

# North Walsham Town Centre

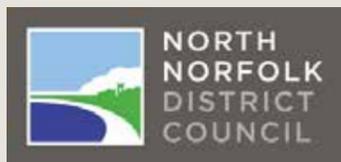
Highways and Public Realm Improvements

Consultation Findings Report

Issue 05

November 2021

Prepared for



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## In this Report:

This report provides findings from the Stage 3 Design public consultation carried out in North Walsham from September 20th to October 15th, 2021 by Heta in collaboration with the HSHAZ project and design teams. The consultation asked for feedback on both the latest public realm and highways proposals.

While the consultation as a whole asked for feedback on both elements of the design, there was a statutory requirement for a formal Highways Consultation to be conducted by Norfolk County Council via a detailed public survey. The results of this survey are not included in this report and will be submitted independently by the County Council.

This report shares overall findings and key takeaways across all of the various engagement activities and platforms, as well as recommendations on how to move forward.

## Collaborators

This report has been prepared by Heta Architects for North Norfolk District Council with the kind input and expertise from their team and the following project partners:

**influence<sup>®</sup> HETA**

**REES BOLTER  
ARCHITECTS**

**bsp CONSULTING** **gleeds<sup>®</sup>**

Issue	Description	Date
01	Draft Public Consultation Report Issued (Excl. Appendix)	16/07/2021
02	Public Consultation Report Issued	20/07/2021
03	Consultation Findings Report Draft Issued	19/10/2021
04	Consultation Findings Report Issued	03/11/2021
05	Consultation Findings Report Issued	08/11/2021

# 1.0



## Introduction

# Public Consultation

## Overview + Approach

### Background and Content

Following on from the first round of consultations that Heta carried out in June and July, and incorporating feedback from the local community, the design team developed the next iteration of proposals for certain areas of the public realm and the Highways.

Between 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021 a wide range of community engagement activities were undertaken to share the design proposals, invite feedback and to inform the final designs. Feedback from the previous consultation suggested many people who use the town centre are in favour of making it more safe and accessible, encouraging active travel, and improving the public realm through greening and creating areas for rest and relaxation, all of which helped to shape and inform these new proposals. Public realm designs were presented for the following specific areas and gateways into the town where improvement works may be carried out:

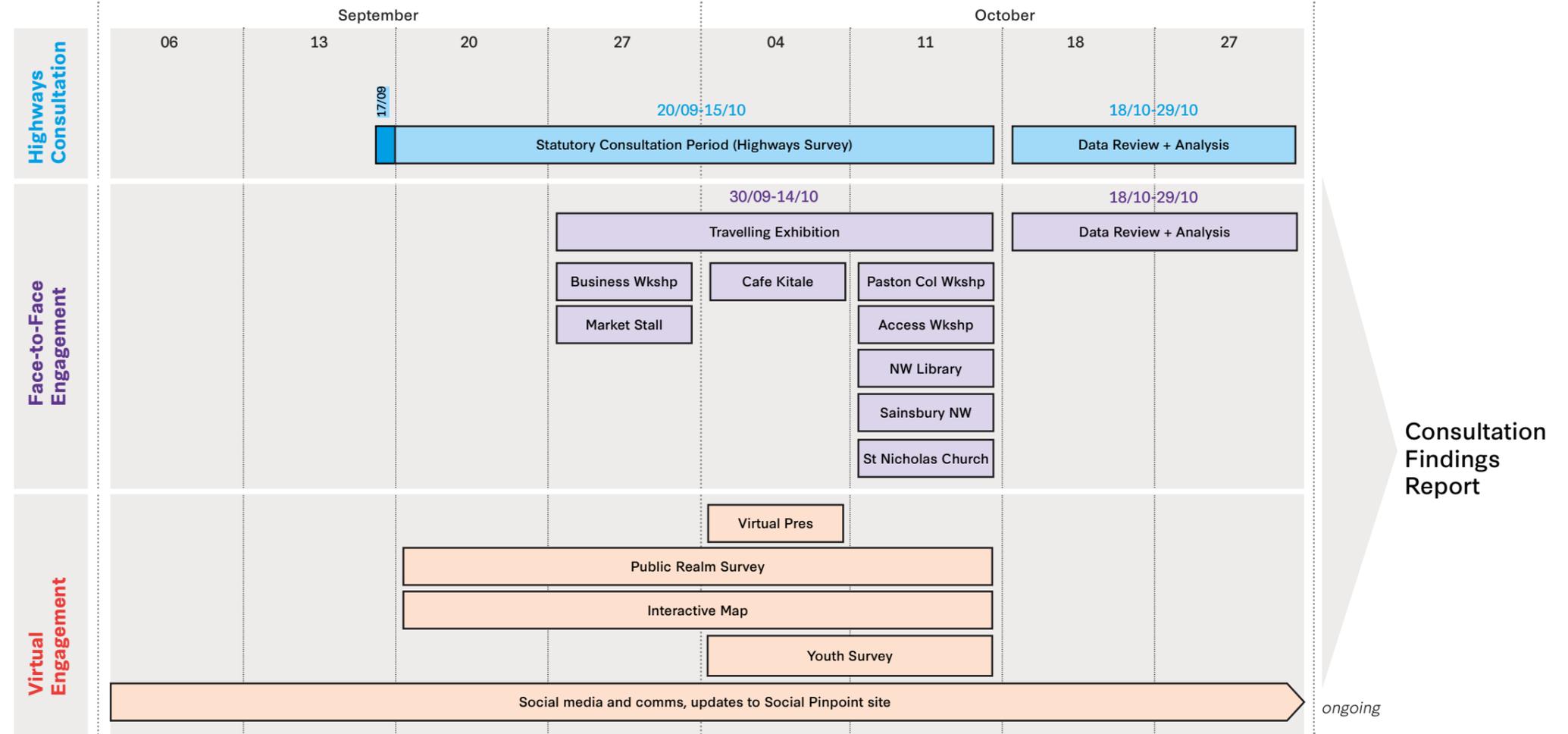
- The Market Place
- Black Swan Loke
- Bank Loke.
- The Shambles terrace
- St Nicholas' Churchyard

### A Multi-faceted Approach

Responding to valid criticism that the previous consultation took place over a very short period of time and did not go out to the community and engage enough of the diverse audiences within North Walsham, this round of consultation took place over a 28-day period. A travelling exhibition was held in a number of locations within the town centre, and additional face-to-face sessions were held with key target groups. The Council's digital engagement platform, Social Pinpoint, was once again used as a means of sharing information and inviting feedback. Printed and digital access to all of the surveys were also provided.

Over the entire period, the project team spoke with around 600 people face-to-face, and around 550 people participated in the various surveys.

### Consultation Programme



All of this quantitative and qualitative data has fed into the findings and feedback presented in this report. The findings from the formal Highways Consultation survey will be presented separately.

#### Highways Consultation

While the consultation as a whole asked for feedback on both elements of the design, there was a statutory requirement for a formal 28-day Highways Consultation to be conducted by Norfolk County Council and partners via a detailed public survey. Letters were mailed out to households and 195 businesses in North Walsham on Friday, 17th September, inviting them to participate online, at the exhibition locations. Paper copies were also available at certain locations in the town centre and on request.

#### Face-to-Face Engagement

A travelling exhibition took place over a three-week period at key locations in the town centre, and the local community were invited to attend via social media, printed posters and leaflets and Social Pinpoint.

Workshops with the business community, those with accessibility needs, young people in the town, and leaders of St. Nicholas Church were also conducted.

#### Virtual Engagement

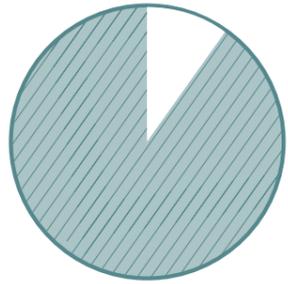
Virtual engagement events were held, predominantly via the Social Pinpoint platform, providing an update on progress made, details of the public realm proposals and highlighting the opportunity to provide feedback via a survey and interactive map. A youth survey targeted to those under 24 years of age was also hosted on the site.

An evening virtual presentation of the proposals was also held by the project team for those who were unable to attend the exhibition.

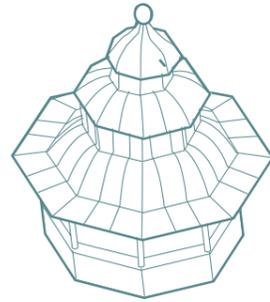
Additional updates and communication was delivered by the HAZ comms team, and will continue throughout the duration of the project.

# Public Realm Survey

## Key Findings



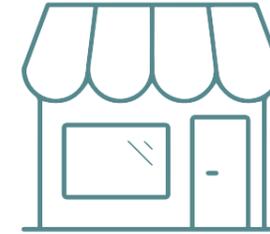
### Strong support for design proposals



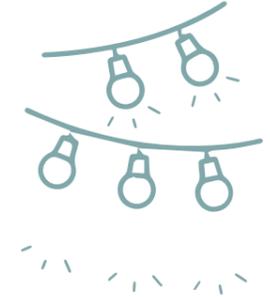
### Market Place top priority



### Desire for communal garden



### Envisioning the future



### Integrated lighting strategy

## 1.

There is strong support overall for the public realm designs, both from what we heard at the engagement events and supported by the public realm survey, where there was over 92% agreement that the proposals met the HAZ project aims and mostly positive comments.

## 2.

The Market Place was the highest priority to improve, although among young people (survey and Paston College workshop) the Shambles and Black Swan Garden came out at the top.

## 3.

Across many of the groups we spoke to, the idea of a communal garden and the Black Swan Garden design were received very positively. Older residents liked the idea of a natural oasis in the town centre, and young people welcomed the idea of a garden that also offered some shelter and privacy. There was disagreement, however, on whether it should be behind locked gates or accessible at all times.

## 4.

Many people were able to envisage that investing in the public realm would be beneficial for the town as a whole, bring in new businesses, etc. However, a minority of others, especially some of the business owners, had trouble envisioning this and so may benefit from some examples, case studies, visuals, etc. to further understand justifying the cost/value.

## 5.

People across all ages raised lighting as an important factor that should be integrated into the proposals, both from an aesthetic and safety point of views

# Highways

## Key Findings



### Complete pedestrianisation still contentious



### Congestion and safety on adjacent roads



### General support for car parks



### Enforcing regulations



### Addressing accessibility needs

## 1.

Opinion was split on making the town centre completely traffic-free. Those in favour thought it was a great idea in terms of safety, friendliness and attractiveness, pollution, and the ability to make the Market Place more vibrant and active. Those against raised the issues around loading/unloading (business owners) and loss of business and that access into the town centre, rather than within the Market Place, was the real problem.

## 2.

One of the other key issues for those against complete pedestrianisation of the Market Place was the fact that this would drive traffic onto the adjacent roads, making them more congested, polluted and dangerous than they are already perceived to be. The final Highways proposal will certainly have to address this, especially with regard to King's Arms Street.

## 3.

Most people, with the exception of some business owners who were afraid of losing customers, were okay with the idea of removing parking from the Market Place and parking in Bank Loke and Vicarage Street, especially if there would be free limited parking re-provided elsewhere within the town centre. Although there were lots of different opinions on the correct amount of time – one to two hours seems to be the consensus. However, there needs to be clarity on the number of available spots and where they will be.

## 4.

Even those who were in favour of a more pedestrian-friendly town centre raised questions as to how the traffic regulations for the Market Place will be enforced on a day-to-day basis, especially if it's variable or changes depending on the day.

## 5.

The Accessibility focus group raised a number of questions and issues with the current Highways proposal, and to a lesser degree, some of the public realm designs. A more thorough audit and assessment of how these issues are responded to within the Highways design and historic context are required.

# 2.0

## Key Findings by Engagement Activity



# Travelling Exhibition

## Key Findings

### Event Overview

To ensure we were able to engage with as many people and different groups within the North Walsham community as possible, we held a travelling exhibition that took place in the following prominent town centre locations between 30<sup>th</sup> September and 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021:

- Thursday Market in Market Place
- Cafe Kitale
- North Walsham Library
- Sainsbury's North Walsham

Additionally, a virtual session was held in the evening of Monday, October 11th, to accommodate those who were unable to make the in-person events.

The latest highways and public realm design proposals were presented via boards that encouraged feedback and comment. Members from the HAZ team, Influence, Heta, BSP Consulting and Norfolk County Council were on hand to answer questions, take visitors through the proposals and listen to any questions, concerns or ideas.

