

# Consultation Report

Options for Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route

December 2020

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This report provides details of the consultation and engagement of the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report.

## 1.2 Main Points Arising from the Consultation

1.2.1 A wide variety of views were expressed with all route options receiving a degree of support.

1.2.2 Respondents to the questionnaire indicated that the three preferred options for further investigation

- **Route 4 Sustainable Travel Corridor East:** This option splits the gyratory in two; two way traffic for all vehicular traffic would be allowed on the western arm of the gyratory, with the eastern arm prioritised for sustainable travel only, although service vehicles and some limited local access would be provided.
- **Route 8a City Centre Clean Air Zone:** In this option the city centre would become a Clean Air Zone (CAZ). All vehicular traffic travelling through the city centre would be subject to a £12 charge except for exemptions. Under this route option the western arm of the gyratory would be used for vehicular traffic utilising the clean air zone with the eastern arm used as a sustainable travel corridor.
- **Route 6a No through City Centre Traffic:** This option would limit through traffic using the city centre. The eastern arm of the gyratory would be prioritised for sustainable travel with the western arm allowing

two way traffic for access with a section at China Street fully pedestrianised.

- 1.2.3 All three routes propose a sustainable travel corridor on the eastern arm of the gyratory, indicating a preference in terms the geographical scope of future interventions.
- 1.2.4 There was support for the ambition of the proposals and the vision for the city centre.
- 1.2.5 Support was given for the desire to improve aspects of public realm within the city centre.
- 1.2.6 There was recognition that wider policy pressures relating to climate change and decarbonisation should act as a driver for change.
- 1.2.7 Some respondents felt that the current gyratory system was adequate and since the opening of the Bay Gateway, journey reliability had improved. They felt that when presented with the alternatives preference was with the current or slightly modified configuration.
- 1.2.8 Concern was expressed in terms of the potential impact the different route options would have to business in the city centre both during the works and once they had been completed.
- 1.2.9 Concern was expressed at the funding package especially in relation to how aspects relating to the city centre and sustainable travel would be funded.
- 1.2.10 Many concerns were expressed in terms of how through traffic, deliveries and journeys within the city centre area would function in relation to the different proposals
- 1.2.11 There was support for improving cycling provision through the city centre.

- 1.2.12 Whilst there was general support for increased sustainable travel provision, concerns were expressed in terms of affordability in relation to bus travel.
- 1.2.13 Respondents expressed concern that some of the route options would relocate existing problems of congestion and air quality in the city centre to residential neighbourhoods. Many respondents noted the need for more detailed modelling to be undertaken so that aspects such as 'rat running' can be accurately addressed.
- 1.2.14 There were calls for a bridge over the river Lune to enable through traffic to avoid the city centre as well as serve residential and industrial sites on the Quay.
- 1.2.15 There were concerns expressed in terms of the lack of detail provided on the proposed cycle superhighway between the city centre and south Lancaster.

## 2 Consultation and Engagement

### 2.1 Overview

2.1.1 A six week consultation on the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report was carried out between 26th October and 8th December 2020. Views were sought from County Council and City Council Members, Local and National Stakeholders, Parish Councils and members of the public.

### 2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the consultation took place online. A virtual exhibition space outlining proposals for both the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report and the Route Options for Junction 33 M6 was developed. This service sought to replicate a physical consultation through a virtual space. Boards summarised the key aspects of both consultations and the interactive nature of the virtual space meant that links could be provided to the final documents. An online chat facility was active with staff available to answer queries in real time during office hours and email contacts were provided for any additional questions.

2.2.2 In addition to the online consultation additional briefings and question and answer sessions were also provided upon request. During the consultation period additional briefings were provided to the following groups:

- County Council Councillors who represented the Lancaster City district area;
- Lancaster City Council members (this was followed up with an additional question and answer session towards the end of the consultation period);
- Lancaster City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

- Garstang Rotary Club;
- Lancaster Rotary Club;
- Lancaster Chamber of Commerce;
- Lancaster BID;
- Lancaster Dynamo Cycle Group;
- Lancaster Vision;
- Lancaster Bus Users Group; and,
- Stagecoach Bus Operator.

2.2.3 In all these cases these briefings and question and answer sessions took place online.

## **2.3 Publicity**

2.3.1 To publicise the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report a press release was distributed to media outlets on 27 October 2020. This generated media items in the Lancaster Guardian and a number of websites representing different groups in the local area. Analysis of the website set up to inform of the consultation had 6519 page views and 437 unique page views. Notification and reminders of the consultation were also distributed on social media regularly through the consultation period.

