

Loughborough Town Centre Bus Trial Proposals



CONSULTATION REPORT

March 2014

Executive Summary

i) Consultation Response Figures

There were 1,311 questionnaire responses received. Of these 843 were submitted online and 468 in paper format (of which 321 were received by post and 147 completed at the public consultation event). A further 45 general responses were received in written or email form.

ii) Support for option A (buses allowed through Market Place in both directions)

- 501 responses expressed support for a trial of option A - 38.2% of responses.
- 463 responses said option A was their preferred option for a trial - 35.3% of responses.

Specific comments:

- Maximises access to town centre for bus passengers – especially those with mobility difficulties (202 comments, of which 50 mentioned mobility issues).
- Maintains bus routes, frequencies and/or punctuality (107 comments).
- Good access for bus passengers important for town centre economy (55 comments).
- Promotes bus usage (28 comments).

iii) Support for option B (southbound buses only allowed through Market Place)

- 139 responses expressed support for a trial of option B – 10.6% of responses.
- 35 responses said option B was their preferred option for a trial – 2.7% of responses.

Specific comments:

- Option B represents a good compromise between the interests of bus passengers and pedestrians.

iv) Support for option C (no buses allowed through Market Place)

- 754 responses expressed support for a trial of option C – 57.5% of responses.
- 715 responses said option C was their preferred option for a trial – 54.5% of responses.

Specific comments:

- Pedestrianisation is a good thing in itself (340 comments). This figure includes more specific comments that only option C would be consistent with the notion of pedestrianisation (194 comments) and that only full pedestrianisation would justify the cost and disruption associated with the scheme (26 comments).
- Safest for pedestrians (228 comments).
- Impact on bus services and passengers not excessive (86 comments). This figure includes more specific comments about proposed locations/proximity of bus stops to the town centre (53 comments) and the significance/impact of the diversion routes (33 comments).
- Maximises enhancement of the public realm and/or creates new space for events and displays (75 comments).
- Easier for pedestrians to travel between the northern and southern parts of the town centre (57 comments).
- Minimises vehicle emissions and noise in the Market Place (55 comments).
- Beneficial for the local economy (14 comments).

v) Support for “option C+”

Many people who supported option C also expressed support for the alternative “option C+” proposal, although this was not formally part of the consultation. The key premise of option C+ was that all buses should serve an expanded hub on High Street and Baxter Gate. This would require southbound buses to loop back on themselves, and some services to divert from the opposite side of the town centre. Option C+ was promoted heavily before and during the consultation as a viable alteration to option C.

vi) General comments

- Loughborough needs a bus station (108 comments).
- Baxter Gate should be made two-way for buses as part of option C (19 comments).
- Cycling arrangements in the town centre should be reviewed (16 comments) – NB this figure includes responses in favour of greater restrictions on cycling, fewer restrictions and/or provision of additional cycling facilities.

vii) Key trends in the consultation responses

- A majority of bus users who responded favour Option A. Other modes are more in line with the overall results favouring option C, with car users especially supportive (over 70%).
- A majority of respondents who visit weekly or more often favour option C, though daily visitors are noticeably more finely split between A and C.

- A majority of respondents accessing the town centre for shopping/services and work/business favour option C, though work/business visitors are noticeably more finely split between A and C.
- Business respondents are more likely to support option C (approximate margin 2:1 vs option A) than respondents as a whole.
- Respondents identifying themselves as having a disability or illness are split almost half and half between options A and C, whereas other respondents are more in line with the overall results favouring option C.
- A majority of younger people (under 45s) support option A, whereas older people (over 45) are more in line with the overall results favouring option C.

viii) Formal written responses received from (option preference where stated)

- Arriva Midlands (option A)
- Charnwood Borough Council (option C)
- Confederation of Passenger Transport East Midlands (option A)
- East Midlands Airport
- Hastings Community Association (option C)
- Kinchbus (option A)
- Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce (option C)
- Loughborough BID (option C/C+)
- Loughborough Town Team (option C/C+)
- Market Traders
- Mary Portas (option C)
- Matthew O'Callaghan (option C)
- Nicky Morgan MP (option C)
- Roberts Coaches
- Sileby Parish Council (option C)
- Storer and Ashby Residents Group (option C/C+)
- Woodhouse Parish Council

Part 1 – Consultation Background and Details

1. Introduction

This report sets out the outcome of the public consultation into proposals to pilot revised access arrangements for local bus services to Loughborough Town Centre following the completion of the Loughborough Inner Relief Road and Town Centre Improvement Schemes. The information provided in the report is intended to inform Cabinet and assist with a decision on what bus access arrangements should be trialled.

2. Background

Department for Transport (DfT) funding for a Loughborough Inner Relief Road was secured in 2012 following submission and approval of a major scheme bid. Construction of the Inner Relief Road began in May 2013 and is was completed in early March 2014. The completed Inner Relief Road will allow general traffic to be re-routed away from the existing A6, which passes through the northern part of Loughborough Market Place. The removal of most traffic will make the area around the A6 Market Place safer for pedestrians and help to connect the two halves of the town centre, which are currently separated by the A6.

