

Public Document Pack

THIRD ADDITIONAL CIRCULATION



To: Councillor Wheeler, Convener; Councillor Bell and Graham, Vice Convener; and Councillors Cormie, Delaney, Lesley Dunbar, Jackie Dunbar, Henrickson, Lumsden, Macdonald, McLellan, Jennifer Stewart, the Depute Provost and Townson.

Town House,
ABERDEEN 16 May 2019

OPERATIONAL DELIVERY COMMITTEE

The undernoted items are circulated in connection with the meeting of the **OPERATIONAL DELIVERY COMMITTEE** to be held here in the Town House on **THURSDAY, 16 MAY 2019 at 2.00 pm.**

FRASER BELL
CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE

B U S I N E S S

GENERAL BUSINESS

- 10.8 Review of Broad Street Partial Pedestrianisation Including Safety Review - PLA/19/088 (Pages 3 - 38)

These documents were previously circulated as Exempt appendices and have now been made public.

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Lynsey McBain on 01224 522123 or email lymcbain@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Community Links Project Review

Review of projects:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 2016-17 project: | |
| ACC-TS1617-CL-2243/886 | Part-pedestrianisation of Broad Street |
| 2017-18 projects: | |
| ACC-TS1718-CL-2331/1699 | Part-pedestrianisation of Broad Street |
| ACC-TS1718-CL-2331/1190 | Part-pedestrianisation of Broad Street: Totem Creation and Installation |



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1 Introduction

Who we are

Sustrans is the charity that makes it easier for people to walk and cycle. We are engineers and educators, experts and advocates. We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

Sustrans works in partnership, bringing people together to find the right solutions. We make the case for walking and cycling by using robust evidence and showing what can be done. We are grounded in communities and believe that grassroots support combined with political leadership drives real change, fast.

Sustrans Scotland provides advice, support and funding for the creation of infrastructure that makes it easier for people to walk and cycle for everyday journeys. Funded by Transport Scotland, through the Scottish Government's for Government 2017-18, the active travel budget has been doubled to £80 million per year, from 2018-19. This means we can better support projects that make our towns and cities friendlier and safer places for people to walk and cycle.

Our partnership programmes

In March 2019 Sustrans Scotland's **Community Links** Programme was redesigned to become **Places for Everyone**.

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/places-for-everyone>

Aims - Community Links Programme 2016-17:

- Create infrastructure that encourages people to cycle, walk or use another active travel mode as their preferred mode of travel for **everyday journeys**
- Meet the needs of **communities** – provide communities with the opportunity to shape their local environment and link the places people live in with the places they want to get to
- Encourage **innovation** – support partner organisations in raising the standard of infrastructure for walking and cycling in Scotland
- Encourage **placemaking** which facilitates greater use of public space and higher levels of active travel
- Create an **enabling environment** for active travel

The aim of **Places for Everyone** is to create safe, attractive, healthier places by increasing the number of trips made by walking, cycling and wheeling for everyday journeys.

We have developed **six design principles** which ensure that **Places for Everyone** projects meet the overall aim.

1. Develop ideas collaboratively and in partnership with communities.
2. Facilitate independent walking, cycling, and wheeling for everyone, including an unaccompanied 12-year old.
3. Design places that provide enjoyment, comfort and protection.
4. Ensure access for all and equality of opportunity in public space.
5. Ensure all proposals are developed in a way that is context-specific and evidence-led.
6. Reallocate road space, and restrict motor traffic permeability to prioritise people walking, cycling and wheeling over private motor vehicles.

Awarded projects

In 2016-17 and 2017-18 Aberdeen City Council (ACC) was awarded funding from Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Programme for the **Part-pedestrianisation of Broad Street** project. We provided design support and £1.1m in first year and £408,000 in the second, to contribute to the design and construction of the £3.5m project.

Additionally, ACC was awarded Community Links funding for the **Part-pedestrianisation of Broad Street Totem Creation and Installation** project. We provided design support, finalist selection panel input, and an award of £9,000. This project demonstrated additional partner collaboration in that a project partner was North East Scotland College (NESCol), which provided the students an opportunity to shape their local environment.

2 Purpose of this document

2.1 Invitation to review, surveys' overview

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) invited Sustrans Scotland to contribute to their review of the space, now that the project has bedded in, and following Sustrans' new position on shared space and people-prioritised streets and places, published in June 2018.

ACC invited Sustrans to review a number of topics and make recommendations to improve the projects. Furthermore, ACC requested Sustrans respond to four options which are being considered to possibly change the project.

This review is to be read in conjunction with results of Sustrans' Research and Monitoring Unit's (RMU) surveys undertaken in Broad St and the surrounding streets: the Placemaking Survey; and the Retail vitality Survey. The data from these surveys will be provided later than this document, as agreed between ACC and Sustrans RMU.

ACC are analysing results of a motor vehicle speed and flow survey on Upperkirkgate and Gallowgate. This review should be read in conjunction with that analysis. Finally, the results of this review and the RMU surveys, are to be read in conjunction with ACC's online public consultation, which ran until Friday 12th April 2019 at <https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/>

2.2 Preface of review

We recommend that the projects' initial Equality Impact Assessments are reviewed, and re-conducted, to inform any consideration to changes to the project and reasonable adjustments are made.

We recommend further engagement with:

- retailers nearby the project site;
- people with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act and;
- seldom heard groups.

3 Our position on shared space and people-prioritised streets and places

Sustrans published a new position on shared space and people-prioritised streets in June 2018. Since the publication of this position, we understand that ACC have been considering the next steps (if any) for the project, and how the public and media view shared space and indeed how Broad St is viewed.

Shared space is an approach to the design of streets and public spaces, but by June 2018 came to be associated with street layouts that put people and vehicles in the same space^{1, 2}. We think we should move beyond the term shared space. It incorrectly implies that motor vehicles can freely and safely mix with people walking and on cycles. We believe that people-prioritised streets and places is a better approach. People-prioritised streets and places put the needs of people first. It is important to reiterate that the term shared space means different things in different contexts. The meaning which is attached to proposing a space as shared, or labelling a built space is shared can vary considerably so caution is advised.

Sustrans Scotland sees Broad St as a space which does not put people and (private) vehicles in the same space, so should be proud of the project's major positive impact on an important city centre street of Aberdeen. We see the project successfully prioritising people, but acknowledge that improvements could be made to enhance priority. The project removed private motor vehicles from Broad St, and we have seen a very successful engagement and training programme in partnership with bus operators, meaning buses on Broad St are giving priority to vulnerable road users, and travelling at approximately five miles per hour. We expect that our RMU survey results will show that people find the space much more attractive than prior to the redevelopment project.

The space allows for people using bicycles to use the carriageway shared with buses, as well as a redetermination order allowing people using bicycles to share the footway with people walking and wheeling.

Our position on shared space and people-prioritised streets and places can be read at below URL, and includes references.

