

Druid Street Walking and Cycling Improvements Review

Summary

This report has been produced by the London Borough of Southwark Highways Division to provide a summary on the consultation exercise carried out regarding a review of the changes made on Druid Street and Gedling Place in May 2022.

The changes comprised bi-directional segregated cycle lanes on the northern kerb of Druid Street, between Gelding Place and Tanner Street, and a modal filter on Gedling Place to prevent motor vehicle traffic, carried out under an Experimental Traffic Management Order.

Public consultation was carried out between 24 October and 4 December 2022 to collect feedback from residents and businesses on their experience of Druid St and Gedling Place since the experimental scheme was implemented.

Consultation Process

Flyers were sent out to 874 addresses on the immediate vicinity of the scheme on 21 October 2022.

Consultees were advised to respond to the consultation via the online consultation portal. They were also given an email address by which to respond, and a freepost address to request paper copies of the survey.

Mailing lists were created using the Council's Smart2 mapping system and database.

Sleeves for Lamp Columns were installed, and were removed following conclusion of the consultation.

Copies of the flyer, lamp column sleeve and distribution areas and paper versions of the survey are contained in Appendix 1.

All letter and flyers were delivered by Royal Mail.

The consultation was also available online via the consultation portal.

An email was sent to respondents to the previous online survey, conducted prior to the scheme implementation, who had given consent to be contacted.

On the afternoon of 4 November 2022, Southwark Council officers visited the businesses on Druid Street with paper copies of the survey. Six responses from businesses were collected.

The online survey closed on 20 November 2022, however was reopened for 1 week from 29 November 2022 to 4 December 2022 to allow stakeholders from Team London Bridge to respond to the survey.

Public access to the online form was removed at the end of the consultation period.

Summary of Consultation Results

Consultation returns and response rates

The consultation closed on 4 December 2022. Public access to the online portal was removed at midnight on this date. Flyers were sent to 874 addresses. A total of 135 responses online responses were received. This represents a 15.4% response rate. A request for paper copies of the survey was received from the Arnold Estate residents. Eight paper surveys were returned to the Tooley Street office.

What streets did respondents live/own businesses on:

What street do you live on / is your business based on?	No. Responses	%
Other	50	43.5%
DRUID STREET	32	27.8%
ABBEY STREET	10	8.7%
TANNER STREET	6	5.2%
JAMAICA ROAD	5	4.3%
COXSON WAY	4	3.5%
SWEENEY CRESCENT	3	2.6%
MALTBY STREET	2	1.7%
MILLSTREAM ROAD	1	0.9%
NECKINGER STREET	1	0.9%
PHOENIX WHARF ROAD	1	0.9%

Analysis of question responses

We asked: What is your overall experience of the changes that have been made on Druid Street and Gedling Place?



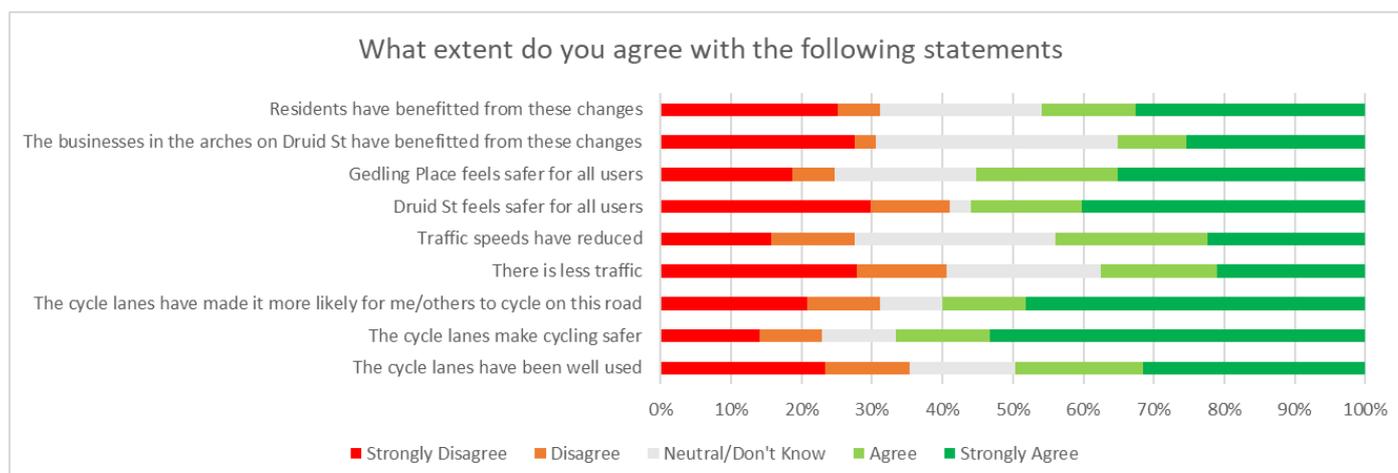
The above chart shows how the overall experience from respondents varies by group. The scheme was most well received by those visiting or travelling through the area, and those on nearby streets. Those residents and businesses directly affected by the scheme have responded more negatively.

