

Epsom 'Plan E' highway improvements Scheme Public engagement Analysis Report

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report describes the engagement process and high level analysis for the Epsom 'Plan E' highway improvements scheme undertaken in March/April 2015. The responses received during the engagement period will help inform the detailed design stage of the scheme's development.

2 Approach to engagement

- 2.1 Public engagement was carried out for a **six week period** between 18 March and 30 April 2015. A public exhibition was held at the Ebbisham Centre on Wednesday 18 March, Thursday 19 March and Saturday 21 March 2015.
- 2.2 A public webpage was created to give details of the exhibition, and to link users to a questionnaire to give their feedback on the scheme. Information panels displayed at the exhibition were also published on the website. Following the exhibition, the display panels were moved to the Town Hall as an unmanned exhibition for the rest of the engagement period.
- 2.3 Notification of the public engagement was sent to various interest groups including business forums, resident association groups, cycle groups and the civic society based on the SCC's Local Transport Plan consultee list.
- 2.4 The event was advertised via social media channels, including a press release, advertising banners on both the borough and county councils websites, Twitter and Facebook. Posters were displayed at town centre bus stops and **500 leaflets** were distributed in the High Street to attract visitors. *What's On In Epsom* visited and tweeted to further advertise exhibition on Wednesday 18 March. *Get Surrey* reported on the exhibition on the 21 March.
- 2.5 Both the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council webpage and the Epsom and Ewell Local Area web pages promoted the exhibition at provided links to the main webpage, described above.
- 2.6 The dedicated county council webpage received over **1,047 hits** during the 6 week consultation period.
- 2.7 Much of the feedback we received was provided online, with respondents directed to a survey monkey page to

(3) South Street
Please refer to Panel 5, Proposals – South Street two-way. Is there anything else you think we should consider or include in this location to help make South Street two-way and the Plan E highway improvements scheme a success?
Yes No I don't know
Please explain your reasons for your response to this question

(4) High Street West / Market Place
Please refer to Panel 6, High Street & the Spread Eagle Junction. Is there anything else you think we should consider or include in this location to help make High Street two-way and the Plan E highway improvements scheme as a whole a success?
Yes No I don't know
Please explain your reasons for your response to this question

(5) The Spread Eagle Junction
Please refer to Panel 6, High Street & the Spread Eagle Junction again. Is there anything else you think we should consider or include in this location to help make South Street two-way and the Plan E highway improvements scheme as a whole a success?
Yes No I don't know
Please explain your reasons for your response to this question

Epsom Highway Improvements - Public Exhibition
Details have been published of a planned £1.5 million revamp of Epsom town centre to cut congestion and boost economic growth.
It is estimated that this will mean journey times through Epsom will drop by up to 20% on average with around two minutes being cut.
The images will go on display to the public along with further pictures and maps of the new town centre road layout in the Spa Lounge at the Epsom & Ewell Leisure Centre. They will also be able to find out about measures to promote walking by improving pedestrian safety. A feedback form will be available at the exhibition. The display material and a link to the feedback form will also be available on-line.
From 18 March

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If you can't make the exhibition on changes to Epsom, the plans are available on line together with a feedback form goo.gl/lNExz



There's still time to find out about changes to the roads in Epsom town centre. Come tomorrow goo.gl/lNExz



Still time to tell us your views on changes to Epsom, the plans are available on line and at town hall till 30 April goo.gl/lNExz

complete the questionnaire. Any handwritten questionnaires received have been inputted into Survey Monkey so that they could be included in the final analysis.

2.8 To aid analysis the responses were categorised into the following key themes:

- Provision for cycling
- Taxis
- Pedestrian facilities, including crossings and footway widths
- Traffic signals, including traffic flow through the town, signage and congestion
- Deliveries (incl. Waiting restrictions) on South St
- The public realm
- Public transport
- Way finding for pedestrians and cyclists.