In total, the project team spoke to about 475 people throughout the course of the exhibition.

### Event Summary

The key findings from the exhibition can be found at the beginning of this report, so here we have provided a summary of what took place at each location and the specific topics discussed.

- “ I feel really positive about these designs. I have a young family and can't drive, so I walk and get the bus everywhere. I also have a child with additional needs and a toddler. [The town can be] intimidated by the louder voices of shop owners but they don't represent everyone.
- “ Pavements are too narrow; making it more pedestrian friendly is what this town has needed for a long time.
- “ We deliberately come into the town and love the new ideas.
- “ Most people who drive around King's Arms St have their own speed limit. This is the most dangerous street for pedestrians.
- “ I'm quite impressed - I like [the proposals]. Especially the Shambles.
- “ We need more restaurants, more 'exotic' coffee shops, a proper Italian and somewhere that has music nights and events.
- “ These plans sound great in terms of making the town look fabulous, but if there's nothing to actually attract people and bring them out of their cars, is it not just a waste of money?



Exhibition at North Walsham Library



Exhibition at Thursday Market Stall

# Travelling Exhibition

## Additional Topics Raised

### Thursday Market Stall

September 30th, 10:00 - 14:00

Parking costs and length of time for free parking

Pedestrian access to town and along King's Arms Street is not safe

Strong support for less traffic, but has to meet business needs

Questioning pedestrianisation in comparison with nearby towns

Negative views of some businesses not reflecting wider community support

### Cafe Kitale

October 7th, 9:30 - 12:00

Generally positive feedback on the proposals

Concerns around how the loading bays will be policed

Lack of activities and events to draw people to the town, even with nicer public realm

Focus on the town's heritage, building improvement schemes and cultural programs

Concerns about pedestrianisation impacting traffic patterns around town

### Virtual Presentation

October 11th, 18:30-19:30

Priority should be a focus on town youth and what they want/need

Questioning pedestrianisation in comparison with nearby towns

Linking public realm strategy to wider strategy to benefit + attract businesses

Need for public realm areas to be accessible throughout the year

Sharing post-implementation marketing and promotion strategy

### North Walsham Library

October 14th, 11:00 - 13:00

Ideal mix of for town centre has greater variety of eateries, shops, events

The Shambles and Black Swan Garden designs were well received

Welcoming the infrastructure to support better/more diverse markets

Need for better wayfinding and signage

Reconsider bus routes through the Market Place

### Sainsbury's North Walsham

October 14th, 14:30 - 18:30

Older and disabled visitors felt disabled parking near town centre was ample

Some felt designs were too 'modern' and detracted from town's character

Issues around free parking now those in Mundesley Rd have been removed

Lots of contention around King's Arms St, traffic pollution and pedestrian danger

Mostly spoke with passers-by who didn't come for exhibition but stopped to chat

# Business Community Workshop

## Key Findings

### Event Overview

The Business Community Workshop took place on Wednesday, 29th September at the Atrium adjacent to North Walsham High School. Around 200 businesses in and around the town centre were invited to participate in this dedicated forum to discuss their particular needs and concerns.

In total, only 13 business owners attended, representing 11 businesses in the town centre. Without exception the business owners were older and there was no evidence of younger entrepreneurial types. Additional attendees were members of the Town and District Councils, and a local MP.

### Event Summary

Those who did attend had very specific concerns largely related to the Highways proposal, specifically in relation to potential restrictions to loading/unloading in the Market Place and access to the town by foot. They were also concerned that removing access to parking directly in the Market Place would reduce business levels, as there was a perception that their patrons would feel the adjacent car parks (Bank Loke and Vicarage Street) were too far away.

Generally the public realm proposals were positively received, although some of the business owners struggled to visualise how investing in the public realm would ultimately bring more people to the town centre, the current view and behaviour being that there is nothing to entice people to dwell in the town centre as many people visit the town for purpose and leave.

Following the presentation and discussions, the key observations noted by the end of the session were that businesses were principally open to the idea of less traffic in the Market Place provided they could preferably unload and load freely. It was also noted that there was also a lessening of overall opposition and a recognition by some that this investment could bring positive change.

- “ Monday to Wednesday there’s no one in town. And even then people only come during the daytime, there’s nothing here at night for them.
- “ We don’t have big shops, and if you don’t have the shops, people won’t come.
- “ This is a foundation for other positive change and investment.
- “ These will improve the appearance of the town as a whole, give it a lift. And make it more attractive to those in the surrounding villages and suburbs.



Presentation at the Business Community Workshop

# Business Community Workshop

## Key Findings

### Opportunities

Will create a positive image for the town that independent shops can build on

Appreciation of and strong interest in the Building Improvement Grant Scheme

Will lay the foundation for other positive change and investment

A positive focus could tap into the strong sense of community and generate action

### Challenges

The ability to load and unload freely throughout the day is the biggest concern businesses have

Difficulty in seeing how this investment would change customer behaviours in the town centre

Safe access for pedestrians coming into town doesn't currently exist

Removing parking from the Market Place would drive customers away

Business is slower on Market Days, so this as a model for the rest of the week is not ideal

# Accessibility Focus Group

## Key Findings

### Event Overview

It had been raised in the previous consultation, and via the design team, that it was critical to understand how the proposals were received by those with special accessibility needs. We reached out to number of local accessibility groups, including a youth group called Dragons and the RNIB, inviting them to participate in a workshop specifically for them. The focus group had fourteen attendees, the majority of whom were visually impaired, but also included those who either had or were representing others with mobility issues (mobility scooters and wheelchairs).

### Event Summary

Overall, the town centre appears to be dangerous and difficult to navigate for those with accessibility issues. Of the workshop attendees, there was a mix of those coming by foot, bus and being driven, but they all agreed that they generally avoid the town centre and limit trips to the absolute minimum, not only because of safety and ease of use, but also because of expense if they need to hire a taxi. The town at night was pretty much a no-go for safety reasons and poor lighting.

This workshop was incredibly insightful for the project team, as it brought up a number of issues we would not have considered otherwise, highlighted at right, and made it apparent that a formal accessibility audit is required. The final proposals for the public realm and highways need to be able to address these concerns within the historic context.

The RNIB have recently shared work-in-progress guidance for the project team to review and consider.

- “ We need audible crossings. [As someone who is visually impaired] I can't communicate with someone in a car.
- “ I don't come in on Market Day. There are too many people and no one gets out of your way.



Presentation at Accessibility Focus Group

# Accessibility Focus Group

## Key Topics

### Navigating the town centre

Majority don't come into town on Market Day or at night, as too dangerous

Current market stall configuration is sprawling and could be more orderly

Outdoor seating areas need barriers with solid bases so they can be avoided

Allowing traffic at variable times is problematic; a clear way to signal the approach of vehicles is needed

Lighting in town at night needs to be significantly improved

### Kerbs, gutters, bollards

The location of dropped curbs needs to be away from loading bays and parking areas

Drainage grates are difficult for wheelchair users to navigate

Gutters needs to be cleaned regularly; clogged gutters are difficult to navigate

Depending on the disability, some people use kerbs as a guide while others avoid them

Bollards in the lokes are difficult to navigate

### Disabled parking

Spots need to be perpendicular to the curb (side by side), longer and wider

Need system for monitoring who parks here to ensure availability for those with genuine need

Spots should be distributed throughout the Market Place, with some outside the chemist

With parking in adjacent car parks, total number of spots in and around the Market Place is sufficient

Needs to have a clean, high contrast area to delineate the difference with pedestrian areas

### Crossings

Town centre needs extra crossings, including audible ones (especially near train station)

New Road Bus Interchange needs a crossing and clear route, as car parks are one of the most dangerous areas

Rotating cones underneath crossing boxes need to be fixed and made unbreakable

Tactiles already in the town need to be improved, as many are already worn down

Raised table with accordance to RNIB guidelines, as it is hard to differentiate between pedestrian and road surfaces

# St. Nicholas Church Meeting

## Key Findings

### Event Overview

As some of the proposed works involve the St. Nicholas Church and churchyard, a meeting was held with the church leaders to discuss the proposals in detail.

This took place on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> October, following initial consultation with Influence and the HAZ project team on.

### Event Summary

The meeting was attended by four church leaders, including wardens and a member of the clergy. They welcomed the opportunity to have a more detailed understanding of the proposals, particularly so that they would be able to share information with their congregation and answer any questions or concerns. Overall it was noted that they were optimistic about the plans and supportive of the proposed changes.

- “ There have been other consultations in their past, but this is farthest we’ve come with any of the proposals and it’s exciting.”
- “ We average 50 people a day through the Church and we want to encourage more visits - these proposals will help us do that.”



Conversations at St. Nicholas Church Meeting

### Parking

Biggest concern was location, with understanding that space near, not in Churchyard would be available

Raised question of parking permits for Church staff

Clergy have daily services and need at least 1 hour parking; 2 hours ideal

In future, those with accessibility issues could be dropped off at the Church/ Market Place entrance future

### Shambles and Churchyard

Curiosity about Shambles terrace materials and how they were sympathetic to surroundings

Churchyard paths should be pedestrian-only; cyclists should dismount out of respect and safety

Church leaders want to share project programme and milestones with congregation

# Paston College Workshop

## Key Findings

### Event Overview

The HAZ team and Heta held a workshop at Paston College on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> October with about a hundred students, mostly aged 15-17, during their afternoon tutorial group. We did a short presentation of the proposals and then asked for feedback on the following specific topics:

- How they currently use the town centre
- How they travel around the town centre
- What would encourage them to use the town centre more
- Which of the public realm proposals they liked the most

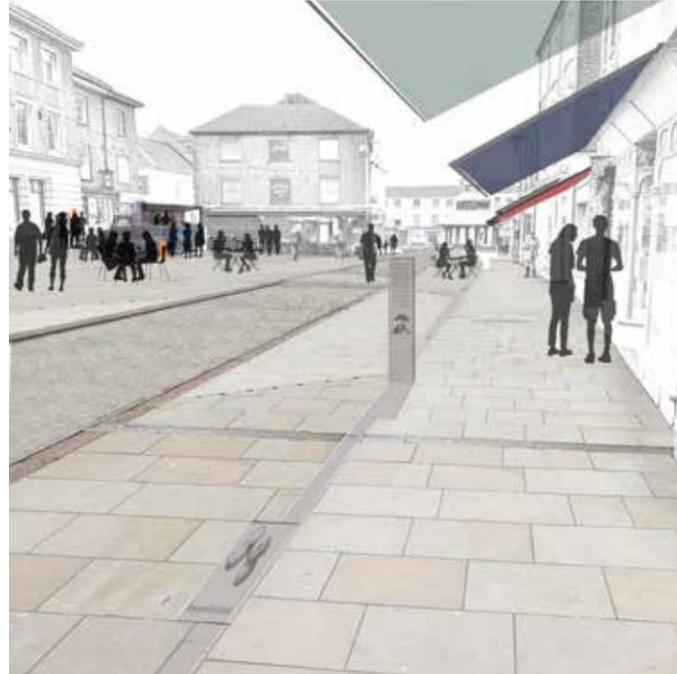
### Event Summary

The students were predominantly residents of nearby towns and villages, rather than North Walsham locals, and most of them followed a pattern of coming in to North Walsham for college, taking a break at lunch time to get food and go for a walk, and then heading directly home after the day was over. The majority of them said they do not, and would not, spend time in the town centre after college as there was nothing for them to do. Even when they do go for a lunch break, their food options are severely limited, with takeaway being closed, only a few grocery stores, and no affordable restaurants or cafés except for Costa Coffee.

What they most wanted was more places to eat and get food from, as well as an affordable restaurant to hang out in, and spaces to sit outside, ideally with some kind of covering or protection.

They were also aware of how they were negatively perceived by some older residents in the town when hanging out in groups - being accused of 'loitering' or 'anti-social behaviour'. The Black Swan Garden concept was rated highly due, in no small part, to the fact that it offered privacy and shelter from other residents who might judge their behaviour.

### Favourite design proposal



#### Top designs

1. Market Place
2. Black Swan Gardens and Shambles Terrace

“ Everything you’re saying I agree with. In general, I think it’s always good to have more pedestrian space and green space. We want to be in a nice space and nature is part of that.