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-position/shared-space-and-people-prioritised-streets-and-places>

4 Site images

4.1 Before Images

R: Junction of Gallowgate, Upperkirkgate and Broad St, taken from Broad St



L: North end of Broad St, from near junction of Upperkirkgate

R: View of most of length of Broad St, taken from near junction of Union St



4.2 After Images

R: North end of Broad St



L: North end of Broad St, from junction of Queen St

R: South end of Broad St, from junction of Union St



L: Junction of Gallowgate, Upperkirkgate and Broad St, taken from Broad St

5 Aims of awarded projects

5.1 Part-pedestrianisation of Broad Street

5.1.1 Aims - overview

The aims of the project (ACC-TS1617-CL-2243/886) awarded Community Links in 2016-17, and continued into the 2017-18 project (ACC-TS1718-CL-2331/1699) were as follows. The project sought:

- to create a much more pedestrian and cycle-friendly environment in the City Centre
- the removal of general traffic from, and the creation of, a shared surface for pedestrians, cyclists and buses on, Broad St
- to create 6m wide 'carriageway' for buses and cyclists (delineated by different surface materials) with much of the original carriageway being transformed into the pedestrianised area
- to relocate bus stops from opposite Marischal College 100m to outside the Town House, and a specific layby created one way, and bus shelters provided
- junction improvements at Upperkirkgate/Gallowgate to a 'Poynton Style' junction to slow down and control traffic with narrowed carriageways and a central 'strip'
- traffic lights removed to improve the pedestrian and cyclist crossing experience
- a new toucan crossing to be located opposite the Broad St/Union St junction to facilitate cycle journeys down Ship Row
- pedestrianised space to include landscaping, seating, lighting, cycle racks, a cycle hub (in the future) and event space
- a redetermination order to allow cyclists to use the entire area.

5.1.2 Review of aims

In its delivery, we view that the project achieved all of the aims. Two points require further discussion: connections from Broad St and Union St junction to Ship Row and beyond; and the impact of the project area being used as an event space. These two points are discussed in sections 8.1.1 and 8.1.2.

5.2 Part-pedestrianisation of Broad Street: Totem Creation and Installation

5.2.1 Aims - overview

The aim of the project (ACC-TS1718-CL-2331/1190) awarded Community Links in 2017-18, was to represent one of the final elements in achieving a shared space, and was to install totem gateway features on Upperkirkgate and Gallowgate, and on Broad St near the junction of Queen St.

Installing the totem gateway features was to indicate a changed space; changed from a traditional carriageway layout, to a space where people move and linger and enjoy the area, and where motor vehicles no longer had priority. The installation of the totem gateways sought to make people driving motor vehicles understand the nature of the public realm and choose to reduce the speed they were driving through the space. Reduced motor vehicle speeds would have, in turn, made the space more attractive, safer and healthier place, therefore encouraging more people to use the space, either lingering or by travelling actively in the space. The totem gateway features were to be supplied with electricity and lit, and be placed in four locations: one on Gallowgate, one on Upperkirkgate and two on Broad St, near the junction of Queen St, as per designs agreed 10356-L(94)001_F and 10356-L(94)002_F.

ACC engaged North East Scotland College (NESCol) to create the totem gateway features. HND Art and Design students researched local history for inspiration and created four differing designs. Later Fabrication and Welding students turned the designs into 1.5m high totem gateway features. Later the totems produced by NESCol were deemed by ACC to be inappropriate for the four agreed locations. Agreement is still yet to be reached to find alternative locations for the NESCol totems.

5.2.2 Review of aims

In its delivery, we view that the project has not achieved its aims.

We acknowledge, that should ACC determine to implement material changes to the project, there will be an impact on this particular component of the project. Further review here should be read as if no changes are made to space.

ACC have, in place of totem gateway features, installed traditional carriageway signage, TSRGD diagram 610 on traffic bollards, which contributes to the space having a traditional carriageway feel. We require that appropriate totem gateway features are designed and installed as per originally agreed designs and funded project. We recommend the currently-installed traditional carriageway signage is removed.

We acknowledge that the totem gateway features originally created by the NESCol in 2018 may not be the most appropriate for the sites, however, we recommend that a clear brief is set before new, appropriate, totem gateway features are created for the project. We recommend that the totems originally created by NESCol are utilised in this space, or another prominent city centre location, to showcase the work of the students and to exhibit the partnership between ACC, Sustrans, and NESCol.

ACC is analysing results of a Gallowgate and Upperkirkgate motor vehicle speed and flow survey, which we recommend are considered alongside one of the project's original aims **make people driving motor vehicles understand the nature of the public realm and choose to reduce the speed they were driving through the space**. Considering the two together may inform the new totem design.



Above: Looking towards junction of Broad St and Gallowgate, taken from Upperkirkgate.

6 Placemaking Survey

Data from RMU to ACC later than this review, as agreed.

Please note, these surveys record the type of data covered by the city-wide Sustrans Bike Life methodology, an assessment of city cycling development, including infrastructure, travel behaviour, satisfaction, the impact of cycling, and new initiatives. Bike Life is vastly more robust than these two reviews for Broad St. ACC has not yet chosen to utilise Bike Life.

Bike Life was initially launched in 2015 and is the UK's biggest assessment of cycling in our cities. More at this URL: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/bikelife>

In 2019 in Scotland Bike Life will be produced by Sustrans for Perth, Stirling, Inverness, Dundee, Renfrewshire, Edinburgh and Glasgow. This year will see the production of the 3rd annual Bike Life report for Edinburgh.

RMU's March/April 2019 surveys at Broad St reflect the impact of a specific intervention, whereas Bike Life provides insightful and more robust information in relation to changes seen across the city. RMU's evaluation of Broad St was micro and place-specific, whilst more directly relatable, is susceptible to lower reliability than Bike Life.

We would welcome Aberdeen City Council joining the above Scottish cities, and indeed cities UK-wide, for Bike Life in 2020.

7 Retail vitality Survey

Data from RMU to ACC later than this review, as agreed.

8 Our review

Please note, the comments in this section review the project as it is on the site currently, and does not take into account the four potential options ACC has put forward to Sustrans to consider. Those options are considered in section 9.

8.1 Infrastructure

Reallocation of road space

Excluding private motor vehicles from Broad St between Gallowgate and Queen St, has had a very positive impact on the space. It aligns with our design principle 6, **reallocate road space, and restrict motor traffic permeability to prioritise people walking, cycling and wheeling over private motor vehicles.**

Delineation between carriageway and footway

Currently Broad St has a 10mm upstand, while Sustrans now generally suggests minimum 60mm upstand between carriageway and footway. This is following renewed engagement between Sustrans and visually impaired groups.

We note that textured setts are present delineating between carriageway and footway for much of, but not all of the project area (for example on Gallowgate and Upperkirkgate).

It is noted that there are points where tactiles are adjacent to the carriageway, however there is not an obvious colour change to delineate crossings. Sustrans would generally suggest clear delineation for crossing points using tactiles of a contrasting colour.

We note that route legibility may be compromised at the project site, and recommend this is evaluated.

Width of carriageway at south of Broad St

8.9m width is not best practice when designing people-prioritised streets, as the crossing time is increased for people walking or wheeling through the space. Consider reducing width of carriageway.

