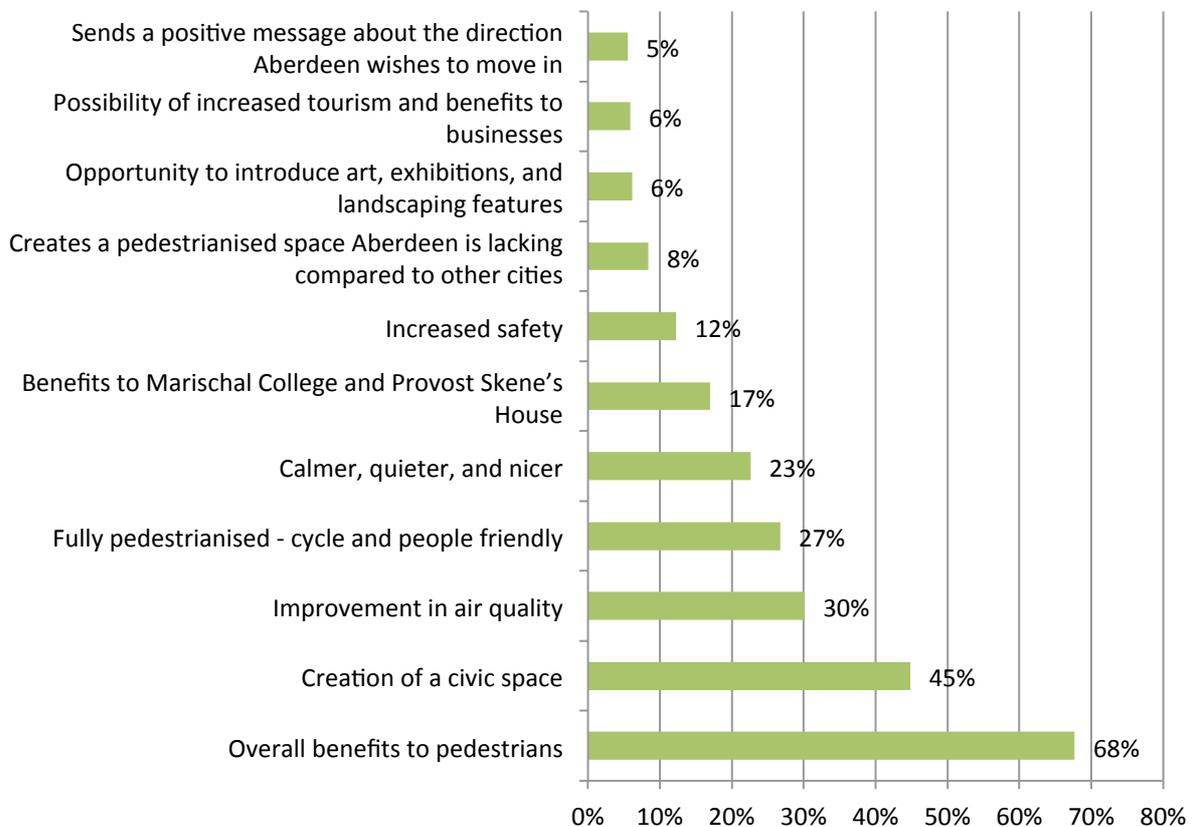
#### Description of Option 3

- Broad Street fully pedestrianised
- Civic space increased from 1675 square metres (sqm) to 3510 sqm
- New civic space with increased landscaping
- Unrestricted movement for pedestrians

#### What do you like about Option 3 (pedestrians and cycles only)?

##### What do you like about Option 3 (pedestrians and cycles only)?

Percentage of those who answered this question (n=801)



## (i) Overall Benefits to Pedestrians

68% of those who responded to why they liked Option 3 highlighted the benefits to pedestrians and the public in general across a wide range of themes and ideas, including:

- Improvement in air quality and ‘greenness’ (30%)
- Full pedestrianisation being “people-friendly” (27%)
- The creation of a “calmer, quieter, and nicer” space (23%)
- Increased safety (12%)

*“Without the noise and pollution, and all the space that motorised traffic imposes on a street, people will feel comfortable to walk or cycle. The site is surrounded by the city’s civic buildings, existing and new retail/leisure offers, and lies in front of perhaps the city’s most impressive building. This is an attractive option.”*

*“It would be great to be able to walk around without having to look behind me all the time worrying about buses or traffic.”*

*“Improves air pollution, safer for pedestrians and cyclists. It would be amazing to be able to walk not just on the pavement.”*

*“I love this option. It prioritises people over motor traffic, which is what all good cities do. It means people can walk and cycle around the shops and restaurants in the area without navigating through motor traffic. It will make the air cleaner to breathe, have a positive impact on our greenhouse gas emissions, and encourage people to choose active travel, which will benefit their health and the health of the NHS. It will also make Aberdeen a more attractive tourist destination by providing interesting inner-city places to explore.”*

*“This option puts pedestrians first, which is how it should be. It encourages healthier options for travel and air quality will be greatly improved. There will be greater opportunities for improving landscaping and visual setting, an*

*encouragement of café culture, and a place where people will want to spend time in, rather than just using it to pass through.”*

*“This option will encourage a cultural change away from always putting the car first to focussing more on sustainable travel within the city.”*

## **(ii) Creation of a Civic Space**

45% gave support for the creation of a central, pedestrianised civic space which offered the ability to stage events and create a focal point in the City.