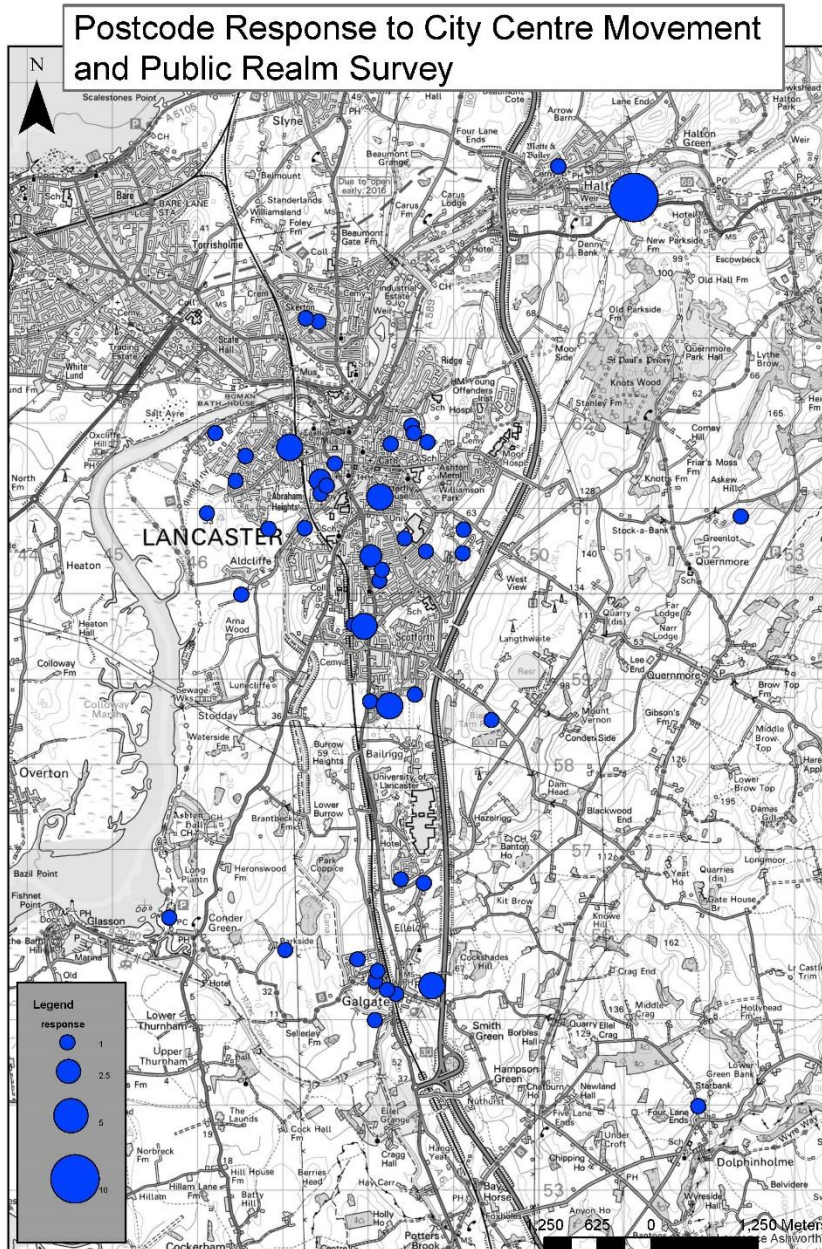
2.3.2 Residents and businesses were notified of the upcoming consultation by letter, dated the 22 October 2020 which was delivered to 32,000 residential addresses 4,000 local businesses and approximately 160 organisations/stakeholders. Posters detailing the consultation were given to local businesses for public display.

## **3 Questionnaires**

### **3.1 Questionnaire on route options**

- 3.1.1 A key aspect of the consultation was a questionnaire relating to the different route options outlined in the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report. A key criteria for the consultation was to present a wide range of route options for consideration. We then asked respondents to select their preferences which we then used to reduce the number of options following our own analysis.
- 3.1.2 The geographical breakdown of respondents who provided details of their postcode is provided in the map below.