- April, 17 years old



Caption

# Paston College Workshop

## Key Findings

### Key Findings

They like to be outside, but current options are very restricted and have no seating

When taking a break for lunch, students said they would like to sit and eat or hang out outside, but currently there is only the Churchyard. Covered seating would also be preferable for year-round use. Black Swan Garden rated highly with them

There is nothing in the way of activities or entertainment for young people in the town

There is currently nothing in the town centre to attract students to spend more time when they have free time or at the end of their day. Places to eat, other markets, cinema, and events were listed as potential draws.

The majority of students travel around the town centre by walking

As many of the Paston College students travel from nearby towns, they also said they come in via train or bus, followed by being dropped off by car.

A variety of food options is what young people want the most in the town centre

Food shopping was the main draw into the town centre, although it was apparent that there are very few options, including food markets and pop-ups, were favoured.

### What would encourage them to use the town centre (top responses)

**Spaces to sit and meet outside, especially covered spaces.**

- “ Right now we just wander around as there’s no place to sit.
- “ If you’re getting food, there isn’t anywhere to sit, so that would be good.

**Greater variety of markets**

- “ I love sweets, so something with homemade baked goods - those fried sticks - churros!
- “ Different markets like with music, gamings, clothes, food that’s not fruit and veg.

**More activities and entertainment**

- “ If I want to go out, I’ll go to Norwich. I never hang out here cause there’s nothing to do.
- “ More free or cheap activities. Plays and drama, buskers, more student exhibitions with food and drink.

**Places to go in the evening**

- “ There’s not proper restaurant here. [We want] something to do in the evening.
- “ Maybe a karaoke bar or pop up cinemas, pub, music.

**Better lighting**

- “ Having some sort of string lights in town like in the concept art would be great.”
- “ [We want] outdoor ‘lit’ spaces.

# Public Realm Survey

## Key Findings

### Survey Overview

The Public Realm survey ran from Monday, September 20<sup>th</sup> until Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. People could participate via the Social Pinpoint site (the preferred option), or complete a paper survey which was available at several locations with the town centre. There was a total of 101 respondents.

Key findings by question are presented here.

### General Response

Although participants offered suggestions and raised questions about many aspects of the public realm design, most comments (63%) were positive.

#### Legend:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative



**Q1. There have been several key aims of the High Street Heritage Action Zone project. Rate your level of agreement with how well these proposals meet the following aims (please select only one response):**

The responses were overwhelmingly positive to the proposals, with strong agreement that they meet the HAZ project aims. Maintenance and security did come up, however, as issues that need addressing.

**Creating communal spaces for relaxation and gathering**

**93% Agree**

- “ The enhanced seating areas and planting are lovely but who will look after the planting keeping it weed free well kept and tidy.
- “ Very supportive of the garden but hope that this will not encourage young people to gather there in the evenings?

**Promoting the Market Place and Cross**

**93% Agree**

- “ ...These proposals will make the town a much more pleasant destination and encourage people to visit and shop.
- “ If you want to improve/enhance historical aspect of town, and create a more environmentally -friendly atmosphere, please encourage wooden shop signs, planting of small trees and reduction of noise.

**Improving navigation around the town centre**

**92% Agree**

- “ The proposed bus stop is a particularly good idea and will ease congestion in Market Street.
- “ The town centre is in dire need of help and the proposed plans seem to provide answers to many of the town’s enduring issues.

**Encouraging people to spend more time in the town centre**

**97% Agree**

- “ Prioritising public space for people and not vehicles is the way forward.
- “ Would love the market square to be traffic free so we can mingle without fumes from cars.
- “ You really need to encourage new shops to the town so shoppers have a reason to come and enjoy what you are proposing to do.

**Bringing to life the unique historic character of the town centre**

**94% Agree**

- “ I really like the idea of the timeline paving. Will there be signs or informational posts relevant to the buildings history to read? That would be a good way to learn about our town’s history.
- “ North Walsham is an old medieval town with a lot of history and a lovely market place, all the above proposals will enhance it.

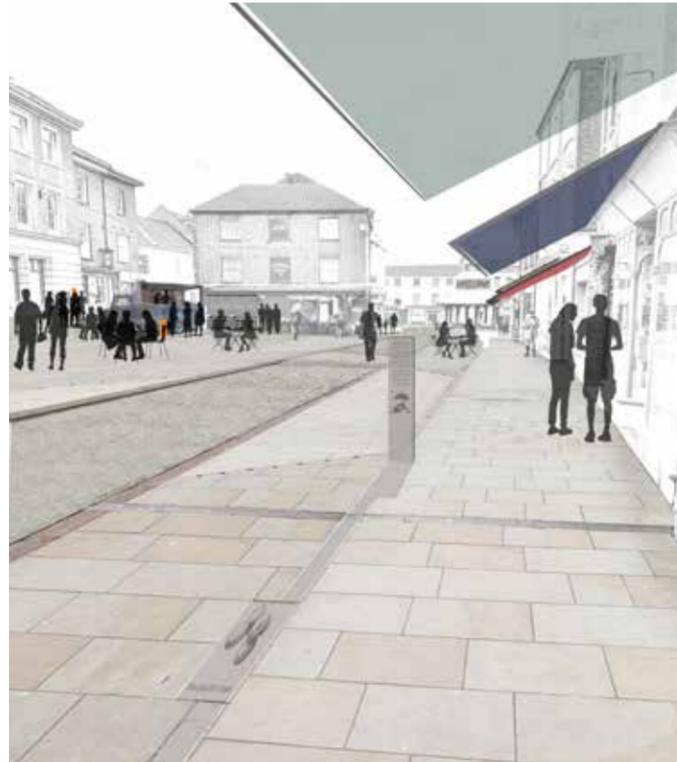
# Public Realm Survey

## Key Findings

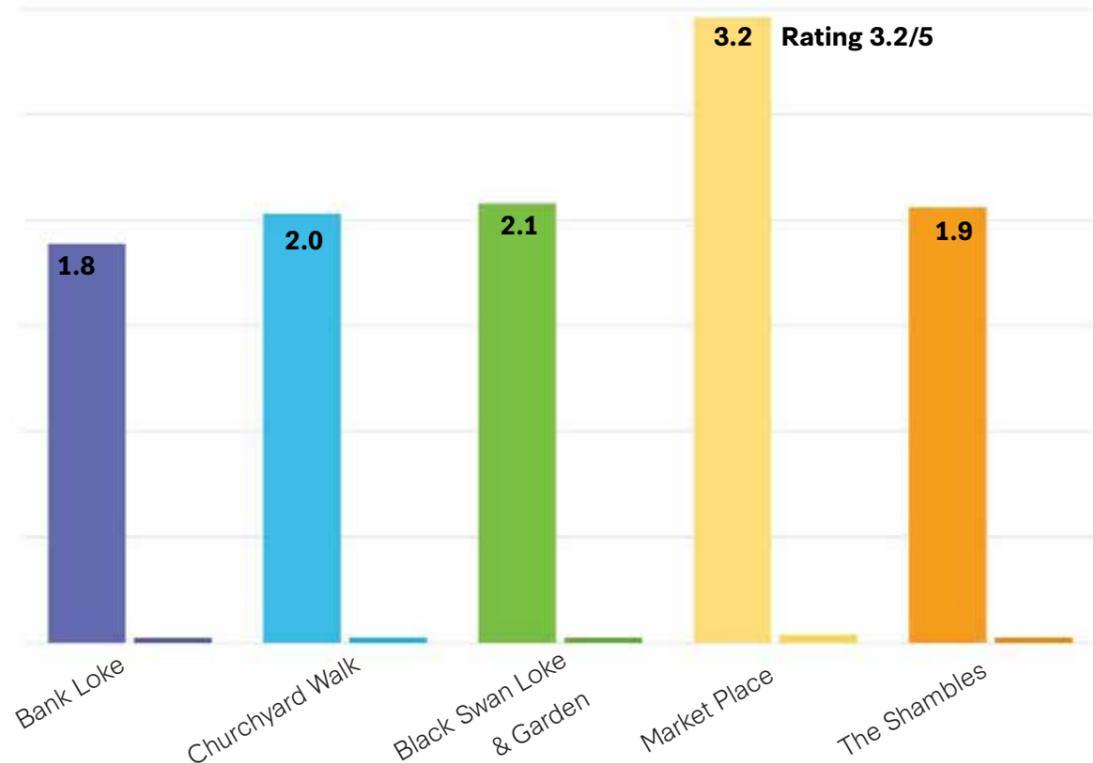
**Q2. Considering the proposals for the five public realm areas you have seen, rank your priorities across the different designs (from most important to least important, 1 being most important, and 5 the least. Please use all of the numbers from 1 to 5.)**

1. Market Place
2. Churchyard Walk
3. The Shambles
4. Black Swan Loke & Garden
5. Bank Loke

Most participants ranked the Market Place as the most important place for a design intervention with 296 votes. Churchyard Walk (208), The Shambles (206) and Black Swan Loke and Garden (203) were ranked respectively. Again, the issue of maintenance came up, as well as the fact that the right mix of businesses also needs to exist to attract visitors.



Eastern approach into the Market Place

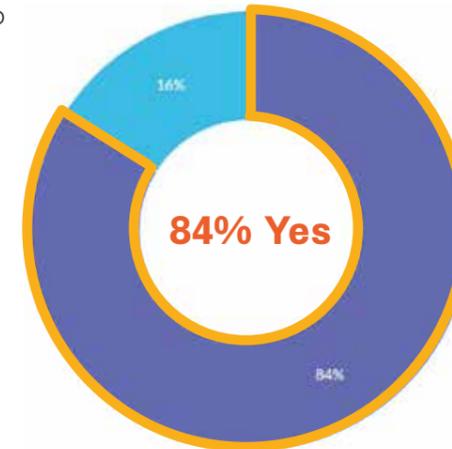


**Q3 Do you support the creation of a communal garden, like the one we have proposed next to the Black Swan?**

The majority of participants (84%) voted to create the communal garden beside Black Swan. However, there was concern about the safety, security and cleanliness of the garden. Comments suggest CCTV, maintenance costs and lighting to mitigate this.

**Legend:**

- Yes
- No



**Q4 Do you have any other comments on the public realm improvement proposals?**

There were 63 additional comments - below is a small selection.

- “ It would be nice to improve the town centre. With more people there, unfortunately, there will a lot more litter and maybe vandalism. Who will keep it clean?
- “ Definitely like the idea of less traffic in the town centre and designs look good; [they] will make the space better for more social and cultural events.
- “ Rather than be pedestrianised, the Market Place could be resurfaced in a heritage material such as cobblestone, which would slow cars down without reducing access.
- “ The town would be more vibrant with more shops. People would not be drawn to North Walsham just because there will gardens, trees, tables, chairs etc.

# Youth Survey

## Key Findings

### Survey Overview

The survey ran from the 11<sup>th</sup> of October - 22<sup>nd</sup> of October. The majority of participants are between 15-17 years old (89%). Only 20% of the 62 participants lived in North Walsham, but 69% of them study in North Walsham. Overall responses to the designs have been positive.

### How do you travel to and around the town centre?



- Walk
- Cycle
- Bus
- Train
- Taxi
- Car (get dropped off)
- Car (drive and park)
- Wheelchair
- Power/mobility scooter
- Other

**45% Walk**  
**20% take the Bus**

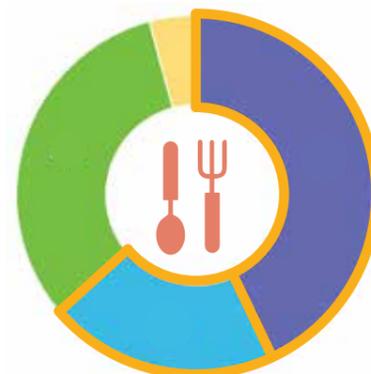
### Where do you go in the town centre?



- Coffee (mainly Costa)
- Grocery Shops
- Charity Shops
- Amenities
- Education
- Spiritual
- Other

**Majority go to coffee and grocery shops**

### Why do you visit these locations?



- Getting food
- Shopping
- Socialising with friends
- Other? (Tell us what you do)

**Food is the top reason for visiting the town centre**

Top choices to encourage more use of the space.

- 1. Covered spaces to meet + free wifi in public space**
- 2. Spaces to meet and socialise outside**
- 3. Outdoor seating**
- 4. More activities / entertainment**
- 5. Public toilets**

“ The men here scare me, also almost got hit by a car walking through the town centre today.