*“More in keeping with the original 'civic square' plan following the removal of St Nicholas House which has potential for festivals and events.”*

*“This is the best of all worlds and creates a great environment for business and leisure. It affords every opportunity to create a fantastic location that can host public events and also be a great home for business. There are sufficient public transport routes nearby that mean that no-one is disadvantaged.”*

*“This will provide an exclusive 'blank canvas' to create an exciting, stylish, attractive civic space which can be enjoyed all year round and also opens up opportunities for more centrally held events, art projects, or festivals like the ones we've enjoyed recently in the city.”*

## **(iii) Benefits to Marischal College and Provost Skene’s House**

As already outlined above in Option 1 – Dislikes and Option 2 – Likes, 17% felt that pedestrianisation would be of great benefit to the showcasing of the popular and unique Marischal College, and also Provost Skene’s House, which some felt would particularly suffer if the development of Marischal Square was completed without the offer of a public space.

*“As Sir Ian Wood said, ‘Aberdeen needs a Heart.’ Marischal College is Aberdeen's gem and invokes such pride. It is of huge architectural and tourism value, especially with Aberdeen being on the door step to the highlands, Cairngorms and the whisky trail. With both Provost Skene's house and Marischal College as a backdrop, full pedestrianisation would really create a space which would be much more appropriate as the centre of the city than Castlegate.”*

*“Pedestrianisation is a huge improvement for both the local population and tourists. Marischal College is a world-renowned building and we do not show it off.”*

*“Marischal College is a beautiful building that will soon be overshadowed, so ways to frame it more effectively and enhance its setting are a necessity.”*

Some were concerned about the impact this may have on both the Marischal College building itself and the space in front of it, in terms of shadow, ambience, and making it feel “closed in”. It was felt that full pedestrianisation was perhaps the only way to lessen this impact.

*“This is the best option, providing an interconnected space between Marischal College and the MUSE development. This could be a fantastic open space with trees and landscaping that would offer city workers and residents a space to take a break in an attractive and stress-free environment.”*

*“The pedestrianisation of Broad Street is the only option that will deliver the public open space depicted in the Muse artists' impressions that served to promote the Marischal Square development. To not pedestrianise Broad Street would be an admission by Muse and the Council that they had not established the feasibility of full pedestrianisation before allowing the artist's impressions to be included in the PACs.”*

**(iv) Creates Pedestrianised Space Aberdeen Lacks Compared to Other Cities**

8% cited liking Option 3 because they felt it created a unique and altogether new space that Aberdeen did not currently have, but which many other major cities did. Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh were frequently mentioned, as were cities in Europe. Some respondents observed that public plazas were ubiquitous in many cities across the world, believing them to add considerable value and attractiveness to cities.

*“I think [full pedestrianisation] would make the city centre feel much more like a space that can be enjoyed and that it's not just a space for people to get from A-to-B. It would feel comparable to some of the pedestrian-only areas in Edinburgh which allow the city to maintain a sense of closeness and engagement with the shops and restaurants there.”*

*“Aberdeen badly needs a focal point. I am a regular visitor to Dundee and feel quite envious of City Square.”*

*“This would provide Aberdeen with a proper pedestrianised town centre similar to Buchanan Street in Glasgow. This gives cities a nice feel to them and somewhere pleasant for people to sit down outside and have lunch without being disturbed by buses, taxis and cars.”*

**(v) Opportunity to Introduce Art, Exhibitions, and Landscaping Features**

6% took the opportunity to express their support for using the space for art installations and exhibitions, as well as the introduction of innovative and attractive features, such as sculptures and water features. There was support for the creation of any kind of greenery, including planters, trees, and grassy areas, with some stating that they hoped the pedestrian space would offer more than “grey concrete”.

*“I particularly like the idea of incorporating landscape features into the downtown area. It desperately needs it, otherwise it looks rather drab and grim. Most modern European towns include a pedestrian area, Aberdeen shouldn't fall behind on this.”*

### **(vi) Possibility of Increased Tourism and Benefits to Businesses**

6% felt that the pedestrianised area would increase tourism and also help create new businesses, with a particular emphasis on the development of what many referred to as a ‘*café culture*’. Indeed, responses to both this question, and the questions about ‘what people liked about pedestrianisation’ and ‘what features people wanted to see’ mentioned cafés, coffee shops, restaurants, and outdoor dining areas, evoking images of European-style plazas and restaurant terraces. Though some responses highlighted that Aberdeen’s climate may require more creative measures to help nurture this, such as ways to provide shelter from the rain and outdoor heaters.

*“In the absence of all vehicle traffic, this would be a true public space – as found in so many other cities – with all the advantages stated above. It would be a showcase for Marischal College, and it would also open the way for so many possibilities: cafes, tables outside, art displays, and many other innovative ideas. An area for Aberdonians to enjoy and feel proud of, and for visitors to delight in.”*

*“This, along with the pedestrianisation of Union Street, will make the city centre more appealing to visitors, boosting business and the economy.”*

*“If the road was pedestrianised then it should be used as a permanent open space for events, businesses should be allowed to develop outdoor eating and drinking options (including allowed day and night-time licensing in this space), and permanent features such as weekend food markets should be encouraged as with other major cities.”*

**(vii) Sends Positive Message About Direction Aberdeen Wishes to Move in**

5% felt Option 3 was the essential choice, not only because of benefits to the immediate area of Broad Street, but also how it would affect the future choices and direction of the development of the City Centre in years to come. It was expressed by some that choosing pedestrianisation would send a “*powerful and positive message*” about the priorities of Aberdeen, and that it would also encourage and enable further “*people-friendly*” development in surrounding areas.