2.9 Each of the main questions has been analysed using the themes above.

2.10 Responses to the questionnaire will be considered further under detailed design.

3 Wider engagement activities

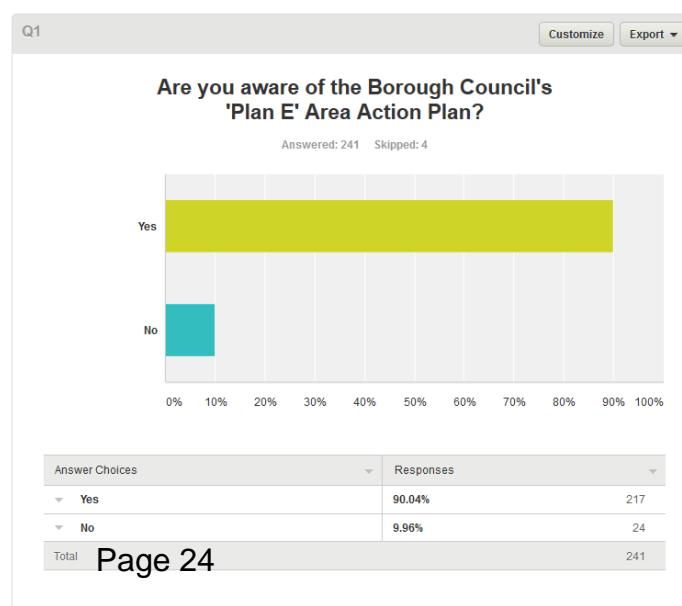
- 3.1 A business event was held in January 2014 to engage with local businesses in the area to help understand their needs. Local businesses located on South Street in particular were approached so that we could understand their loading and delivery arrangements. This will be particularly important as the scheme is progressed to detailed design.
- 3.2 Relatively little feedback was obtained from the business event, however the public exhibition raised the profile of the scheme again and further engagement with the local businesses was undertaken as some requested further information.

4 Consultation response analysis

- 4.1 More than **500** people visited the three-day exhibition, and we received **245** questionnaire responses.
- 4.2 There was an even split between male and female respondents, with over 70% of the respondents aged over 45.
- 4.3 This section describes the results received for each of the questions asked.

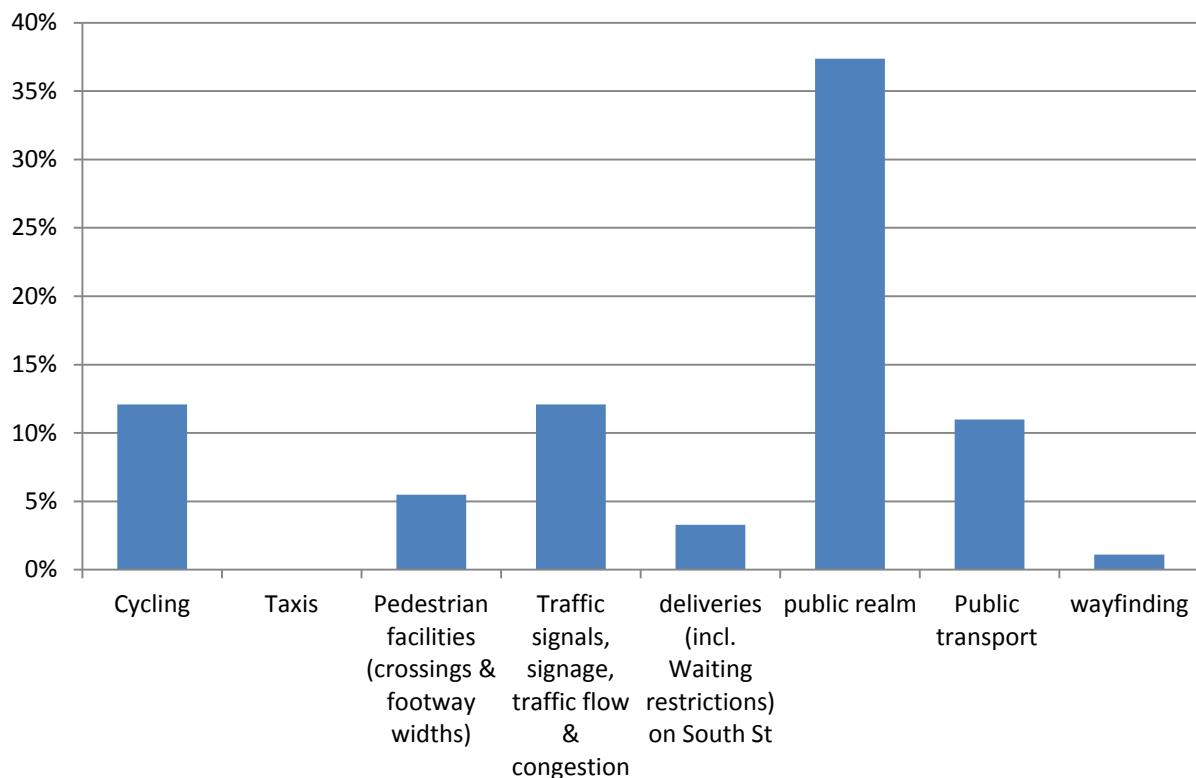
Question 1: Are you aware of the Borough Council's 'Plan E' Area Action Plan?