After the current A6 Market Place has been closed to general traffic, a major package of improvements will be carried out in the town centre to create a more attractive and pedestrian-friendly environment. The town centre improvements are currently scheduled for completion by November 2014: in time for the annual Loughborough Fair.

Whilst most traffic will be permanently barred from using the A6 Market Place after this point, the town centre improvements have been designed to allow continued scope for limited vehicle access. This is because at the very least, delivery vehicles will need to have continued access to the Market Place for loading and unloading outside of peak shopping hours (i.e. between 4pm and 10am the next day), whilst emergency services will require access at all times. However, an important consideration is whether buses should also be allowed to travel through the revamped Market Place, with a final decision yet to be made.

3. Why the consultation was undertaken

The issue of allowing buses through the Market Place was previously considered in 2005/06 during an extensive consultation into the Loughborough Inner Relief Road and Town Centre Improvement schemes. Following this consultation, a decision was made to trial allowing buses one way (southbound) through the Market Place for an initial one-year period.

In March 2013, Cabinet agreed that a further consultation should be held on allowing buses through the Market Place before making a decision, due to the time elapsed since the previous consultation. This time around, three options are being considered:

- Option A – Buses allowed through Market Place in both directions.
- Option B – Southbound buses only allowed through Market Place.
- Option C – No buses allowed through Market Place.

The consultation was designed to help Cabinet to decide on which option to implement once the inner relief road has opened and the town centre improvements have been completed. It is important to note that whichever option is chosen, it would initially be implemented on a trial basis and would be subject to review within an eighteen month period. At the point of review, a further decision would have to be made on whether to make the trial arrangements permanent, or to trial a different option.

4. Consultation period, information and methods of response

The consultation period started on 28th October 2013 and continued until 8th December 2013. Members of the public could find out about the consultation options by obtaining a copy of the consultation leaflet (available on request by phone or email, or to pick up from one of several locations across Loughborough¹), visiting the consultation website (www.leics.gov.uk/lborobustrial), or attending the public exhibition event held at Loughborough Town Hall (see section 5 below for more information). A copy of the consultation leaflet is attached as appendix A.

During the first week of the consultation, key stakeholders and County Council Members with wards in Charnwood District were contacted via post or email to notify them of the start of the consultation period and request their views on the proposed options. All notified parties were also sent a paper or electronic copy of the consultation leaflet. A full list of stakeholders contacted is provided in appendix B.

The main method of responding to the consultation was by completing a questionnaire, which could be submitted either online or in paper format (attached to the consultation leaflet). General written responses submitted by post or email were also accepted and taken into consideration.

5. Public exhibition

¹ Charnwood Borough Council Offices, John Storer House, Loughborough Leisure Centre, Loughborough Library and Loughborough Town Hall.

A public exhibition event was held in Loughborough Town Hall for three consecutive days on Thursday 21st (10am-6pm), Friday 22nd (10am-4pm) and Saturday 23rd (10am-2pm) November 2013, featuring a range of static and video displays.

County Council officers were present throughout the public exhibition, along with the public liaison officer for the Loughborough Town Centre Scheme works programme (employed by the scheme contractor, Eurovia/Ringway) to discuss the proposals with members of the public and answer queries. Additionally, several additional parties had a permanent presence at the exhibition by prior agreement and were able to provide their own perspective on the consultation options. Specifically, these included:

- Representatives from local bus operators Kinchbus and Arriva Midlands, who collectively operate the majority of services in and around Loughborough.
- Members of “Pedestrians First in Loughborough”, a local pressure group arguing for full pedestrianisation of the existing A6 Market Place.

The exhibition was attended by a total of 504 people, of which 175 visited on Thursday, 158 on Friday and 171 on Saturday. The event was visited by the four County Councillors representing Loughborough: Robert Sharp (Loughborough East), Betty Newton (Loughborough North), Max Hunt (Loughborough North West) and Peter Lewis (Loughborough South West), as well as other County Councillors from Charnwood and the local MP, Nicky Morgan.

It was apparent from the start of the exhibition that certain visitors had already made their mind up before seeing the consultation materials on display. This was evident from those visitors’ requests to assign their support to option C or the unofficial “option C+” as a consultation response, without first making any reference to the information on display or attempting to discuss the proposals with staff at the event.

For the final week of the consultation period, some of the displays from the public exhibition were placed in Loughborough Library. This was to provide members of the public who had not had the chance to visit the exhibition with the opportunity to find out more detailed information about the consultation options.

6. Additional meetings and events surrounding the consultation

The consultation options were discussed at a variety of external meetings and events held before, during and after the consultation period. Several of these were attended by County Council Officers who used the opportunity to raise awareness about the consultation and encourage people to respond, including the three Loughborough Area Forums held on:

- 9th October 2013 (Loughborough East Area Forum),

- 17th October 2013 (Loughborough South-West Area Forum)
- 30th October 2013 (Loughborough North-West Area Forum)

The agenda for all three area forums included an interactive discussion of the consultation proposals entitled “*Town Centre Improvements: for Pedestrians or Buses?*”

Officers also attended the following:

- Charnwood Highway Forum on 4th September 2013.
- Action for Better Charnwood Meeting on 10th September 2013.
- Loughborough Town Team Meetings on 11th September and 12th November 2013.
- ‘Your Bus Matters’ Event organised by Bus Users UK, held in Loughborough Market Place on 16th October 2013.
- Loughborough Quality Bus Partnership on 23rd October 2013.
- John Storer House Well-Being Group on 7th November 2013.
- Market Traders Meeting on 9th December 2013.
- Loughborough BID Meetings on 22nd January and 25th February 2014.