The following table summarises the common themes found in the free text responses to the question.

Comment	No. of mentions
There is now more conflict between vehicles / pedestrians / cyclists	16
Cycle lanes are not well used	14
Street feels safer	12
Delivery vehicles block road	12
Closure of Gedling Place is inconvenient for residents of Arnold Estate	10
Street is more pleasant / general positive comments	8
Cycle lane has been detrimental to businesses	8
Traffic has increased	7
Pedestrian accessibility has got worse	4
Wayfinding needs to be improved	3
There is more noise and antisocial behaviour	3
Sign post Millstream as alternative	1
One-way restriction is being contravened by vehicles	1
Flooding / drainage issues	1

Most of these responses were negative and highlighted some specific issues.

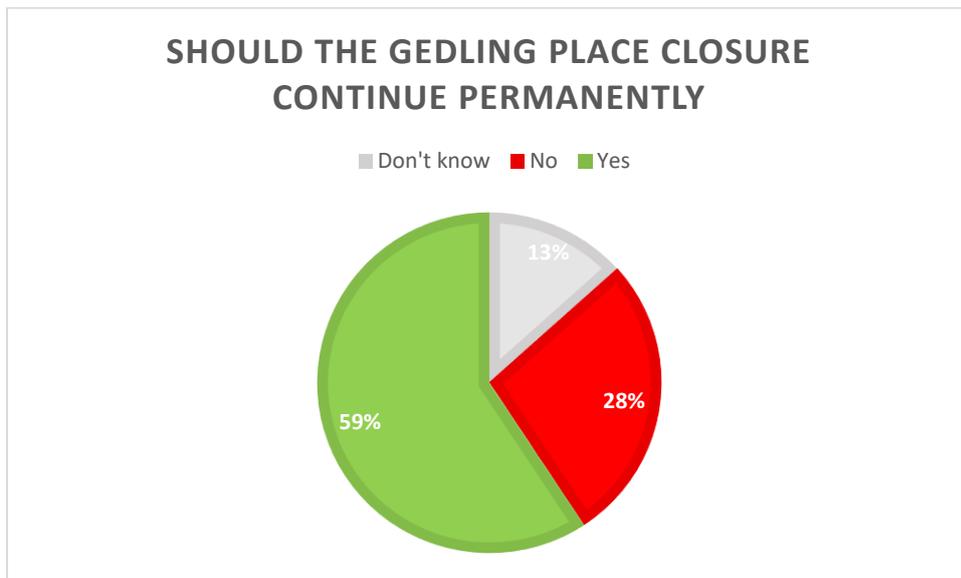
We asked: Please say to what extent you agree with the following statements



This chart shows how people responded to various statements regarding the scheme. It shows that more than 50% of respondents agree or strongly agree that Gedling Place and Druid Street feel safer, that the cycle lanes have made cycling safer, and the cycle lanes have made it more likely for people to cycle on this road.

There are no statements where more than 50% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree; however, all statements have mixed responses, suggesting opinions vary quite widely.

We asked: **Do you think the closure of Gedling Place to motor vehicles should continue permanently?**



The above chart shows that 59% of respondents think the closure of Gedling Place should continue permanently.

The following chart breaks down the responses by the capacity in which people were responding.



It shows that residents of directly affected roads were less likely to be in favour of Gedling Place remaining closed to traffic permanently. Local businesses were more likely to be either against this or Don't Know, whereas the rest of the groups were more likely to be in favour of this.

We asked: How could we improve Gedling Place?

The following table summarises the free text responses received to this question.