- 4.4 **241 (98%)** out of a total 245 respondents answered this question, and of these **217 (90%)** said they were aware of the Borough Council's Area Action Plan. **24 (10%)** respondents said they were unaware of the plan.



Question 2: Please refer to Panels 3 & 4 of the exhibition materials – Existing Situation. Do you agree with the demands and challenges specified as affecting the existing highway situation in Epsom Town Centre?

- 4.5 A number of identified issues in the town centre were identified for respondents to rate how far they agree that they are problems affecting Epsom town centre.
- 4.6 **191 (78%)** out of a total 245 respondents answered this question. How they rated the effect of the problems identified can be summarised as:
- **95%** agreed that traffic congestion is a problem in the town centre
 - **87%** agreed that traffic dominance is a problem in the town centre
 - **81%** agreed that pedestrian safety is a problem in the town centre
 - **83%** agreed that barriers to movement caused by traffic congestion were a problem in the town centre
 - **64%** agreed that declining economic performance is a problem in the town centre
- 4.7 We also asked respondents whether they thought there are any other issues or challenges which they thought should be considered to improve Epsom town centre.
- 4.8 We received **91 comments** on this part of the question. The graph below shows the main concerns that were raised in addition to those problems identified above.



- 4.9 A large proportion of the comments made related to the public realm. For the purpose of this analysis, 'public realm' includes Upper High Street, guardrail removal from the High Street, parking, severance, crime, retail offer, Quadrant Junction and the Marketplace.

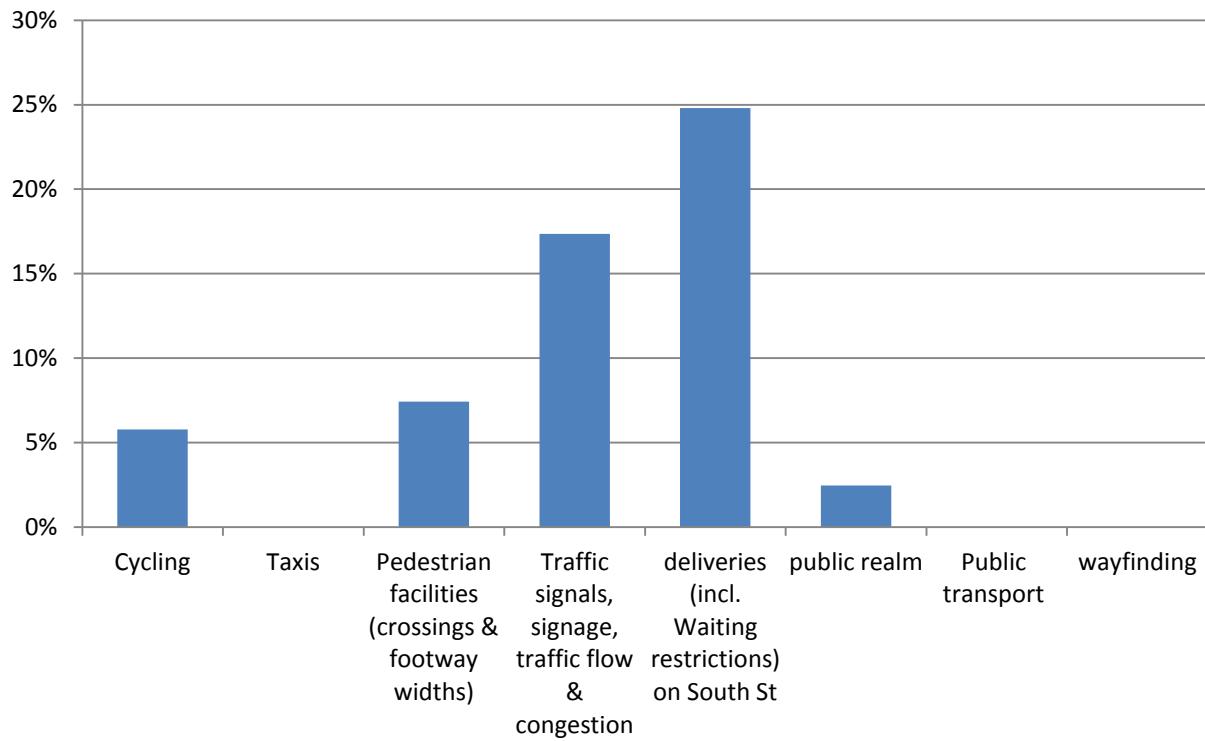
Question 3: South Street. Please refer to Panel 5 of the exhibition materials, Proposals