Part 2a – General Analysis of Responses

7. Headline Figures

There were a total of **1,311** questionnaire responses to the consultation. Of these **843** were submitted online and **468** in paper format. Of those responses completed in paper format, **321** were submitted by post and **147** at the event.

A further **45** general responses to the consultation were received by email or in written form. The range of views expressed was reflective of those raised in the questionnaire responses to the consultation.

8. What questions did we ask?

Within the consultation questionnaire, we asked respondents:

- Which of the consultation options (A, B or C) they would support being trialled (question 4a). Respondents were allowed to select more than one answer to this question in case there was more than one option they would be happy to see trialled (for this reason, the total number of responses to this question exceeds the total number of responses to the consultation).
- Which of the consultation options they would prefer to be trialled (question 4b) and why (question 4c). Unlike for question 4a, respondents were only allowed to selection one answer for question 4b.
- Whether they had any other comments or suggestions relating to the consultation and town centre improvements.

9. Responses to Option A (buses allowed through Market Place in both directions)

In total, **501** responses indicated support for trialling option A (**38.2%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these, **463** responses identified option A as the preferred option (**35.3%** of all questionnaire responses).

Frequently made² comments in support of option A

Comment summary	No. of comments
1) Maximises access to the town centre and key amenities for bus passengers. <i>Some of the 202 comments made the following more detailed argument:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Need to keep bus stops as close to the town centre as possible to avoid disadvantaging bus users with impaired mobility.</i> 	202 50
2) Maintains bus routes, frequencies/timetables and/or punctuality.	107
3) Good access for bus passengers important for town centre	55

² A minimum threshold of 10 comments has been used to justify including comments in the table.

economy.	
4) Promotes bus usage.	28

10. Responses to Option B (Southbound buses only allowed through Market Place)

In total, **139** responses indicated support for trialling option B (**10.6%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these, just **35** responses identified option B as the preferred option (**2.7%** of all questionnaire responses).

Frequently made comments in support of option B

The limited number of responses backing option B in preference to the alternatives means that the list of 'frequently made comments' for this option is small both in volume and range of arguments made. The most common theme was the belief that option B represented the best compromise between the needs of pedestrians and bus passengers/operators.

11. Responses to Option C (No buses allowed through Market Place)

In total, **754** responses indicated support for trialling option C (**57.5%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these, **715** responses identified option C as the preferred option (**54.5%** of all questionnaire responses).

Frequently made³ comments in support of option C

Comment summary	No. of comments
1) Pedestrianisation is a good thing in itself. <i>Some of the 340 comments made the following more detailed arguments:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Only option C is consistent with the notion of pedestrianisation.</i> 194 • <i>The cost of the scheme and disruption caused by the construction works will not have been worthwhile unless the Market Place is fully pedestrianised.</i> 26 	340
2) Safest option for pedestrians. <i>NB - Some responses referred to specific vulnerable groups such as the elderly, disabled and children, whilst others referred simply to pedestrians in general.</i>	228
3) Impact on bus services would not be excessive. <i>Some of the 86 comments made the following more detailed arguments:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Option C bus stop locations are close enough to the town centre and/or are little or no further away than the proposed stop locations for options A and B.</i> 53 • <i>The diversions to bus services would not be significant and/or it would be possible for the operators to adjust their services to accommodate additional mileage without significant adverse effects (e.g. fares, frequencies).</i> 33 	86
4) Maximises enhancement to public realm and/or creates new space for events and activities.	75
5) Greatest ease of movement for pedestrians between the northern and southern parts of the town centre.	57
6) Minimises vehicle emissions and noise in the Market Place	55
7) Fully pedestrianised area beneficial for the town centre economy.	14

³ A minimum threshold of 10 comments has been used to justify including topics/themes in the table.

A significant number of comments were also received supporting the unofficial “option C+”. These have been dealt with separately in section 13 below.

12. Responses Supporting None of the Consultation Options

In total, **58** responses indicated support for none of the consultation options (**4.4%** of all questionnaire responses). A further **5** responses indicated that they did not know which consultation option to support (**0.4%** of all questionnaire responses).

Common reasons for supporting none of the consultation options

A wide range of arguments were offered despite the relatively small number of responses backing ‘none of the above’. As such, there were few common themes, with the exception that there were a significant number of comments were also received supporting the unofficial “option C+”. These have been dealt with separately in section 13 below.