Shared footway by bus shelters

The footways are too narrow to be shared by people walking and wheeling and cycling and waiting for buses in this busy urban environment. The shared footways at the project site are generally 3.2 – 3.5m wide, however there is a narrow point of only 2.35m.

We recommend eliminating this pinch point by providing on-carriageway cycling space which (our design principle 2) **facilitates independent walking, cycling, and wheeling for everyone, including an unaccompanied 12-year old.**

In addition, Sustrans Scotland now recommends as a default position that people on foot and those on bike do not share footways (pavements beside a carriageway) in urban settings.

Public use of space

Note that Sustrans RMU’s Placemaking survey data, and ACC’s online public consultation data will provide review of how the public are using and viewing the space (see section 6).

It is positive that some benches have been included in the space and we recommend providing further opportunities for sitting which will animate the space, and explore outdoor dining options.

Some Sustrans staff have observed people using the space in a manner which suggests users are unclear of who has priority (for example, such as in image below). Similarly, we expect the results from the online public consultation, and the RMU surveys to show that there is some lack of understanding regarding which users have priority and where, at the project site. Perhaps there is a limited understanding by the public of the transport hierarchy. We recommend that ACC undertake a thorough community education campaign to support the public celebrate and understand the space. A robust and full campaign would require investment of time and resources to be effective. ACC may consider focusing the community education campaign on all of the City Centre Master Plan’s transport projects.



Above: A member of the public running across the pedestrianised roundel at the north end of the project site.

8.1.1 Connections for people using bicycles

The full success of the redevelopment of Broad St will not be seen in terms of encouraging people to choose using a bicycle, until route legibility is provided and the connections to the project area are addressed. There are opportunities to collaborate with Sustrans to consider re-routing the National Cycle Network along Broad St and Union St.

Simple interventions are recommended at Ship Row to increase connectivity to and from Broad St, therefore making cycling a more attractive option for people.

Kerbs

Currently when people using bicycles seek to connect between Broad St and Ship Row, they are met with full height kerbs. The current dropped kerb provision is not adequate to cater for the volume of people walking, wheeling and cycling, and the potential future volume, therefore is not encouraging people to walk, wheel and cycle at the project area or in the city centre.

The current layout can be seen from the images below. The kerbs do not reflect those in agreed drawing no. 115648-1102-F. Dropped kerbs (flush $\pm 6\text{mm}$) must be introduced for the width of Ship Row.

Location of bin

The bin must be relocated to provide clear access between Ship Row and Broad St via Union St. Bin is not included in the agreed drawing 115648-1101-F.



L: Bin should be relocated from here

L: Junction of Union St and Ship Row, taken from Union St. Current kerbs should be replaced with dropped kerbs (flush $\pm 6\text{mm}$) whole width of Ship Row, between arrows.

Signage discouraging using bicycles

On Ship Row, approaching Union St, it is required to remove:

- “End of Cycle Route” sign
- “Cyclists dismount” sign
- mount pole

See agreed drawing no. 115648-1101-F

Wayfinding totem

Note in below image, wayfinding totem, this adds to the sense that people walking, cycling and wheeling are welcomed and catered for in Aberdeen’s City Centre.

Below: Junction of Broad St, Union St, Ship Row, taken from Ship Row.



8.1.2 Event space and impact

Sustrans Scotland highly values the civic life which is given a platform to flourish when Broad St is used for public events, such as the Winter Festival. We support and encourage placemaking which promotes greater use of public space. However, we understand that the space has excluded the through-movement of people using bicycles when events have been taking place. Furthermore we understand that the space has also excluded the through-movement of people using bicycles when events have been in place, but closed to public attendance at certain times of day.

Comment for ACC - please confirm if this was the case during previous events, such as the 2018 Winter Festival.

Projects we support and provide funding for must be continually open for people walking, wheeling, and cycling. Requesting a person using a bicycle to dismount breaks the comfort and attractiveness of a route, excludes those who can cycle but struggle to walk. If it is not possible to keep a project open (for example for site maintenance), we expect that high-quality diversion route is provided both user groups.

8.2 Green Infrastructure

Tree planters

We note that the soil has been colonised by weeds, and most planters have been used in place of litter bins to deposit cigarette ends. We note that the planters are quite brutal in colour in the grey space, especially when planting is not in leaf.

We recommend that weeds are cleared, and at a minimum, finish with mulch to suppress weeds. Consider introducing low-level planting, which can provide colour, texture, interest, biodiversity benefits, and may discourage them being used as bins. We understand that while the birch trees are multi-stem and are likely to spread out, the surrounding soils should be planted up, preferably with native species and possibly similar to that seen in planters outside the Marriot hotel nearby.

Pit planted trees

We recommend the dead cherry tree is replaced with a new specimen tree at the earliest opportunity, to ensure comparable consistency and size in trees for structure of space. Consider mitigating risk that trees could be easily broken, due to girth of stems.

Raised planter with grass

It is understood that the raised planter has been designed to support outdoor events. However for pocket greenspaces such as this, Sustrans suggests consideration is given to enhancing the space with additional landscaping elements which are more exciting, structural, colourful and innovative, and better for biodiversity.

We suggest considering dedicating some of the available space to a pocket perennial wildflower meadow ideally, otherwise, perhaps planted with some structural herbaceous planting, such as that proposed for the tree planters above. Some of the short cropped sward could be retained to still provide opportunities for people to sit and enjoy the space in good weather.

There is evidence that the grass planter is used by dog walkers (urine-scorched grass and dog waste), which is likely to discourage other potential users. We recommend discouraging dog walkers from leaving dog litter on site; and clean site of dog litter daily (at minimum).



Above L: Healthy cherry tree with blossom and leaves
Above centre: A dead cherry tree which needs replaced
Above R: Weeds, and litter deposited in the planter



L: A raised planter with species-poor grass sward

9 Options - material changes to project

Sustrans Scotland's legal agreement with all recipients of a Community Links award includes a clause binding the recipient to maintain the projects to a high functional quality for at least 15 years; and a clause binding a partner if a project is removed within a period of fifteen years of this agreement, all funding will be returned to Sustrans. However, where Sustrans Scotland and the partner agree in writing to changes to a project, it can be agreed that those clauses do not apply.

9.1 Request from ACC to review options

ACC have advised that options for possible changes to the project are being explored. ACC have asked Sustrans Scotland to advise our position, should these changes be implemented.

Please note, we provide review below to the four options, however the review comments below should not be viewed as agreement to changes, but the beginning of discussion to consider, and possible support to implement one or more option.

Review is provided by relating the options to Sustrans Scotland's design principles, published in March 2019. The principles can be found in section 1. Please note, review comments below pertain to each option in isolation. We understand ACC may determine to implement a combination of options, in which case we would seek to collaborate with ACC on various options/combinations. We suggest ACC explores detail of options further via Places for Everyone.

Note, the terminology for the four options has been provided by Aberdeen City Council.