Comment	No. of mentions
Remove road closure	27
Improve paving	15
Improve lighting	14
Remove rubbish	8
Artwork	7
Tackle Anti-social behaviour	6
Retain closure	5
Improve signage / wayfinding	3
Remove cycle lane	2
More street cleaning	2
Improve road markings	2
Width restriction	1
Improve visibility of bollards	1
Further consultation	1

Many responses reiterated the request to remove the closure to motor vehicle traffic.

We asked: How could we improve Druid St?

The following table summarises the free text responses received to this question.

Comment	No. of mentions
More planting	26
Remove cycle lane	14
Reduce disturbance from businesses	11
Provide better separation between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians	11
Improve loading	11
More cycle parking	10
Extend cycle lane	10
Improve bin collection / waste management	9
Revert to single cycle lane	7
Prevent through traffic	7
Weekend closures	6
Provide pedestrian crossing facilities	6
More seating	6
Prevent vehicles driving / parking in cycle lane	5
More street cleaning	4
Traffic calming	3

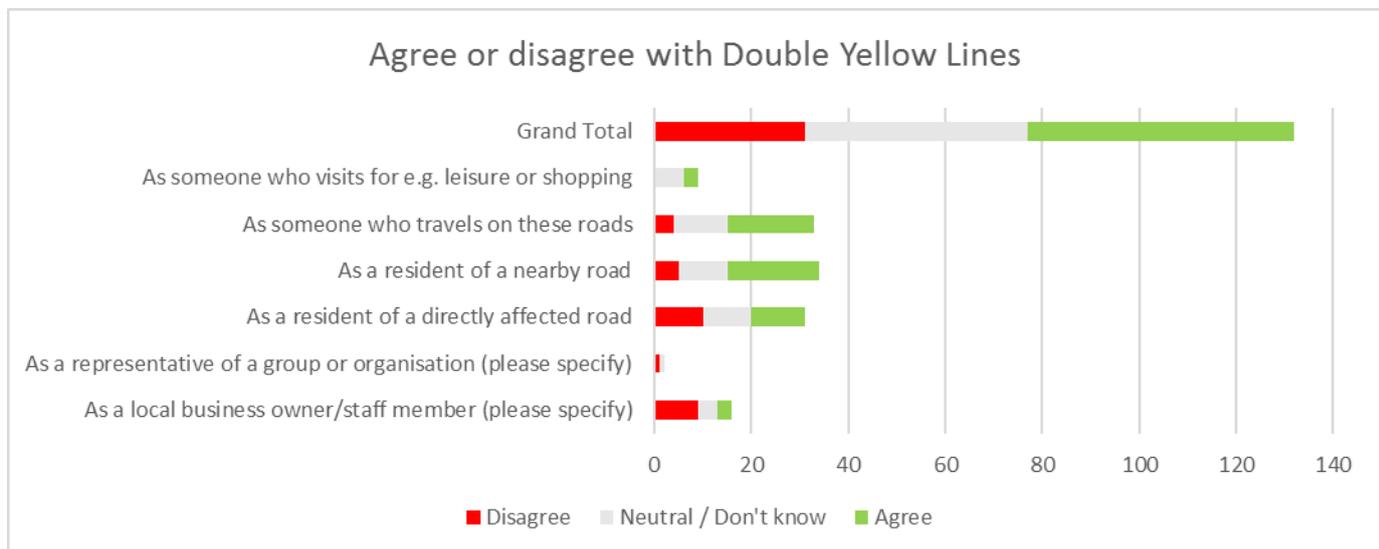
Public toilets	3
Cycle hire station	3
Improve signage	3
Footway in front of arches	3
Use footway space for cycleway	2
Remove businesses' materials from highway	1

We asked: What do you mainly use the loading bays for?