3.1.3 Results of questionnaire:

3.1.4 864 responses were received as part of the consultation. The results are provided in the table below:

Rank	Option	Votes	Percentage
1	Option 4	111	12.8%
2	Option 8a	109	12.6%
3	Option 6a	108	12.5%

4	Option 2	85	9.8%
5	Option 1	78	9.0%
6	Option 7a	76	8.8%
7	Option 3	74	8.6%
8	Option 5	71	8.2%
9	Option 8b	61	7.1%
10	Option 6b	59	6.8%
11	Option 7b	32	3.7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>864</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 3.2 Alternative Route Suggestions

3.2.1 A number of other route options were provided ranging from relatively small scale interventions on specific junctions or sections of the gyratory through to large scale interventions for major new roads to the west and east of the city centre. A number of respondents also emphasised the need for a bridge over the River Lune to link to Morecambe Road and the Bay Gateway.

## 3.3 Reasons for Route Option Selection

3.3.1 As part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to give a reason behind their preferred options.

3.3.2 These comments provide a rich stream of data and will form an important aspect as the reduced route options move towards the next stage of consultation and ultimately feed into the design process. A summary of aspects raised in relation to the route options is provided below:

### Route Option 1 and Route Option 2

3.3.3 There were concerns expressed at how some of the other route options that reduced highway capacity would affect vehicular movements across the city.

There were concerns that the other options would only move traffic to other parts of the city, particularly Freehold and Ridge for options that reduced through movements on eastern arm of the gyratory and Fairfield, Marsh and Aldcliffe on the western arm . With this in mind there was a feeling from those who commented with a preference for options 1 and 2 that prioritisation for vehicular traffic through the city centre was the main priority and should be maintained.

### **Route Option 3**

3.3.4 It was recognised that Option 3 enabled access to both sides of the city for vehicular travel whilst also allowing some priority for sustainable travel. It was felt that as this option was similar to the current configuration it would not impact as much on aspects such as rat running in other options. However, there were some concerns raised in terms of cyclists sharing a lane with busses on the dedicated sustainable travel route.

### **Route Option 4**

3.3.5 This option received the most votes. Many respondents felt that this option offered the best opportunity for increases in sustainable travel whilst also allowing the continuation of the through movement of traffic on the western arm of the gyratory. Respondents also noted it offered a significant opportunity to link to cycle and walking routes at the Millennium Bridge. Respondents also commented on the public realm opportunities the route offered especially in relation to Dalton Square and the ability to link up with proposals to the east of the city such as Canal Quarter and Heritage Action Zone.

### **Route Option 5**

3.3.6 Similar views to option 4 were expressed in relation to the balance between sustainable travel prioritisation and through traffic. Respondents noted the public realm opportunities especially in relation to linking the city centre to Lancaster Castle and the railway station. However, concern was expressed in

terms of access and onward journeys by vehicle for residents living in the west of the city.

### **Route Option 6a and 6b**

3.3.7 Comments on the benefits of both options mirrored those of options 4 and 5. It was felt that these options represented more benefits for sustainable travel and offered key links and more public realm improvements to both the eastern and western arm of the gyratory. Again as with the split between options 4 and 5, there was clear preference for option 6a as it did not impact as greatly on residents to the west of the city and placed the core sustainable travel corridor on the east of the gyratory enabling public realm opportunities on the east of the gyratory and link to other development such as Canal Quarter and Heritage Action Zone.

### **Route Options 7a and 7b**

3.3.8 Similar concerns were expressed in terms of options 7a and 7b. With a preference for 7a over 7b due to concerns from residents to the west of the city and ability to provide public realm opportunities on the east of the gyratory and link to other development such as Canal Quarter and Heritage Action Zone. It was also felt that these options, through offering vehicular access to the city centre but not through traffic, represented a good balance between restriction and access for business reasons.

### **Route Options 8a and 8b**

3.3.9 Again, comments for 8a and 8b mirrored those above with a preference for 8a due to its ability provide public realm opportunities on the east of the gyratory and link to other development such as Canal Quarter and Heritage Action Zone. The addition of restraint through a charge for non-compliant vehicles was seen as a necessary component to meet the environmental challenges ahead.

3.3.10 A free text box was provided so that respondents could give any further comments in relation to the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report. The responses were varied and in many cases very detailed. These have been subject to full analysis and will form a rich resource of data to inform the subsequent consultation and ultimate design and implementation process."