9.2 The four options

9.2.1 Fully pedestrianise Broad St (removing buses)

From the above, we understand that ACC is considering excluding buses from Broad St, meaning all motorised vehicles would be excluded from the space. We understand that ACC would continue to allow people walking, cycling and wheeling, and review below pertains to that understanding.

We see that this option particularly aligns with our design principle 6, **reallocate road space, and restrict motor traffic permeability to prioritise people walking, cycling and wheeling over private motor vehicles**, and therefore suggest that this option would be supported by Sustrans.

Consideration would need to be given to impact on bus network, journey times, travel time, emissions, and attractiveness for public to use bus service. We would seek to collaborate with ACC if this option is considered. We suggest ACC explores this option via Places for Everyone.

9.2.2 Remove vehicle traffic from Upperkirkgate/Gallowgate (buses remain)

From the above, we understand that ACC is considering excluding all motor vehicles except buses from Upperkirkgate/Gallowgate. We understand that ACC would continue to allow people walking, cycling and wheeling, and review below pertains to that understanding.

This option particularly aligns with our design principle 6, **reallocate road space, and restrict motor traffic permeability to prioritise people walking, cycling and wheeling over private motor vehicles**, and therefore suggest that this option would be supported by Sustrans.

We see this option may have a substantial positive impact on the nearby walking and cycling network to achieve safer, more attractive, and healthier places. We would seek to collaborate with ACC if this option is considered, we suggest via Places for Everyone.

9.2.3 Install Crossing Points at Upperkirkgate/Gallowgate

From the above, we understand that ACC is considering changing the current crossing provision on Upperkirkgate/Gallowgate.

This option may align with our design principles. We would seek to collaborate with ACC if this option is considered. Please note, our view of this option is entirely dependent on the way forward with ACC’s option 2. Furthermore, our support of this option would also be entirely dependent on the type of crossing sought. We encourage ACC to utilise Sustrans support to consider various crossing options. We suggest ACC explores this option via Places for Everyone.

9.2.4 Remove redetermination order for cyclists on footways

From the above, we understand that ACC is considering removing the order which allows people walking, cycling and wheeling to use the shared footway. We understand this change would provide a protected space for people to walk and wheel, but are unclear what provision would be given to people cycling. We are unclear if the removal is being considered only on Broad St (between Queen St and Gallowgate); or also at the junction of Union St and Ship Row.

Should this be introduced, careful consideration must be given to the provision for people cycling. We encourage ACC to utilise Sustrans support to consider this option, and we would seek to collaborate with ACC if this option is considered. We suggest ACC explores this option via Places for Everyone.



L: current setts on Broad St of TSRGD Diagram 956. ACC may consider replacing these with symbols depicting people, if shared footway is removed.

10 Summary of recommendations

Sustrans Scotland sees the project to be a hugely positive change to Aberdeen's City Centre. It prioritises people, and creates a much more pedestrian and cycle-friendly environment. The value of removing (or restricting) motor vehicles, which has been achieved at the project site, cannot be overstated for creating safe, attractive, healthier places by increasing the number of trips made by walking, cycling and wheeling for everyday journeys.

Please again note, that the recommendations in this review are without the benefit of the results of the four studies mentioned in section 2.1

We expect that the results of the three surveys/consultations will show that most people feel the project hugely improved the space, and they feel comfortable in the space. We also expect that the results will show that there is some perception in the public that the space is confusing and unclear when it comes to priority of various road user groups. We expect we will see suggestions for changes to the project site also.

Without these results, at this time we do not ask for or require large-scale changes to the project area, however, as referenced in section 2.2 we recommend that the projects' initial Equality Impact Assessments are reviewed, and re-conducted, to inform any consideration to changes to the project. We recommend further engagement with:

- retailers nearby the project site;
- people with protected characteristics in the Equality Act and;
- seldom-heard groups.

We recommend all reasonable adjustments should be made, following robust review of, and engagement, as noted above.

Furthermore, we encourage ACC to continue to work with Sustrans to develop plans and bring forward other projects in the city centre and creating safe, attractive, healthier places by increasing the number of trips made by walking, cycling and wheeling for everyday journeys.

In the table below, please find a summary of changes required; changes recommended; and changes we suggest consideration of.

We understand that ACC are considering options, to make changes to the project area. Within this review we have suggested how Sustrans may support various changes, and we encourage ACC to utilise Sustrans support to consider various options in greater detail, via Places for Everyone. We recommend that ACC develop any options to change the project in a way that is **context-specific and evidence-led** (our design principle 5).

10.1 Recommendation references

Outstanding requirements

| Item | Reference |
|--|-----------|
| Appropriate totem gateway features are designed and installed as per originally agreed designs | 5.2.2 |
| Currently-installed traditional carriageway signage is removed | 5.2.2 |
| Utilise the totems which NESCol students have already created here or other prominent city-centre location | 5.2.2 |
| Evaluate results of Gallowgate and Upperkirkgate motor vehicle speed and flow survey, alongside original project's aims | 5.2.2 |
| | |
| Dropped kerbs (flush $\pm 6\text{mm}$) must be introduced for the width of Ship Row | 8.1.1 |
| Bin must be relocated | 8.1.1 |
| Remove: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ““End of Cycle Route” sign • “Cyclists dismount” sign • mount pole | 8.1.1 |
| Projects we support and provide funding for must be continually open for people walking, wheeling, and cycling; including during events | 8.1.2 |

Recommendations

| Item | Reference |
|---|-----------|
| Review two projects' initial EqIAs, and re-conduct them. Ensure each recommendation/consideration below is included in an EqIA and reasonable adjustments made | 2.2 |
| Engage further with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retailers nearby the project site • people with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act and • seldom heard groups | 2.2 |
| Further use Sustrans RMU surveying by utilising Bike Life | 6 |
| Eliminate pinch point of 2.35m on south of Broad St, by providing on-carriageway cycling space | 8.1 |
| Provide further opportunities for sitting in the project area | 8.1 |
| Undertake a thorough community education campaign | |
| Delineate between carriageway and footway, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60mm upstand • textured setts • tactiles • legibility of route | 8.1 |
| Weeds are cleared from planters | 8.2 |
| At a minimum, finish with mulch to suppress weeds, or consider introducing low-level planting | 8.2 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Replace dead cherry tree | 8.2 |
| Discourage dog walkers from leaving litter | 8.2 |
| Clean site of dog litter daily (at minimum) | 8.2 |
| Use Places for Everyone to explore one, or some, or all four options to change the project site consider or recommend? | 9.2 |

Considerations

| Item | Reference |
|--|-----------|
| Reduce width of carriageway at south of Broad St | 6 |
| Mitigate risk of trees easily being broken | 8.2 |
| Dedicate some space to a pocket perennial wildflower meadow, or structural herbaceous planting | 8.2 |

.....

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle. We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

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VAT Registration No. 416740656

Aberdeen - Broad Street

Post construction monitoring report

April 2019



| | | |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Circulation status: | External – Public | |
| Current status | Final | |
| Date issued: | Wednesday 15 May 2019 | |
| Quality Assured: | Martin Laban – Evaluation Manager Jack Clarkson – Senior Evaluation Officer | |
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About Sustrans

Sustrans makes smarter travel choices possible, desirable and inevitable. We're a leading UK charity enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. We work with families, communities, policy-makers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.

