

BRIDPORT TOWN CENTRE CONSULTATION

**Consultation August-October 2017: report of
responses (Updated November 2017 to include
additional summary information)**

Bridport Town Council



Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Introduction | 3 |
| 2. Background to the survey | 3 |
| 3. Methodology | 4 |
| 4. Summary of key findings | 5 |
| 5. Breakdown of responses | 7 |
| Appendix A - Questionnaire | 16 |
| Appendix B - Full comments from the consultation | 20 |

1. Introduction

At its meeting on 28 March 2017, Bridport Town Council agreed that a consultation exercise be undertaken on town centre traffic, including seeking views on a trial closure of South Street and town centre speed limits.

The consultation ran from 7 August for 8 weeks until 1 October. This report presents the results, which will be considered by the Town Council at its Council meeting on 21 November 2017.

2. Background to the survey

In summer 2001, the Town Council undertook an extensive public consultation exercise on the "possible closure of South Street for a trial period. Over 60% of the residents who responded supported the selective closure of South Street on market days. A number of traders, mostly from South Street, opposed the closure. The proposal was not taken forward at the time.

The issue was raised again formally at the Town Council in 2004 and during 2008-2009, when the Council considered a number of recommendations for the town centre, including changes to crossings and loading bays. These were subsequently agreed for implementation by Dorset County Council, the Highway Authority. There was consultation undertaken at that time on town centre traffic with local organisations. Comments from the public were again invited. The possible closure of South Street was raised by some respondents to that consultation. The Town Council said at the time that it would re-visit this issue.

The Town Council's latest Town Plan included a priority project to "consider and consult on a town centre traffic feasibility study including options for South Street."

In 2016, the Town Council agreed a brief to Dorset County Council for feasibility work on town centre traffic, including South Street. The feasibility study findings were reported to the Town Council in March 2017.

The Feasibility Study recognised that there was no significant evidence-based analysis of traffic movements for any of the options. The impact on traffic flows of the occasional closures for events had also not been monitored. The Feasibility Study stated that to accurately forecast traffic flows, would require a detailed and expensive traffic model. The Town Council felt that the costs of this detailed model would be prohibitive and that to accurately assess the impact of the closure of South Street, a temporary trial closure for up to 3 months should be considered. The main focus of the proposed consultation would therefore be to seek views on a trial temporary closure. The results

would enable the Town Council to assess the strength of feeling and support, before any further work is undertaken.

The related issue of traffic speeds in the town had also been raised and would be included as part of the consultation.

The Town Council in March 2017 therefore agreed that a consultation exercise be undertaken on town centre traffic, including seeking views on a trial closure of South Street and town centre speed limits, subject to the wording and format of the consultation being reviewed and agreed. The questionnaire wording was subsequently approved. Due to Local and then national elections in May and June respectively, the start of the consultation was put back until August.

3. Methodology

The survey questionnaire was available online alongside a copy of the report to Council with details of the County Council's Feasibility Study, a Questions and Answers document and copies of the press release announcing the start of the consultation.

Hard copies of the questionnaire were also available in the Tourist Information Centre, Library and Mountfield.

The start of the consultation was widely advertised both in the press and through contact with stakeholders including businesses via the Chamber of Trade and Commerce and by visiting businesses in South, East and West Street. Separate notifications were sent to taxi drivers, bus companies, fire/ambulance services, statutory agencies, and local transport services. Local community organisations were also notified through the Bridport Local Area Partnership circulation network.

4. Summary of key findings

This section provides a headline of the key findings, which are detailed in the next section and Appendix B.

