

Annex 4 – Area pilot consultation summary and officer response

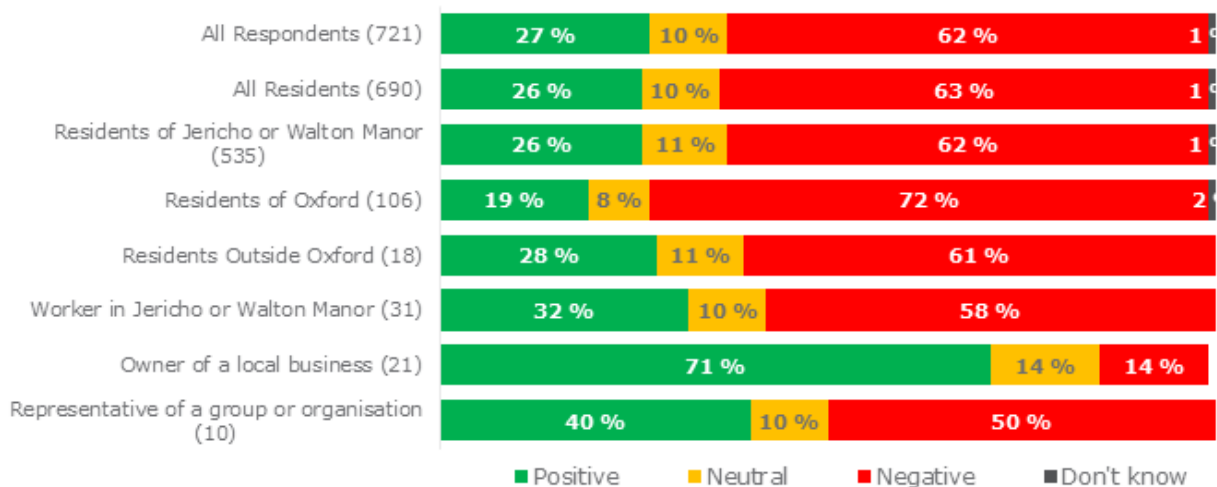
Overview

1. Consultation on the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme was carried out between 5 March and 19 March 2021. An email was sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, South Central Ambulance service, Oxford City Council, and local City and County Councillors. Leaflets advising of the consultation were sent to 4,316 properties in the areas. Proposals were discussed with the emergency services who did not raise any objections to the proposals.
2. An independent external research agency was instructed to provide short term resource to meet the reporting deadline for Cabinet Member Decisions, whilst also providing a thorough, robust and independent analysis of the consultation results. A full in-depth report of the consultation is provided in Annex 2.
3. 815 responses were received during the consultation period, comprising;
 - 721 questionnaires submitted via the county council's online portal
 - 96 emails or letters received by the county council.

Headline results - Online survey

4. The majority of online survey respondents were Jericho or Walton Manor residents (74%), or individuals living in Oxford (15%). The remainder of the responses is made up of those who work in either Jericho or Walton Manor (4%) owners of local businesses (3%), groups/organisations (1%) and those living outside of Oxford (2%).
5. Table 1 shows the overall feelings from these different respondent types to the package of area pilot scheme measures proposed for the area.

Table 1: Summary of feelings about the proposed area pilot scheme



Reasons for support/opposition – online survey

6. Some respondents made comments to support their view. The main reasons given for supporting or opposing the proposals are listed below. The percentage of all online respondents mentioning each reason is given in brackets.
7. The main reasons respondents gave for supporting the proposals are:
 - General support for the proposals (mentioned in 9% of all responses received)
 - Measures would prevent rat running (2%)
8. The main reasons given for opposing the proposals are:
 - General concern about traffic levels in residential streets / redistributing traffic to other neighbouring roads (mentioned in 23% of all responses received)
 - Concern about access issues on Walton Street (23%)
 - That proposals do not go far enough/ are not a proper Low Traffic Neighbourhood Scheme (22%)
 - Preference for the current Walton Street ETRO measures to remain (13%)
 - Preference for an alternative Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme (13%)
 - Disappointment for the proposals being consulted upon (11%)
 - Concerns about 'through' traffic (11%)
 - Concern measures will increase pollution (11%)
 - Concern measures will not support pedestrians and cycles (10%)
 - Concern about traffic volumes and access on St Bernard's Rd (10%)
9. Further analysis of the survey feedback can be found in Annex 2.

