

GRANTHAM MID LENT FAIR CONSULTATION

SEPTEMBER 2023



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

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Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Council, Cabinet and in particular the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture – Councillor Paul Stokes - with the results of the consultation that has been undertaken with various stakeholders on the proposals to:
 - extend the duration of the Mid Lent Fair in Grantham from four days to five
 - change the days the Mid Lent Fair is in Grantham
2. This consultation has been undertaken in response to two requests made by the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain - the Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Mid and South Lincolnshire section. If the proposal to extend the duration of the fair is approved, the Mid Lent Fair would increase from four days to five in Grantham. If the proposal to change the days the fair is in Grantham is approved, the Mid Lent Fair would be in Grantham from Wednesday 20 March through to Sunday 24 March (instead of Sunday 17 March through to Wednesday 20 March).

Objectives

3. The main objectives of the consultation were identified as follows:
 - To ensure that local businesses and residents who may be directly affected by the proposals were given an opportunity to submit their views
 - To find out what they think of the proposals and if they support them or not. This included those who live or have businesses within the areas affected by the road closure order and also those who operate by licence within these areas. These included market traders and hackney carriage/ taxi drivers.
 - To ensure various statutory agencies were contacted and asked to comment. These included Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue and Lincolnshire County Council.
 - To ensure that any other stakeholders (other local residents and businesses not directly affected by the proposal) had an opportunity to have their say
4. The subsidiary objectives of the consultation were identified as follows:
 - To establish if there were any issues for those living and/or working in the areas identified as being most affected by the proposal
 - To communicate the changes that would happen if the proposals were approved to four main groups of stakeholders – residents, local businesses, those who operate by licence in this area (market stall holders and hackney carriage licence holders) and statutory stakeholders

Legislation

5. The actions identified in this consultation were governed by the Markets and Fair Clauses Act 1847¹ – in particular clauses 42 and 44.

¹ [Markets And Fairs Clauses Act 1847 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Methodology

6. A survey was prepared that was structured around these objectives. 272 residents and businesses and 248 licence holders who live and/or work in the area where the road closure is in place to accommodate the fair were contacted directly. They were sent a copy of an A5 flyer outlining the reasons for the consultation and a printed copy of the survey. Those contacted were asked to either complete the printed copy of the survey and return it to the Council Offices/ Customer Services Centre Access Point or to access the survey via a web link or QR code.
7. The consultation was promoted to other residents and businesses not classified as being directly affected by the proposal via social media channels and also in the local media. Stakeholders could respond via a web link or QR code. If they required a printed version, they were asked to contact the Corporate Facilities and Events Supervisor.
8. Statutory stakeholders including Lincolnshire Police, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue and Lincolnshire County Council were contacted directly by the Corporate Facilities and Events Supervisor. She also contacted Asda (because their deliveries are directly affected by the Mid Lent Fair) and Buckminster Estates – the holder of the Market Charter (as the market would need to re-locate temporarily on Saturday 23 March if the proposal was approved).
9. The consultation ran for four weeks from 4 September 2023 to 2 October 2023. Most responses (213 or 95.9%) were collected on-line via the web link. 222 responses were received in total.

Details

10. To help the council understand the degree of support or otherwise for the proposal to extend the duration of the Mid Lent Fair in Grantham and change the days it was in Grantham, the consultation officer was asked to work with the Corporate Facilities and Events Supervisor to draw up plans to consult with local residents and businesses and other stakeholders.
11. To this end 272 local residents and businesses were contacted directly, along with 248 taxi drivers and market stall holders. The survey, along with a flyer, was sent to properties on a number of streets affected by the road closure order. This included residential and business properties in Westgate, Greyfriars and Conduit Lane.
12. The flyer set out why the council is considering the requests from the Showmen's Guild to possibly extend the duration of the Mid Lent Fair in Grantham and change the days it is in Grantham. It also mentioned that should the proposals be approved; they would have to be submitted to one of his

majesties principal Secretaries of State in accordance with the requirements set out in the Markets and Fairs Clauses Act 1847 (clause 44).