“ I like going into the Market place to get food.

“ It would be great to prioritise pedestrians and have more green spaces.

# Youth Survey

## Key Findings

Top favourite designs.

1. Shambles Terrace
2. Black Swan Loke + Garden
3. Market Place

Top ideas to make the town feel safer:

1. Lighting
2. CCTV
3. Better Footpaths

*Only 53% feel safe in town*



# Town Council Extraordinary Meeting (not part of the HAZ consultation programme)

## Feedback

### Event Overview

On 12<sup>th</sup> of October, the North Walsham Town Council held an 'extraordinary meeting' to discuss the public realm and Highways proposals. This was not one of the scheduled consultation events and the HAZ project team was not in attendance, but the Council shared their response to the proposals, which we have included here as we felt it was important to capture.

### Response from the Town Council

**To respond to your current engagement on the HAZ Placemaking proposals in the Market Place, North Walsham Town Council has engaged with the residents and the traders and users of the town centre, through ad-hoc surveys and in a public meeting on 12th October. We have also monitored comments on this on social media. Whilst we are supportive of the project as a whole, we have four key issues that concern us as described below.**

- We understand that as part of this project permanent free one hour parking spaces will be provided in Bank Loke car park to replace spaces lost in the Market Place. We would also like to see a number of permanent free one hour parking spaces provided in Vicarage Street car park for the benefit of motorists who arrive to that side of the town centre.
  - The use of Kings Arms Street by pedestrians is currently dangerous, with no clear safe route for pedestrians. The footways are narrow and discontinuous along its length. Alongside the wider HAZ project, a continuous footpath should be constructed along Kings Arms Street, The carriageway is currently wider than is required for a single lane, and so can be reduced to provide space for footway widening. This work should be carried out in advance of construction work beginning in the Market Place; or failing this, some temporary road markings (such as hatched edge strips) or other safety measures introduced, to improve the safety of pedestrians.
  - We have concerns at the impact on air quality in Kings Arms Street when it becomes a busy route seven days a week, rather than Thursdays only. We suggest that monitoring should be carried out over several weeks to compare the Thursday and other day levels.
- We strongly recommend that access for deliveries to businesses should be available at ALL times, i.e. including during the daytime closure periods. The volume of these is not great and so would not cause significant nuisance to pedestrians or to the quiet use of the Market Place, but the beneficial impact of permitting daytime delivery would be huge on our traders. The delivery bays should have time limits displayed to ensure that they are always available for delivery vehicles

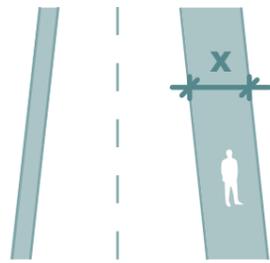
# 3.0



## Next Steps

# Recommendations and Next Steps

Placemaking + Public Realm Masterplan



## Share outcomes and next steps

## Demonstrate feedback integration

## Visualise key dates and milestones

## Create a multi-channel comms plan

## Create ongoing engagement program

## Look for further funding opportunities

**1.**

Share the outcomes of the consultation process and what the next steps are for the project.

**2.**

Be able to demonstrate that the consultation process we've been through has been captured in the next iteration of the design and highways proposals.

**3.**

Create an overview of the various elements of the HAZ project and how they integrate with each other, along with a visual timeline of key dates and milestones, to share with the public.

**4.**

Create a comprehensive multi-channel comms plan throughout the life of the project that lets the community know what's happening on the project across all areas.

**5.**

Develop a regular program of engagement events where the community can find out what's happening directly from the project team and have their questions/concerns addressed (this could be virtual).

**6.**

Re-look at the funding available for other elements of the Masterplan to develop further (for example, St. Nicholas Court, public toilets, etc.)

# FAQ's

## Placemaking and wider HAZ project

### Addressing Questions + Concerns

While individuals will always have specific concerns or questions, there were several topics that came up repeatedly, and any future project communications must address these with clear, robust answers.

One of the most critical things to convey is that the public realm and highways proposals sit within the larger context of the HAZ project and includes other work-streams like building improvements, cultural programme, etc.

### Project Overview

- 1. What is the HAZ project and why is North Walsham doing it?**
- 2. Who is funding this project?**
- 3. Who is leading this project?**
- 4. Other than the public realm and highways proposals, what else is part of this project?**
- 5. What are the project time-scales and key milestones?**
- 6. When can we expect to see work happening?**
- 7. What else will be able to input on?**
- 8. When the proposals are implemented, what is the wider marketing and promotion strategy?**

### Public Realm + Highways

- 1. It looks like all of these decisions have already been made - why are you asking for our opinions?**
- 2. What will you do with our feedback?**
- 3. How will investing in the public realm and highways attract more people and new businesses to the town?**
- 4. How have we engaged with the town's youth, especially those who live in North Walsham?**
- 5. Why are we proposing pedestrianisation when nearby 'successful' towns like Holt aren't doing it?**
- 6. What are we doing to understand the impact of pedestrianising the Market Place on the traffic patterns around the town centre?**
- 7. Why isn't King's Arms Street not part of this proposal? It's one of the most dangerous streets in the town.**
- 8. How will businesses in the Market Place get their deliveries?**
- 9. Where and how many free parking spots will there be? How long can you park there?**

# 4.0



## Appendix

# Travelling Exhibition

## Exhibition Location Detailed Comments

### Exhibition Location Summaries

#### Thursday Market Stall - September 30th, 10:00-14:00

Approx 150 visitors visited the stall. It was observed that these were mostly 60+ ('active seniors') as well as a few 35+ including some parents of young/school age children. Quite a few singles compared with couples.

Additional topics discussed:

- Parking, especially questioning why parking could not be completely free, and the length of time for free parking. Concern raised about spots being taken all day by those working in town, so some time restriction needed.
- For residents who live in/near the town centre, access to their own road, blocking of pavements and long stay parking on residential streets
- Pedestrian access into the town centre and especially along King's Arms Street is not safe.
- Lots of support for making the town centre traffic free or at least reducing traffic, although the needs of the businesses in terms of deliveries was raised by non-business owners.
- Some against pedestrianisation questioned why this was being done in North Walsham when nearby, more 'successful' towns like Holt and Cromer weren't doing it.
- Some local business owners who did not or could not attend the workshop stopped by to discuss their specific needs; similar to those already raised in the workshop.
- Some people commented that the negative views of some of the business owners towards the town centre improvements did not reflect the supportive and positive opinions of much of the wider community.

#### Cafe Kitale - October 7th, 9:30-12:00

Approx 100 visitors, slightly younger audience compared with Market Place; more people between 30's-50's. Included several people who worked in the town centre.

Additional topics discussed:

- Some questions and concerns but most were generally positive.
- Representatives from some of the charity shops in the town centre had concerns about people making donations not being able to drive right up to their shops to drop off. They felt if this wasn't possible people would donate to other charity shops instead and they would be forced to close down.
- Particular concerns around loading and how this will be policed. In particular what is currently the loading bay opposite PACT, which is proposed to be the bus stop. This is currently and frequently used illegally throughout the day for 'pop ins' and short stay parking.
- Similar to other events, people liked the proposals but worried about the impact of traffic patterns around the town.
- Suggestion that better signage would help those unfamiliar with the town to navigate the system.
- Some comments about lack of things to bring people into the town even if it did look better
- Many conversations around the town's heritage, building improvement schemes and cultural programming
- One man representing funeral directors was particularly concerned about access into the church and where other funeral cars would park, suggested access from Vicarage Street might be preferable.

#### Virtual Presentation - October 11th, 18:30-19:30

8 attendees. Positive feedback on public realm designs, but recognition that covered areas are also needed to prolong use even in inclement weather.

Additional topics discussed:

- Desire to understand how the project team are engaging with youth, especially those who live in North Walsham.
- Questioning pedestrianisation when other nearby towns like Holt have not.
- King's Arms Street is a dangerous road for pedestrians and a solution needs to be addressed in these proposals.
- Desire to understand how the public realm works will benefit businesses and shops, and what else is being done to attract new businesses into the town (i.e. reduced business rates, etc.)
- Positive feedback on public realm designs but recognition that covered areas are also needed to prolong use even in inclement weather
- Desire to understand what the marketing and promotion strategy for the town will be once the proposals have been carried out.

# Travelling Exhibition

## Key Findings

### **North Walsham Library - October 14th, 11:00-13:00**

Approx 70 visitors, mostly aged 60+ ('active seniors'), including some repeat business owners. Most visitors wanted to be convinced that the area can and would improve.

The desired range of shops and businesses that would be ideal for the town centre - some wanted more clothes shops, some wanted more eateries and cafés. A restaurant along the lines of the Wetherspoon's model was felt to be what the town needed, as well (family friendly, good but cheap with a wide appeal to bring in the whole community).

The Shambles area and Black Swan Garden designs specifically were well received.

Additional topics discussed:

- The desired range of shops and businesses that would be ideal for the town centre - some wanted more clothes shops, some wanted more eateries and cafés. A restaurant along the Wetherspoons model was felt to be what the town needed as well (family friendly, good but cheap with a wide appeal to bring in the whole community).
- Some visitors with more time to spend said that currently, they go to Norwich for a nice meal or a day out, but would happily spend more time in North Walsham if there were things to do/places to go.
- The Shambles and Black Swan Garden designs specifically were well received.
- The infrastructure that the Highways proposals created for better and more diverse markets was welcomed.
- Concern around how people access the available car parks and that signage needs to be much improved to enable this
- Some raised concern around buses not being able to go through the Market Place and wanted this to be reconsidered
- Suggestion that the taxi rank on Market Street could be moved elsewhere and these spots could be made into public parking

### **Sainsbury's North Walsham - October 14th, 14:30-18:30**

Approx 150 people. More diverse audience and age range than other locations, including several families and people who care for partners or parents. Most visitors came across the exhibition by chance rather than coming specially for it. A good site to raise awareness as we gave out lots of booklets and surveys to people who didn't always stop for conversations. In hindsight and for future consultation, this might have been a better site to visit earlier in the process.

Additional topics discussed:

- Some people were slightly wary at the start and there were several lengthy conversations, but most people seemed positive when plans were explained.
- Several comments about disabled parking in the town centre, mainly from older people and one blue badge holder, they felt parking nearby was ample and most people could manage/ walk from Bank Loke and surrounding area.
- Several similar comments from different individuals that they felt the designs were too 'modern'. They moved to the area from London and other cities and felt the designs were too modern and detracted from the town's character.
- Lots of contention about King's Arms Street, especially in relation to traffic pollution into shops and danger to pedestrians
- Issues around parking now the free spaces in Mundesley Road have been removed.
- Current two lane arrangement allows vehicles to turn left onto New Road while vehicles turning right wait for traffic to be clear. Limiting traffic through Market Place will reduce volume of traffic at that junction but reduction to single lane could cause traffic backing up along Church St waiting for right turns at junction.
- Vehicles delivering to McColls convenience store on the corner of Church St park in the left hand lane currently, allowing traffic to continue to travel past in right hand lane to the junction. Reduction to single lane would mean traffic complete blocked if delivery vans continue to park on the road.

# Business Community Workshop

## List of Comments/Questions

- How will Church St be narrowed as one way?
- How will donations be delivered?
- Salvation army donations drop-off - vehicles unable to pass if narrowed.
- Thursdays are quieter than any other day for businesses.
- Rely on donations access throughout the day.
- Turning movements into side lane - Church Street are restricted.
- Market Cross Mews - need to swing into loading bay, but if there is a bus or lorry causes obstruction
- Shift taxi rank to other side of the road?
- Would rather improve pedestrian routes to town than in the Market Place.
- All traffic being steered down King Arms St - pedestrians having safe access into the town centre (currently doesn't exist)
- Pedestrian routes to the town centre town centre - pinch points very narrow pavement.
- People from residential areas (often who don't have cars) getting there.
- Typical drop-off time: 2-3min for donations either side of Hall Lane on Church Street.
- Awnings on buildings - who will maintain these? - Not relevant to most businesses.
- Market Place is the priority.
- People coming to the market don't necessarily come to our shops.
- Any proposals would be an improvement.
- Opportunity to put tables and chairs outside - use wider pavement for this?
- Lighting is an issue - Bank Loke, Churchyard into Vicarage Car Park feels unsafe at night
- Mon-Wednesday there's no one town.
- Customers just want to pick up / drop off, not linger.
- People only come during the daytime, there's nothing here at night for them.
- Need a system for pickup and drop-off, even if during a restricted time 4-8pm.
- Attractors: don't have big shops. If you don't have the shops, people won't care.
- What will entice people to come in when the weather is old/wet?
- Deliveries occur at multiple times through the day and schedules can't be changes 5 times a week.
- Public toilets in town centre need to be addressed and people want an update on this.
- Improve the appearance of the whole place, give it a lift.
- Communal garden at Black Swan Loke was well received.
- Would create a foundation for other positive change and investment.
- Positive clean image for the town that independent shops can build on.
- Number of grants being given to shops for improvement will be much appreciated.
- Make the place more attractive to those in the surrounding suburbs/village.
- Make NW a destination, spend more time, create an experience.
- About bringing original new businesses into the town.
- Shop frontages have to change and be improved.