- 1,300 individuals and organisations submitted responses to the survey; of these, 821 provided additional comments, which were split into 1,526 topic specific points (Appendix B)
- The majority of respondents to the consultation (82%) live in the Bridport area with 16% of respondents having a business in the Bridport area.
- Most people access the town centre either by car (50% of respondents) or on foot (42% of respondents).
- When asked what most needed to be improved in relation to the town centre and traffic, the top four responses were:
 - Available car parking (23%)
 - Improving the movement of traffic around the town (traffic flows) (20%)
 - Access to town centre shops and businesses (14%)
 - Public transport (14%)
- In response to the question about whether a trial closure of South Street should take place, 69% of all respondents were against and 29% in favour (2% replied 'don't know'). When this was split into responses from business owners, the rate against a trial closure was 73% and from visitors to the area, it was 76% against a trial closure.
- The most common reasons given against the trial pedestrianisation were:
 - Concerns regarding additional pressure /displacement of traffic on to other roads, particularly Gundry Lane (247 comments);
 - Concerns about harm to businesses in the area (136 comments); and
 - Concerns about the costs of a trial or suggestions for alternative spend (131 comments).
- The most common reasons given for supporting a trial pedestrianisation were:
 - Benefits of pedestrianisation in terms of public safety and enjoyment (27 comments)
 - Pedestrianisation could lead to improved traffic flow in other areas (25 comments)
 - No harm to/Benefits for businesses (footfall, dwell time etc) (24 comments).
- A number of respondents suggested a partial or part time pedestrianisation of South Street, rather than what had been suggested in the consultation (69 comments).

- There was a majority of respondents (59%) in favour of a speed limit of 20 mph on all town centre roads, as indicated in the questionnaire.
- In the comments received, 32 comments suggested that it is currently difficult to drive over 20mph in the town centre and a number of the responses were questioning how the reduced speed limit could be enforced (31 comments).
- Question 4 in the questionnaire asked for any other comments in relation to the above options but also in relation to any other issues that people wished to raise. This elicited a large number of responses on a wide range of topics in addition to those outlined above. These have been grouped by topic area and are provided in Appendix B. No comments have been left out or edited, but some have been split where more than one topic was raised by the respondent.

5. Breakdown of responses

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Number of online surveys completed | 643 |
| Number of paper surveys completed | 639 |
| Letters, emails and other submissions received | 18 |
| TOTAL | 1,300 |

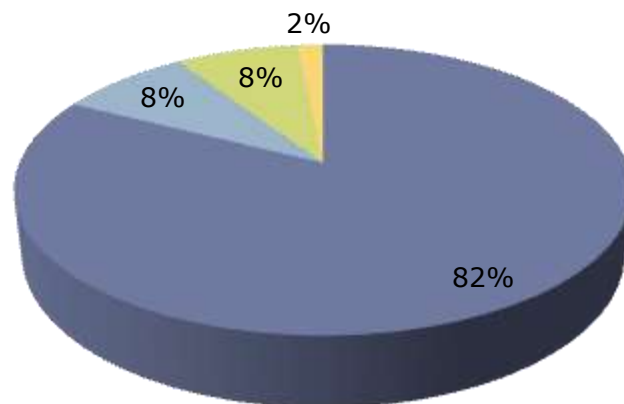
Not all respondents answered every question, so there are some differences in totals for some questions.

5.1 Profile of respondents:

Do you live in or are you a visitor to the Bridport area?

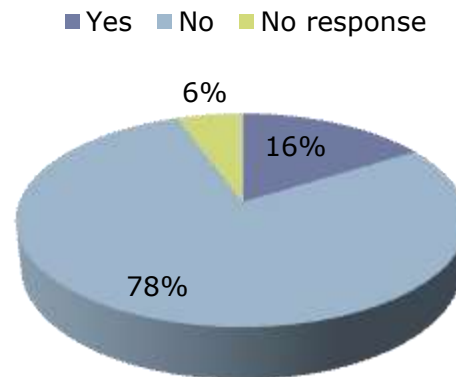
| | Number |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| I live in the Bridport area | 1,072 |
| I am visiting the area | 107 |
| I live near and/or work in Bridport | 100 |
| No answer given | 21 |
| Total | 1,300 |

■ Live in Bridport ■ Visiting the area
■ Live near/work in Bridport ■ No answer given