13. Comments about Option C+

Option C+ was developed by a Mr. David Walker as an alternative to consultation option C. Details of how option C+ would operate were provided in a flyer designed by Mr Walker. Option C+ was not formally part of the consultation, but nonetheless attracted a lot of attention in the local media immediately before and during the consultation period and was actively promoted by Mr Walker at events including the Loughborough South West Area Forum, Market Traders’ Meeting and at the Public Exhibition at the Town Hall. Option C+ was also mentioned on various occasions within the letters page of the Loughborough Echo newspaper, including in several letters written by Mr Walker (see appendix D). A copy of a flyer promoting option C+, which was distributed during the public exhibition can be found in appendix C.

It is difficult to clearly gauge levels of support for option C+, given that it was not a formal part of the consultation and could only be referred to within ‘open comments’ questions 4c and 5 of the questionnaire. Complicating matters further, option C+ was referred to by numerous different terms throughout the consultation, including the ‘Walker Loop’.

In spite of these difficulties, it was possible to identify **106** questionnaire responses which made comments explicitly indicating support for option C+. Almost all of these responses had either indicated broader support for consultation option C or did not support any of the consultation options.

It is clear from the number of responses that made explicit reference to option C+, as well as some of the broader themes emerging from the comments sections, that the emergence of option C+ as an alternative proposal had a significant impact on the consultation and people’s attitudes towards the three consultation options.

14. Additional Comments and Suggestions

A wide variety of additional comments and suggestions were submitted to us through the questionnaires. The most popular themes⁴ were as follows:

Comment summary	No. of comments
1) Provision of a new bus station <i>NB – comments were received about two distinct ‘bus station’ concepts, one comprising an off-road facility on the old Hospital Site off Baxter Gate, the other comprising an enlarged on-road facility of around 8-10 facilities along High Street and Baxter Gate as part of the option C+/Walker Loop proposal.</i>	108
2) Make Baxter Gate two-way for buses (and in some cases other traffic) to provide close access to and full pedestrianisation of Market Place.	19
3) Review cycling arrangements in the town centre <i>A variety of opinions were expressed on this subject, ranging from those wanting to see greater restrictions, to those who wanted access to be retained or enhanced and in some cases wanted additional cycle facilities in the town centre.</i>	16

A significant number of comments were also received supporting the unofficial “option C+”. These have been dealt with separately in section 13 above.

⁴ A minimum threshold of 10 comments has been used to justify including topics/themes in the table.

Part 2b – Detailed Analysis and Key Trends

15. Introduction

Further analysis has been completed on the responses to questions 4a and 4b of the consultation questionnaire:

Q4a – Which, if any, of the options would you support?

Q4b – Which is your preferred option?

This breaks the results down according to:

- Primary mode of travel to/from the town centre.
- Frequency of visits to the town centre.
- Primary reason for visiting the town centre.
- In what capacity people were responding to the consultation (i.e. as an individual, business or other body/organisation).
- Whether respondents had a long standing illness or disability.
- Age of respondents.

16. Breakdown According to Main Mode of Travel

The number of respondents who identified their main mode of travel into the town centre was **1,290 (98.4%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these, **618 (47.14%)** said that their main mode of travel was by bus or coach, **350 (26.7%)** by car or van, **236 (18%)** on foot, **66 (5.03%)** by bicycle and **20 (1.53%)** by other modes of travel.

Responses to Q4a – Which, if any, of the options would you support? (Select all that apply)

Option	Main Mode of Travel									
	Bus or coach		Car or van		On foot		Bicycle		Other	
	Number of responses	% of total travelling by bus or coach	Number of responses	% of total travelling by car or van	Number of responses	% of total travelling on foot	Number of responses	% of total travelling by bicycle	Number of responses	% of total travelling by non-specified means
A	330	53.40	69	19.71	66	27.97	22	33.33	7	35.00
B	74	11.97	27	7.71	29	12.29	7	10.61	2	10.00
C	259	41.91	266	76.00	160	67.80	46	69.70	10	50.00
None	21	3.40	17	4.86	12	5.08	6	9.09	1	5.00
Don't Know	3	0.49	1	0.29	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	5.00

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to more than 100% for each category, as question 4a asked respondents to “tick all that apply” – i.e. so that they could say that they would support more than one option if this was the case.

Responses to Q4b – Which is your preferred option? (Select one option only)

Option	Main Mode of Travel									
	Bus or coach		Car or van		On foot		Bicycle		Other	
	Number of responses	% of total travelling by bus or coach	Number of responses	% of total travelling by car or van	Number of responses	% of total travelling on foot	Number of responses	% of total travelling by bicycle	Number of responses	% of total travelling by non-specified means
A	313	50.65	62	17.71	58	24.58	19	28.79	5	25.00
B	13	2.10	11	3.14	8	3.39	1	1.52	2	10.00
C	247	39.97	256	73.14	148	62.71	40	60.61	11	55.00

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to less than 100% for each category, as question 4b omitted those who answered “none of the above” or “don’t know” for question 4a.

A narrow majority of respondents who identified their main mode of travel into the town centre as by bus or coach expressed a preference for option A (buses allowed through Market Place in both directions). For all other modes of travel, a majority of respondents expressed a preference for option C, with car users being particularly in favour of C.

