

# London Borough of Southwark



## Mint Street Road Closure

### Public Consultation Summary

November 2013

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 This document report has been produced by the London Borough of Southwark Public Realm Projects Group, to provide a summary of the consultation exercise relating to the permanent closure of Mint Street. The measures are being drafted by the Public Realm Projects Team, with the project manager for this scheme being Chris Mascord (Senior Engineer).

1.1.2 The area under consideration is located within the SE1 district of Southwark (Borough) in the north of the borough. See figure 1 below.

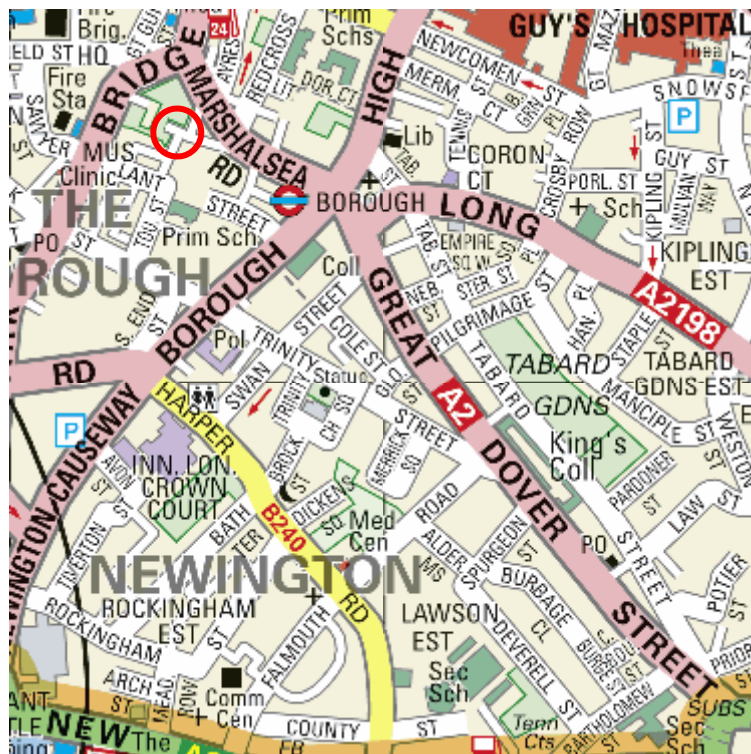


Figure 1: Location of proposed scheme

### 1.2 Project and Objectives

1.2.1 The measures proposed in this consultation are part of the Council's ongoing commitment to make Southwark's streets safer and more accessible for all. The proposed measures will assist to enhance the environment for all road users, reducing traffic speeds and improving pedestrian safety.

1.2.2 Following the trial closure of Mint Street to vehicular traffic that was implemented in October 2012, the council is now reconsulting local residents and businesses to ascertain if the trial closure should become permanent.

- 1.2.3 During the course of the last 12 months, the council has evaluated the impact on traffic flows in surrounding streets. The results indicate that there has been a significant reduction in traffic volume traversing local streets in the area.
- 1.2.4 The closure has resulted in a 96% decrease in traffic travelling west along Mint Street between Marshalsea Road and Caleb Street and a 94% reduction in traffic traversing south along Weller Street.

### **1.3 Consultation Procedure**

- 1.3.1 Active community participation was encouraged through the use of a consultation letter and questionnaire (see Appendix A – Consultation Documents).
- 1.3.2 The consultation document included a covering letter asking residents if they would like to make the experimental road closure of Mint Street permanent and questionnaire/comment form that could be sent to the Public Realm Projects Group with a pre-paid address reply.
- 1.3.3 The consultation document was delivered to the same geographical area as the previous consultation that outlined the experimental closure proposal. (See Appendix D – Location Plan and Extents of Consultation).
- 1.3.4 The distribution area was large enough to gain views from the wider community that may be considered to be affected by the experimental road closure. A mailing list was established for the area by way of the Council's GIS database. In addition, the consultation documents and plans were supplied to the Council's established list of statutory consultees including London Buses, cycle groups and the Metropolitan Police. Please see Appendix C of list of addresses within the distribution area.
- 1.3.5 The consultation documents were delivered by Royal Mail to 374 addresses detailed within the distribution list. The documents were delivered on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2013, with a return deadline of the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2013, allowing 4 weeks for the consultation period.