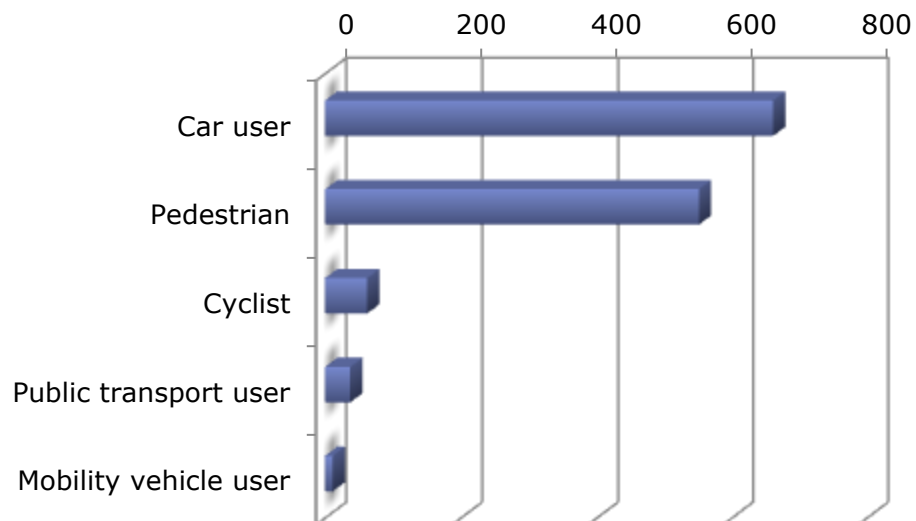
Do you have a business in the Bridport area?

| | |
|-------------|------------------|
| Yes | 210 ¹ |
| No | 1018 |
| No response | 72 |



Do you mostly access Bridport town centre as a:

| | Number | % |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------|
| Car user | 661 | 50.0 |
| Pedestrian | 551 | 41.7 |
| Cyclist | 62 | 4.7 |
| Public transport user | 37 | 2.8 |
| Mobility vehicle user | 11 | 0.8 |
| Total | 1,322 | 100 |

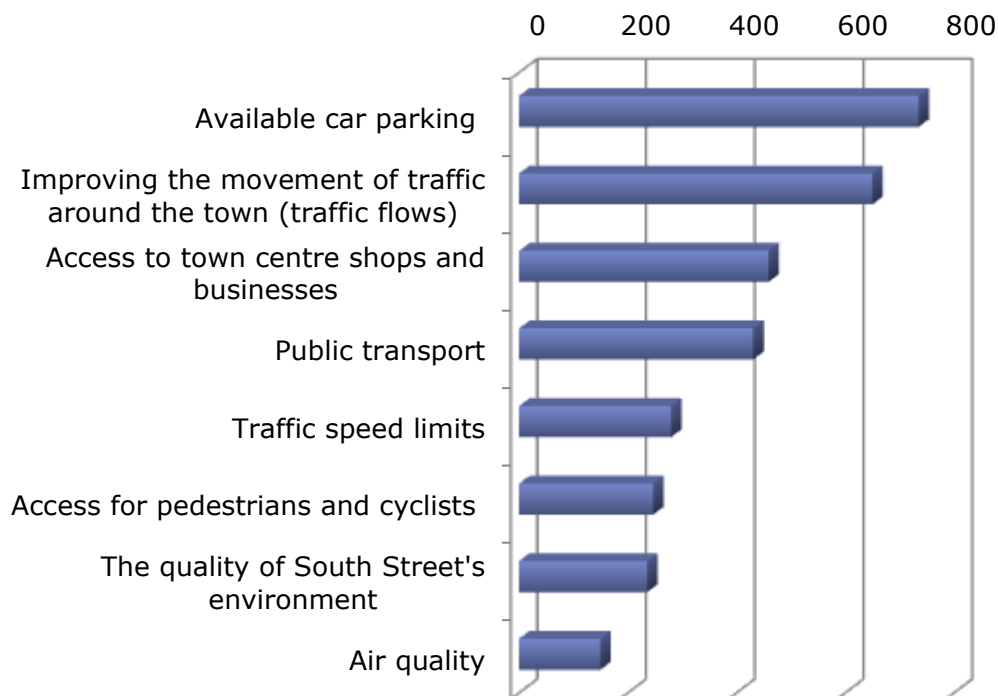


¹ This includes some market stall holders

5.2 Views on the town centre and traffic:

What do you consider most needs to be improved in relation to the town centre and traffic? (respondents could provide up to 3 choices)