Email and letter feedback

10. The county council received 96 emails or written letters in response to the Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot scheme proposals – 87 from residents, 6 from representatives and organisations, and 3 from essential services groups and community groups.
11. Sentiments expressed through e-mails and letters largely opposed the proposals and breaks down as follows:
 - 56 emails opposing the proposals (51 residents, 1 business and 2 groups/organisations, with a further 2 emails received from a source that could not be confirmed);
 - 10 emails expressing support for the proposals (4 residents, 3 businesses and 3 groups/organisations); and
 - 11 that were broadly supportive but expressed specific concerns/caveats (6 residents, 3 businesses and 2 groups/organisations).
12. It should be noted that responders might have responded to the online questionnaire and also emailed comments.
13. The main themes from the email/letter feedback are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Main comments raised in email/letter feedback, in descending order of mentions (number of times mentioned in correspondence listed in brackets)

Comments
Oxfordshire County Council has gone back on original LTN plans (23)
Concern about rat running traffic (10)
Concern about specific access issues on Walton Street (9)
General concern about traffic levels in residential streets / redistributing traffic to other neighbouring roads(9)
Prefer support an alternative LTN scheme (9)
Support/agree with the proposals (9)
Keep the Walton Street barrier (8)
Want to see full reopening of the street/no restrictions (5)

Social Media

14. Social media posts were timed to go out on the first day of the consultation and then at a mid-point. There were three comments made across all twelve of the Facebook and Twitter posts that Oxfordshire County Council posted, all of which relate to issues or concerns with the proposed area pilot scheme.
15. The main comments received in response to Facebook posts were that the pilot scheme will have a detrimental effect on local businesses and that roads in Oxford should not be closed.

Correspondence received after close of the consultation

16. A further 12 responses via letters/ e-mails were received after the close of the consultation (11 from residents, 1 from a business). All of this correspondence opposed the area pilot scheme proposals. Reasons for these views were (number of mentions in brackets);
 - That proposals do not go far enough/ are not a proper Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme (4)
 - Concern about traffic volumes and access on St Bernard's Rd/ Leckford Rd (4)
 - Want to see full reopening of Walton Street street/no restrictions (2)
 - Want the existing Walton Street ETRO closure to remain (1)
 - Measures will not prevent through traffic/ incentivise active travel (1)

Officer Response

17. The Jericho and Walton Manor area pilot consultation generated a significant local response, even though it was open for a relatively short time. The previous formal consultation on the Walton Street ETRO, also generated a strong response. Strong arguments and legitimate concerns were expressed by those both for and against the proposals. The polarised responses suggest that developing a scheme which is both deliverable and has a broad consensus of support is challenging.

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18. When asked about each individual restriction put forward in the area pilot scheme consultation, there was largely an equal split in opinion. However, when asked specifically about overall feelings on proposed measures, there was a more negative response (62%) to proposals. This sentiment was widespread across all respondent types with the exception of local business owners who were overall positive (71%) on the area pilot proposals.
19. It was clear that a notable number of negative responses to the proposals were from those who considered the measures did not go far enough to support active travel. As detailed in annex 4, alternative measures were considered by officers, however it was felt there would be a number of practical challenges, measures would not address wider points of traffic volumes/ incentivising active travel and were not likely to receive wider support.
20. Negative feelings towards the area pilot scheme and objections to the individual traffic restriction measures within the consultation, were also received from;
 - Those who preferred the current Walton Street ETRO measures
 - Those who did not support any traffic restrictions in the area
 - Those who were concerned that the proposals did little to address, or were afraid could make worse, traffic volumes on individual streets.
21. A number of concerns were also raised that without restrictions on northbound traffic, this would incentivise south to north 'through' traffic passing through the area, and that this through traffic should also be targeted. Officers do not consider there to be a strong desirability for traffic to pass south to north through the area; however, should the area pilot scheme proposal be implemented as a trial, this would be carefully monitored.
22. General sentiment from those who indicated support for the traffic pilot measures, was that they preferred the arrangement to the existing ETRO, which was felt to create an unequitable traffic distribution throughout the area including for delivery vehicles. There was a feeling that the measures still targeted a removal of through traffic in the area to promote active travel.
23. Both the area pilot consultation and previous formal consultation on the Walton Street ETRO generated a strong response. Strong arguments and legitimate concerns were expressed by those both for and against the proposals. The polarised response both to the area pilot and previous consultations, suggest that developing a scheme which is both deliverable and has a broad consensus of support in the area is challenging.
24. Officers consider that advancing either proposal (the area pilot, or the ETRO trial) would not be suitable given there is no clear local support. It should be noted that the recommendation to terminate the Walton Street ETRO is considered to conflict with the county councils adopted transport strategy (Local Transport Plan 4) which states objectives including to "*reduce the*

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proportion of journeys made by private car” and also “ improve public health and wellbeing by increasing levels of walking and cycling”. These impacts are assessed more fully in annex 5.

25. Whilst these impacts need to be carefully considered, officers consider that on balance, they can be justified on the basis that there is an existing strong commitment to implement a range of other measures which complement the Local Transport Plan and can be expected to have a direct positive influence upon securing active travel enhancements and addressing negative impacts to protected groups. Measures include;
- 2021 - Consultation and delivery of active travel improvements to Banbury and Woodstock Road corridors
 - 2022 - Potential expansion of the Oxford Zero Emission Zone area
 - 2023 onwards – Delivery of Woodstock Road/ Banbury Road Corridor Improvement schemes
 - 2023 onwards - Implementation of Connecting Oxford