## **2.0 Consultation Responses**

### **2.1 Response Rate and Distribution**

- 2.1.1 A total of 42 responses were received during the consultation period, equating to an 11% response rate.
- 2.1.2 One questionnaire was received from a Statutory Consultee (Southwark Living Streets)

### **2.2 Questionnaire Analysis**

- 2.2.1 The questionnaire element of the consultation document contained the following key questions and associated tick box options:

**Q1.** Are you a resident or business?

**Q2.** Do you support the permanent closure of Mint Street?

2.2.2 The following is a summary of replies received:

**Question 1 - Are you a resident or business?**

	Resident	Business
Replies	39	3
Total	93%	7%

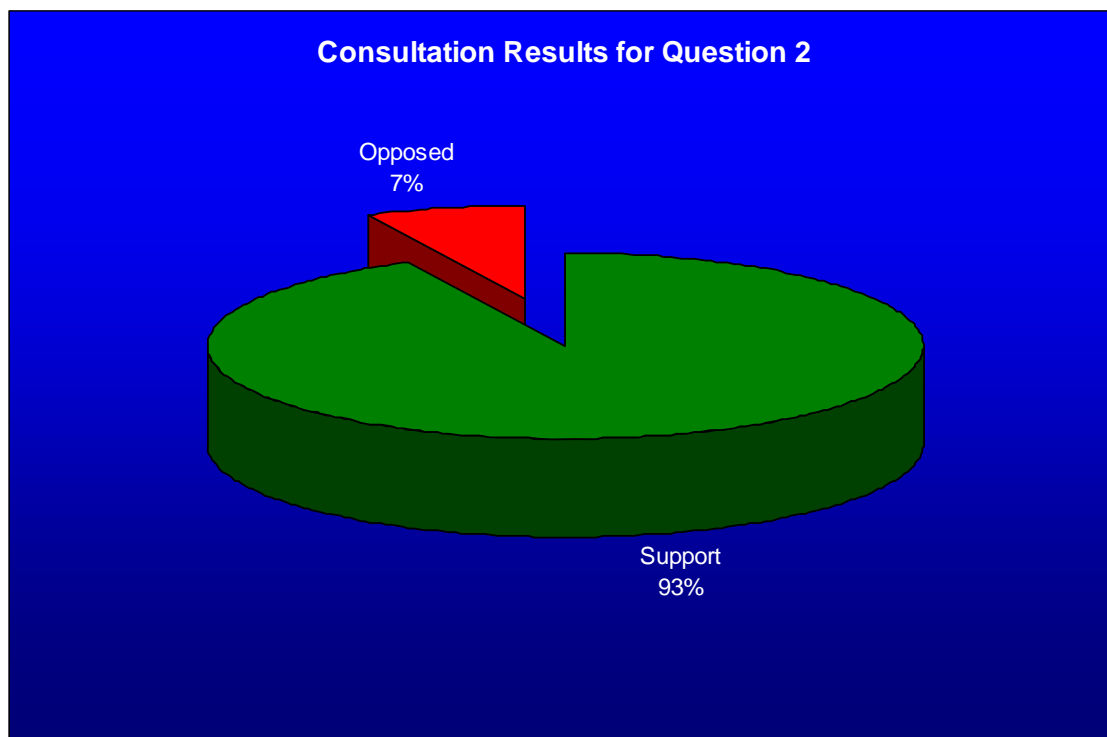
**Table 1: Returned questionnaire results for question 1**

2.2.3 Table 1 indicates that the majority of responses received throughout the consultation period were from local residents, with only three businesses formally replying.