## Opportunities

### **Will create a positive image for the town that independent shops can build on**

By improving the appearance of the whole town and make North Walsham more of a destination that people want to spend time in.

### **Appreciation of and strong interest in the Business Improvement Grant Scheme**

None of the businesses were previously aware of these grants, but were very interested to find out more as there was general agreement that shop frontages need to be improved.

### **A positive focus could tap into the strong sense of community and generate action.**

Whilst easier for some than others to envision, there was a sense that thing could improve, but that a group of people to drive things forward was needed.

### **Will lay the foundation for other positive change and investment.**

A more attractive public realm could help to bring more original, new businesses into the town and address some of the variety that is currently lacking.

### **Additional topics raised:**

- The need for public toilets in the town centre and a desire to understand what was being done to address this
- Recognition that shop frontages need to be improved, but that as many of them are in a Conservation Area, how this would work. In general, more information needed about the Business Improvement Grant Improvement.

## Challenges

### **The ability to load and unload freely throughout the day is the biggest concern businesses have.**

They have deliveries throughout the day, so restricting times was not practical. Some were open to the idea of a time period within which this could happen. Issues were also raised around having enough space for delivery vehicles to park and turn around.

### **Difficulty in seeing how this investment would change customer behaviours in the town centre.**

As the town centre is currently relatively empty early in the week and after shops close, the prevalent behaviour is that people don't linger, or want to. Businesses wanted examples of how public realm investment could change this.

### **Safe access for pedestrians coming into town doesn't current exist.**

It was felt the focus should be more on making footpaths and access *into* the town center safe, rather than in the Market Place. King's Arms Street was noted as especially dangerous.

### **Removing parking from the Market Place would drive customers away.**

Customers were generally thought to value instant access to takeaways and shops, and that asking them to walk any further or park in the nearby car parks would make them go elsewhere.

### **Business is slower on Market Days, so this as a model for the rest of the week is not ideal.**

The businesses saw the Market as competition, with people shopping in the Market instead of the shops, not an event that could enhance/complement their offering.

# Public Realm Survey

## Data Analysis

### Legend:

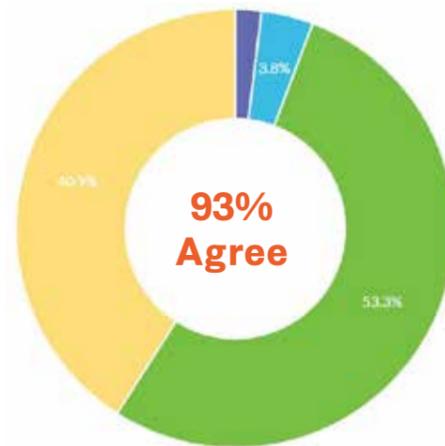
- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**Q1. There have been several key aims of the High Street Heritage Action Zone project. Rate your level of agreement with how well these proposals meet the following aims (please select only one response):**

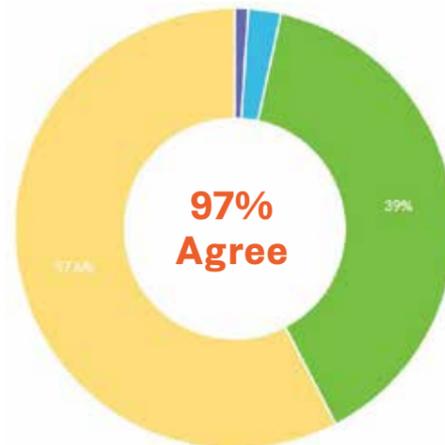
### Key Comments

The vast majority of participants wished to improve the public realm.

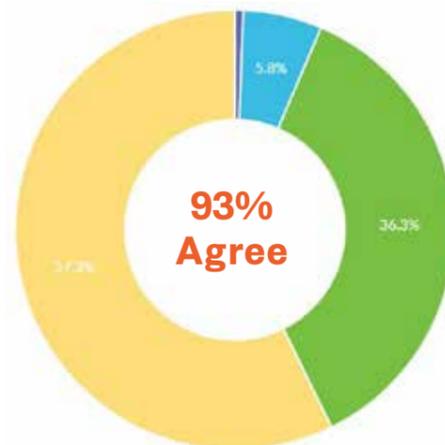
**Q1 (a) Promoting the Market Place and Cross**



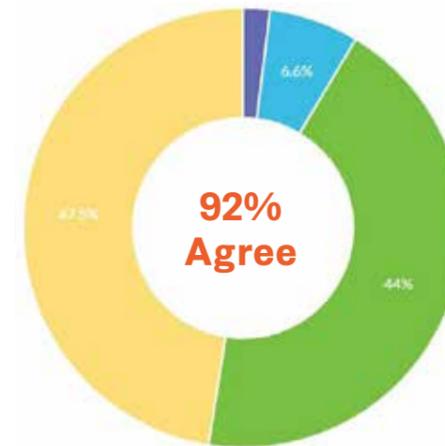
**Q1 (b) Encouraging people to spend more time in the town centre**



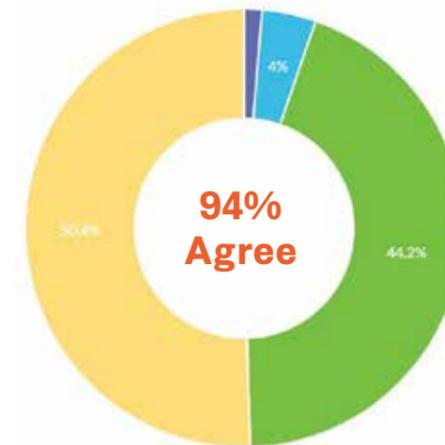
**Q1 (c) Creating communal spaces for relaxation and gathering**



**Q1 (d) Improving navigation around the town centre**



**Q1 (e) Bringing to life the unique historic character of the town centre**



“ I really like the plans, I do think shop owners should be made to update or move.

- Public Realm Survey

“ Sending all the traffic up Kings Arms Street is a dreadful idea - it is so narrow, and the pavements are poor.

- Public Realm Survey

“ I like that you are trying to make North Walsham a pleasant destination. I don't shop there enough but if I'm encouraged to come into the market place this will change.

- Public Realm Survey

“ Community orchard, rather than community garden. More trees and other planting in the market place.

- Public Realm Survey

“ Very supportive of the garden but hope that this will not encourage young people to gather there in the evenings?

- Public Realm Survey

# Public Realm Survey

## Data Analysis

Please provide further explanation of your response for any of the above:

“ It would be nice to improve the town centre. With more people there, unfortunately, there will be a lot more litter and maybe vandalism. Who will keep it clean?

- Public Realm Survey

“ Defiantly like the idea of less traffic in the town centre and designs look good and will make the space more better for more social and cultural events.

- Public Realm Survey

“ Rather than pedestrianise the market place could be a resurfaced in a heritage material such as cobblestone which would slow cars down without reducing access.

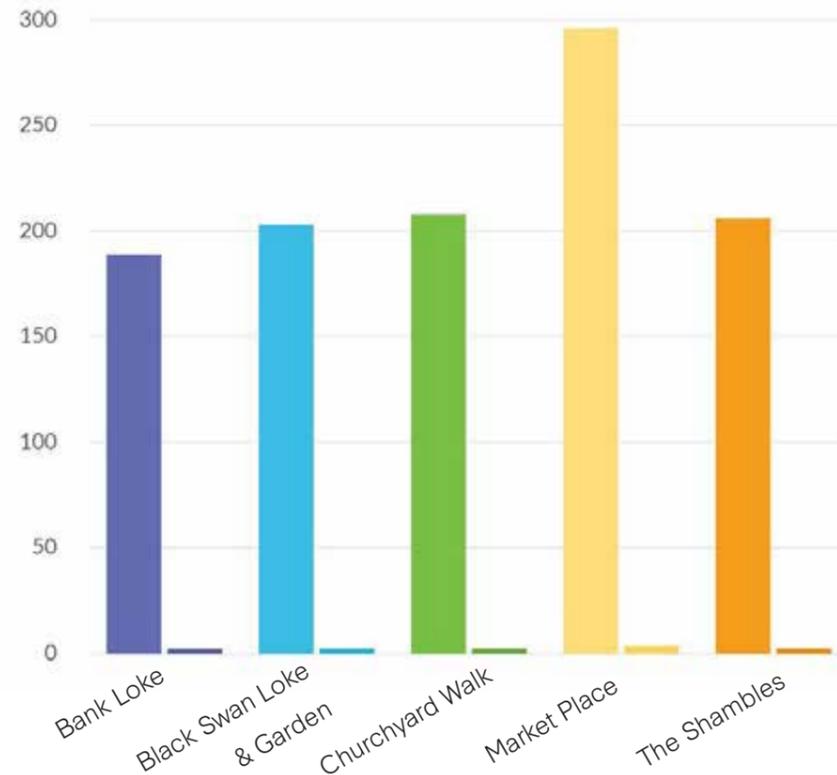
- Public Realm Survey

**Q2 Considering the proposals for the five public realm areas you have seen, rank your priorities across the different designs (from most important to least important, 1 being most important, and 5 the least. Please use all of the numbers from 1 to 5.)**

1. Market Place
2. Churchyard Walk
3. The Shambles
4. Black Swan Loke & Garden
5. Bank Loke

**Key Comments**

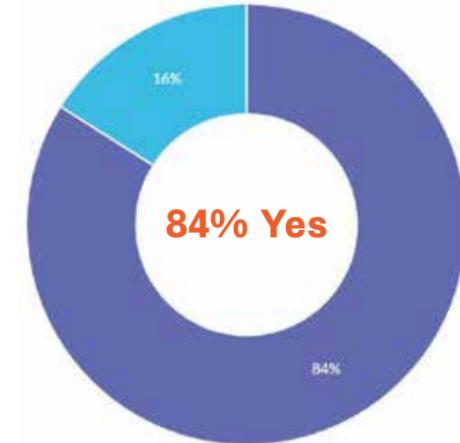
Most participants ranked the Market Place as the most important place for a design intervention with 296 votes. Churchyard Walk (208), The Shambles (206) and Black Swan Loke and Garden (203) were ranked respectively.



**Q3 Do you support the creation of a communal garden, like the one we have proposed next to the Black Swan?**

**Legend:**

- Yes
- No



**Key Comments**

The majority of participants (84%) voted to create the communal garden beside Black Swan. However, there was concern about the safety, security and cleanliness of the garden. Comments suggest CCTV, maintenance costs and lighting to mitigate this.

**General Response**

**Legend:**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative



**Key Comments**

Although participants were mostly divided on many aspects of the public realm design, most comments (63%) were positive.

# Public Realm Survey

## List of Comments

### Legend:

- Bank Loke
- Black Swan Loke & Garden
- Churchyard Walk
- Market Place
- The Shambles
- Highways

**1. There have been several key aims of the High Street Heritage Action Zone project. Rate your level of agreement with how well these proposals meet the following aims (please select only one response):**

**a. Promoting the Market Place and Cross**

**b. Encouraging people to spend more time in the town centre**

**c. Creating communal spaces for relaxation and gathering**

**d. Improving navigation around the town centre**

**e. Bringing to life the unique historic character of the town centre**

**Please provide further explanation of your response for any of the above:**

- More covered spaces would be an improvement, shop canopies/blinds?
- ● The town looks shabby and uninviting but has an interesting past. When the town provides what people want they will come e.g. the weekly market. If there is enough free parking within easy walking distance through pleasant spaces, they may stop going on about the few unnecessary parking spaces in the market place.
- ● Great to see that time and resources are being spent on this, but I would also ask what is being done to address wider issues around **climate change**. There's a great opportunity to reduce our reliance upon vehicle use and encouraging pedestrians and cyclists instead. Otherwise, people will just ask for

more parking spaces and we end up with islands of activity that can only be reached by car. I would strongly encourage you to consider how your plans will address climate change and emission reduction. Simply shifting traffic to other parts of the town is not the answer, it needs to be fundamentally address, rather than avoiding the issue.