17. Breakdown According to Frequency of Visit

The number of respondents who identified their frequency of visits to the town centre was **1,289 (98.32%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these, **399 (30.43%)** said that they visited daily, **580 (44.24%)** less than daily but at least twice per week, **182 (13.88%)** weekly and **127 (9.69%)** less often than weekly. **1** respondent said that they never visited.

Responses to Q4a – Which, if any, of the options would you support? (Select all that apply)

Option	Frequency of Visit									
	Daily		At least twice per week		Weekly		Less than weekly		Never	
	Number of responses	% of total visiting daily	Number of responses	% of total visiting at least twice per week	Number of responses	% of total visiting weekly	Number of responses	% of total visiting less than weekly	Number of responses	% of total who never visit
A	167	41.85	197	33.97	62	34.07	68	53.54	1	100.00
B	40	10.03	63	10.86	21	11.54	15	11.81	0	0.00
C	208	52.13	358	61.72	117	64.29	56	44.09	0	0.00
None	18	4.51	29	5.00	5	2.75	5	3.94	0	0.00
Don't Know	2	0.50	2	0.34	1	0.55	0	0.00	0	0.00

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to more than 100% for each category, as question 4a asked respondents to “tick all that apply” – i.e. so that they could say that they would support more than one option if this was the case.

Responses to Q4b – Which is your preferred option? (Select one option only)

Option	Frequency of Visit									
	Daily		At least twice per week		Weekly		Less than weekly		Never	
	Number of responses	% of total visiting daily	Number of responses	% of total visiting at least twice per week	Number of responses	% of total visiting weekly	Number of responses	% of total visiting less than weekly	Number of responses	% of total who never visit
A	158	39.60	181	31.21	56	30.77	62	48.82	1	100.00
B	12	3.01	16	2.76	5	2.75	2	1.57	0	0.00
C	197	49.37	338	58.28	111	60.99	55	43.31	0	0.00

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to less than 100% for each category, as question 4b omitted those who answered “none of the above” or “don’t know” for question 4a.

Amongst respondents who claimed to visit the town centre weekly or more often, a majority expressed a preference for option C, whilst those who claimed to visit less often than this appeared to narrowly favour option A. Respondents claiming to visit the town centre on a daily basis were noticeably more finely divided between options A and C than those visiting once or a couple of times per week.

18. Breakdown According to Usual Reason for Visiting

The number of respondents who identified their main purpose for visiting the town centre was **1,287 (98.17%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these, **932 (71.09%)** said that they visited for shopping and/or access public services and amenities, **239 (18.23%)** said that they visited for work or business, **67 (5.11%)** for leisure or tourism and **49 (3.74%)** for other, unspecified purposes.

Responses to Q4a – Which, if any, of the options would you support? (Select all that apply)

Option	Reason for Visiting							
	Shopping or Accessing Services & Amenities		Work or Business		Leisure or Tourism		Other	
	Number of responses	% of total visiting for shopping or access to services	Number of responses	% of total visiting for work or business	Number of responses	% of total visiting for leisure or tourism	Number of responses	% of total visiting for other purposes
A	328	35.19	110	46.03	35	52.24	22	44.90
B	97	10.41	28	11.72	8	11.94	5	10.20
C	556	59.66	125	52.30	33	49.25	24	48.98
None	44	4.72	6	2.51	1	1.49	4	8.16
Don't Know	4	0.43	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to more than 100% for each category, as question 4a asked respondents to “tick all that apply” – i.e. so that they could say that they would support more than one option if this was the case.

Responses to Q4b – Which is your preferred option? (Select one option only)

Option	Reason for Visiting							
	Shopping or Accessing Services & Amenities		Work or Business		Leisure or Tourism		Other	
	Number of responses	% of total visiting for shopping or access to services	Number of responses	% of total visiting for work or business	Number of responses	% of total visiting for leisure or tourism	Number of responses	% of total visiting for other purposes
A	299	32.08	107	44.77	32	47.76	20	40.82
B	25	2.68	7	2.93	2	2.99	1	2.04
C	531	56.97	119	49.79	28	41.79	22	44.90

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to less than 100% for each category, as question 4b omitted those who answered “none of the above” or “don’t know” for question 4a.

A majority of respondents whose usual purpose for visiting the town centre was shopping or access to services expressed a preference for option C. Respondents who mainly visited for work or business purposes more narrowly preferred option C, whilst those visiting for leisure or tourism purposes appeared to narrowly prefer option A.

19. Breakdown According to Respondent Type

The number of respondents who identified the capacity in which they were responding was **1,260 (96.11%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these, **1,158 (88.33%)** said they were responding on their own behalf as individuals, **71 (5.42%)** on behalf of a business and **31 (2.36%)** on behalf of other bodies or organisations.

Responses to Q4a – Which, if any, of the options would you support? (Select all that apply)

Option	Type of Respondent					
	Individual		Business		Other, Unspecified	
	Number of responses	% of total individual responses	Number of responses	% of total business responses	Number of responses	% of total other responses
A	453	39.12	23	32.39	14	45.16
B	128	11.05	4	5.63	3	9.68
C	660	56.99	45	63.38	15	48.39
None	51	4.40	2	2.82	2	6.45
Don't Know	4	0.35	1	1.41	0	0.00

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to more than 100% for each category, as question 4a asked respondents to “tick all that apply” – i.e. so that they could say that they would support more than one option if this was the case.