*“This is the best option and will help transform this end of the city which is in need of change. We want to be proud of our city centre and this is the sort of bold move we need. Buses and private vehicles will adjust routes and in time disruption will be minimal. It’s well known that Aberdonians resist change but this opportunity is too far reaching to miss. We have a chance to make things better and we need to take it.”*

*“We need more pedestrian areas, trees, and parks. I would encourage every opportunity to move in this direction.”*

*“With the right features this creates an opportunity to move towards even more significant pedestrianisation, like most modern vibrant cities.”*

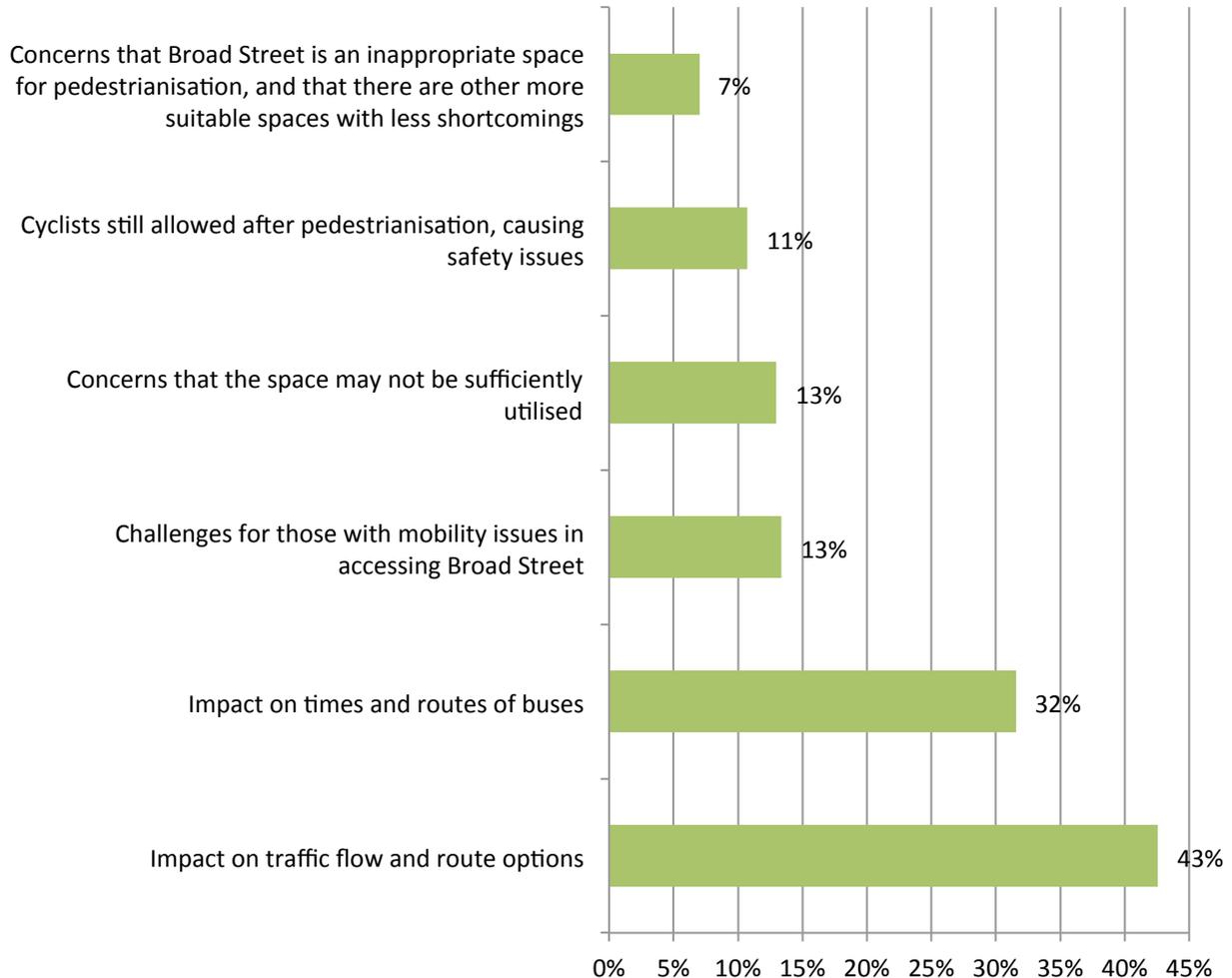
*“Full pedestrianisation marks a step change for the city and its approach to encouraging footfall and dwell time. Delivering this option would represent a landmark shift in approach to external audiences and reflect the visionary approach that the city needs to and is taking to its future.”*

*“This option would force planners to think about the impact of traffic in and around the surrounding area and would open up the possibility of new routes or better traffic development in that area, which should ultimately be positive for private and public transport usage.”*

## What do you dislike about Option 3 (pedestrians and cycles only)?

### What do you dislike about Option 3 (pedestrians and cycles only)?

Percentage of those who answered this question (n=758)



#### (i) Impact on Traffic Flow and Route Options

As outlined in Option 1 – Likes, many respondents disagreed with full pedestrianisation because of the effect it would have on traffic flow and a perceived significant increase in journey time and congestion.

#### (ii) Impact on Times and Routes of Buses

As outlined in Option 2 – Likes, many respondents felt that a thorough and suitable provision of public transport would not be possible were Broad Street to be closed to buses.

### **(iii) Challenges for Those with Mobility Issues in Accessing Broad Street**

As addressed in Option 1 – Likes, there were those who felt that full pedestrianisation of Broad Street presented challenges for people who were challenged by issues of limited mobility, such as the elderly and disabled.

### **(iv) Concerns That the Space May Not be Sufficiently Utilised**

Some expressed concern that were Broad Street to be pedestrianised it may not be sufficiently utilised by pedestrians and the public in general to make it worthwhile. Also, if not properly populated by businesses such as restaurants and bars, it was felt that the absence of cars, particularly at night, may actually create a space that was less rather than more welcoming and safe.

