

# Joint Report of the Heads of Planning & City Regeneration and Highways & Transportation

Development Cabinet Advisory Committee - 21 December 2016

## WIND STREET PEDESTRIANISATION - RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

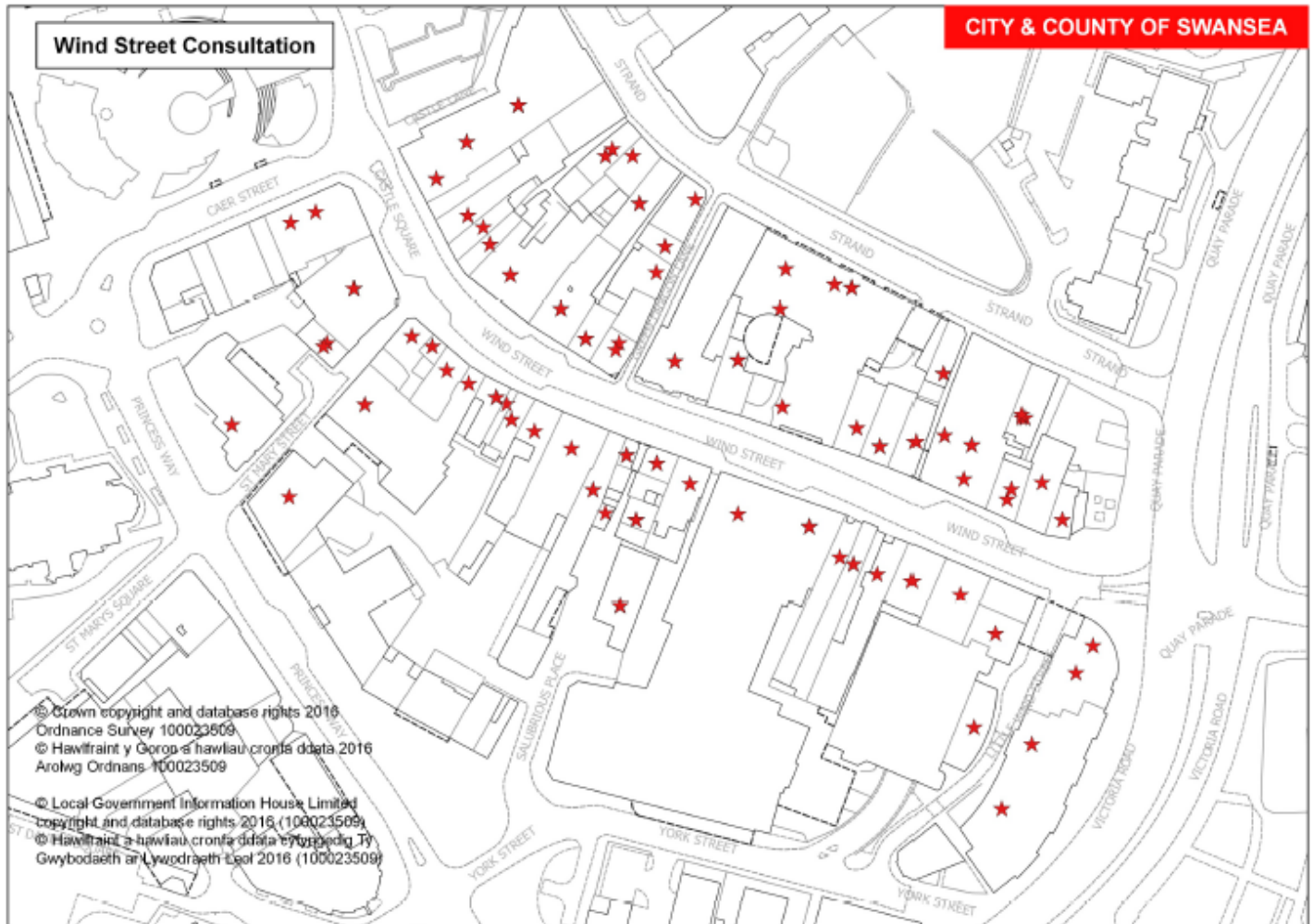
<b>Purpose:</b>	To enable Development Cabinet Advisory Committee to consider the results of the consultation conducted on the proposal to pedestrianise Wind Street and to note next steps.
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<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Paul Roach
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Sandie Richards
<b>Access to Services:</b>	Phil Couch
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To note the results of the consultation exercise as indicative of overall support for pedestrianisation among the immediate residents and business community.</li><li>2. To note the requirement to undertake scoping and feasibility work and wider consultation to pedestrianise Wind Street according to several options.</li><li>3. To consider how the project may be funded and resourced in the context of the wider master-plan for the City Centre and competing priorities for funding.</li><li>4. To note that a detailed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required to identify specific equalities issues associated with this project.</li></ol>

### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Swansea Council was approached by Swansea Business Improvement District (BID) to consider pedestrianising Wind Street during the afternoon and evening periods to improve the area and help develop and promote a café culture.
- 1.2 Prior to this BID had conducted informal research among its member businesses operating on Wind Street to gauge initial views on the scheme, the feedback regarding which was supportive.
- 1.3 In order to formally evaluate the appetite for this proposal among local businesses as well as residents and also to adequately consider the servicing and access needs for the area, a process of consultation was undertaken by City Centre Management on behalf of Highways and Transportation.
- 1.4 This report has been written by the City Centre Manager to summarise the methodology that was applied, present the key data that was captured from the return sample, provide a basic overview of the results and set out potential next steps in the process.