It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today. www.sustrans.org.uk

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1 Introduction

Sustrans' Research and Monitoring Unit (RMU) undertook post construction monitoring in March/April 2019 to evaluate the new developments on Broad Street, Aberdeen. This report provides a short overview of the project, outlines the monitoring conducted, and presents initial findings. The report should be read in conjunction with 'Sustrans Review CL Project Broad St Aberdeen 2019 Apr' produced by Sustrans' Community Links project team.

1.1 Broad Street

The part-pedestrianisation of Broad Street was one of the first projects from Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan¹ (2015) which sought to create a more pedestrian and cycle-friendly environment in the city centre. The project's main aim was to make Broad Street open to buses, cycles and pedestrians only. The project has seen the removal of general traffic from Broad Street and the creation of shared space for pedestrians, cyclists and buses. In addition to a reprioritisation of the transport hierarchy², public realm improvements to Broad Street have included a roundel to replace the existing traffic lights at the Gallowgate / Broad Street / Upperkirkgate junction, raised grass planter, a water fountain and trees. A redetermination order has been approved to allow cyclists to use the entire area. The space is now also utilised for events.

Before



After



1.2 Community Links

The Broad Street developments are part of the Community Links programme, which has the following objectives³:

- Create infrastructure that encourages people to cycle, walk or use another **active travel** mode as their preferred mode of travel for everyday journeys
- Meet the needs of **communities**: provide communities with the opportunity to shape their local environment and link the places people live in with the places they want to get to
- Encourage **innovation**: support partner organisations in raising the standard of infrastructure for walking and cycling in Scotland

¹ <https://aberdeencitycentremasterplan.com/>

² <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/active-travel/walking-and-cycling-developing-an-active-nation/sustainable-travel-and-the-national-transport-strategy/>

³ https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/file_content_type/community_links_guidance_2018_0.pdf

- Encourage **placemaking** which facilitates greater use of public space and higher levels of active travel
- Create an **enabling** environment for active travel that limits the speed and volume of motorised vehicles while improving the walking and cycling experience, such as traffic calming measures and implementing filtered permeability

To complement the objectives of Community Links, Aberdeen City Council had the following specific aims for the Broad Street project:

- Greater footfall leading to an increase business sales
- Increase in visitor numbers
- Health benefits as a result of increasing number of journeys made on foot or bike
- Increase in journeys made on foot or by bicycle
- Makes active travel more attractive resulting in more people cycling and walking
- Promotes healthy living across the city
- Changes in perception amongst local people and visitors
- Increased civic pride
- Improved community safety
- Increased number of green space and trees within the city centre
- Increased street cleanliness
- Opportunity for innovative and entertaining landscape feature, art and lighting
- Helps deliver the agreed vision of the masterplan
- Improved perception amongst investors
- Increased investor confidence
- Increase in visitor spend
- Increased sense of community through gathering in new civic spaces
- Significantly improving the setting of Marischal College
- Setting an entrance to the City Centre Masterplan Queen Square area
- Reduction in car use and associated drop in carbon emissions
- 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
- Can control how long buses wait in the area
- Supports aim to reduce cross city centre journeys
- Likely to contribute to localised air quality improvements
- Improved bus journey times and reliability

1.3 Monitoring

In order to evaluate the project a mixed method approach was used to gauge both usage and stakeholder's evaluation of the project area. The three monitoring tools outlined below used a combination of observation and surveying stakeholders through closed questionnaires with some free texts questions.

- A video manual count of active travel movements
- An on-street survey about travel behaviour and usage of the project area
- A retailer survey about customer/employee travel behaviour and usage of the project area

This report presents the findings from the three monitoring tools, highlighting how the street is being used, who by, people’s perceptions of the changes, and their thoughts on those changes.

The monitoring is post construction only, as such a direct comparison from before the project cannot be made, however both surveys asked retrospective questions and is useful for understanding current usage and users views of the project area.

2 Video Manual Count

Counts of active travel users were undertaken over four days at the north end of Broad Street. The counts took place from 7am-7pm on three weekdays (26th, 27th and 28th of March) and one weekend day (30th of March) during term time, providing 48 hours coverage over the period.

Due to the width of the project area, a screen line count was used and capture movements by video camera. The counts recorded mode of travel (pedestrian, cyclist, wheelchair, jogger, pram or other) and direction of travel (northbound or southbound). As this is a screen line count, values are reported as movements instead of journeys, trips or people, as it is unclear how many times a person may cross the line during any given journey. The weather during the count was predominantly cold and mostly dry, though some rain was observed on Saturday between 7am-10am. No large scale events were observed and usage is considered to be typical.

Figure 2-1 – Screen line video manual count Broad Street

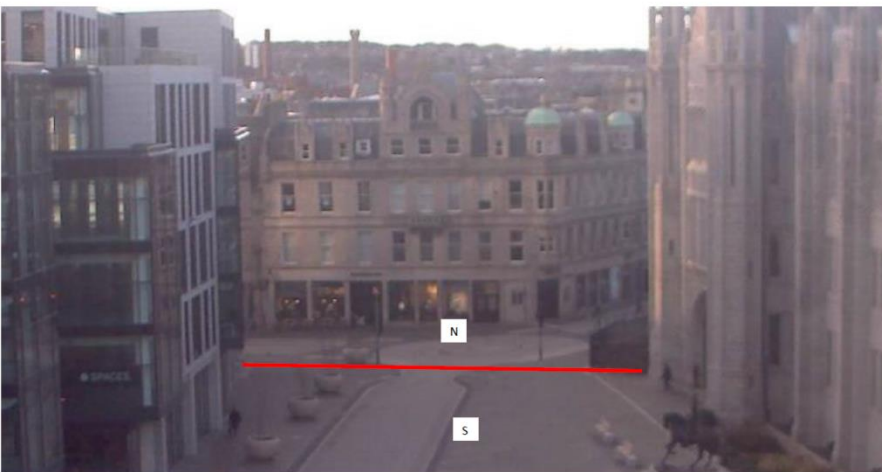


Table 2-1 – Daily average total of all active travel users between 7am-7pm

| | AVERAGE | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | SATURDAY |
|--------------------|---------|---------|-----------|----------|----------|
| DAILY usage | 5,485 | 5,475 | 6,223 | 6,230 | 4,013 |

As shown in Table 2-1, the average total number of movements made through Broad Street by active travel users between 7am and 7pm was 5,485.

Usage varied by 2,210 movements between the days, with weekdays providing higher footfall than the weekend. The reason for the variation is unclear as it could reflect how the space is used but also be related to the rain on Saturday morning.

Figure 2-2 shows the peak usage on an average weekday was between 12 midday and 1pm. This could be explained by lunchtime trips. There are also smaller peaks at 08:30 and 16:00, which could be explained by commuting. The weekend experiences a low count in the morning compared to weekdays and has a broad peak between 11:30 and 17:00.