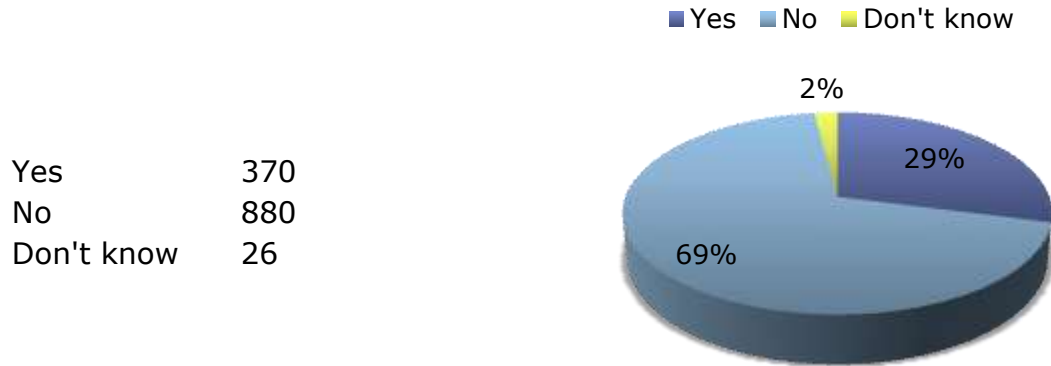
| | Number | % |
|---|--------------|------------|
| Available car parking | 735 | 23.1 |
| Improving the movement of traffic around the town (traffic flows) | 650 | 20.4 |
| Access to town centre shops and businesses | 459 | 14.4 |
| Public transport | 431 | 13.5 |
| Traffic speed Limits | 280 | 8.8 |
| Access for pedestrians and cyclists | 247 | 7.7 |
| The quality of South Street's environment | 236 | 7.4 |
| Air quality | 150 | 4.7 |
| TOTAL | 3,188 | 100 |



5.3 Views on the pedestrianisation of South Street:

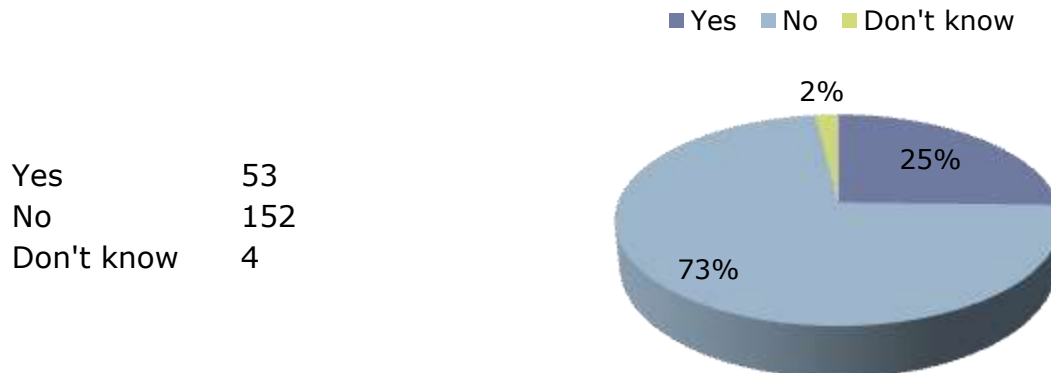
Do you think a trial closure of South Street should take place?