*“Removing the buses would reduce the number of people milling around in the area and they’ll all head to Union Street and possibly avoid Broad Street altogether. What happens when there aren’t events taking place? It could turn in to an underused space.”*

*“We have public space in the quadrangle at Marischal College and on the roof at St Nicholas shopping centre which is not utilised. This would end up the same.”*

*“It is a waste of space. There is already a large space around the corner at the Castlegate which is underused and probably already costs the Council a lot to maintain. Nice computer renderings of people in t-shirts lounging in outdoor cafés do not really bear much resemblance to the reality of being close to the coast in northeast Scotland.”*

*“I don’t see the ‘space’ as being fully utilised during normal days when there are no events. Broad Street is not a busy shopping area and there won’t be enough businesses on Broad Street to attract high enough number of pedestrians. How many people would be coming/passing by this place? Where are the pedestrians walking to and from? This will just look like a concreted area with no purpose except for occasional events.”*

### **(v) Cyclists Still Allowed After Pedestrianisation, Causing Safety Issues**

Some stated the opinion that full pedestrianisation should also exclude cyclists as well as cars and buses, with many expressing concerns over safety and citing experiences of near misses with cyclists who rode dangerously and/or on the city's pavements.

*"Please, if you are going to allow cyclists, at least have lanes for them! Cycling on pavements is generally a bad idea. They can be pedalling furiously with no accountability!"*

*"Should be pedestrians only as cyclists can cause annoyance and accidents if not in separate cycle area."*

*"Cyclists should definitely be excluded to prevent possibility of accidents with pedestrians."*

### **(vi) Concerns That Broad Street Is Inappropriate for Pedestrianisation**

As mentioned in Point 4 above, there were some who felt the space at Broad Street could end up underused. Others also highlighted that they felt Broad Street an inappropriate space to attempt pedestrianisation in the first place, and pointed to other areas that they felt would be more suitable. Chief among the objections were:

- A lack of the right type of businesses to attract pedestrians
- The belief that there is a "wind tunnel effect" on Broad Street, which will be exacerbated by the Marischal Square development
- The weather, which many felt provided too few days of rain-free sunshine to justify an open to the elements pedestrianised area
- A feeling that Broad Street had too much shadow, and would have more once Marischal Square was completed
- Belief that other places would be better suited to pedestrianisation

*"The area is in shadow a lot of the time due to Marischal College, the court and town house buildings, and the new Muse development, all of which are quite tall*

*and close together. This will make it a very dull and grey area which won't be pleasant to spend time in, somewhat like George Street outside John Lewis and the Bon Accord Centre."*

*"It will not be particularly inviting because of the proximity of the new monstrous development, which will literally cast a shadow over the space from early afternoon onward."*

*"I am confused by attempts to make Broad Street the centre of such an effort. There is little of interest to the pedestrian on Broad Street, and the success of the Marischal Square development remains to be seen. The idea that Marischal College will be highlighted by such a pedestrianisation effort is laudable, but Marischal College is a civic building with few reasons to visit it – especially now that the university museum is no longer open."*

*"This is not the right area for pedestrianisation – Schoolhill, Upperkirkgate, Belmont Street, Little Belmont, and the streets in between would be much better suited. This is an area of the city already full of shops, people, and activity, and would actually give the city the feeling of a 'centre'. The council should try to attract more people to the parts of the city we all should be proud of."*

*"The reality is folks will go to Broad Street if there is something on but not as a place to chill out – that really is further up around His Majesty's Theatre and Union Terrace Gardens."*

### **(vii) Other**

Other less frequently cited reasons (<2%) that respondents disliked Option 3 included:

- The relocation of bus stops
- A perceived negative impact on business
- A feeling that the proposal for Option 3 as it stands is *"not green enough"*
- That it is the more expensive and disruptive option

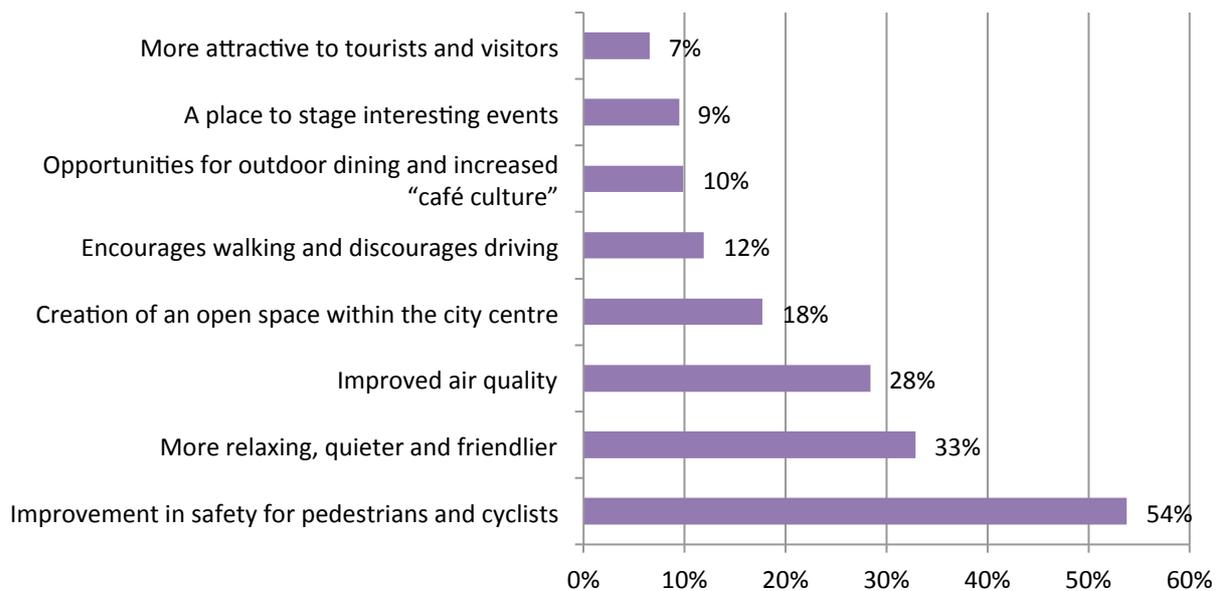
### 3.4 “PLACES FOR PEOPLE” PROJECTS

#### Description

The Masterplan aims to make the City Centre a more attractive place for residents, workers and visitors. The “Places For People” projects aim to help deliver a safer, cleaner City Centre through the creation of new public realm places over the next 25 years. While the City Centre would remain accessible to all under the plans, pedestrianisation could be needed on some street sections to deliver the Masterplan vision in full.