In terms of directional flow, there was no significant difference between the numbers of northbound versus southbound movements when looking at all travel modes. However, when looking at just cyclists it is worth noting that 62% of movements were heading from south to north up Broad Street, compared to 38% heading north to south.

Figure 2-2 – Usage by day type over time

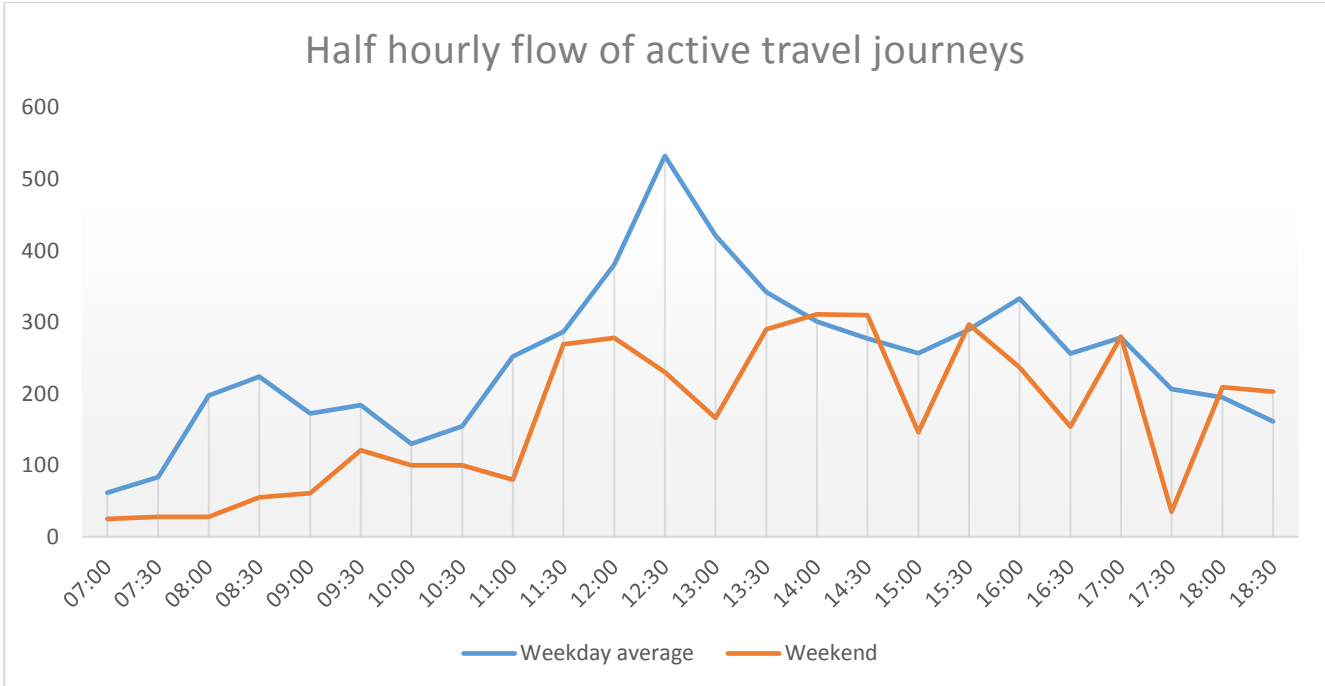
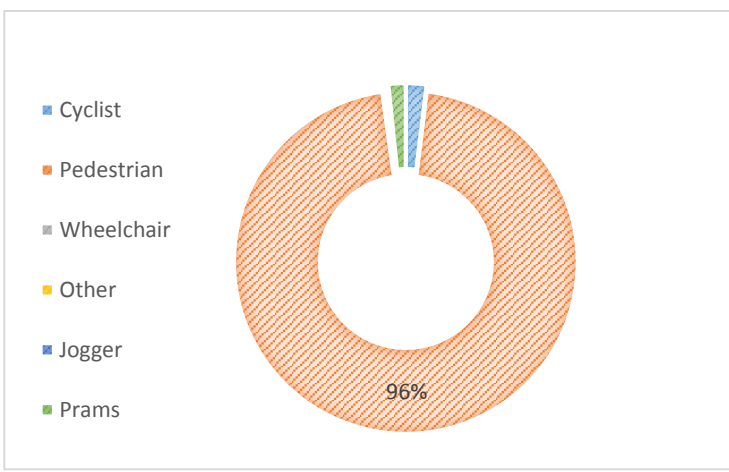


Figure 2-3 provides a breakdown of how people are travelling through the space by mode. Pedestrian movements dominates in terms of numbers, making up 96% of all movements over the four days. Cyclists represent 2% of the movements with an average of 107 per day, whilst wheelchairs (7) and joggers (16) make up less than 1% each.

Figure 2-3 Usage by active travel mode



3 On-street Survey

On-street surveys of people using the area were undertaken concurrently with the video manual count. The surveys took place from 7am-7pm on three weekdays (26th, 27th and 28th of March) and one weekend day (30th of March) during term time, providing 48 hours coverage over the period. The survey sampling methodology is to ask the next available person if they are willing to take part in the survey.

Over the four days 154 people completed surveys. The activity being undertaken by the respondent reflects the findings from the count, with walking making up 94%, followed by smaller proportions for cycling, running, dog walking and wheelchair use.

3.1 Demographics

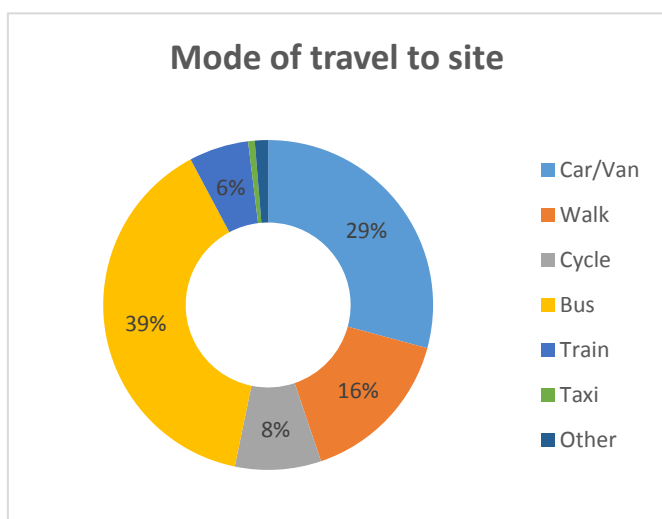
The sample of 154 people seems demographically representative of a wider population:

- Gender was split exactly 50-50 between male and female
- All age categories were represented; though over 65's were slightly overrepresented
- 27% of respondents reported themselves as having a health problem or disability
- The majority were in good health and had completed 30 minutes physical activity every day that week, but there were also respondents with fair/poor health and fewer days of exercise
- Nearly half were employed full-time, a quarter were retired, with 14% employed part-time, 9% unemployed, and a small number of carers, students and volunteers.
- 92% were White British in ethnic origin. Other ethnicities were White Irish, White Polish, White Eastern European, White other, Asian Indian, Black African, and Other ethnic group.
- The majority of respondents (64%) had been visiting Broad Street for over five years.