13. The survey was structured around two proposals. These were a proposal to extend the duration of the Mid Lent fair in Grantham and a proposal to change the days the fair is in situ. It included questions designed to capture and/ or measure:

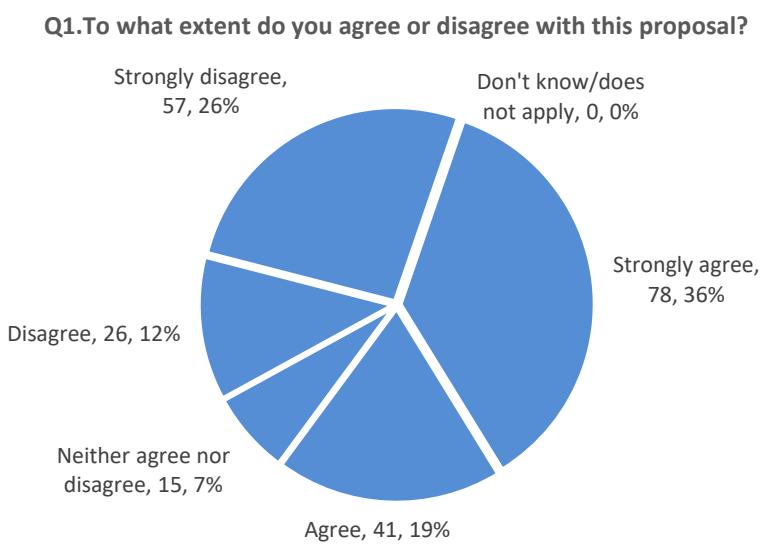
- The degree of support for the proposals
- Whether the proposal to extend the duration of the fair would affect them or not
- Whether the proposal to change the days the fair is in Grantham would affect them or not
- Whether they were a local resident, a business or a trader operating under licence
- Where they live
- If they had any queries

14. The consultation closed on 2 October 2023. 222 responses were received, of which 213 were via the link and 9 were printed copies which were input manually.

Results

Agreeing or disagreeing with the proposal to extend the duration of the Mid Lent Fair

15. The first question residents and businesses were asked was the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to extend the duration of the Mid Lent fair in Grantham from four days to five. Just over half of those responding (119 or 54.8%) agreed with this proposal, as illustrated in the graph below:



16. Cross tabulating these responses against the postcodes of respondents directly affected by the road closure order revealed more than three quarters (78.3%) disagreed with the proposal. This is illustrated in the table below:

	No	%
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	3	13.0
Neither agree nor disagree	2	8.7
Disagree	2	8.7
Strongly disagree	16	69.6
Don't know/does not apply	0	0
Total	23	100.0

17. Respondents were then asked to detail why they supported or objected to the proposal. An analysis of responses to this question revealed the following themes.

Some respondents were in favour of the extension because:

- It will generate more trade
- It gives people more opportunity to visit the fair
- Its good for the local community

“Hopefully more trade”

“.... more people will have time to go to the fair with it being a weekend...”

“Just great for community life”

Some were against the extension because:

- Of the negative impact it would have on trade
- The disruption and congestion in the centre of Grantham
- Of difficulties with access
- Of the costs of fairground rides

“As a retailer it’s bad enough to have them here for 3 trading days at the beginning of the week without losing trade on Friday and Saturday which are our busiest days”

“Causes a lot of problems getting around the town centre.”

“it would inconvenience locals especially the many elderly who live close by who suffer the noise and difficulty accessing their properties.”

“We are in a cost-of-living crisis.... The price of rides is ridiculously high.....”

The effect that extending the duration of the fair might have

18. Respondents were then asked if extending the duration of the fair from four days to five would affect them or their business directly. Around a quarter (56 or 25.8%) of respondents thought that it would, with two thirds (144 or 66.4%) stating that it wouldn't. 17 respondents (7.8%) didn't know. Of the 56 respondents that answered yes to this question, 21 were local businesses, 28 were residents, 3 were market traders and 2 were hackney carriage licence holders.