#### What do you like about pedestrianisation?

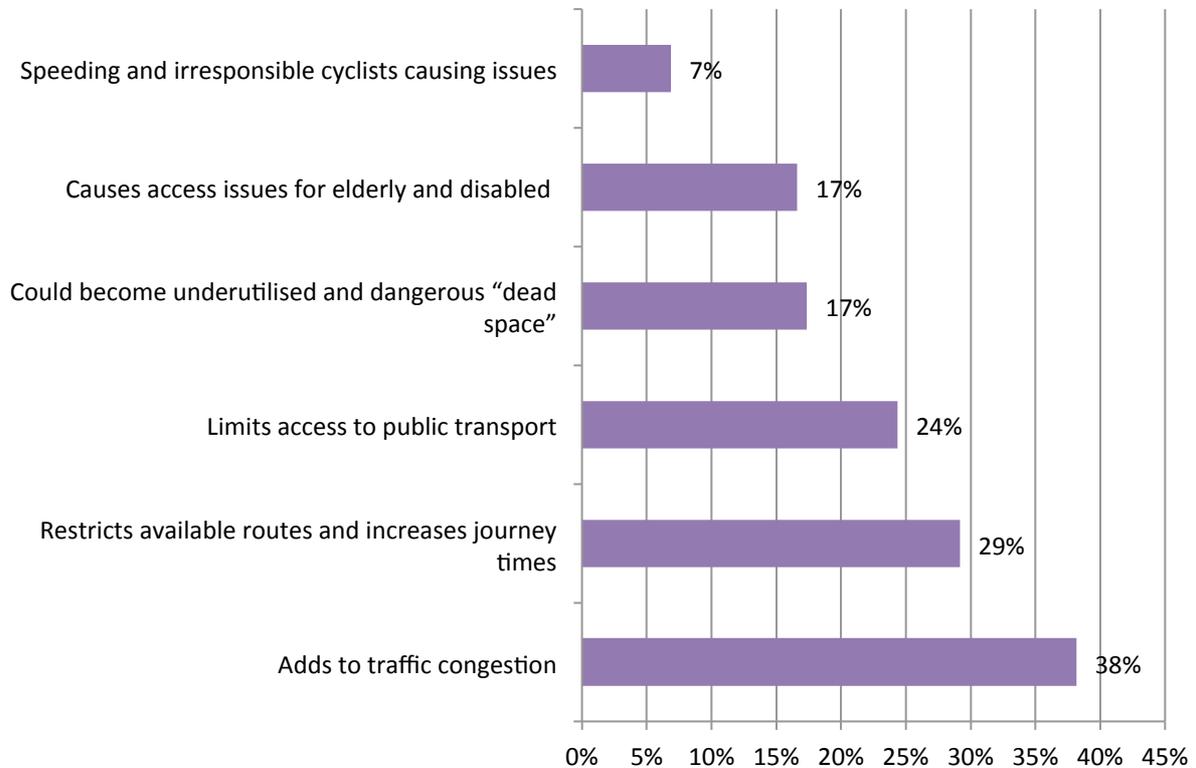
**What do you like about pedestrianisation?**  
Percentage of those who answered this question (n=824)



The majority here (54%) felt that pedestrianisation would result in improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists, with significant numbers stating that it would make the space more relaxing (33%) and improve air quality (28%). There was support for the creation of an open space within the City centre (18%) that would encourage walking (12%), provide opportunities for outdoor dining (10%), stage interesting events (9%) and be attractive to tourists (7%). These issues have been explored in more detail in the earlier questions in the consultation – specifically in the “like” sections for Options 2 and 3.

## What do you dislike about pedestrianisation?

**What do you dislike about pedestrianisation?**  
Percentage of those who answered this question (n=789)



The main concerns for respondent so this question were that pedestrianisation would impact negatively on traffic congestion (38%), by restricting available routes resulting in increased journey times (29%).