- South Street two-way. Is there anything else you think we should consider or include in this location to help make South Street two-way and the Plan E highway improvements scheme as a whole a success?

4.10 177 respondents (72% of all respondents) answered this question. They answered as follows:

- Yes **58% (102)**
- No **32% (56)**
- I don't know **11% (19)**

4.11 This question received 121 comments. Using the key themes outlined in Section 2 'Approaches to Consultation' above, the graph below shows the main concerns raised in connection with South Street.



4.12 A quarter of the comments made were concerned with how **deliveries** would operate and be managed on South Street under the proposals.

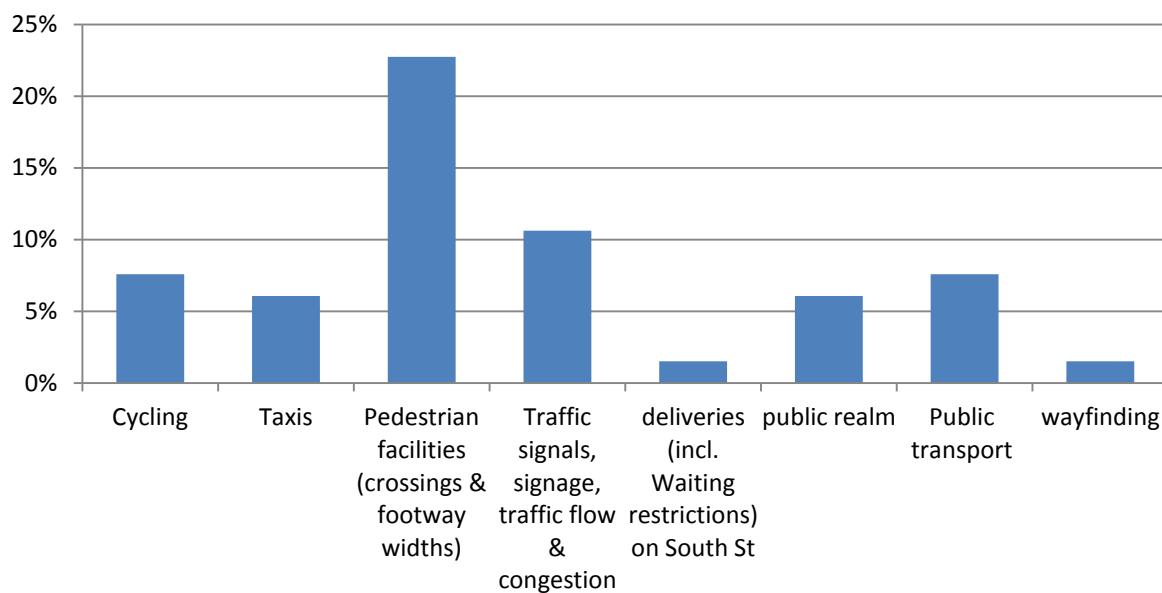
4.13 Almost a fifth of comments made were concerned with the impacts of **traffic flow**, the current operations of **traffic signal** junctions and concerns over **congestion**.

Question 4: High Street West / Market Place. Please refer to Panel 6 of the exhibition materials, High Street & the Spread Eagle Junction. Is there anything else you think we should consider or include in this location to help make South Street two-way and the Plan E highway improvements scheme as a whole a success?

4.14 177 respondents (72%) answered this question. They answered as follows:

- Yes 40% (70)
- No 49% (87)
- I don't know 11% (20)

4.15 Nearly half of those who answered this question thought there was nothing else we should consider at High Street West / Market Place. 74 comments were made in response to this question. Using the key themes outlined in Section 2 Approaches to Consultation above, the graph below shows the main concerns raised in connection with the High Street and Market Place.