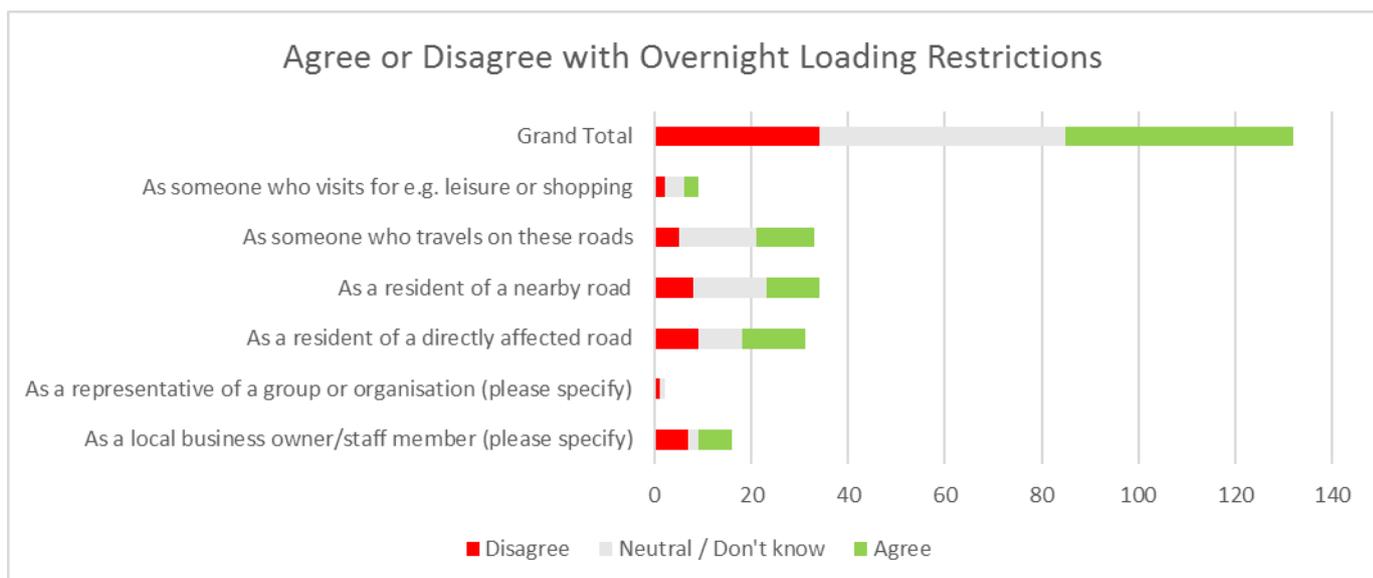
We asked businesses that use the loading bays on Druid St what they use the loading bays for, the responses are shown in the following table.

Loading and unloading vehicles	13
Seating or space for visitors	5
Storing materials	2
Parking	2

We asked: Please say whether you would agree or disagree with the implementation of the proposed loading restrictions.



The above chart shows that while more people agree than disagree overall with putting in Double Yellow Lines, local businesses mostly disagree with this.



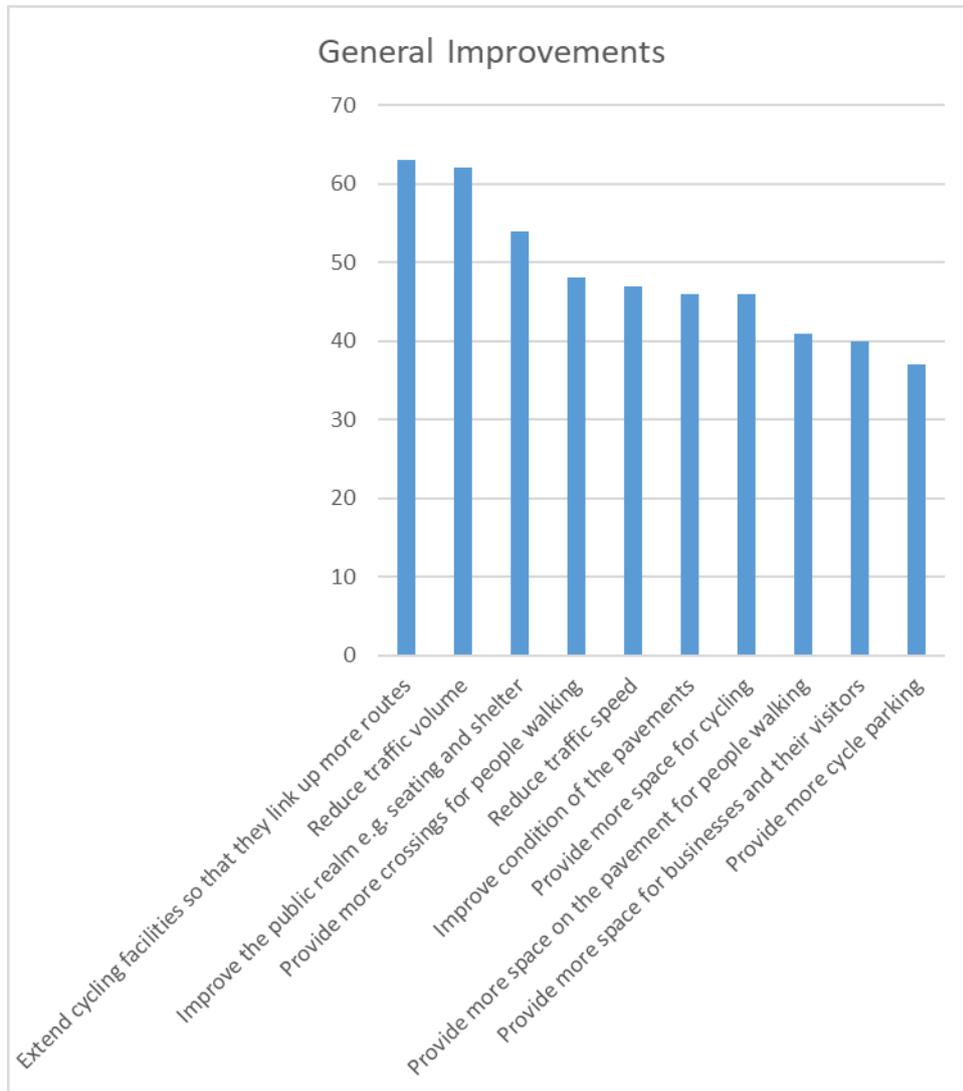
Similarly, regarding overnight loading restrictions, overall more people agree than disagree with this proposal. Among local businesses, an even number agree and disagree.