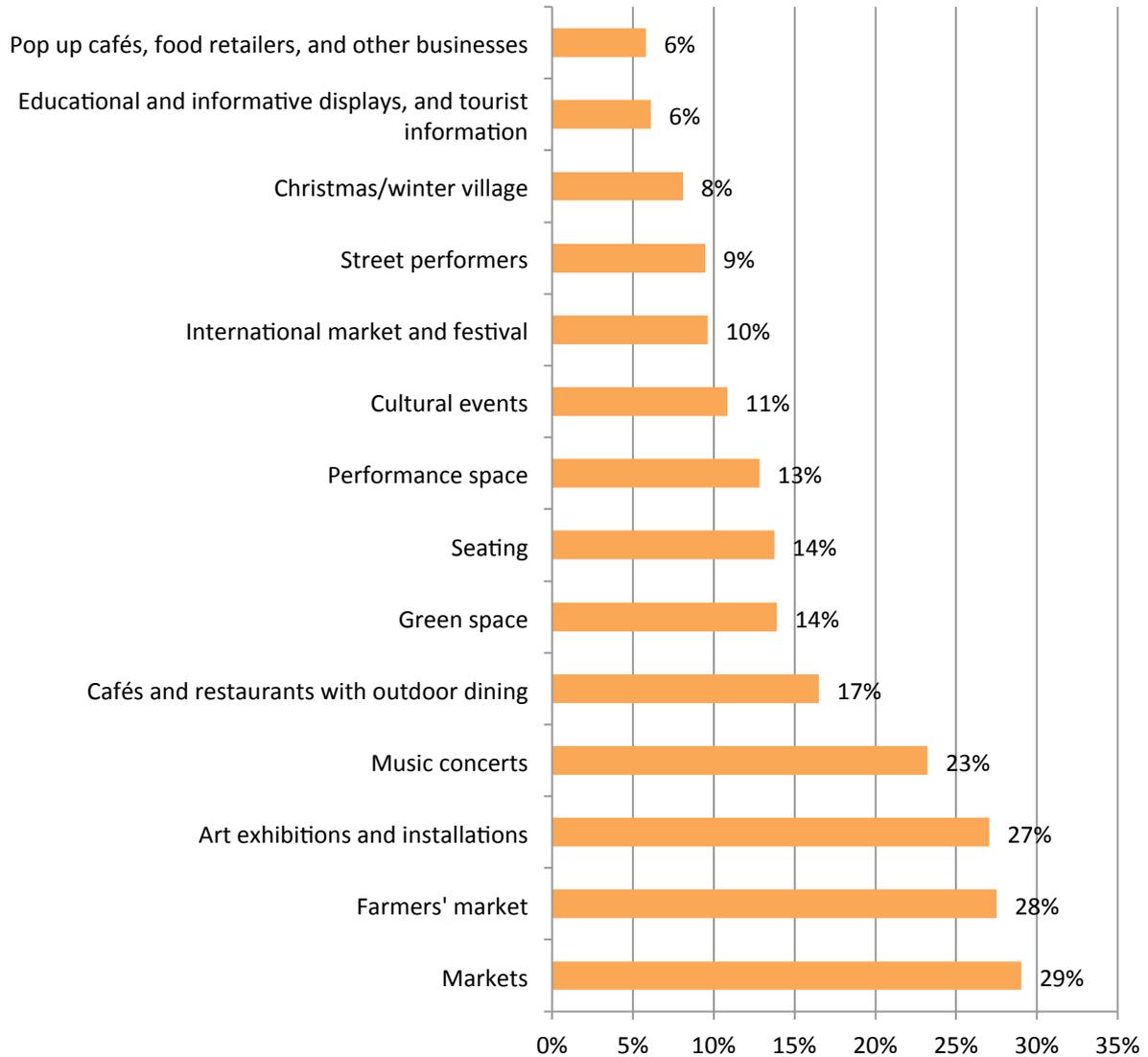
Some felt that this would limit access to public transport (24%), which would contribute to restricted access to the area for elderly and disabled people (17%).

Others felt that pedestrianisation could be negative, with some concerned that any new pedestrian area may become underutilised, and possibly uninviting and even dangerous at night (17%), while some felt that irresponsible cyclists also represented a danger to the public (7%). These issues have been explored in more detail in the earlier questions in the consultation – specifically in the “dislike” sections for Options 1 and 2.

## How would you like to see public realm space on Broad Street used?

### How would you like to see public realm space on Broad Street used?

Percentage of those who answered this question (n=654)



The chart above sets out the main ideas put forward for how to use the public realm space, with the most frequently mentioned being the introduction of markets (29%) and/or farmer’s market (28%), art exhibitions (27%), music concerts (23%), and café’s with outdoor dining (17%). Some mentioned wishing to see the introduction of green space and seating (both 14%). Respondents to this question mainly provided “bullet point” answers, giving a name to their idea but, in general, not providing further details beyond what had been outlined in questions 1, 2 and 3.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 KEY POINTS

A range of views was provided by a good number of Aberdeen based respondents, the majority of whom lived in the City area.

There was a high level of support for some kind of pedestrian priority in Broad Street and across the City as the Masterplan advances. This support was based on the potential benefits it could bring for pedestrians and cyclists in terms of more pleasant and safer spaces with improved air quality, as well as through the creation of a civic space that could be used for interesting activities and events that would improve the overall attractiveness and quality of life in the City.

There were also significant concerns voiced about the possible impact of pedestrianisation on limiting route options, causing congestion in other areas and limiting access to public transport and the potential loss of existing bus routes in Broad Street, limiting access to public transport within the City centre.

Option 2 was felt by some to be a successful compromise that still allowed public transport access.

A variety of “likes” and “dislikes” for each of the three options were put forward by respondents, along with views on pedestrianisation and ideas for the use of public space. The most commonly put forward views are set out by question, in the following tables, and then explore in detail in the body of the report.

**Option 1: Keeping Broad Street open to all traffic**

LIKES	DISLIKES
Maintains the current level of traffic flow	Does not provide a usable space for the public and for events
Maintains the route options available to drivers	Does not remove the issue of traffic congestion from Broad Street
Not a sufficiently convincing reason to change the system	Does not encourage walking and cycling, or make Broad Street a safer place
Provides good access to Broad Street and buildings such as Marischal College, particularly for workers and those with limited mobility	Maintaining the status quo would represent a “missed opportunity” to improve Aberdeen city centre, now and in the future
Maintains the status quo	Does not improve air quality on Broad Street
	Does not benefit Marischal College

**Option 2: Making Broad Street buses, cycles and pedestrians only**

LIKES	DISLIKES
Reduction in the amount of traffic on Broad Street	Buses still using Broad Street, preventing better use of the space and possibly causing safety and environmental issues
Creates more usable public space	Increases traffic congestion elsewhere
Maintains the provision of bus routes	Limits drivers’ route options
Better for pedestrians	An impractical compromise
Better for cyclists	Should also be closed to cyclists
Improvement in air quality and pollution	
Benefits to Marischal College and Marischal Square	