3.2 Usage

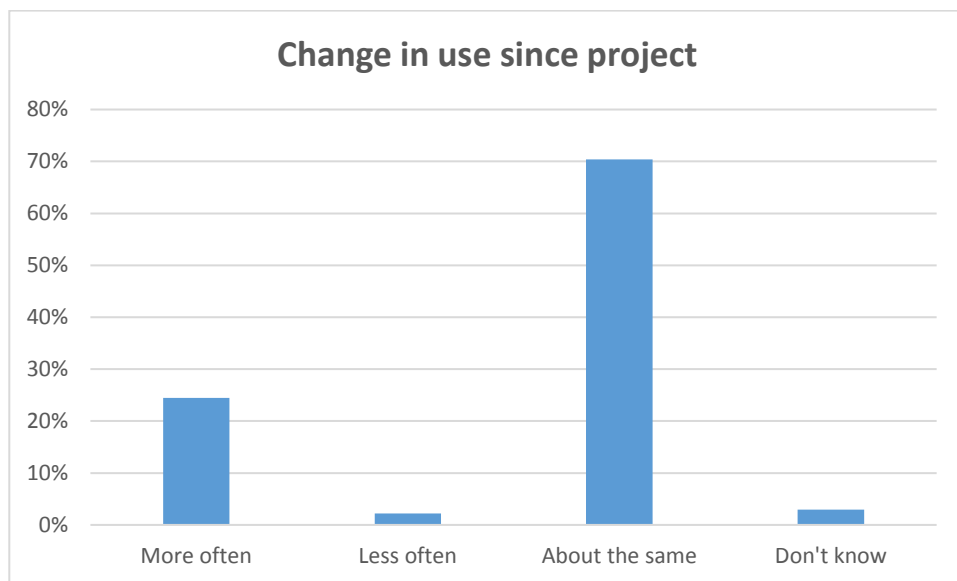
Although respondents were either walking, cycling or wheeling when surveyed, it is important to consider their wider travel journeys to get to Broad Street. A relatively even mix of respondents used private vehicles (car/van/taxi), public transport (bus/train) and active travel (walk/cycle) as their main mode of travel, as shown in Figure 3-1.

Figure 3-1 – How people travel to Broad Street



- Respondents were asked how far they had travelled before reaching Broad Street. Three quarters of people had travelled five miles or less, including one fifth of people having travelled one mile or less.

Figure 3-2 – Self-reported change in usage since the project

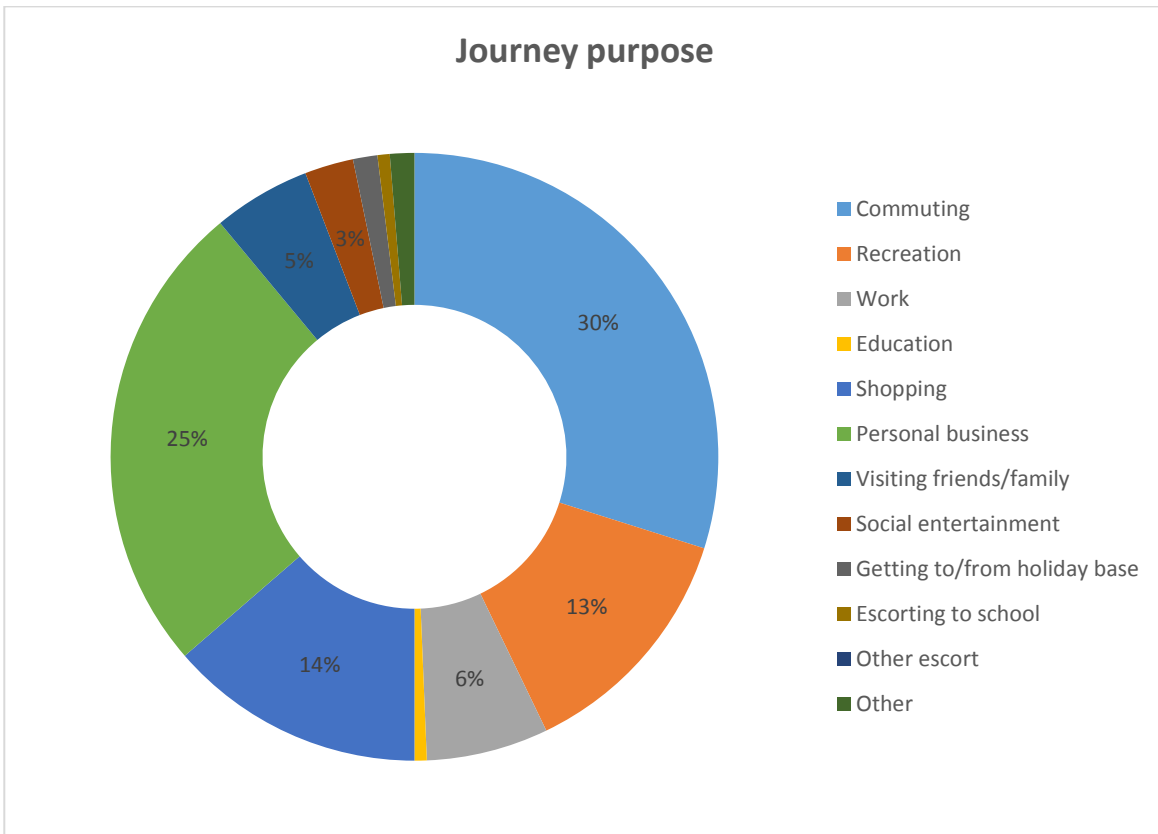


- Figure 3-2 shows the majority of people had not changed the amount they visit Broad Street as a result of the project (70%); but 24% stated they visited more often compared to 2% who stated they visited less often; giving a net gain of 22% of respondents visiting more often overall.
- Within those that had not used a car, 58% had done so simply because a car was not an option. However, 40% could have used a car but choose not to.
- 77% of respondents visit Broad Street at least once a week, with 42% stating the visit daily.