- Sort out one way system.
- Quite frankly these changes will not improve North Walsham. It needs far more than a couple of greener areas, wider pavements and no go zones for vehicles. As a resident for over 10 years there is nothing in the town centre to bring people in. That is where you need to start. The whole town is in need of a complete overhaul . The **quality of shops** needs massive improvement for a start. Just look at the town centre of North Walsham on a Saturday afternoon, you will be able to count the number of people you see on one hand. There is NOTHING to get people into the town and I just can't see how these changes will do that when it doesn't give anyone a reason to be there in the first place. For all of the housing that is being added to the town, far greater efforts need to be made. It's a big problem that won't be solved overnight. But someone really needs to look at the quality of shops that are here. We have a discount store, several estate agents, takeaways, a butchers and greengrocers and a few other shops. Most close at lunchtime. What above would make anyone want to spend time here..?
- There isn't really any mention of the **market cross** in these plans so not sure how this will be 'promoted' would have like a don't know or natural answer option.
- Prioritising public space for people and not vehicles is the way forward.
- ● Plans look great, no need for cars or buses to drive through . Much better to make town centre a place to meet and socialise, to eat and drink
- The town has unique lay out and wonderful buildings. We need to **celebrate the towns history but build in facilities resources and opportunities** for the future. This must be cross generational. It would also be

wonderful to make the town accessible for those with limited mobility. We need good disable parking.

- ● Cutting off all access to cars will damage the high street. No shops no people , why do we need the town shut to cars when their is already large open spaces in town, precinct, churchyard and memorial park
- The proposed by pass of the town centre using King's Arms street and Church street is a bad decision due to the narrow roads.
- I really like the plans, I do think shop owners should be made to update or move. Waterloo shop is disgusting inside, and the sweet shop opposite, how long have those sweets been in the jars? - I don't think he gets enough custom to change the stock frequently, these two in particular let the town down. Could they be given a **shop makeover** from the funds and some modern retail training?
- ● Overall concept, design, traffic modifications etc. are all fine. However, it may be 'chicken and egg', unless there is a significant change to the range and **quality of shops and services** to attract footfall little will change. Current empty shops need to be filled. Existing outlets need to be made more attractive. With one or two exceptions, e.g. Shambles, Hop in, there is little to attract people into the centre beyond the use of everyday services such as banks, chemist etc. If you walk through the centre, look above shop front height to see how little is being done to maintain buildings. Somehow a range of independent, non national chain, offerings need to be attracted in, attractive to a broad age range. I realise that this may be the holy grail for many small town centres but physical improvement schemes will not have their desired outcome without changing the overall attractiveness of a place.
- The town would be more vibrant with more shops. People would not be drawn to North Walsham just because there will gardens, trees, tables, chairs etc. What I have seen from photos the town have been open to traffic over the centuries whether it as a horse and cart car or bus. Who at the N D C live in N.W . Back to the tables and chairs they are not very

hygienic I have not seen anyone clean them what are there now. Is someone going to be employed full time to clean them. As for no traffic through the town what's going g to happen to the traffic? There will be congestion up Kings Arms St and Church St I would hate to imagine! What about the disabled? Some disabled cannot walk to far having the parking in the market place help when they need to go the chemists etc. When the covid was at its height the town was closed off it was dead as I remember there was a demonstration from the shop keepers and towns people, and as I remember rightly Mr Baker put in an appearance in Support of the townspeople. Shops is what the town need not to be blocked off!

- I remember Walsham in the 1960 , it was so busy, market day there wasn't enough room on the pavement.
- The proposed bus stop is a particularly good idea and will ease congestion in Market Street.
- Things need to change in this town center, it is decaying and dead and proposals like this will only help despite what others may say (their motives are usually selfish ones)
- The history of the town has been destroyed through the years, there's nothing in the town to attract people, all you are doing is making it harder for disabled people to shop and more and more people will go elsewhere it will destroy the town not improve it I have a disabled family and lived here all my life the car parks will be too far to walk, we won't support the town and especially as having to go so far round just to get out and back home is ridiculous.
- Public realm improvements and consumer and business satisfaction - There is significant evidence that perceptions of an area - to businesses and consumers - matter. It is often assumed that more parking is the answer to struggling high streets. However across Europe, studies have linked the quality of public spaces to people's perceptions of attractiveness of an area, contributing towards their quality of life and influencing where they shop. 8 • Pedestrianisation has also been blamed for falling

# Public Realm Survey

## List of Comments

sales, ignoring the many contributing factors. Contrary to this claim, there is consistent evidence that customers like pedestrian environments and dislike traffic. • Retailers have been shown to over-estimate the importance of the car for customer travel. In these studies, more people actually walked, cycled or came by bus. • Case study evidence suggests that restricting traffic does not necessarily reduce the number of customers. In fact, charging road users and ring-fencing the revenue for public realm investment could also enhance business performance in the long run. • Other studies have found willingness to pay and positive perceptions amongst landowners, retailers and entrepreneurs. • Householders and customers are willing to pay for better streets too: for example, revealing preferences for more attractive and sophisticated street designs. • The way we shop has changed and so have our expectations of the high street. Shoppers now seek to 'experience' something different and we need to know more about how better streets can add to that experience. In recent years, successive governments have placed more emphasis on walking and cycling on health, environmental and safety grounds. Active travel also complements efforts to revive high streets and create liveable communities. As well as being relatively cheap forms of transport, walking and cycling infrastructure requires less comparative government investment. In spite of this, walking has generally been treated as the 'poor relation' of infrastructure spending and is often an afterthought in urban planning. Economic benefits from infrastructure spending are often difficult to demonstrate (for example, the current controversy regarding High Speed 2). A factor that influences the high cost benefit returns for walking investments is that the sums required are usually comparatively small and the consumer surplus – the savings generated from switching from cars or public transport – are substantial. Although this report has focused largely on private returns to businesses and investors, these should be assessed alongside the wider public or social returns. Together they make a compelling case for investing in the public realm.

● The proposals provide a well thought out strategy to achieve the objectives within the inevitable funding constraints.

● There needs to be central disabled car parking that's closer than what is offered at Bank Loke. If pedestrianisation is the way forward there need to be more to attract people than a variety of charity shops, and over abundance of hair dressers and barbers and way too many empty lots. Think Bonmarché (would bring in older generations that are hesitant to travel to Norwich) and a Wetherspoons/ McDonald's equivalent for the younger generations and families

● This does not stop all drivers going through market place, I as a driver have a blue disabled badge so can drive straight through without even parking with nothing to stop me or any other blue badge holder using it as a cut through to new road. kerbs should be aligned with the road so alleviating trip hazard and bollards placed to define road and pedestrian areas. Raised areas are also a trip hazard for disabled and visually impaired. The town is gridlocked on Thursday due to the market and road closures for this, by putting this in place will gridlock the entire town every day. No mention of how many parking spaces are being lost both in market place and new road car park for the proposed bus terminal no mention of where the lost disabled or able bodied spaces at new road are going to be put if at all. Are the post office going to vacate the site to free up the spaces. This proposal has not been thought through at all, the highways infrastructure needs to be prioritised and sorted out before any of this can be done in the future especially with the proposed western development creating another possible 3,000 vehicles using the roads around the town. Cycles and skateboards will use market place as a playground again creating hazards. Urgent medical supplies that need to be delivered to the chemists each day means that the drivers will have to find alternate drop of points and parking. Local businesses such as the take aways will no longer be able to access market place using their own vehicles for deliveries to local residents. Why permit holder bays as currently they don't have them? Diverting all traffic along Kings Arm Street is going to create absolute chaos and fumes from idling traffic especially when all other roads are at a standstill as they do already. Having a bus stop at market place is not the place for it, buses already stop and drop people off by the Kings Arms and are regularly

stopped from proceeding along the road due to other delivery lorries dropping off to other businesses along this route. Emergency services would never be able to access anyone if this goes ahead. The fuel shortage of late showed the town gridlocked so closing market place will only add to this when situations happen like this or an accident happens on any of the roads that link onto it. Market street will be the same, along with all the roads from the traffic lights leading to these areas.

● Some positives but no real substance once you look into the proposed scheme. Nothing leaps out at me that will create intrigue and regeneration

● Sending all the traffic up Kings Arms Street is a dreadful idea - it is so narrow, and the pavements are poor.

● More green areas more seating. And completely pedestrianise please

● I have put the remarks 're North Walsham because I feel very strong about closing the market place off North Walsham is a small market town NOT a seaside resort therefore gardens and trees will look out of place. I have lived here all my life and the town have gone down hill therefore we need the parking in the market place need to stay to encourage people to stop and look around. We need more small shops, having travelled to quite a few towns in England that is what you find. OK there are your coffee shops but not to the extent you want to have here. We also need the parking for disabled people which extend to more than four. Also there will be required New dropped kerbs, guide dogs will then have to get used to all the changes also the traffic congestion have you thought of visually impaired people who have try and cross the roads. Personally I think that there is not much thought gone into all this. Do all the shop keepers have to change their occupation to coffee shops to cater for all the table and chairs you want? It's a pity that a lot of the older and interesting buildings have been pulled down then the money could have been wisely spent on them. Please think again. Just thought that who's going to stop here when there's Cromer and Sheringham down the road. I wouldn't!

● Currently the town offers no attraction for visitors or locals, these proposals will make the town a much more pleasant destination and encourage people to visit and shop.

● Would like to see total pedestrianisation

● North Walsham is basically a nice medieval town that lacks vision and investment, so is dying. I consider that the plan goes a long way in addressing these issues.

● I am very supportive of the plans, with some caveats. It seems likely that any recovery within the town centre will be **leisure and service led**. The plans should therefore include more focus on encouraging these type of businesses. Examples could include, more public seating, or provision for cafés and restaurants to have additional outside seating. Provision of free wifi throughout the town centre (this would also help market traders who experience poor signal for POS devices. I would also like to see more emphasis on permanent features to reflect the social, cultural and industrial history of the town. A permanent display space on the market place, and a town trail with signage and on-line information (accessible via QR codes) would be an excellent way of encouraging visitors to the town.

● The town centre is in dire need of help and the proposed plans seem to provide answers to many of the towns enduring issues

● Closing the market place will add to traffic woes.

● Looks excellent. But now just having 30 minutes free parking in all of Bank Loke Car Park would do more than anything else to revive the town centre, and even more so if the short stay in the market place is reduced

● Access is the big issue - bus and car. Closing the Market Place to traffic will threaten the shops. This is not an Italian piazza. Can you not imagine winter night-times?

● Would love the market square to be traffic free so we can mingle without fumes from cars.