**Question 2 – Do you support the proposals?**

	Support	Opposed	No Opinion
Replies	39	3	0
Total	93%	7%	0%

**Table 2: Returned questionnaire results for question 2**



**Figure 2: Graphical representation of consultation data for question 2**

2.2.4 Table 2 and figure 2 indicate a majority of support for question 2, with 93% requesting the closure of Mint Street to remain (become permanent).

### **2.3 Additional Comments**

2.3.1 The questionnaire element of the consultation document invited consultees to attach any additional comments they may have on the proposals when returning the reply-paid questionnaire.

2.3.2 The majority of respondents (93%) indicated full support for the retention of the Mint Street road closure. Many respondents indicated that there had been a significant improvement in safety and noise reduction associated with the prohibition of through traffic in Mint Street and Weller Street.

2.3.3 Many respondents indicated that Mint Street and Weller Street were much safer following the trial closure and therefore the retention of the closure on a permanent basis is essential, particularly as the roads are frequented by school children.

2.3.4 Many respondents indicated that noise levels had been reduced and the speed of vehicles using both roads (local traffic) had been significantly curtailed.

2.3.5 A number of residents commented that motorcyclists can still get through the closure (through gaps in the bollards).\*

\* In response, the aim of the closure was to prevent vehicle traffic and be implemented in a cost effective manner. The use of bollards across the



carriageway prevents vehicle traffic and is an extremely cost effective solution (agreed by the SSDM Manager), but still allows for pedal cyclists to traverse through (as per the borough cycling strategy). Unfortunately there is little that can be done to prevent indiscriminate driving by motorcyclists with out also compromising access for cyclists.

Currently the central bollards in the carriageway are lockable and can be used by emergency services for access. Installing a permanent physical barrier would prevent emergency service access and it would still be possible for motorcyclists to traverse around the structure using the footways.

The council is aware of these concerns and will periodically ensure that the mobile CCTV enforcement vehicle is present to issue penalty charge notices to motorcyclists that disregard the vehicle access prohibition.

2.3.9 Analysis of the additional comments from respondents that objected to the scheme highlighted the following concerns:

***A resident that objected to the scheme highlighted that it was an inconvenience to residents who drive that now have to sit in traffic to get home.\****

\* In response, residents that drive too and from their homes only have a short diversion as a result of the road closure. The responses from the majority of residents in the area indicate that there has been a significant step change in both improvements to road safety and environmental factors such as a reduction in noise pollution following the closure of Mint Street. The main benefits of the scheme (safety for pedestrians), is also in line with the borough's road user hierarchy. As a result of the scheme it can also be argued that the closure potentially encourages a modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport (walking and cycling), as the risk to vulnerable road users has been greatly reduced in these local streets.

***A business owner (in Pickwick Street) objected on the grounds that revenue has declined following the closure of Mint Street, as potential customers can no longer use the route to access the business.\****

\* In response, there is no evidence that the closure of Mint Street has reduced 'access' to the business location. The most direct routes to the business location are still available via Great Suffolk Street and Lant Street. It can also be argued that the route via Marshalsea Road, Mint Street and Weller Street is far more convoluted than using the more direct routes including Southwark Bridge Road into Lant Street and Borough Road into Great Suffolk Street.

2.3.10 60% respondents did not submit a further comment.

## 2.4 Levels of Consensus

2.4.1 The following majority levels of agreement have been given in relation to the questions contained within the consultation document:

- 93% of consultees support the permanent closure of Mint Street at Weller Street ;
- 7% of consultees are opposed to the retention of the closure.

## **2.5 Statutory Consultee Replies**

- 2.5.1 One statutory consultee provided a reply to the consultation (in support).
- 2.5.2 No objections were received from Ward Members throughout the consultation period.

## **3.0 Recommendations**

- 3.1 Due to the majority of respondents supporting the permanent closure of Mint Street and Southwark's ongoing commitment to make streets in the borough safer for all, it is recommended that the closure is retained on a permanent basis (subject to statutory consultation).