

# Belgrave flyover demolition method – public consultation



## Findings of the public consultation as at 30/01/2014

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*This report provides a summary of the findings of the public consultation.*

*It includes information about:*

- *The issues and options under consideration*
- *The consultation method*
- *The public response and views expressed*
- *The decisions taken in light of what was learnt*

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Belgrave flyover demolition method – public consultation**

The Belgrave Flyover removal, associated highway works and new car parking facilities were due to be delivered in the period from February to October 2014. These works have been approved as part of a planning permission secured by Sainsbury's, who will be implementing the works through their contractors. The council's highway services will oversee the works and agree traffic management measures during construction.

The scheme forms part of the wider initiative to improve the Golden Mile area of Belgrave.

While the works themselves are approved and have been subject to statutory planning and highway processes, there were two main options to demolish the flyover involving differing durations and impacts on traffic and local residents. We sought local views on these two options.

The options were:

#### **Short option:**

- Demolish the northerly abutment and three northern spans in one go under full inbound and outbound road closure to Belgrave Road for 9 days, working 7am until midnight (15th Feb to 23rd Feb).
- Demolish the southern abutment and three southerly spans in one go under full inbound and outbound road closure to Belgrave Gate for 9 days, working 7am until midnight (15th March to 23rd March).
- Demolish the last two remaining spans over the island (24th March 4th April) – daytime working only.
- In summary, although programme is nine weeks, the full road closures are only for two nine day periods (i.e. 2 working weeks). The roundabout will be kept open for the remainder of the programme (7 weeks).
- Noisy works up to midnight for 2½ weeks (18 days).

#### **Long option:**

- The ten sections (8 spans and 2 ramps) will be demolished one section at a time commencing 15th February.
- The programme will look to restrict lane closures to off-peak working only.
- The working hours for 12 weeks will be 9.30am to 3.30pm and 7.00pm to midnight every day (including weekends).
- The programme will look to restrict lane closures to off-peak working only and maintain traffic flow around the roundabout at all times during the day.
- Closures of slip lanes will be required in the evenings.
- Weekend closures of the roundabout will be required to demolish the spans over the carriageway.

## **CONSULTATION METHOD**

### **Objectives and techniques**

Leicester City Council and Sainsbury's were keen to hear the views of the local public and traders on the impact of the works on the area so decided to ask the public to choose the long or short option.

The question was posed as an online survey publicised through the city council consultation website and social media and was also available as a leaflet with a tear off slip and freepost card to respond.

8,000 cards were circulated across key public areas in Belgrave as well as at main city council buildings such as the customer services centre, libraries, and community centres. Residents and businesses in the Golden Mile area also received leaflets through their door.

Public meetings were held for local residents and businesses, MPs and local councillors were briefed, and key stakeholders such as traders associations, emergency services, local schools and colleges, community groups, as well as the ASRA sheltered housing all received 1:1 briefings.

Information was also issued to these groups as posters to be displayed in the area near the demolition. There were regular press releases through local media and interview on local radio, including Sabras Radio which serves non English speaking sections of the community. Interpreters were also organised for the public meetings.

Those who were unable to complete a form for themselves were offered support to do so. The paper form was kept very simple with a tick box against either option – no personal details were requested.

There was a period of 2 weeks to submit responses.

As responses came in, comments were logged daily and our FAQs were adjusted on the website [leicester.gov.uk/belgraveflyover](http://leicester.gov.uk/belgraveflyover) to help the public with any aspects of the demolition that were not clear.

## **PUBLIC RESPONSE AND VIEWS EXPRESSED**

### **Respondents**

1) Responses received to consultation:

- 969 votes received (653 online & 316 leaflets)
- 655 for the short option (68%)
- 314 for the long option (32%)
- A majority of 341
- **Clear two-to-one majority in favour of the short option**

2) A petition was also received containing 253 signatures, citing a number of grievances and requesting the long option. However, the petition does not contain any evidence that the individuals who signed were asked to consider the short option. We also cannot verify if these individuals also voted online or by leaflet. In any case, the 253 signatures do not affect the overall outcome being in favour of the short option.

3) There were some spoiled entries where no option was chosen. In this case, the comments were logged but no vote was cast.

## **Views and comments**

The comments made were categorised on a daily basis and fed back to management for response which was made via our FAQ section of the website.

The majority of comments were regarding the decision to demolish the flyover at all, and on concerns over traffic and travel issues.

With regard to demolition, the key messages were that the public wanted little disruption and to have the demolition completed in as shorter time as possible.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

### **Decisions taken**

Based on the numbers of responses, the decision was taken to implement the short option of 9 weeks which is to commence on 15 February.

### **Further dialogue**

The results were announced on 31 January by the city mayor and Keith Vaz MP with a further opportunity for press, businesses, and the public to ask further questions on the specifics of the demolition method chosen.