**Option 3: Making Broad Street pedestrians and cycles only**

LIKES	DISLIKES
Creation of a civic space	Impact on traffic flow and route options
Improvement in air quality	Impact on times and routes of buses
Benefits to pedestrians and cyclists	Challenges for those with mobility issues in accessing Broad Street
Benefits to Marischal College and Provost Skene’s House	Concerns that the space may not be sufficiently utilised
Opportunity to introduce art, exhibitions, and landscaping features	Concerns that Broad Street is an inappropriate space for pedestrianisation, and that there are other more suitable spaces with less shortcomings
Sends a positive message about the direction Aberdeen wishes to move in	Cyclists still allowed after pedestrianisation, causing safety issues

### Views on Pedestrianisation

LIKES	DISLIKES
Creation of an open space within city centre	Adds to traffic congestion
Improvement in safety for pedestrians and cyclists	Restricts available routes and increases journey times
More relaxing, quieter and friendlier	Limits access to public transport
Improved air quality	Could become underutilised and dangerous “dead space”
Encourages walking and discourages driving	Causes access issues for elderly and disabled
Opportunities for outdoor dining and increased “café culture”	

### Ideas for using the public space

IDEAS
Markets - including farmers’ and international markets
Art exhibitions and installations, including sculptures
Music concerts
Cafés and restaurants with outdoor dining
Green space
Seating
Performance space
Cultural events
Street performers
Festivals and fairs, such as food and drink festivals, Christmas festival and winter village, craft and fun fairs
Educational and informative displays, and tourist information
Pop up cafés, food retailers, and other businesses

## 4.2 REFLECTIONS FOR FUTURE CONSULTATIONS

On completion of this analysis work, we would like to offer a small number of points for consideration in future consultations:

- There was a high response rate for this consultation, with the materials (consultation documents and background information) and response platforms used (i.e. Citizenspace, email and paper forms) being easy to understand and engage with
- There was virtually no negative feedback from respondents about the consultation process itself
- The quality of responses, in terms of expressing their views with clarity, was impressive – demonstrating good engagement with citizens

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## **Appendix B: Benefits and Challenges of Options**

### Option 1:

#### Benefits

- The space accommodates all traffic flows including public and private vehicles as well as cyclists, bus lay-bys and pedestrians;
- The space could be improved as the setting to Marischal College and as a new place in the city centre;
- Immediate and wider area amenities are well served by public transport; and
- Maintains current level of route choice for all vehicles.

#### Challenges

- Volume of traffic stops larger outdoor events from taking place in the space;
- No means of controlling how long buses wait in the area;
- The opportunity to improve the public space is reduced;
- Relocated northbound bus stop may result in traffic queues onto Union Street;
- Likely longer term disadvantage to public transport as further Masterplan projects are introduced;
- Does not contribute to improvements for cycle facilities;
- Does not contribute to air quality improvements; and
- Does not help deliver the agreed vision of the Masterplan.

### Option 2:

#### Benefits

- Improved environment from reduced traffic and an attractive route for cyclists;
- Access to public transport enhanced;
- Opportunity to close Broad Street for larger temporary events;
- Opportunity for innovative and entertaining landscape feature, such as water, art, lighting;
- Significantly improving the setting of Marischal College;
- Setting and entrance to the City Centre Masterplan Queen Square area;
- Can control how long buses wait in the area;
- Supports aim to reduce cross city centre journeys;
- Makes cycling and walking more attractive;
- Likely to contribute to localised air quality improvements; and
- Helps deliver the agreed vision of the masterplan.

#### Challenges

- It will take time for private drivers and taxis to adjust to other routes;

- Relocated northbound bus stop may result in traffic queues onto Union Street; and
- Reduces current level of route choice for some vehicles.

### Option 3:

#### Benefits

- Enhanced year round civic space;
- Additional flexibility for events;
- Further enhanced setting of Marischal College;
- Opportunity for innovative and entertaining landscape features;
- Space to hold regular programme of events to use the space as a new place in the city centre;
- Setting and entrance to the City Centre Masterplan Queen Square Area;
- Contributes to localised air quality improvements;
- Makes walking and cycling more attractive; and
- Supports aim to reduce cross city centre journeys.

#### Challenges

- Major impact on bus users (routes and journey times) in short, medium and long term;
- Reduces current level of route choice for most vehicles;
- It will take time for private drivers and taxis to adjust to other routes;
- Options for bus routes become less available;
- Area amenities directly accessed by pedestrians, cyclists only;
- Full closure does not fit with the overall vision and aims of the masterplan;
- Significant journey time increases for bus passengers;
- Closure of key public transport corridor; and
- Lack of activity in the space when events are not taking place.

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Full Council
DATE	29 <sup>th</sup> June 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Heat Network Torry – Phase 1
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/16/126
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek permission to proceed with the next stage of the heat network proposal in Torry. This will include the procurement and appointment of the technical design consultants for the detailed heat network design of the heat network and routes, including an investment grade business case which will detail the capital investment and revenue implication of the heat network over the life of the proposed energy from waste (EFW) facility and beyond.

The initial heat network in Torry will be the Phase 1 of the heat network development connected to the energy from the EFW. The scope of works for the technical consultants on this project will also outline the future phases of the heat network expansion which will include expanding the heat network further into Torry, towards the City centre and other areas in Aberdeen which could benefit from the heat network.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

To instruct the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure to implement the following:

- Develop a brief for the scope of works to procure the services of technical consultants to produce a fully costed detailed design of the Phase 1 heat network in Torry and to provide an initial assessment of how this could be further extended within the Torry area and more widely across the city.
- Proceed to procure and appoint technical consultants.
- Prepare a report to future committee meeting with the findings.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be costs associated with the appointment of the technical consultants carrying out the detailed network design and preparing business case. It is estimated that these costs will be around £50k. This cost is purely an estimate at this stage as the tender would inform the cost of this service. This cost will be met by the CH&I directorate.