# Public Realm Survey

## List of Comments

- This scheme is an utter no-no. Based on previous reviews from other towns. This is a disaster waiting to happen. Previous experience has shown that the town folks opinions do not count, as the town council, useless in there opinions and ideas, do not know what they are doing, are so out of focus, and old school, have already made up there minds at to what they want. The town needs better direction, and not from this pathetic planning, they are proposing to make. The townsfolk do not want what is being proposed. Some of its history makes for interesting viewing. However, there is no variety or proper ideas behind this scheme. I'd do a far better job with this distribution of funds than this lot are proposed to NOT TO BE PEDESTRIANISED! It has been trailed before and failed miserably, when will the town council wake up? To attract people to the town center,
- Closing the town centre off to traffic is the way forward.
- C. Don't think garden in Black Swan area good idea it will give teens somewhere to meet up but no visitors. d. Improving navigation - agree but not possible e. By tidying shop fronts etc. not closing town to traffic
- D - I don't feel that it improves navigation for pedestrians or cars
- a. Elderly limited mobility without blue badge would struggle to collect prescriptions etc. b. Shop more diverse. Shops open on Sunday and Wed afternoon would help. e. agree - hopefully concerns for shopkeepers making a living as parking spaces are always full with people popping into shops. That would end under new plan. Very few town centres with direct parking left!
- Not sure how this will promote the market cross. It's still a bit lost in the town.
- I see it that more traffic is going to be forced along Kings Arms Street. Considering parts of it has no footpath in places raises the risk to pedestrians and cause bottle neck at junction KA St/ Grammer School Road.
- Promote the town not waste money on tarding up the town to be something it is not this will kill the town.
- a - it's great that we can improve our historic town. but I can't see any 'promotional' material that will spread the word to people living in other areas. Surely we need adverts or brochures to be promoted. b - More seating and green spaces will most definitely attract visitors and encourage them to stay. c - Nature and being in nature is beneficial for everyone's mental wellbeing. d - it's good to see improved pedestrian access, but where is the cycle access in the market place? e - I really like the idea of the timeline paving. Will there be signs or informational posts relevant to the buildings history to read? That would be a good way to learn about our towns history. There is lack of cycle paths or access in the plans, I do believe that creating a town centre that is safe and easily accessible for cyclists this would bring a larger collection of people to the town. For example they could cycle from Aylsham to North Walsham - 2 key places with historic buildings, cafés or bars and somewhere to sit together.
- North Walsham is an old medieval town with a lot of history and a lovely market place, all the above proposals will enhance it.
- It is hard to create a café culture. Most people will still rush in and out visitors may linger. What will it be like in February.
- If North Walsham were a town on the continent it would be ?thriving?. It has great assets, and making it attractive to visitors and locals would help its shops ad cafés. The more done to enhance it the better and no single negative objection should stand in its way.
- C. I hope the Hare garden will be used well, not for antisocial gatherings and littering. d. As a cyclist I am concerned about 'contraflow' bikes in Church st. (removing existing land for bikes)
- B. only if more facilities AND modern public toilets C. again they would only make for a more pleasant experience getting there - not necessarily stopping. d. traffic would bottle neck at grammar school road junction
- b. The free parking will still be time limited c. There are already lots of benches d. There will be one less road to take us through the town. These plans don't add anything to the Market Cross, instead a bus stop is to be put in front of it, and the area that has been opened up which provides a view of the church when walking up to the town will be filled with trees obscuring the view.
- If you want to improve/ enhance historical aspect of town, and create a more environmentally -friendly atmosphere, please encourage, WOODEN SHOP SIGNS, PLANTING OF SMALL TREES AND REDUCTION OF NOISE.
- I would like to see the re-establishment of the through route from Hall Lane to New Road to avoid the perils of Church St.
- The market place, and in fact the whole town, is in need of improvement and we welcome the fact that money is now available to do this. However we are against barring traffic and parking in Market Place, as has been proven? (As it was done in last lockdown) that our shop lost a large amount of turnover. NO SHOPS = NO VIBRANT MARKET PLACE.

# Public Realm Survey

## List of Comments

### 4. Do you have any other comments on the public realm improvement proposals?

- Yes to Black Swan but its a bit out of the way. Will people find and use it? Nothing is going to draw in visitors with current road access. It is mainly for those who live here.
- For me need to clean street of GUM and get rid of the dirty PIGEONS
- Please pedestrianise!! Clearly mark route for cars around market place so that it is easy to access everything N,S, E and W of market place
- These changes will make little improvement at all. A deeper look needs to be made into the town itself.
- Everything looks good improve north walsham a lot
- Over all What about Kings Arms Street and walking access from the train station? Will the horrible gates into the church yard be removed? Will there be any changes or improvements to the area in front of the heritage center. The addition of the Swallow's café is fantastic and would love to see more made of that area.
- Please do not spoil the country town feel of the town. Don't pedestrianise the area in front of the White Swan. Not needed.
- This is the worst thing that could happen in North walsham. Why shut off town to traffic, we suffer bottle necks on grammar school road since the placement of the roundabout, before this traffic wasn't a problem. Now you want to send traffic down kings arms Street arguably the narrowest Street in North walsham, and once again not taking into account the local businesses.
- I like that you are trying to make North Walsham a pleasant destination. I don't shop there enough but if I'm encouraged to come into the market place this will change.
- Relocate the four disabled bays outside the market place area.
- We do need more cycle paths
- I am fast becoming an older member of N W and feel concerned that the town is fit for the future and keeps a good balance of population. We must provide home for young families and therefore I would love to see a few facilities and resources for young families with children. So maybe a few child friendly street art furniture maybe combined with the seating areas? E.g. little square concrete/wood seats that can be used for children to sit or jump on or to use as a childlike table. Maybe a concrete tube to crawl through . Sorry not great examples. It would be great to consciously develop a sit and chat seating area. Encourage community interaction. Maybe with a computerised wizzy information board that is updated by NNDC and the town Council. Highlighting up coming events in NW and locally. Children's fun days, 40s weekend, market days, films in the park etc. Maybe voluntary groups can have information up loaded it? Practical stuff... Smart street waste bins, street lighting that is appropriate to the area and possibly adaptable to street events, trees, more trees, plants, bug hotels, bird bat boxes. Place for pop up street art, theatre and music. CCTV coverage to make the streets safe. Make sure teenagers are catered for and made welcome. Hopefully inclusion and CCTV will reduce vandalism.
- Cause it is a completely wrong to pedestrianised town traffic bad enough round the town as is. Plus kings arm street is not suitable for more traffic. Get out your offices and look properly .
- The images show lots of people sitting at tables in the public realm spaces. We will need a few more cafés / bars / restaurants to make this idea of a cafe culture work.
- Design is set out to destroy the town , people already moaning about no shops , if this plan goes ahead there will be even less.
- Something for the kids to be engaged with, like outdoor puzzles, small trails around the garden, giant jenga, connect 4 (appreciate this might go walkies) but things to keep them entertained if you get a coffee and want to kill time.
- Tidy up near Shambles NO garden. You own that part of the tie plus others. Since the slates have been laid it have been dangerous at the start as they were laid the wrong way round and the slate slide off. Now there are seeds growing between them. Actually it would have been better if the toilets were left there and modernised instead of effecting the second hand wooden hut on Bacton Rd.
- You really need to encourage new shops to the town so shoppers have a reason to come in and once there they can enjoy what you are proposing to do.
- Very supportive of the garden but hope that this will not encourage young people to gather there in the evenings?
- Manage traffic in all town centre streets, the width of the road is not the issue, the manner in which they are used is.
- Waste of space , when there's limited shops , nothing new comes in and when they do they don't stay , better of spending the money improving shops so there's something for people to come to shop in no one wants just charity shops and hairdressers , all you will do is kill the town , even the disabled bays are used by work vans and delivery lorries, the town is nothing like it use to be with loads of shops , it has over the years been killed off your proposals will kill it permanently such a waste of money
- Looking forward to see these proposals which will be most welcome
- I have rated The Shambles first because it provides the view through to the church (if taxis are not permitted to park at the top of Market Street) and so sets the mood and atmosphere for people approaching by bicycle or vehicle via Market Street. This mood will be continued by the new works to the Market Place to provide a coherent presentation of North Walsham. CCTV will need to be a key part of preventing vandalism when the terracing and planting are completed.
- Communal garden next to the black swan will only end up being used as a public lavatory at night.... Market place only has Costa as a cafe who already have tables on the pavements so cannot see the need for more social spacing.
- I think without CCTV and time restrictions the gardens at black swan will become a focal point for public disorder. After witnessing drug taking by users of the black swan pub this weekend on the benches opposite the proposed garden why would any family want to spend recreation time in that garden. North Walsham in bloom did a fantastic job this year for the town, I'd rather see their displays than the proposed bland ones.
- More water and green in town centre please
- Traffic management. It's fine putting in place traffic and parking measure, but without enforcement they mean nothing. What enforcement, physical enforcement measures are being proposed.
- Community orchard, rather than community garden. More trees and other planting in the market place.
- All good as long as there is budget to maintain them over long time, so they don't become neglected and run-down.
- Seem like very positive changes that will greatly improve the town center!
- I do have concerns about Kimberley Road, Lime Tree Road & Hall Lane absorbing a lot of the traffic flow, particularly at school times
- Scrap the lot! Go back to the drawing board. It's being run by a load of clowns here. Better transport links are needed, as in bus services, link them to the train stations, bring the villages to the towns, by means of the trains and buses. I note the NW town center bus service 33a? Could be better served as often it's almost empty. Draw them to the town, connect the villages to the trains, have better facilities and access to the stations, there is a whole host of things that could be better and the proposals for the town are not one of them. Utter lemons!

# Public Realm Survey

## List of Comments

- These ideas are all great. The Black Swan garden will probably need to be secured at night and have CCTV to stop vandalism and youth loitering. When you make nice areas like this there will always be someone who wants to ruin it, as was the case with the church garden.
- Can't bus stop on Yarmouth road be move back on to space behind it belonging to PO or BT don't know which making a drive in bay so traffic can flow pass bus stop?
- Are there going to be designated mobility scooter/ cycle paths for market street and town centre? St Nicholas court will there be a path from steps (leading to court) into churchyard to join existing paths?
- It would be nice to improve the town centre. With more people there, unfortunately, there will a lot more litter and maybe vandalism. Who will keep it clean? I occasionally see a street cleaner in the town. Some of the money must be spent on more help.
- I suggest connectivity between the two weavers way section. More disabled parking and a low carbon emission zones for buses and cars
- Needs wider consultations, need to regenerate dated shop precinct first.
- Traffic management is key. Riding bollards etc. Great ideas to increase public realm area
- Traffic management.
- Keep the market day going and other events (e.g. farmers market) Maybe more events.
- Defiantly like the idea of less traffic in the town centre and designs look good and will make the space more better for more social and cultural events. I think the Black Swan garden looks good but not sure it's the best use of this money as there's a LOT needs doing. Would like to see more detail on church street plans.
- Lots of free parking or people will use Sainsburys car park and store.
- Good Luck
- It is a good idea to improve the town. As long as that includes tidying up some shops (appearances) especially Trafalgar stores which is a bit of an eyesore. As it is a prominent part of the town.
- Waste of public money
- There appears to be a real danger of increased traffic flow around the market place which is the opposite of the desired outcome. The whole of the town needs to be subjected to a weight limit - Crow rad will be effected and already is not fit for the vehicles using it.
- 1.Black Swan - communal garden sounds great! 2. The Shambles - The illustrated view looks positive. More plants would brighten up the seating area. 3. Market Place - More trees and planters would be nice. 4.Churchyard walk - I don't really walk through is so it will be good to have something to look at 5. Bank Loke - Parking close by is the last issues on my mind. There are plenty of places to park locally ALL within a few minuets walk. A 'Discovery and education trail was mentioned in your leaflet and I would thoroughly encourage this idea! Heritage timeline paving would help to support the above, and I'd love to learn more about the history of out town. Will there be plants satiable for attracting wildlife within the shambles terraced garden or the church garden? It would be good to support wildlife as well as us! One more through I had was to plant some communal fruit trees such as apple or fig, due to the fact the they produce sufficient fruit for people to share. Could they be grown in the church, Shambles or communal garden? Finally has anyone through about something eco-friendly such as solar panels or kinetic energy equipment to charge phones or lights in the marketplace? It would be great to lead the way as a greener healthier town.
- I have concerns about the Black Swan garden. Will it be misused by people on drugs!!! Because of it's position it would be a warmer area to sit. Wildflower areas should be in cemetery and the park areas, not in town centre as they look scruffy as they age and are cut down. This is an exciting project. Can the council offices be moved back to the Cedars?
- The enhanced seating areas and planting are lovely but who will look after the planting keeping it weed free well kept and tidy. The border at the top of the Shambles by the churchyard ledge is a mess and an eyesore, if black swan loke and garden is left uncared for it will make the town centre look worse rather than better.
- Black Swan Garden could be used by Drinkers (winos)
- Free Parking
- Please do not move the hare from present position to be 'lost' in the communal garden
- Looking forward to it
- The more pedestrian only spaces and the more trees the better. The overall car parking needs looking at of course.
- Like the Loke lights! Who will look after the gardens? Will the gates of communal garden be locked at night to prevent vandalism?
- How would it be cared for on going? All the ideas are a start, but will take a lot longer (and more money) to bring other market traders and Sunday market traders in. Also what about the shopping area behind the clock tower. Can that be better used and sign posted (think alley way next to scrivens opticians)
- Rather than pedestrianise the market place could be a resurfaced in a heritage material such as cobblestone which would slow cars down without reducing access. A better improvement in the town would be to encourage all shop owners to keep their frontages well maintained. A heritage colour scheme could be chosen with free paint provided, this scheme has worked will in towns in Europe. Cromer recently added a lovely art trail to their town - we could have a similar scheme with a historical theme e.g. Lord Nelson or old photo of the town. There are some lovely facts in the North Walsham Town guide which could be reproduced on information boards around the town.
- Proposals are excellent but would ask all stakeholders to address the problems of appearance of retail and charity shop façades - PEELING PAIN and UGLY PLASTIC sings deter people who could be tempted to spend more money in town.
- Support Black Swan but don't see it as a priority.
- Support Black Swan garden but the hare should stay where it is as a gateway to the town. A further point in navigation around the town. KS St was closed for approach 15mins on 4th Oct. I was in car, so was able to drive thought Market Place. Any changes to the road layout would cause chaos with large cues of traffic building up very quickly.