Responses to Q4b – Which is your preferred option? (Select one option only)

Option	Type of Respondent					
	Individual		Business		Other, Unspecified	
	Number of responses	% of total individual responses	Number of responses	% of total business responses	Number of responses	% of total other responses
A	420	36.27	20	32.39	12	38.71
B	32	2.76	2	5.63	0	0.00
C	622	53.71	45	63.38	17	54.84

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to less than 100% for each category, as question 4b omitted those who answered “none of the above” or “don’t know” for question 4a.

The proportions of individual responses supporting and/or preferring each option is similar to the headline figures, which is unsurprising given that individual responses represented the overwhelming majority of overall responses. Business responses were slightly more heavily in favour of option C.

20. Breakdown According to Disability Status

The number of respondents who identified whether or not they had a long standing illness or disability was **1,235 (94.2%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these **231 (18.7%)** identified themselves as having a long standing disability or illness and **1004 (81.3%)** identified themselves as not having a long standing illness or disability.

Responses to Q4a – Which, if any, of the options would you support? (Select all that apply)

Option	Long Standing Disability or Illness?			
	Yes		No	
	Number of responses	% of total with disability or illness	Number of responses	% of total without disability or illness
A	107	46.32	370	36.85
B	24	10.39	109	10.86
C	106	45.89	604	60.16
None	12	5.19	41	4.08
Don't Know	2	0.87	3	0.30

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to more than 100% for each category, as question 4a asked respondents to “tick all that apply” – i.e. so that they could say that they would support more than one option if this was the case.

Responses to Q4b – Which is your preferred option? (Select one option only)

Option	Long Standing Disability or Illness?			
	Yes		No	
	Number of responses	% of total with disability or illness	Number of responses	% of total without disability or illness

A	100	43.29	341	33.96
B	7	3.03	26	2.59
C	104	45.02	568	56.57

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to less than 100% for each category, as question 4b omitted those who answered “none of the above” or “don’t know” for question 4a.

A majority of respondents who did not identify themselves as having a long term disability or illness expressed a preference for option C. In contrast, respondents identifying themselves as disabled or suffering from a long term illness were almost evenly divided between options A and C, indicating a greater tendency to value close bus access to the centre than other respondents.

21. Breakdown According to Age

The total number of respondents who identified their age was **1269 (96.8% of total)**. Of these **337 (26.56%)** were under the age of 45, and **932 (73.44%)** were over the age of 45. As can be seen, the responses are heavily skewed towards the older age groups with an under representation of those under the age of 45. This is even more marked for those under the age of 25, with just **96 responses (7.6%)**.

Responses to Q4a – Which, if any, of the options would you support? (Select all that apply)

Option	Age of Respondent							
	Under 25		25-44		45-64		65 and over	
	Number of responses	% of total under 25	Number of responses	% of total between 25 and 44	Number of responses	% of total between 45 and 64	Number of responses	% of total over 65
A	71	73.96	128	53.11	135	32.22	157	30.60
B	15	15.63	41	17.01	39	9.31	43	8.38
C	28	29.17	109	45.23	270	64.44	317	61.79
None	44	2.08	8	3.32	18	4.30	27	5.26
Don't Know	4	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.48	3	0.58

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to more than 100% for each category, as question 4a asked respondents to “tick all that apply” – i.e. so that they could say that they would support more than one option if this was the case.

Responses to Q4b – Which is your preferred option? (Select one option only)

Option	Age of Respondent							
	Under 25		25-44		45-64		65 and over	
	Number of responses	% of total under 25	Number of responses	% of total between 25 and 44	Number of responses	% of total between 45 and 64	Number of responses	% of total over 65
A	65	67.71	120	49.79	127	30.31	142	27.68

B	2	2.08	12	4.98	9	2.15	12	2.34
C	27	28.13	101	41.91	257	61.34	300	58.48

NB – numerical and percentage totals may add up to less than 100% for each category, as question 4b omitted those who answered “none of the above” or “don’t know” for question 4a.

There appears to be a clear trend (notwithstanding the overall skew of responses towards the older age category), with those under the age of 45 coming out in favour of option A, and those over the age of 45 coming out in favour of option C. This is shown more clearly in the table below. Support seems to be even more heavily tilted towards option A for those under 25 by a ratio of more than 2:1 based on the results, though the small sample size inevitably makes the trend more difficult to be confident in.

Responses to Q4a/Q4b answers according to age – under 45s vs over 45s

Option	Q4a Which (if any) options would you support? (tick all that apply)				Q4b Which option do you prefer? (tick one only)			
	Under 45s		Over 45s		Under 45s		Over 45s	
	No of responses	% of all <45s	No of responses	% of all >45s	No of responses	% of all <45s	No of responses	% of all >45s
A	199	59.05%	292	31.33%	185	54.90%	269	28.86%
B	56	16.62%	82	8.80%	14	4.15%	21	2.25%
C	137	40.65%	587	62.98%	128	37.98%	557	59.76%
None	10	2.97%	45	4.83%				
Don't know	0	0.00%	5	0.54%				

22. Breakdown According to Gender and Ethnicity

The number of respondents who stated their gender was **1,271 (96.95%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these **730 (55.68%)** said that they were male and **541 (41.27%)** said that they were female. The breakdown of responses according to the options supported/preferred is similar to the overall results for both males and females.