## 2.0 Methodology

- 2.1 During the latter stages of the summer 2016, a bilingual questionnaire tailored to the businesses and residents of Wind Street and adjacent areas was devised by the City Centre Manager in conjunction with the Group Leader for Highways and Transportation. The need for wider consultation was agreed to be undertaken at the right time once the proposal had been formally tested among the immediate residents and business community.
- 2.2 The survey was delivered and wherever possible collected by hand by the City Centre Rangers a copy of which is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The geographic area of the sample is outlined below reflecting the business and residential premises on Wind Street and also the adjoining streets.



- 2.3 The sample area was underpinned by a spreadsheet of 284 specific addresses which was used and updated by the City Centre Rangers to track communications with the respondents and record the survey returns.
- 2.4 Of the 284 premises identified within the sample area these were split between 123 residential units and 161 business units.
- 2.5 During the delivery of the questionnaires 40 properties were identified as being vacant, 13 were identified as duplicates as a result of the addressing process and/or due to property mergers and 18 were found to be inaccessible. In order to quantify the return rate these premises were therefore deleted from the sample which reduces the total sample number to **213 properties**.

### 3.0 Returns

- 3.1 The original deadline for submission of the surveys was 5 September 2016, however, a number of forms were received by post and accepted by the Rangers after this date and the cut-off date was therefore revised to 16 September 2016.
- 3.2 By 16 September 50 returns were submitted which represents a return rate of 23.5% of 213 potential respondents.
- 3.3 In terms of the residential versus business split – 9 surveys (18%) came from local residents. The majority (41 surveys – 81%) were however returned by the businesses with senior management completing 15 surveys (36.6%), the licensee completing 11 surveys (26.8%), the owner completing 9 surveys – 21.9%) and members of staff completing the remainder (7 surveys - 17%).
- 3.4 Demographic analysis of those responding show the majority of respondents to be male, an average age of 36.8 years and 77.7% of the post codes being from the immediate SA1 area.
- 3.5 As part of the survey process, participants were given the opportunity to submit their email contact details. 26 addresses were provided which will enable follow up to be undertaken if required as the project or other relevant schemes unfold.

### 4.0 Data Results & Analysis

- 4.1 The key data results are outlined below in the order they were presented to the respondents. Basic statistical analysis of this data is also provided for evaluation purposes.
- 4.2 In terms of general awareness of the proposal to pedestrianise Wind Street 66% of those surveyed said they were aware of the project. Equal levels of awareness were expressed among both residents and businesses and Swansea BID was reported as the main source of this information (29.4%).
- 4.3 Overall, the principal of pedestrianising Wind Street was supported by a majority of 66%. Analysis of the returns made by businesses shows 68.2% being in favour whilst those submitted by local residents are higher at 88.8% although this group represent a significantly smaller sample.
- 4.4 Respondents were asked to explain the reasons for their answer and these were quantified into several categories as follows:

	<b>No/ % providing positive comments</b> <b>(see A)</b>	<b>No/ % providing negative comments</b> <b>(see B)</b>	<b>No/ % providing neutral comments</b> <b>(see C)</b>	<b>No/ % providing both positive &amp; negative comments</b> <b>(see D)</b>	<b>No/ % providing no response</b>
<b>Local residents</b>	5/ 15.1%	2/ 25%	0/ 0%	1/ 100%	3/ 50%
<b>Businesses</b>	28/ 88.8%	6/ 75%	4/ 100%	0/ 0%	3/ 50%
<b>Total No/ %</b>	<b>33/ 63.4%</b>	<b>8/ 15.3%</b>	<b>4/ 7.6%</b>	<b>1/ 1.9%</b>	<b>6/ 11.5%</b>

- 4.4.1 The specific comments provided are set out in Appendix 2 according to each category; however, there is a general theme about improving the attractiveness and appeal of the area and increasing safety whilst concerns about access particularly for the elderly and disabled people are cited.
- 4.5 A series of questions were posed in order to develop an understanding of the practical issues associated with the pedestrianisation proposal and the implications that this might have for businesses and residents.

- 4.5.1 16 returns (32.6%) provided positive comments and/or reported no practical issues. 15 responses (30.6%) set out practical suggestions as to how the scheme could be managed most of which related to deliveries and loading provisions. 8 people (16.3%) provided a negative response most of which highlighted concerns about traffic congestion and deliveries and 10 others (20.4%) gave no response.
- 4.5.2 Examples of the comments made are set out in Appendix 3 grouped in categories.
- 4.6 Views were invited on closing Wind Street daily from 11am until 6am the following morning, the results on which are summarised overleaf.