The following table summarises the free text responses to the question.

Comment	No. of mentions
Cycle lane means deliveries now block the road	8
Businesses should be supported	4
Permit scheme or weekend restrictions	3
Loading bays are not sufficient for larger vehicles	3
Remove materials stored on loading bays to allow room for loading	2
Daytime loading restrictions	2
Allow access for businesses in arch only	1
Alternative delivery vehicles e.g. cargo bikes	1

From discussions with businesses, deliveries typically start from 7am.

What are the most important things to you that we could improve in this area?



Extending cycling facilities, reducing traffic volume and improving the public realm were the top issues we could look at to improve the area.

The following table summarises the free text responses to the question.

Comment	No. of mentions
More planting	7
Reduce disturbance from businesses	3
Remove cycle lane	2
Close Druid St to through traffic	2
Prioritise residents	2
More litter bins	2
Consider disabled drivers	1

The item most commonly mentioned was more planting.

We asked: What can we do using highways measures to support older people and people with disabilities?

The following table summarises responses to the question.

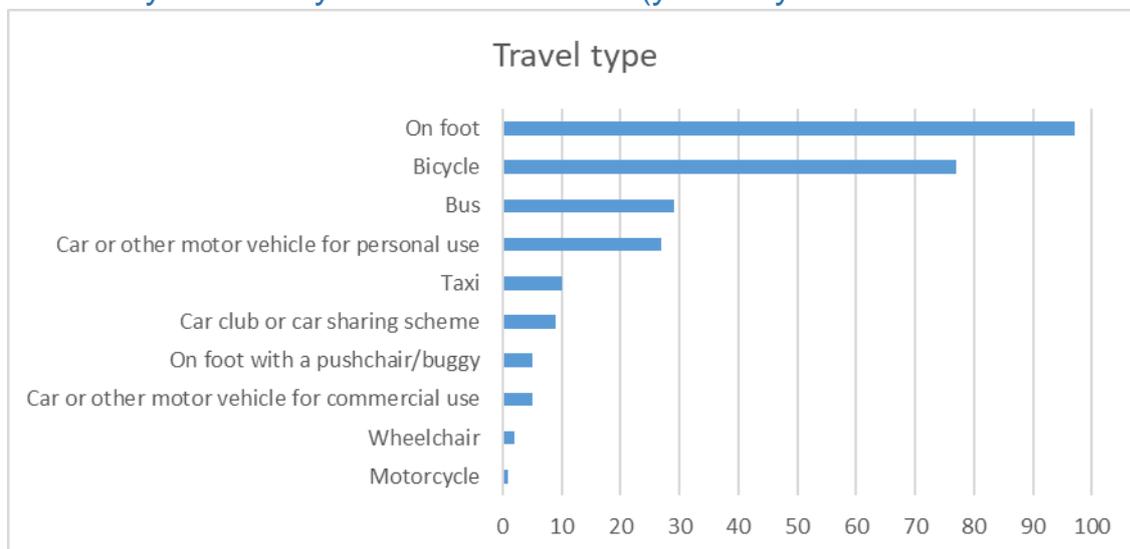
Improved levels at kerbs and crossings	61
Better access to public transport, stations and stops	49
Permanent wider pavements	44
More disabled parking bays	10

The most popular responses was improving levels at kerbs and crossings.