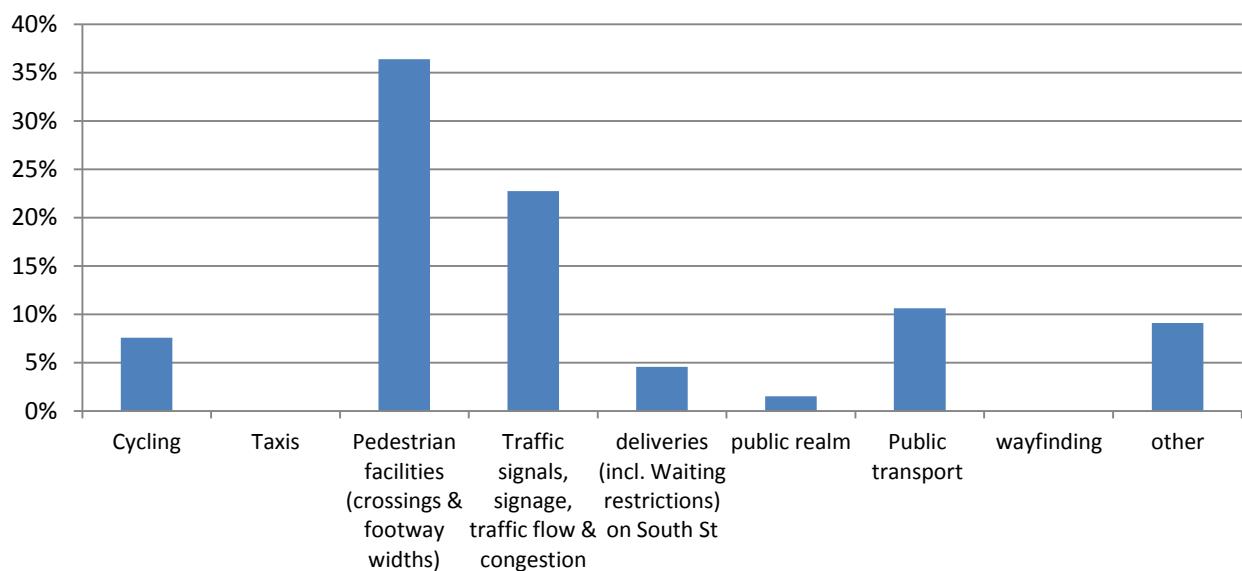
4.16 Nearly a quarter of comments made were concerned with the **pedestrian facilities** on High West and in the Market Place. The other categories also received an even spread indicating that all these competing issues are evident in this area of the town centre.

Question 5: The Spread Eagle Junction. Please refer again to Panel 6, High Street and the Spread Eagle Junction. Is there anything else you think we should consider or include in this location to help make South Street two-way and the Plan E highway improvements scheme a success?

4.17 168 respondents (69%) answered this question. They answered as follows:

- Yes 33% (56)
- No 55% (92)
- I don't know 12% (20)

4.18 We received **66 comments** on this question. The main concerns at the Spread Eagle reflected in these comments are shown in the graph below.



4.19 Nearly a quarter of comments made were concerned with issues or suggestions regarding **pedestrian facilities** at the Spread Eagle junction and over a fifth mentioned issues with the traffic signals.

Question 6: Please refer to Panel 7, Other Proposals. Is there anything else we should consider or include in terms of:

- (i) Network management (e.g. traffic signals, CCTV, car park information);
- (ii) Pedestrian facilities;
- (iii) Cycle parking facilities;
- (iv) Sustainable transport (e.g. bus stops, bus information);
- (v) Street scene.
- (vi) Economic growth

4.20 111 respondents (45%) answered this question. A sample collection of comments / suggestions received are given below.

(i) Network management (e.g. traffic signals, CCTV, car park information)

all lights including ped crossings to be more 'intelligent'

Much better co-ordination of the traffic lights, to avoid stop, start through the High Street, with resulting pollution + frustration resulting in speeding through the town is to try to beat the next red light!

(ii) Pedestrian facilities

20 mph speed restriction through centre of Epsom

less street sign clutter

Eliminate this hazard of upstand bricks on N/W side of Market Place Clock Tower. Provide restraining rail on corner of Spread Eagle to direct pedestrians to controlled crossing.