	<b>No/ % providing positive comments (see A)</b>	<b>No/ % providing practical suggestions (see B)</b>	<b>No/ % providing negative comments (see C)</b>	<b>No/ % providing neutral comments</b>	<b>No/ % providing no response</b>
<b>Local residents</b>	2/ 10%	1/ 10%	3/ 20%	0/ 0%	1/ 33.3%
<b>Businesses</b>	20/ 90%	6/ 90%	12/ 80%	2/ 100%	2/ 66.6%
<b>Total No/ %</b>	<b>22/ 44.8%</b>	<b>7/ 14.2%</b>	<b>15/ 30.6%</b>	<b>2/ 4%</b>	<b>3/ 6.1%</b>

- 4.6.1 The specific comments received by respondents are set out in Appendix 4 by category.
- 4.6.2 In summary 22 respondents commented in support of the 11am-6am closure, however, 12-6pm was quoted as the preferred time for 2 respondents and 2-5pm by another.
- 4.6.3 The main body of negative comments received in this section were mainly about access and the ability of businesses to service their premises.
- 4.7 A series of questions were put to the businesses about their current servicing arrangements.
- 4.7.1 9 respondents stated they are served via a back entrance, 6 via a front entrance and 3 indicating both front and rear access.
- 4.7.2 Specific access and/or delivery and servicing times were stated by 11 businesses, 7 of which indicating that this usually takes place before noon.
- 4.8 The businesses were asked to comment on whether they would be interested in using the pedestrianised area of Wind Street if the scheme was implemented.
- 4.8.1 24 out of 39 respondents said 'yes' with 14 (82.3%) citing using it for outdoor seating.
- 4.9. The questionnaire provided space for any additional comments or suggestions to be made about the pedestrianisation proposal.
- 4.9.1 Whilst these section was not completed by 57.9% of the returns; the remaining 42.1% were split into 6 (12%) positive comments, 6 (12%) practical comments, 3 (6%) negative comments, 1 (2%) neutral comment and 5(10%) stating N/A.
- 4.9.2 The specific comments provided by the respondents are set out in Appendix 5 according to category.
- 4.9.3 In this section many of the participants took the opportunity to reinforce views previously expressed but a number highlighted other issues relevant to the management of the area. For example, the use of plastic glasses outside premise and the need for additional bins and policing were among the points put forward.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

- 5.1 In conjunction with the favourable view expressed previously by BID, the results of the consultation process provide empirical evidence in support of pedestrianising Wind Street; the rationale being for many to increase the prosperity of their business, diversify use of the area and extend patronage to families and other groups of non-users and change unfavourable perceptions regarding safety.
- 5.2 This view endorses the work being undertaken as part of the Purple Flag Award which is in the process of seeking renewal as well as the emerging multi-agency strategy which will guide the management and development of the evening and night time economy in the City Centre over the short, medium and long term.
- 5.3 The research highlights concern about access to premises and traffic congestion in and around the City Centre. However a core body of businesses appear keen to utilise the pedestrianised area mainly for outdoor seating to help grow their offer.
- 5.4 Whilst the ability of businesses to service their units is clearly critical, many businesses report having rear access and/or the majority of loading appears to take place in the morning. Similarly, a preference for closing Wind Street from 11am until 6am the following morning seems to be acceptable to the majority.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Whilst there are no immediate financial implications within this report any future associated costs that may arise will need to be contained within existing budgets and/or subject to external funding.

## **7.0 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 Separate legal advice will be required to bring a pedestrianisation scheme into force. In particular a road traffic regulation order pursuant to the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 will be required setting out the terms of the scheme. Consideration would need to be given to such issues as the operational hours of the scheme together with any exemptions deemed necessary such as access for weddings, funerals, emergency vehicles, permitted access for delivery vehicles, taxis, residents, breakdown services and medical personnel.

## **8.0 Next Steps & Considerations**

- 8.1 Following the favourable results of the consultation, next steps proposed in the process of pedestrianising Wind Street are to develop and consult upon the feasibility of a series of options which can be appraised with consideration to the costs, benefits, maintenance and management arrangements among other practical issues.
- 8.2 As part of this work, it is recommended that a site visit is conducted to areas such as Cardiff where successful and recent models of pedestrianisation have been implemented.
- 8.3 The availability of funding will be a key factor which will need to be considered in the context of the pressures on internal budgets and external funding particularly given the extensive regeneration programme being brought forward for the City Centre and competition for resources. It is vital however, that this project forms part of the wider master-plan for the City Centre especially given proposals to develop the existing leisure offer.

## **9.0 Recommendations**

- 9.1 The following recommendations are provided to CAC to enable a scheme to be progressed:
  - 9.1.1 To note the results of the consultation exercise as indicative of support for pedestrianisation among the immediate among the immediate residents and business community.

- 9.1.2 To note the requirement to undertake scoping and feasibility work and wider consultation to pedestrianise Wind Street according to several options.
- 9.1.3 To consider how the project may be funded and resourced in the context of the wider master-plan for the City Centre and competing priorities for funding.
- 9.1.4 To note a detailed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required to identify specific equalities issues associated with this project.

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