## 4 Responses

### 4.1 MP's, Councillors and Political Parties

4.1.1 On October 23 2020, prior to the consultation commencing on 26 October 2020 a briefing on the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report was given to Lancashire County Councillors. A separate briefing was also held with Lancaster City Councillors later the same day. During the consultation on November 25 2020 an additional question and answer session took place for Lancaster City Councillors. An offer was also made that councillors could request individual briefings during the consultation period. Four City Councillors requested this and they were briefed individually on the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report.

4.1.2 Representation was received from two political parties and two city councillors. Issues raised included:

#### Political Parties

- A call that both the city centre and J33 proposals should be guided by an overall low carbon transport framework for the district.
- Welcoming the consultation and proposals as Lancaster City Centre's congestion and air quality problems require urgent consideration and radical solutions.

#### City Councillors

- A call for a bridge over the River Lune.
- Concerns expressed in terms of how vehicular movements could function in relation to the different route options.

### 4.2 Town and Parish Councils

4.2.1 Town and Parish councils within and adjacent to the Lancaster district were consulted. A number responded but in the majority of cases representation was focused upon the proposals for Route Options for Junction 33 M6. In terms of specific references to the city centre consultation key issues raised included a view that the consultation did not factor in wider movements and the potential that this would have in other areas of the city

### **4.3 National and Local Stakeholders**

4.3.1 Emails were sent to a wide range of stakeholders informing them of the consultation. Guidance from the Local Transport Plan 3 was used in terms of identifying recommended statutory and non-statutory stakeholders. In addition to this, key stakeholders and businesses in the Lancaster area were also notified of the consultation.

4.3.2 Responses from stakeholders were received by letter, email, and online questionnaire. Responses were received from both national bodies and local stakeholders. The responses varied depending on the type of organisation represented and often related to the interest the group represented; issues raised included:

- A number of stakeholders indicated a preference for route options to be focused upon the eastern arm of the gyratory to support development in the Canal Quarter and the Heritage Action Zone;
- Support for a city centre that supported sustainable travel and reduced car dependency;
- There was support for the ambition of the proposals and the vision for the city centre;
- Concern at the suggestion of bus hubs in the city centre and the removal of the bus station;

- Calls for a bridge over the River Lune to support movements to the Bay Gateway and the servicing of the Lune Industrial Estate;
- Concern that some of the route options would not be able to function adequately in terms of vehicular movements;
- Concern was expressed at the funding package especially in relation to how aspects relating to the city centre and sustainable travel would be funded;
- Calls for the city centre economy to recover post-Covid before any major change is implemented;
- Calls for close collaboration and discussion between city centre business in terms of the timing of any works;
- Measures should be prioritised that are seen to help foot flow in the city centre improves/increases accessibility of the city centre and help the viability of businesses in the city centre; and,
- Requests to be involved in the design and implementation process.

## **4.4 Members of the Public**

4.4.1 Representation from members of the public came via letters, printed and online questionnaires and emailed comments. A broad scope of comments were received relating to the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy ranging from the highly critical to the highly supportive: issues raised included:

- Support for less traffic in the city centre and a focus upon access via sustainable travel;
- A call to implement proposals that were supportive of wider policy pressures such as decarbonisation and climate change;
- Support for improved public realm in the city centre;



- Concerns about rat running through neighbourhoods especially in the east of the city;
- Scepticism at the ability of the county and city councils to implement the more radical components of the strategy;
- Concerns were expressed in terms of how through traffic, deliveries and journeys within the city centre area would function in relation to the different proposals;
- Concern that the proposals presented an emphasis on sustainable travel yet were premeditated on major road infrastructure; and,
- Calls for a railway station to serve Lancaster University and south Lancaster.

## 5 Conclusions

5.1.1 This consultation has been undertaken to gain a wider understanding of the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report. Consultation has taken place with a wide range of interested parties, including elected members, town and parish councils, stakeholders, and the general public. As part of the consultation it is recommended that the three options below are progressed to the next stage of assessment.

- Route 4 Sustainable Travel Corridor East;
- Route 8a City Centre Clean Air Zone; and,
- Route 6a No Through City Centre Traffic.

5.1.2 This next stage should involve a full analysis of the different route options incorporating transport modelling to assess displaced vehicular movements and air quality implications.

5.1.3 Due to the complex nature of the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy Route Options Report many of the responses received are

very detailed and not all points can be covered in this overarching report. Many of these comments provide important and valuable suggestions. This local be considered and taken forward as the different route options are modelled and go to the next stage of consultation.

- 5.1.4 Further consultation in relation to the reduced options should take place over the summer of 2021 and respondents to this consultation process will be informed.