The initial feasibility study for Phase 1 heat network in Torry indicated that the potential heat network development and implementation cost to be circa £11m. The findings from the detailed design will provide a more accurate build cost. The Council will have to decide on the financing option for funding this capital investment.

Once the heat network is in place, there will be revenue costs for the heat network in terms of network maintenance and operation. This will be presented in the reports from the consultants.

There are no state aid implications as we shall follow the necessary open procurement processes.

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

It is advised that the Project Lead for this work must seek services and advice from the Commercial and Procurement (CPS) and also from other services such as Finance, Asset Management and Housing.

### 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Aberdeen City Council has an ambition to become an energy exemplar City and as such the provision of a more widespread heat network benefitting residents, business and public bodies would be a key component of this vision. As part of this ambition, officers are working on proposals to establish an Energy Services Company (ESCO) which will lead in developing and implementing heat networks and sustainable energy sources and also co-ordinate demand-side activities such as insulation, retrofit and energy management systems.

These objectives also feature highly in Powering Aberdeen – Aberdeen’s Sustainable Energy Action Plan, the draft of which was approved by Council on 11 May this year.

An extended heat network would be anchored by the EFW facility and, ideally, connect to the existing heat networks and CHP facilities that have grown organically under Aberdeen Heat & Power’s (AHP) stewardship and extend these networks to cover a much wider area of the city.

The provision of the EFW facility in Aberdeen City requires there to be a credible heat plan and this fits in with the Council's ambition to extend its heat network across the city. The Council wish to develop a heat network locally to the EFW facility in order that the community in Torry can benefit from the heat and it is likely that there will be surplus heat that can be utilised elsewhere in the city provided that the heat network can be extended and cross the River Dee.

A desk top study carried out on behalf of the Council by Resource-Efficient Scotland mapped out how a heat network in Torry could be developed. Ultimately, the network could provide connections to thousands of domestic premises and a number of business/commercial premises. However, this is a very large scale undertaking and would take a number of years to develop. It is perhaps more realistic to develop the network in a series of planned stages and this report focuses on carrying out further detailed research in order to develop a robust business case for a Phase 1 network.

Phase 1 of the heat network is likely to include circa 300 homes, primary school, swimming pool, community centre, some industrial buildings in East Tullos industrial estate and commercial offices, with a potential annual heat demand of approximately 11GW. The approximate length of this heat network is 10km.

The desktop exercise indicates that Phase 1 would require an investment of around £11m. However, this should be seen as an indication only and the full costs will not be known until a full technical feasibility study is carried out.

There are a number of available sources of funding to develop a network of this scale and early work has been done on developing sustainable business models to support the development and management of the network over the long term.

A business case detailing the design, investment requirements and business model for the Phase 1 network will be presented to a future committee.

## 6. IMPACT

### **Improving Customer Experience –**

Phase 1 of the heat network in Torry would benefit the customers connecting to the network as they could potentially get a reliable, affordable source of heat, which has a low carbon impact. By connecting to the heat network, customers would also benefit from a reduction in their cost of boiler or heat system maintenance.

### **Improving Staff Experience –**

The success of the heat network development and the achievement of the overall energy ambition of the Council would reflect on the dedication, commitment and tenacity of the staff involved in the EFW project, Powering Aberdeen, Waste Management, Energy Management, Planning, Procurement and other professional services throughout the Council.

### **Improving our use of Resources –**

The use of district heating is one of the most efficient way of heating multiple residential/public/commercial buildings via a heat network. This heat network project will use heat produced as part of the EFW process and this process heat is used to heat the water for the district heating. By using district heating, there is potential to lower heat costs to the building users and it is more environmentally friendly compared to using heat from gas or electric heating that consumes fossil fuel sources.

The technology used in the energy production and distribution is a proven technology with minimum risk and complications. If a building or dwelling is connected to the heat network, there will be no requirement for individual boilers or other heat sources for these buildings, reducing costs and carbon.

### **Corporate -**

This project will deliver the aims of:

- Aberdeen – the Smarter City Vision  
*Smarter Environment (Natural resource)*  
*Smarter Living (Quality of Life)*
- Strategic Infrastructure Plan
- Powering Aberdeen
- Energy Management Service Plan

### **Public –**

This report would likely to be of interest to the public in general and specifically for the community in Torry as the heat network will be developed in Torry, initially identified as Phase 1, and eventually expand to most of Torry in future phases.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Risk level</b>	<b>Mitigation/Control</b>
Unsuccessful appointment of technical consultants	Low	Ensure that procurement description for the service required is clear and budget is allocated. The brief for the scope of works has to be clear.
Council unable to secure the funds for building the heat network.	Medium	Ensure that the report findings from the appointed technical consultants are robust and are of an Investment Grade Business Case standard. This report should be scrutinised by senior level officers in Finance and Procurement. Project Lead to ensure that all relevant information is provided.
Issues with the physical route for the proposed heat network, including technical constraints by existing infrastructure such as roads and buildings.	Medium	The route for the heat network needs to be technically viable on all aspects. Ensure that appropriate council officers from Roads, Planning and building control are consulted at early design stage
The build of the EFW plant not going ahead as scheduled.	Medium	There are still ongoing discussions and agreements to be finalised before the EFW is built. Ensure that the relevant council officers are consulted and briefed on the outcome of the findings.

## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Review of Energy from Waste Business Case – Zero Waste Sub Committee report 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015 ref ZWSC/7602
- Powering Aberdeen: Aberdeen's Sustainable Energy Action Plan

[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/council\\_government/shaping\\_aberdeens/SustainableEnergyActionPlan.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/council_government/shaping_aberdeens/SustainableEnergyActionPlan.asp)

## 9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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