The following table summarises the free text responses to the question.

Comment	No. of mentions
Remove closures	3
Tackle unauthorised parking	2
Maintenance	2
More seating	1
More controlled crossings	1
Improve lighting	1

How do you usually travel in this area (you may select more than one)?



Stakeholder Responses

Team London Bridge

How could we improve Gedling Place?

Create a vibrant link between Ropewalk and Druid Street, bringing creative solutions

- design, greening, maybe using some space for bin management or cycle parking.

Create a space helping wayfinding along the Low Line.

How could we improve Druid St?

As per the Druid Street vision set up by Southwark Council, with support from residents, businesses, Team London Bridge, focus on these points:

- Outside space for businesses in arches to flourish and weekend footfall to use
- Greening along the pavement and into the estate to create better separation between residents and
- Better cycling, but we suggest a single lane with wands is sufficient heading east, and cycles can merge with traffic heading west, given the light traffic levels. This would free up space for businesses.
- Space management for businesses relating to waste, cleaning, clearing the area at closing times

Loading Bays

It is true that loading and unloading was one of the main issues where residents suffered noise pollution. This related (from memory) largely to bottle collections and reversing vehicles late at night, so there could be focus on these points. However, it should also be noted that many deliveries are done out of hours, and do not make a lot of noise.

What are the most important things to you that we could improve in this area?

Space for walking, but this would be away from the footway, and supporting walking nearer the arches. In terms of the arches, creating a flexible space that can be used for loading during the week and walking at the weekend would be most beneficial. Some ideas are offered for Druid Street in the Low Line Movement study <https://lowline.london/news/strategies-low-line/>. Another idea is for Saturdays to be traffic free. Greening was a priority for residents, and creating a Low Line Commons (see strategy link). Transport measures must be connected with better space management.

The Arch Company

In recent months I have been contacted by several tenants who occupy premises at Druid Street who have been impacted by the temporary cycle lane. Many are concerned as they are now unable to service their units.

If the cycle lane remains after the trial period, I have no doubt we will lose the majority of our tenants at this location and will find these units hard to re-let to uses other than leisure which would include bars and tap rooms, something we understand local residents do not want to see. From a commercial point of view this will impact our revenue, but it will also impact a great deal of employment space in this part of Bermondsey for which we are a major provider. I recognise that the borough wishes to encourage active travel and therefore we are not calling for a complete removal of the cycle lane. However, given the significant impact and disruption caused to our tenants, I strongly recommend that the cycle lane should revert to a single lane again.

London Bridge and West Bermondsey Ward Councillors

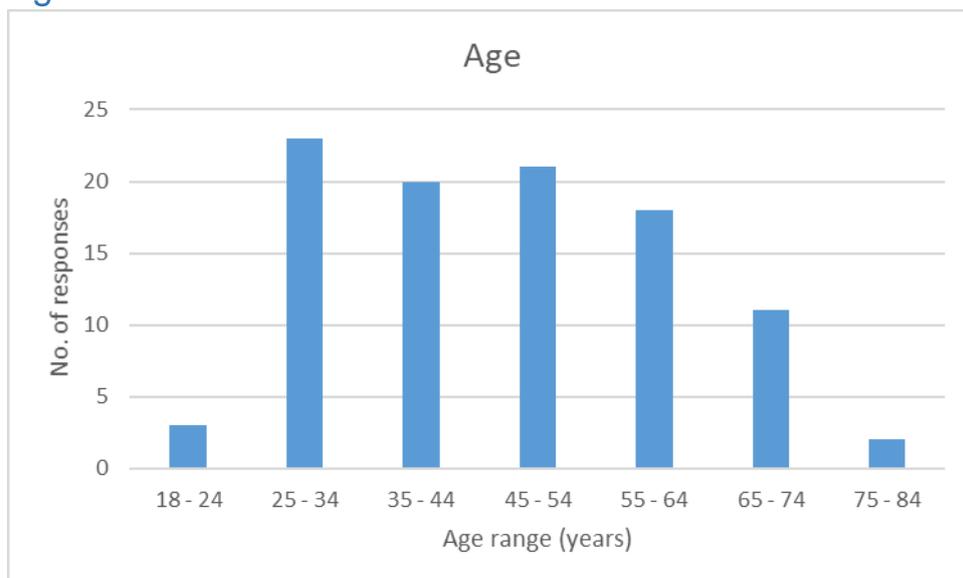
We believe there is a strong case for reverting to a single cycle lane on Druid Street. This could run east along Druid Street, with cyclists merging with traffic when heading west, given lighter traffic levels in that direction. This would ensure there is still good cycling provision for those travelling along the busier eastward route, while also freeing up space for the businesses on Druid Street to receive deliveries, and not block the road to the same extent. The increased difficulties with deliveries caused by the double cycle lane mean future occupants of arch space would more likely be the bars and tap rooms that require less in the way of delivery, and which local residents have raised noise and anti-social behaviour concerns about.