The number of respondents who stated their ethnicity was **1,205 (91.99%** of all questionnaire responses). Of these, **1,165 (88.9%)** said that they were white with **41 (3.1%)** stating that they were of any other ethnicity. Due to the very low numbers of people stating that they were of ethnicities other than white, a breakdown of responses based on this variable would have been of limited value and has not been completed.

Part 3 – Responses to the Option Impact Assessments

24. Headline Results

As part of the questionnaire, respondents were provided with the opportunity to express their views on the 'impact assessments' for each option (questions 1, 2 and 3), which were included within the leaflet and public exhibition displays. The headline results are displayed below:

Level of agreement with impact assessment for option A – buses allowed through Market Place in both directions (question 1a):

Strongly agree: **340 (25.9%** of all responses)

Agree: **205 (15.6%**)

Neither agree nor disagree: **80 (6.1%**)

Disagree: **133 (10.1%**)

Strongly disagree: **467 (35.6%**)

Level of agreement with impact assessment for option B – southbound buses only allowed through Market Place (question 2a):

Strongly agree: **71 (5.4%** of all responses)

Agree: **200 (15.3%**)

Neither agree nor disagree: **159 (12.1%**)

Disagree: **235 (17.9%**)

Strongly disagree: **515 (39.3%**)

Level of agreement with impact assessment for option C – no buses allowed through Market Place (question 3a):

Strongly agree: **453 (34.6%** of all responses)

Agree: **243 (18.5%**)

Neither agree nor disagree: **101 (7.7%**)

Disagree: **133 (10.1%**)

Strongly disagree: **286 (21.8%**)

Respondents who disagreed with the impact assessments were also provided with the opportunity to leave comments indicating why this was the case. It became apparent from some of the comments that a significant number of respondents had answered based on their views about each of the consultation options rather than to highlight areas where they disagreed with the impact assessments for each option, as was originally envisaged. These comments were nonetheless felt to be valuable and were analysed as part of the response to questions 4 or 5 of the consultation questionnaire instead, where they were more appropriately dealt with. It does,

however, raise questions about whether or not the response to questions 1a, 2a and 3a is an accurate reflection of overall levels of agreement with the impact assessments.

Once non-applicable responses had been filtered out and moved elsewhere for consideration, there remained a more select pool of comments indicating disagreement with the impact assessments for each option. These are summarised below.

25. Common Criticisms of Impact Assessment for Option A (Buses Allowed Through Market Place in Both Directions)

After initial filtering, there remained **88** responses to the questionnaire which made specific criticisms of the impact assessment for option A. A selection⁵ of more detailed comments is provided in the table below.

Comment summary	No. of comments
1) Underplays level of conflict between buses and pedestrians.	30
2) Sceptical about whether buses would travel through Market Place at 'walking pace' in practice and/or how this would be enforced.	19
3) Overplays proximity of bus stops to the town centre compared to other options.	13

26. Common Criticisms of Impact Assessment for Option B (Southbound Buses Only Allowed Through Market Place)

After initial filtering, there remained **83** responses to the questionnaire which made specific criticisms of the impact assessment for option B. A selection⁶ of more detailed comments is provided in the table below.

Comment summary	No. of comments
1) Exaggerates impact on bus services and/or passengers. <i>Some of the 48 comments made the following more detailed arguments:</i>	48
• <i>Bus services would remain more attractive than claimed.</i>	19
• <i>Overplays significance of diversions, effect on bus journey times and/or changes to services required.</i>	14
• <i>Overplays inconvenience of bus stop locations compared to Option A.</i>	14
2) Underplays level of conflict between buses and pedestrians.	17
3) Sceptical about whether buses would travel through Market Place at 'walking pace' in practice and/or how this would be enforced.	12

27. Common Criticisms of Impact Assessment for Option C (No Buses Allowed Through Market Place)

⁵ A minimum threshold of 10 comments has been used to justify including topics/themes in the table.

⁶ As above.

After initial filtering, there remained **78** responses to the questionnaire which made specific criticisms of the impact assessment for option B. A selection⁷ of more detailed comments is provided in the table below.

Comment summary	No. of comments
4) Exaggerates impact on bus services and/or passengers. <i>Some of the 52 comments made the following more detailed arguments:</i>	52
• <i>Bus services would remain more attractive than claimed.</i>	11
• <i>Overplays threat to future viability of Loughborough's local bus network.</i>	10
5) Underplays benefits of full pedestrianisation.	10

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⁷ A minimum threshold of 10 comments has been used to justify including topics/themes in the table.

Part 4 – Responses from Key Stakeholders

The tables below display responses to the consultation received from key stakeholders, where applicable displaying the preferred option and/or a summary of main comments made.