(iii) Cycle parking facilities

More please

These would be used if a cycle lane is included in the road design.

Provide more of these. It would encourage people to cycle if there is somewhere to park them.

Now that the cycle store at Epsom Station has been moved to the west end of Station approach, the traffic lights at the end of the cycle lane beside the railway should lead cyclists to cross at a diagonal into Station Approach rather than onto the pavement in front of the Station.

Yes please as much as possible

It is pointless having cycle parking if there are no safe facilities for cyclists in the town centre.

Provide more of these. It would encourage people to cycle if there is somewhere to park them.

Provide cycle parking in the area adjacent to Waitrose unloading

(iv) Sustainable transport (e.g. bus stops, bus information)

The bus shelter in Waterloo Road, which was recently knocked down is greatly missed by elderly passengers who need the seats to rest on whilst waiting for the bus.

Real time bus info would be very good

One large bus stop good idea

What can be done in a town with no bus station???

Good as suggested

Real time bus information

Bus stop by Nando's causes traffic congestion in Waterloo Road. Maybe it could be made bigger and the pavement a little narrower.

(v) Street scene (Public Realm)

All OK except at end of High Street where shops are shut. Also Upper High Street near car park

Epsom Heritage - Home of the Derby, Nell Gwynne and lots more

More public seating is needed at Upper High street end of High street to help make this end of the High street more attractive. The Town centre needs more trees and greener to soften its appearance at Upper High street end, Derby Square, Market Square and most importantly Station Approach. The trees in Station Approach MUST be properly established and maintained.

(vi) Economic growth



Question 7: Please refer to Panel 10, The Next Steps and Related Opportunities. What other areas of Epsom do you think we should consider for improvement in the future?

4.21 We received **121 comments** to this question.

4.22 A number of areas for improvement were highlighted in responses to this question. They included:

- Support for rail crossing at Kiln Lane – Kiln Lane Link
- Quality of retail offer in the town centre
- Upper High Street
- Quadrant Junction
- East Street
- Road safety concerns e.g. at Chase Road/Hook Road and at Station Approach/West Hill
- Oaks Square and Derby Square improvements.

Question 8: Gender

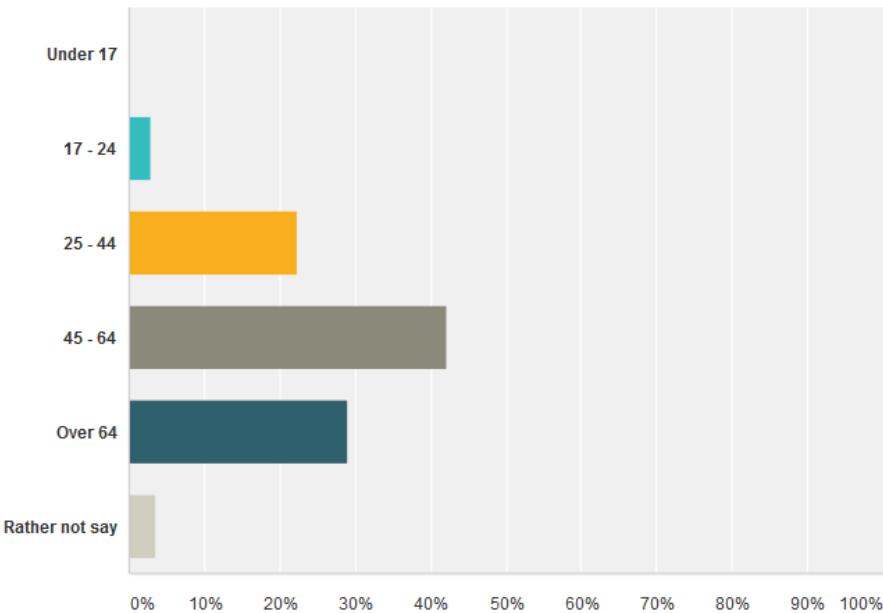
4.23 **169 respondents (69%)** responded. Of these 54% stated male, 43% stated female, and 3 % preferred not to say.

Question 9: What is your age group?

4.24 **166 respondents (68%)** responded. The graph below illustrates their answers.

What is your age group?

Answered: 166 Skipped: 79



Question 10: Please provide your postcode?

4.25 **161** respondents (66%) provided their postcode. Most of which were KT17 & KT18.