3.3 Journey purpose

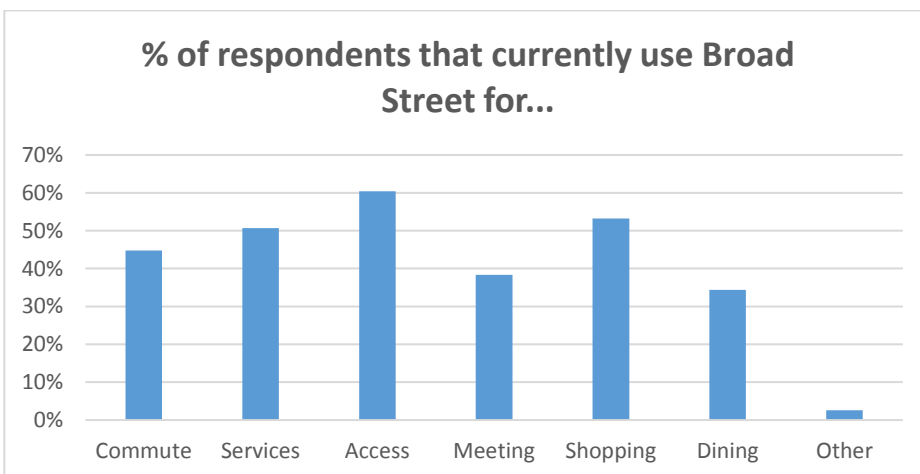
There was a wide range of trip generators and quite an even spread between the most popular ones, as shown in Figure 3-3. The two most common journey purposes were commuting (30%) and personal business (25%). As commuters are typically less likely to stop and be surveyed due to time constraints, this figure could be higher in reality. After those two journey purposes, recreation and shopping make up 13% and 14% respectively. Carrying out work and visiting friends/family contribute a further 6% and 5%. Education, social entertainment, holiday, and escorting to school were the purposes for no more than four trips each over the four days.

Figure 3-3 – Purpose of trip when surveyed



Respondents were also asked what activities they used Broad Street for. Figure 3-4 shows people use Broad Street for more than a single purpose, with the average number of activities per respondent being 2.8.

Figure 3-4 – Proportion of users by activity



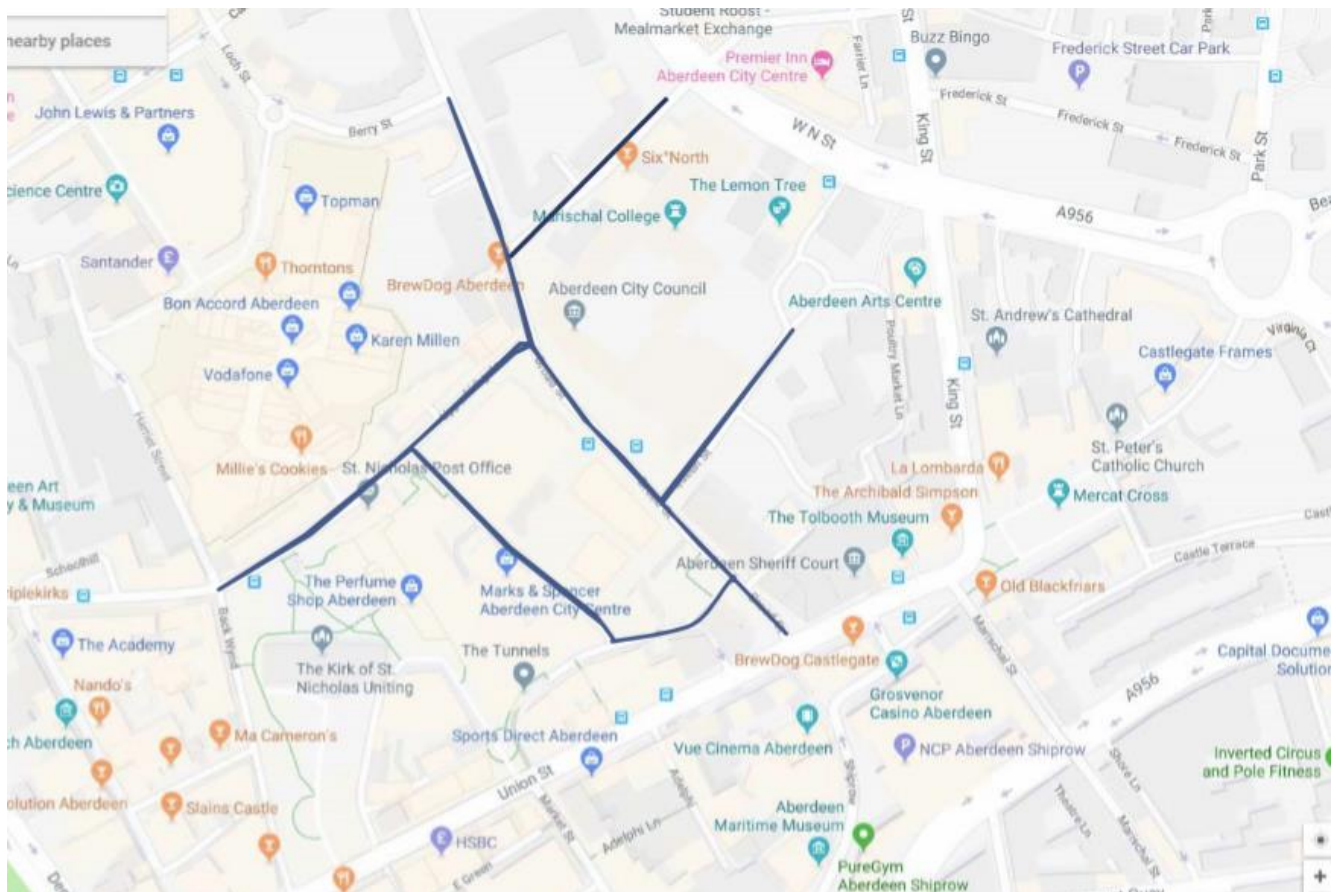
3.4 Impact of project

- The vast majority of respondents were aware of the project (88%).
- 71% of respondents that were aware of the project felt the changes were either positive or somewhat positive. Comparatively, 11 respondents felt the changes were somewhat negative (8%) or negative (1%). As such the overall net view of the changes were 62% positive.
- As stated in the usage section, 22% of respondents overall stated they used Broad Street more as result of the changes.

4 Retail Survey

Surveys with retailers on Broad Street and the surrounding area (parts of Queen Street, Littlejohn Street, Upperkirkgate and Flour Mill Lane) were undertaken on the 29th of March and 3rd of April. Figure 4-1 highlights the area covered by the survey.

Figure 4-1 – Area of coverage for retail survey



4.1 Business demographics

A total of 21 businesses completed the survey. Of the respondents there was a mixture of business types with coverage of professional services, retail and leisure. The majority of the businesses (76%) were established over five years ago and therefore had been in operation both before and after the project to redesign Broad Street. Only one respondent stated they were unaware of the project having taken place.

4.2 Impact of project

As stated, only one of the twenty business was unaware of the project on Broad Street. Overall the respondents were neutral about the changes made, with 38% stating they felt neutral; whereas there was a small net positive in eight respondents stating they believed the changes to be either positive or somewhat positive compared to five that felt the opposite.

Of the features that were deemed to be positive, the two that received the most support were the area's appearance (86%) and that there was space to socialise (76%). Whilst none of the features were deemed to be negative overall, 38% felt the area was not safe for children to play in.

4.3 Further recommendations

In addition to asking about the current features of the project area, the businesses were also asked to comment on what improvements could be made to the area. The most consistent recommendation of the options was to enhance the area with greenery/artwork/signage, with 95% agreeing this would improve the area. Improving pavements, reducing litter and deterring vandalism all received a slight majority agreement. A reduction in traffic was met with the most scepticism with 7 of the business suggesting this would not improve the area.