# Youth Survey

## Data Analysis

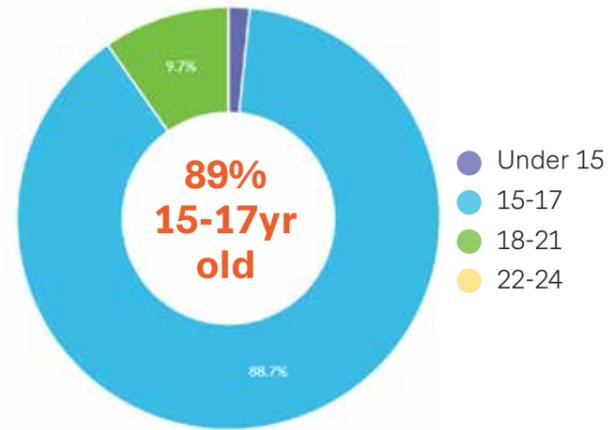
### Key Comments

Main comments were to have more places to eat, hang out and activities to take friends to.

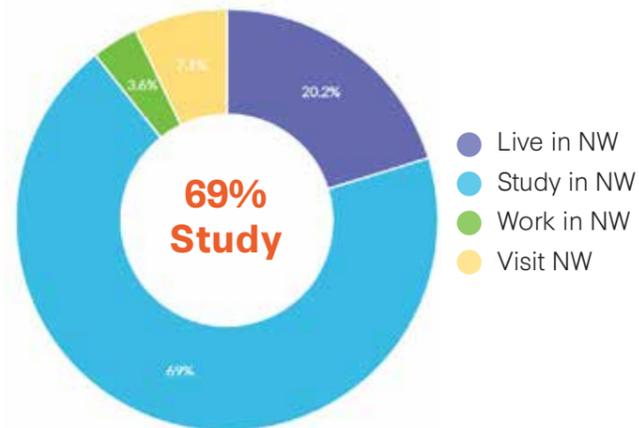
Almost half of the participants walked to and around town. As a result, promoting walk ability would be ideal in North Walsham.

Top places to visit for leisure were Costa coffee and the park around St Nicholas Church. Top food places were USA Chicken, Kelly's Fish and Chips and the sweet shop. Key amenity shops were Lidl, Sainsbury's, QD and the pharmacy.

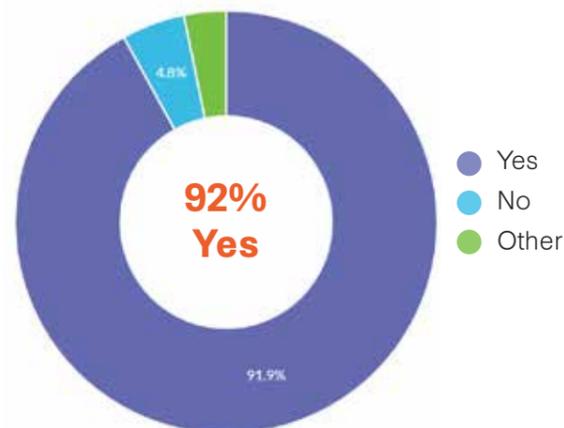
**Q1 How old are you?**



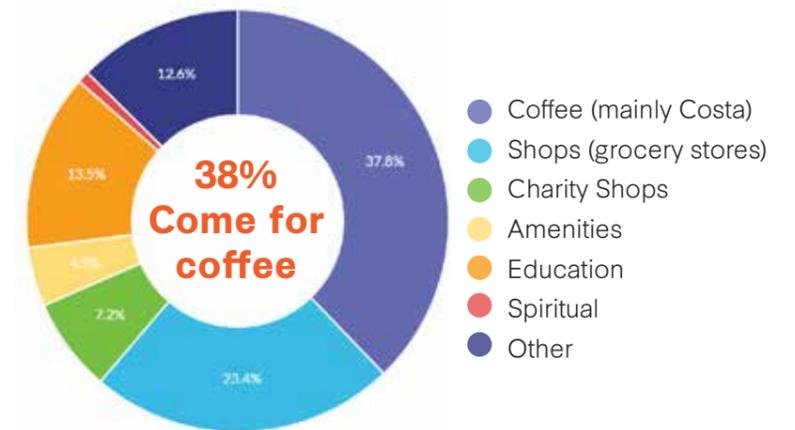
**Q2 What best describes your association with North Walsham? (Select all that apply)**



**Q3 Do you currently use the town centre?**



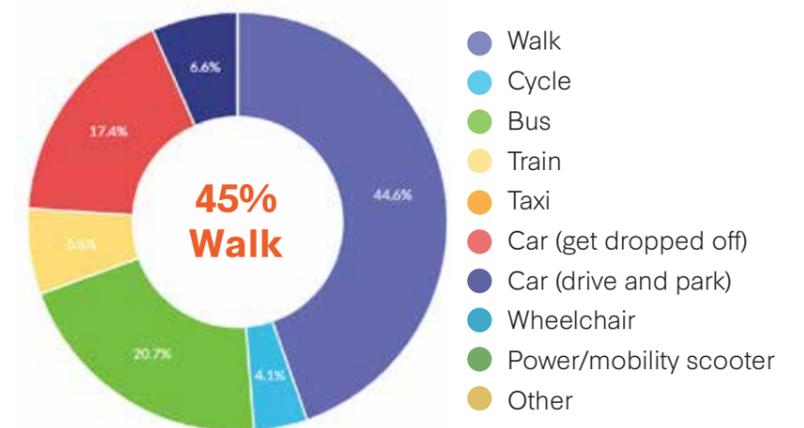
**Q4 Where do you go in the town centre?**



**Q5 Why do you visit these locations? (Select all that apply)**



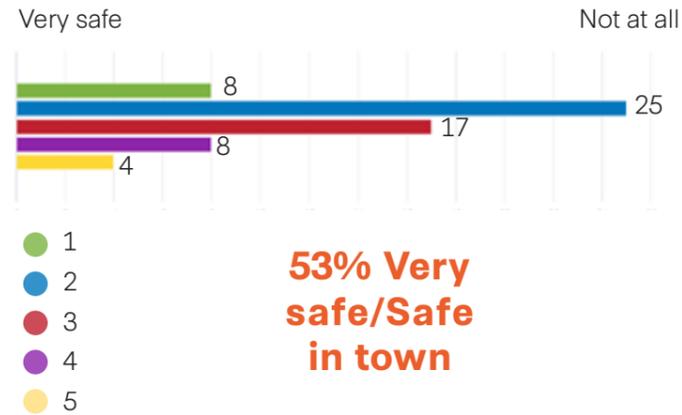
**Q6 How do you travel to and around the town centre? (Select all that apply)**



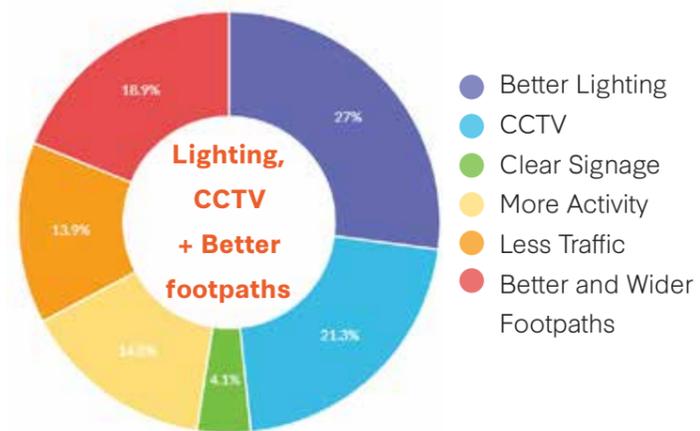
# Youth Survey

## Data Analysis

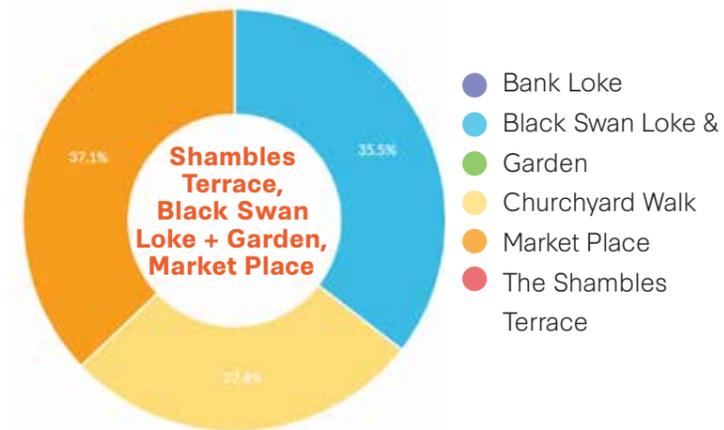
**Q7 How safe do you feel getting around the town centre? (Rate 1 - 5)**



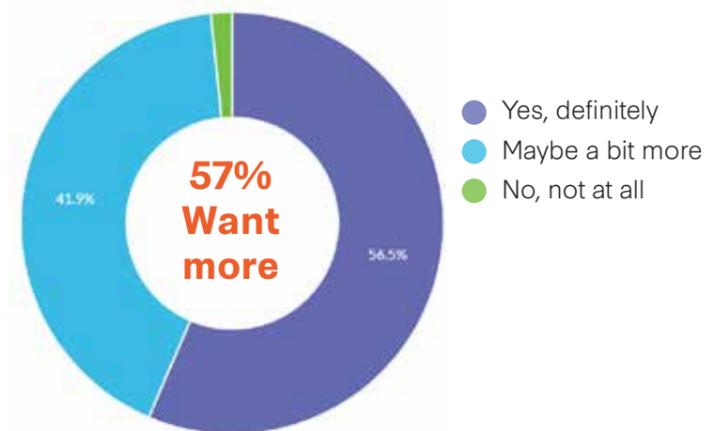
**Q8 If you answered 'somewhat' or 'not at all safe', which of the following would make you feel safer?**



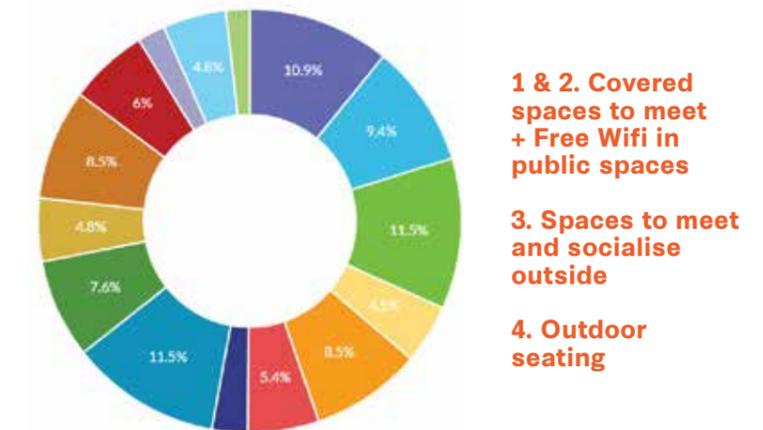
**Q9 Select the image that represents your favourite design - turn into image selection.**



**Q10 If these improvements were made would you use these spaces more? (Select one)**



**Q11 What would encourage you to use the town centre more?**



- Spaces to meet and socialise outside
- Outdoor Seating
- Covered spaces to meet
- A greater variety of markets
- More activities/entertainment
- Places to go in the evening
- Public art/street art
- Free wifi in public spaces
- USB/Power charging outlets in public spaces
- Better lighting
- Public Toilets
- Better and wider footpaths
- More cycle racks
- Less traffic
- Other