19. When asked to describe how they might be affected by an extension, an analysis revealed that most comments centred on the disruption and congestion caused by the fair. The impact it would have on trade and the market (with Saturday being the busiest day for businesses, market traders and hackney carriage licence holders), and access for residents, customers and deliveries were common responses. The amount of noise generated by fairground rides was also mentioned, as illustrated here:

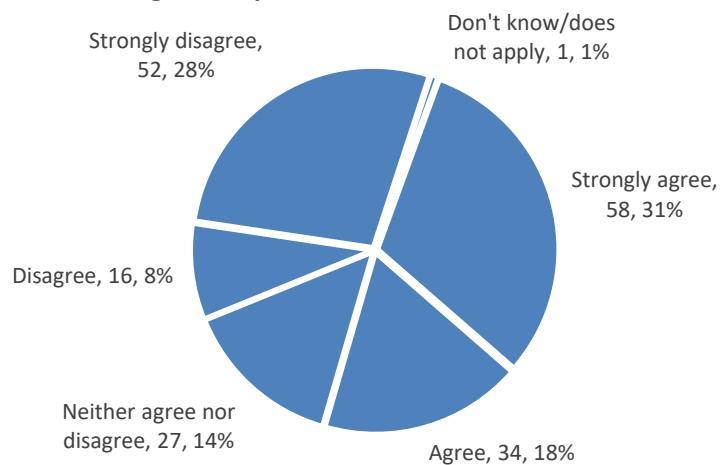
“My office is in the Market Place and every year we have to close when the fair starts as the noise is deafening, it shakes the windows in our old building, so we cannot concentrate or make phone calls.”

“I am a taxi driver with the traffic jams it will cause I will not be able to work as it would be a waste of time”

“Getting around the town becomes very difficult”

20. Just under half (92 or 49%) of respondents supported the proposal put forward by the Showmen's Guild to change the days the Mid Lent Fair visits Grantham. Just over a third (68 or 36.2%) didn't, as illustrated in the chart below:

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to change the days the Mid Lent Fair is in Grantham?



21. Cross tabulating these responses against the postcodes of respondents directly affected by the road closure order revealed the same number strongly disagreed with the proposal to change the days the Mid Lent Fair visits Grantham as strongly disagreed with the proposal to extend the fair by one day. This is perhaps not surprising and is illustrated in the table below:

	No	%
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	2	8.7
Neither agree nor disagree	5	21.7
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	16	69.6
Don't know/does not apply	0	0
Total	23	100.0

22. When asked if changing the days of the week the Mid Lent Fair is in Grantham would affect them or their business directly, seven out of ten respondents (133 or 71.5%) stated that it wouldn't. Around a fifth of respondents (38 or 20.4%) thought that it would. 15 respondents (8.1%) didn't know.

23. The quotes below are indicative of the comments made by respondents about this issue. The impact of the change on footfall was a concern for businesses, as was access to their premises. Residents were also concerned about access as well as light and noise pollution from the fairground rides.

“Yes of course it will not only in Westgate and the Market Place but all traders in the town as footfall will be down considerably...”

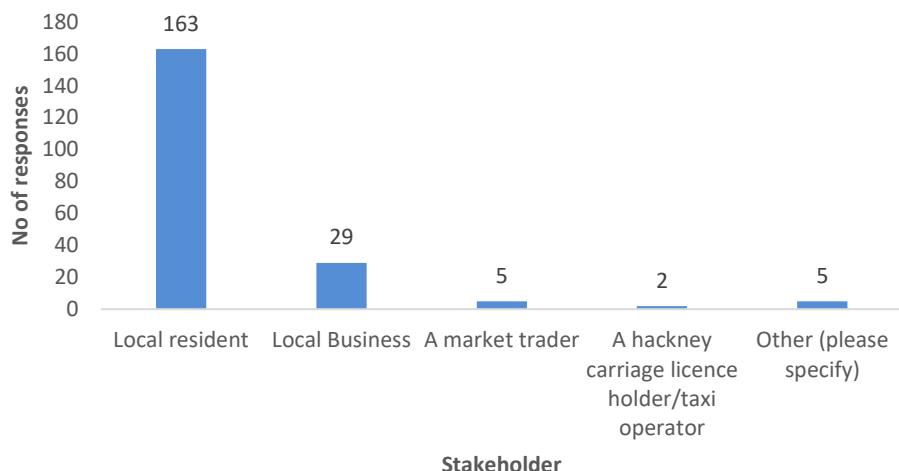
“... the rides are right in front of my gates and my customers don't like the noise or disruption”