All respondents:



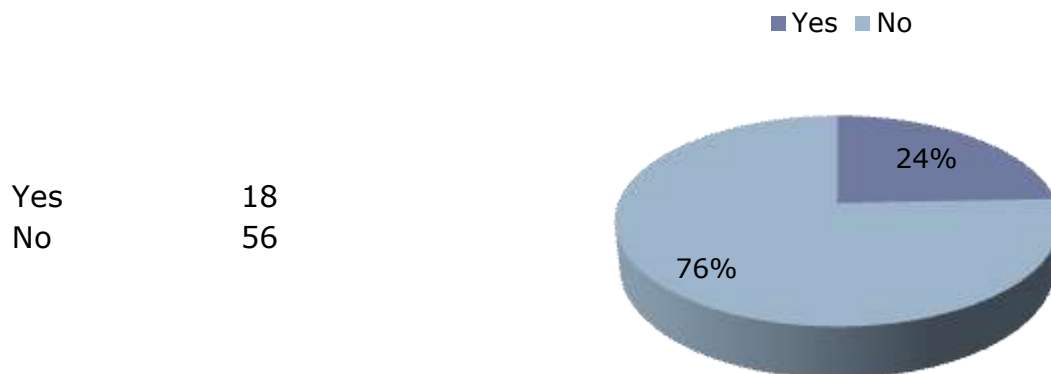
Do you think a trial closure of South Street should take place?

Business owners only:



Do you think a trial closure of South Street should take place?

Visitors only:



This question elicited the largest response in terms of additional comments, which are provided in full in Appendix B.

Matching the proportion of the votes above, most of the comments were against the pedestrianisation of South Street:

| Topic of comments – against pedestrianisation | Number of responses |
|--|---------------------|
| Additional pressure / displacement of transport on other roads/areas - particularly Gundry Lane | 247 |
| Concerns about harm to businesses in the area | 136 |
| Concerns about the costs of a trial or suggestions for alternative spend | 131 |
| Do not want to see any changes here: unnecessary to change/can't see the need or benefits of the trial | 64 |
| Traffic flow in general would be impeded | 32 |
| Pedestrianisation would change the character of the town | 30 |
| Inconvenience and/or longer journeys due to diversion | 25 |
| Pedestrianisation will drive people away, or they will be more likely to bypass the town | 17 |
| Access for disabled/less mobile would be hindered | 17 |
| Negative impact on delivery and service/emergency vehicle access | 11 |
| Trial would not help to improve air quality/could worsen air quality | 9 |
| Concerns for pedestrian safety on diverted routes | 8 |
| Other/general comments against the trial | 47 |

The following are the subject of the comments made by those in support of the pedestrianisation of South Street:

| Topic of comments – supporting pedestrianisation | Number of responses |
|---|----------------------------|
| Benefits to pedestrian safety and enjoyment | 27 |
| Pedestrianisation would lead to improved traffic flow in other areas | 25 |
| Trial pedestrianisation will not harm/will benefit businesses with increased footfall | 24 |
| General benefits to the town | 14 |
| Potential improvements to air quality/reduction in air pollution | 11 |
| Reduction in traffic in the town centre/priority for walking and cycling | 8 |
| Support the trial, but clear diversions would be needed via appropriate routes if implemented | 6 |
| Delivery times/parking for disabled should be controlled | 4 |
| Support for a trial as long as no harm to businesses | 3 |
| Other/general supporting the trial pedestrianisation | 34 |

Some respondents suggested a 'middle ground' for the partial or part time pedestrianisation of South Street:

| Topic of comments – suggestions for partial/part time pedestrianisation | Number of responses |
|--|----------------------------|
| Support pedestrianisation for market days/Saturdays only | 40 |
| Suggest trial pedestrianisation for specified dates/times /periods | 12 |
| Suggested alternatives to pedestrianisation of South Street | 9 |
| Support pedestrianisation for events only | 8 |

There were questions and comments about the trial itself and how it would work in practice:

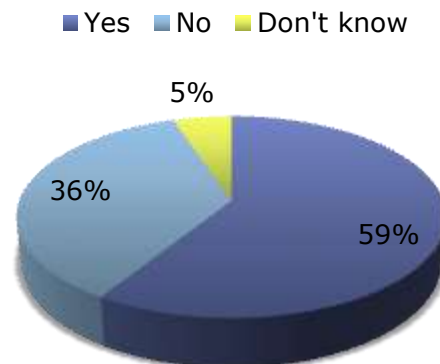
| Topic of comments – questions/comments about the trial and its implementation | Number of responses |
|--|----------------------------|
| Comments on alternative assessments/alternative improvements for traffic and pedestrian flow | 73 |
| Questions/comments about how the trial is implemented and measured | 19 |
| Trial would be useful to measure the impacts/benefits | 17 |
| Questions on the need for the trial – not enough information on the implementation, purpose, benefits and possible impacts | 17 |
| Questions/comments about the consultation | 16 |

5.4 Views on a 20mph zone for Bridport:

Would you support a speed limit of 20mph on all town centre roads included within the blue shaded area in this map?



| | |
|------------|-----|
| Yes | 742 |
| No | 453 |
| Don't know | 65 |



This question also prompted a number of more detailed comments, the majority suggesting that it is already difficult to exceed 20mph in the town centre and others asking how the new speed limit could be enforced. Some also suggested that a smaller area may be more appropriate:

| Topic of comments – the 20mph zone for Bridport | Number of responses |
|---|----------------------------|
| Traffic already moves slowly in the town – no need for a reduced speed limit | 32 |
| Enforcement of speed limits needed/difficulties with enforcement | 31 |
| Suggestions for reduced speed in specific areas/a smaller area - particularly the town centre | 25 |
| Proposed area for 20mph is too large | 20 |
| General comments supporting a reduction to 20mph | 18 |
| Reduced speed limit would create congestion and increase air pollution | 8 |
| Cannot see the need for a reduced speed limit | 7 |
| General comments against a reduction to 20mph | 6 |
| 30mph is adequate | 5 |
| Suggestions to extend the 20mph area | 5 |
| General/other comments regarding speed limits | 6 |

5.5 Other comments made on the town centre and traffic

Other key areas raised by respondents were car parking, in particular that there is not considered to be enough car parking and that a Park and Ride would be a good option:

| Topic of comments – car parking | Number of responses |
|---|----------------------------|
| Not enough car park spaces in Bridport - more/better parking areas are needed | 54 |
| Comments supporting a Park and Ride for Bridport | 25 |
| Poor/inappropriate on-road parking is hindering traffic flow | 17 |
| Parking/loading bays for businesses | 6 |
| Current car parking provision is sufficient | 5 |
| Reduce/restrict parking provision for disabled drivers | 4 |
| Roadside parking restrictions needed | 2 |

Public transport – with many recognising the impacts of recent cuts:

| Topic of comments – public transport | Number of responses |
|---|----------------------------|
| Impact of recent cuts to bus services | 13 |
| Improvements needed to public transport to reduce pressure on roads and car parks | 13 |
| Other/general comments about public transport | 4 |

And wider highways/town centre matters and improvements, particularly around the phasing of the traffic lights and pedestrian crossing times:

| Topic of comments – wider highways matters/improvements needed | Number of responses |
|---|----------------------------|
| Traffic light phasing needs addressing (for cars) | 20 |
| Better pedestrian crossing timings/adherence to lights/adequate | 12 |
| Wider town improvements needed (non traffic/transport) | 12 |
| Suggestions for the market (layout/parking etc) | 9 |
| Concerns about current traffic congestion | 6 |
| Concerned about removal of Town Hall junction traffic lights | 3 |
| Traffic and transport general/other comments | 9 |

Appendix A - Questionnaire

Bridport Town Centre Consultation

Bridport Town Council would like to know your views on town centre traffic, including a trial closure of South Street and town centre speed limits.

The County Council, as the Highway Authority, has to approve any highway or traffic changes. The options for the town centre and South Street in particular have been discussed with the County Council and the potential impacts identified but it is recognised that there is no real evidence assessing the impact of a closure of South Street on the town centre, including traffic movements in and around the town.