Beyond this change, we think the consultation responses highlight some key priorities for local residents and businesses, around the future of Druid Street. Many of the local residents who responded raised concerns about anti-social behaviour and noise, which is why we will continue to make the reviewing of new licenses a priority, and work with residents and businesses to manage noise and make sure the street works for local people. There was a strong expression of support for more planting on Druid Street, to help create a greater separation between businesses and residents. And clearly, more thought is needed on the easing of deliveries for businesses, beyond moving to a single cycle lane. This could include exploring some form of loading restrictions, and also new ways of providing deliveries, such as expanding the use of cargo bikes.

Lastly, although we understand the concern from residents directly affected by the closure of Gelding Place, we recognise the overall majority in favour of retaining its closure, and support this measure.

Equalities Questions

Age



Ethnic background

White British	47	49.5%
Other European	13	13.7%
Other White	8	8.4%
White English	6	6.3%
White Scottish	4	4.2%
Black British	3	3.2%
White Irish	3	3.2%
Other ethnic background	2	2.1%
Other Mixed background	2	2.1%
Asian British	1	1.1%
Bengali	1	1.1%
Chinese	1	1.1%
Indian	1	1.1%
Mixed White/Asian	1	1.1%
Somali	1	1.1%
White Welsh	1	1.1%

Disability

Are you disabled?		
No	79	84.9%
Yes	11	11.8%
Prefer not to say	3	3.2%

Sex (as recorded at birth)

Sex		
Male	57	63.3%
Female	29	32.2%
Prefer not to say	4	4.4%

Conclusions

The response rate of 15.4% is higher than the previous survey carried out regarding this scheme.

Responses have been received from across different age groups, ethnicities and from those with disabilities.

The scheme has been viewed more positively from those who travel through Druid Street or visit the area. Those residents and businesses directly affected by the changes have viewed the scheme more negatively.

Many of the negative responses from residents in the Druid Street area are concerned with the impact businesses are having in the street, regarding anti-social behaviour, littering and noise, particularly from those premises licensed to sell alcohol. It is not clear that this has been affected by the highways scheme.

From the consultation responses and discussions with businesses, it is apparent there are problems caused when deliveries are made to the arches and when loading and unloading, as large vans and lorries are now blocking the carriageway. Reportedly, before the cycle lanes were installed, vehicles would wait on the opposite side of the carriageway to the arches while loading/unloading, and this would leave enough space for other vehicles to pass. However, it should be noted this would block the advisory contraflow cycle lane, and contravene the existing loading restrictions on the kerblines. Some consultation responses, including those from Team London Bridge and ArchCo, have called for the cycle lane to be reduced to one lane, or removed completely, to deal with this issue.

There is no obvious overall agreement as to whether loading restrictions would help alleviate the issue, either double yellow lines or overnight loading restrictions. From the businesses spoken to, most of the loading activity and deliveries happens during the day, so overnight loading restrictions would have little impact.

Responses regarding the perception of the scheme were mixed. However generally more people agreed that Druid Street and Gedling Place feel safer for all users since the scheme has been implemented.

There were some responses commenting that it was now more pleasant and felt safer cycling on Druid Street, since the cycle lanes were installed. However, some felt that the cycle lanes had led to more conflict between vehicles and those cycling and walking.

There is an overall majority of responses in favour of retaining the closure of Gedling Place permanently. However, some residents would like to see motor vehicle access restored.