Copies of the full responses to the consultation from key stakeholders are attached in appendix E.

28. General Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Preferred Option	Comments
Action for a Better Charnwood (ABC)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members were unable to reach a consensus with support divided between options A and C. The views expressed by members of ABC have therefore been recorded as individual responses to the consultation.
Arriva Midlands	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on bus services and passengers of B or C.
Charnwood Borough Council	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safest and most attractive environment for pedestrians Consistent with 2006 cabinet resolution.
Confederation for Passenger Transport East Midlands	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on bus services and passengers of B or C. Faster journey times and improved waiting facilities for passengers under option A. Importance of bus passengers to town centre economy.
East Midlands Airport		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern about impact on Skylink service and passengers if options B or C adopted.
Hastings Community Association	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hastings ward residents have been most directly affected by the scheme.
Kinchbus	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on bus services and passengers of B or C. Faster journey times and improved waiting facilities for passengers under option A.
Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce	C (C+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removes vehicle severance of town centre. Bus only and additional waiting restrictions and bus hub for High Street/Baxter Gate.

Leicestershire County Council Traffic Management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junction modifications required to allow bus movements from Ashby Square into Greenclose Lane if option C is chosen.
Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID)	C (C+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes vehicle severance of town centre. • Safer environment for pedestrians. • Extended area of public realm to be used for events and extended markets. • Impact on bus services and passengers not excessive.
Loughborough Town Team	C (C+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes vehicle severance of town centre. • Safer environment for pedestrians. • Extended area of public realm to be used for events and activities. • Impact on bus services and passengers not excessive – inner relief road would be faster and therefore bus journey times could be reduced, whilst option C+ would provide comparable levels of access to town centre via bus as currently.
Market Traders		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to maintain good access to the Market Place for Bus Passengers. • Public realm improvements need to incorporate means for traders to access the Market from the northern end.
Mary Portas	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses disrupt and divide. • Fully pedestrianised town centre likely to bring in more people to the town centre.
Matthew O'Callaghan (Labour Parliamentary Candidate for Loughborough)	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of bus stops should be reconsidered and the viability of option C+ investigated.
Nicky Morgan (Member of Parliament for Loughborough)	C (C+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing buses through Market Place would mean pedestrians would have to remain conscious of traffic, defeating the object of the Inner Relief Road.
Pedestrians First in Loughborough (PFIL)	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal consultation response submitted, however PFIL were

		actively campaigning in favour of option C before and during the consultation, including at the public exhibition.
Roberts Coaches		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service 27 currently uses stand N on Baxter Gate, which will be removed as part of the town centre improvements.
Sileby Parish Council	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes conflict between pedestrians and vehicles. • Consideration should be given under all options to the siting of the bus stops to suit all ages and abilities.
Storer and Ashby Residents Group (SARG)	C (C+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safest and most attractive environment for pedestrians and shoppers. • Extended area of public realm to be used for events and activities. • Impact on bus services and passengers not excessive.
Woodhouse Parish Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain bus stops close to town centre shops for the benefit of rural passengers.

29. Charnwood County Council Members

As outlined previously, all local County Council Members for Charnwood District were notified during the first week of the consultation. Many of the local Members attended the public exhibition, including the four County Councillors representing Loughborough: Robert Sharp (Loughborough East), Betty Newton (Loughborough North), Max Hunt (Loughborough North West) and Peter Lewis (Loughborough South West). The local Members for Loughborough also attended their respective area forums where the bus trial proposals were discussed as an interactive debate, whilst Cllr Sharp and Cllr Hunt asked questions relating to the proposals at Council on 4th December 2013.

The only formal written responses received were from Cllrs Sharp and Lewis in reply to the notifications sent out in the first week of the consultation, attached as appendix F. Neither of these responses expressed an explicit preference for a particular option.

List of Annexes

Annex A – Consultation Leaflet

Annex B – List of Stakeholders Contacted in Advance of the Consultation

Annex C – Option C+ “Walker Loop” Flyer distributed by David Walker

Annex D – Letters Featured in Loughborough Echo Promoting Option C+:

Annex D1 – Letter to Loughborough Echo – 15 October 2013

Annex D2 – Letter to Loughborough Echo – 25 October 2013

Annex D3 – Letter to Loughborough Echo – 22 November 2013

Annex D4 – Letter to Loughborough Echo – 22 November 2013

Annex D5 – Letter to Loughborough Echo – 29 November 2013

Annex E – Responses from Key Stakeholders:

Annex E1 – Response from Loughborough market Traders

Annex E2 – Response from Hastings Community Association

Annex E3 – Response from KinchBus

Annex E4 – Response from Leicester Chamber of Commerce

Annex E5 – Response from Loughborough Town Team

Annex E6 – Response from Nicky Morgan MP

Annex E7 – Response from Arriva

Annex E8 – Response from Charnwood BC

Annex E9 – Response from East Midlands Airport

Annex E10 – Response from Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID) and the Love Loughborough Partnership

Annex F – Responses from Local County Council Members:

Annex F1 – Response from Peter Lewis CC