The Town Council feels that to accurately assess the impact of the closure of South Street, a temporary trial closure for up to 3 months should be considered. However, before a decision is taken on whether to apply to the County Council for a trial closure, it was agreed that a consultation should be undertaken to seek views on the proposal. The results would enable the Town Council to assess the strength of feeling and support, before any further work is undertaken.

The estimated costs of a trial closure of South Street including order making could be between £20,000 and £50,000 but would be confirmed before any decision was taken on whether to apply for a closure.

Timescale:

- Consultation ends 1 October 2017
- Town Council considers responses and way forward October 2017

If there is support for a trial closure of South Street :

- Draft proposals November 2017
- Order Making Process, including statutory consultation - December - February 2017/18
- If approved: Experimental closure could be introduced March - May 2018 (up to 12 weeks)

Other town centre issues - traffic speeds etc.

Depending on the outcome of the consultation, these matters would be discussed with Dorset County Council regarding the next steps.

Consultation questions overleaf

Issued by Bridport Town Council August 2017

General town centre and traffic

1. What do you consider most needs to be improved in relation to the town centre and traffic? (Please tick no more than 3 issues from the list. You can comment on your answer or suggest other issues under question 4).

| | |
|---|--|
| Improving the movement of traffic around the town (traffic flows) | |
| The quality of South Street’s environment | |
| Traffic speed Limits | |
| Air quality | |
| Access for pedestrians and cyclists | |
| Available car parking | |
| Public transport | |
| Access to town centre shops and businesses | |

South Street

The Town Council is considering the pedestrianisation of South Street for a trial period of up to 3 months, to assess the impact on the town centre. South Street would be closed to vehicular traffic from the junction of Gundry Lane to the Town Hall junction. There would continue to be access for deliveries to businesses and residents, emergency services and vehicles used by people with disabilities.

2. Do you think this trial closure of South Street (as described above) should take place? (Please tick)

| | | | | | |
|-----|--|----|--|------------|--|
| Yes | | No | | Don’t know | |
|-----|--|----|--|------------|--|

Speed limits

3. Would you support a speed limit of 20 mph on all town centre roads included within the blue shaded area in this map?

(Please tick)



| | |
|------------|--|
| Yes | |
| No | |
| Don’t know | |

Any other comments

4. If you wish, please add any other comments on any of the questions 1 to 3 (you can add a separate sheet if needed)

About you

5. Do you live in or are you a visitor to the Bridport area? (Please tick)

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| I live in the Bridport area | <input type="checkbox"/> | Please continue to questions 6&7 |
| I am visiting the area | <input type="checkbox"/> | Please go to question 8 |

6. Please provide your postcode:

| | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Your postcode: | <input type="text"/> |
|----------------|----------------------|

7. Please provide the name of your street:

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Your street name: | <input type="text"/> |
|-------------------|----------------------|

Please continue to question 9 overleaf

8. Where are you visiting from?

| |
|----------------------|
| <input type="text"/> |
|----------------------|

Please continue to question 9 overleaf

About you

9. Do you mostly access Bridport town centre as a (please tick ONE):

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Pedestrian | |
| Public transport user | |
| Car user | |
| Cyclist | |
| Mobility vehicle user | |

10. Do you have a business in the Bridport area?

| | | |
|-----|--|------------------------------------|
| Yes | | Please continue to questions 11&12 |
| No | | Please go to question 13 |

11. Please provide your business postcode:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Your business postcode: | |
|-------------------------|--|

12. Please provide the name of the street your business is in:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Your business street name: | |
|----------------------------|--|

13. If you would like to be kept informed of the results of this consultation, please provide your email address:

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Thank you - you've reached the end of the survey!

Completed surveys can be returned to the following locations until

1st October 2017

Council Offices, Mountfield

Bridport Tourist Information Centre

Bridport Library

Any questions, please call the Town Council on 01308 456722

or see the website: www.bridport-tc.gov.uk

Appendix B - Full comments from the consultation

(separate document)