“.... The Grange now has more light pollution from strobe effects...”

Stakeholder Information

24. The graph overleaf shows the number of responses received from the various stakeholders. Most were from residents and/or businesses as shown here:

Q9. No of responses received from various stakeholders



25. The majority of responses were from those who were not contacted directly and asked to take part. Eight out of ten respondents (162 or 85.7%) said that they had **not** been contacted directly. This is important because it means those who live or work in the area affected by the road closure order - who are therefore more likely to be directly affected by the proposals - could possibly be under-represented in the distribution of responses. The reasons for this lack of response from this section of the population are not known.

26. This is also evident when the postcodes of respondents are considered. To help the council understand how the proposal might affect local people and businesses directly, depending on where they live or work, respondents were asked to supply the first few digits of their postcode. Nine out of ten respondents (89.6%) were from the centre and outskirts of Grantham as illustrated below:

Postcode	no	%
LE15 7	1	0.6
NG23 5	2	1.2
NG24 2	1	0.6
NG31	5	3.0
NG31 6	34	20.7
NG31 7	34	20.7
NG31 8	34	20.7
NG31 9	40	24.5
NG32	3	1.9
NG32 1	1	0.6
NG32 2	2	1.2
NG33 3	3	1.9
PE9 2	2	1.2
PE11	1	0.6
SW6	1	0.6
	164	100.0

27. However, only 23 responses were received from those with postcodes in the area affected by the road closure order.

Other comments

28. An analysis of the free text responses to the question asking if respondents would like to comment on anything else revealed a handful of common themes. The most popular by far was a request to move the fair to another location as illustrated in the word cloud below:



Statutory and other consultees

29. Statutory stakeholders were contacted directly by the Corporate Facilities and Events Supervisor. Feedback was received from:

- Lincolnshire County Council. They didn't comment on the proposal, but on operational elements of the Mid Lent Fair, including road not gritted signs, the requirement to have a formal traffic management plan and a request to see the plan of where the rides will be situated
- The District Safety Advisory Group (SAG). They didn't have any objections to the proposals. Unfortunately, the police, LCC Emergency Planning, Grantham area Fire and Rescue or East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) were not in attendance at the meeting when this was discussed. These organisations were contacted individually but no feedback was received.

30. Buckminster Estates (who hold the charter for the market) had no objections. No response was received from Asda.

Conclusion

31. The purpose of this consultation was to establish if the proposal to extend the Mid Lent Fair in Grantham from four days to five would be supported by local people and businesses. Those who live or work in the area affected by the road closure order were contacted directly, with others made aware of the opportunity to participate through the local and social media channels.
32. Just over half of respondents (119 or 54.8%) supported the proposal to extend the Mid Lent Fair in Grantham. Just under half (92 or 49%) supported the proposal to change the days the Mid Lent Fair visits Grantham – from Sunday 17TH March to Wednesday 20th March 2024 to Wednesday 20th March to Sunday 24th March 2024.
33. It should be acknowledged however, that the majority of responses were received from individuals or businesses not directly affected by the changes. When responses from those affected by the road closure order were considered independently, seven out of ten did not support these proposals.
34. The Council is asked to consider the feedback contained within this report. When the decision has been made the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain (the Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Mid and South Lincolnshire section), the statutory stakeholders as well as Buckminster Estates will be contacted by the Corporate Events and Facilities Supervisor.

Prepared by Deb Wyles
Communication and consultation
7 November 2023