Question 11: Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

4.26 **167** respondents answered this question. Of these, **(10%)** considered themselves to have a disability, **(88%)** did not consider themselves to have a disability. 2% preferred not to say.

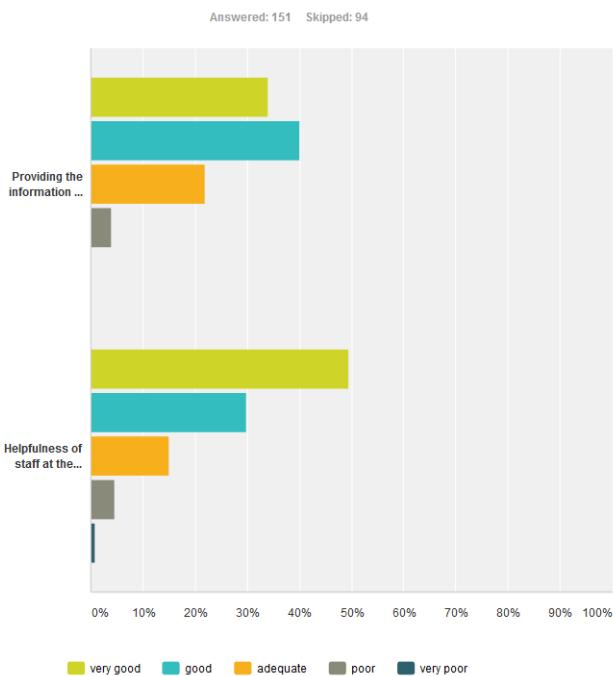
Question 12: How did you view the exhibition panels?

4.27 **(53%)** of respondents to this question said they visited the exhibition to view the exhibition panels. There was some overlap, as **(57%)** said they viewed the exhibition panels online.

Question 13: To help us improve our service to you, please rate the exhibition in terms of providing the information you needed, and helpfulness of staff at the exhibition.

4.28 The graph below presents the results of this question.

To help us improve our service to you,
please rate the exhibition in terms of:



Question 14: Do you have any other comments about the public exhibition? For example, at future public exhibitions, what could be improved?

4.29 A number of suggestions which could be used to try and improve future public exhibitions have been collected. These included:

- A minimum of 4 days duration and to include a Sat.
- Viewed at Town Hall. Questionnaires and comment book not readily available - had to be requested
- More for warning that is to take place!
- I felt that each panel tried to cover too much and that more panels, each covering less aspects, would aid understanding and be clearer.
- It was for too short a period, not advertised widely enough - I am amazed how many had not heard of it. If it could be produced in hard copy in Libraries, we could all browse at leisure and give more thought to our reaction. Also, we would not be pressured by numbers and could sit and examine it.
- Do you ever bring examples of traffic models that you run on the PC i.e. SCOOT for demo purpose.

5 Conclusions

5.1 This report describes the engagement process for Epsom 'Plan E' highway improvements, which was undertaken in March/April 2015. All responses received during the engagement period will be considered and will help inform the detailed design stage of the scheme's development.

- 5.2 More than 500 people visited the exhibition over the 3 days with over 200 visitors on the Saturday. 245 questionnaires were completed either at the exhibition or received on-line. The county council webpage hosting the exhibition panels and on-line questionnaire received over 1,047 hits during the 6 week consultation period.
- 5.3 Most respondents (over 80%) agreed with the demands and challenges facing the town centre of traffic congestion and traffic dominance and barriers to movement, pedestrian safety, town centre appearance and declining economic performance, and that something needed to be done to address these issues particularly around the town centre appearance.
- 5.4 Over **120** comments were received regarding the South Street proposals, a quarter (25%) were concerned with how deliveries would be managed.
- 5.5 In total over **2,500** separate comments have been returned regarding the proposals set out in the exhibition panels. The project team are now considering the relative merits of all the comments received in terms of those:
 - which need to be considered further to aid the detailed design process to progress the scheme;
 - which have been considered before or previously rejected as not relevant to progressing the scheme, i.e. “bypass the town”, which is outside the scope of this scheme.
- 5.6 All comments relating to the street scene aspects (town centre appearance etc.) will be shared and discussed with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. This will assist the Borough Council's aspirations to improve the town centre as set out in the **Town Centre Area Action Plan** known as (**Plan E**).