



Streets Alive - Shaping our Future Business Interviews - Analysis Report



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Streets Alive - Shaping our Future

Business Interviews - Analysis

On the week beginning 10 June 2021, McElrea Consulting Ltd interviewed 55 businesses on behalf of Gore District Council. This was to gain an understanding of whether or not the 'Streets Alive' trial on Irk Street has infused vibrancy into the town and created a pedestrian friendly precinct.

A total of 19 businesses were interviewed on Irk Street and 36 businesses interviewed on Main Street. The following report splits out comments received by both streets to give a good indication of the views of businesses who are directly and indirectly affected by the trials.

Overall, the experience of the trials on Irk Street has differed depending on where your business is located. 74% of businesses located on Irk Street have indicated that their experience of the trials has been positive to very positive, where as only 39% of businesses located on Main Street have had a positive experience. A higher percentage (47%) of those businesses located on Main Street have indicated that the trials have not had any impact on their business, whether it be positive or negative.

When asked if businesses would like to see the changes become permanent, 80% said yes to some or all. This was true for both Main Street and Irk Street businesses. Businesses feel that Irk Street is more welcoming, vibrant and aesthetically pleasing and would like for the outdoor seating to become permanent. Some businesses would like for there to be more car parking introduced (maybe by removing bike stands) and for the stage to be removed. Some businesses think that the aspects from the dark side of the street should be removed as the street is too narrow.

When asked whether or not the loss of carparks has impacted on businesses, 42% of interviewees from Irk Street agreed that they have been impacted negatively (people parking onsite while shopping elsewhere, lack of safe parks for elderly) while 58% have not been impacted. However, 89% of businesses on Main Street cited that they have not been impacted by the loss of carparks. Those that were cited lack of loading zones and safe parking for the elderly.

82% of businesses interviewed agree that the trials have added vibrancy to the town, mainly through the outdoor seating and people having lunch outside. However, when asked, only 26% of Irk Street businesses and 53% of Main Street businesses believe that the trials have created a more pedestrian friendly precinct. The reason for this result is mainly due to the courtesy crossing. Businesses think it is dangerous and should either be removed or changed into a pedestrian crossing.

There are many aspects that businesses would like to see become permanent with the main one being the outdoor seating. Keeping everything on the sunny side of the street and getting rid of aspects on the dark side of the street was also mentioned by numerous businesses. This would allow for the street to not be as narrow and free up some spaces for more parking.

Other ideas to make the township more vibrant include installing outside seating in front of cafes on Main Street, more car parks and loading zones and more greenery.

Following is an analysis of the 55 businesses interviewed.

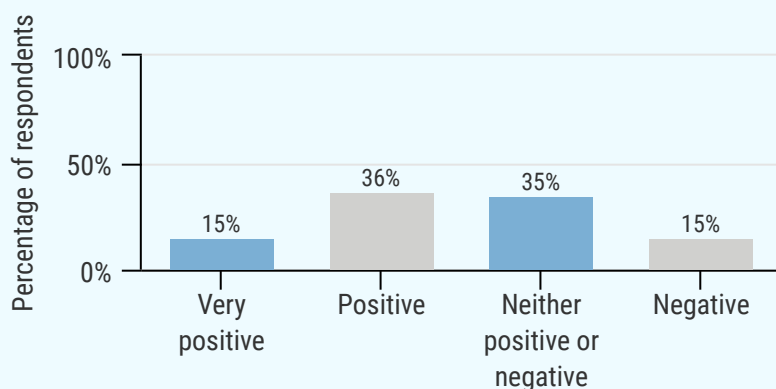


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Business Interviews - Analysis

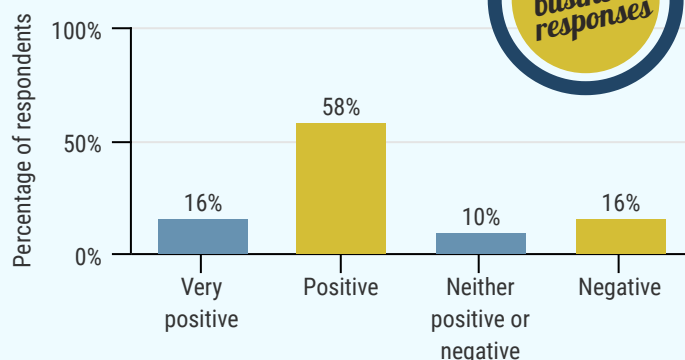
As a business, how would you describe your experiences with the new parklets, seating and landscaping being trialled in Irk Street?

55
business
responses



Of the 55 businesses interviewed, 51% have had positive to very positive experiences with the Irk Street trials, 35% have not been impacted and 15% have been impacted negatively.

Irk Street

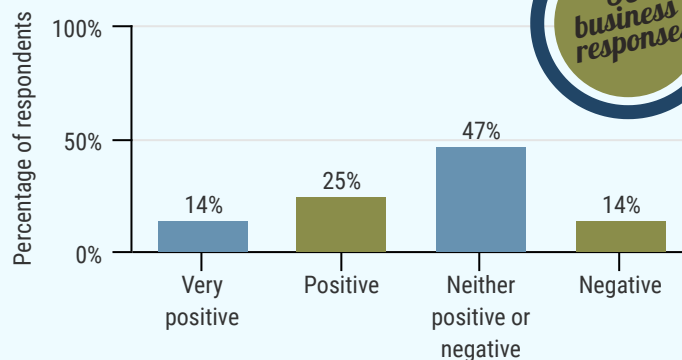


19
business
responses

Of the 19 businesses interviewed on Irk Street, **74% are positive to very positive** about their experiences with the trial changes on Irk Street. Interviewees advised that the **outdoor seating is great**, especially for the elderly, people with young children and for those who work in the CBD. Interviewees advised that the **changes make the area more welcoming and vibrant** and that they think **the area looks more appealing**. Some businesses commented that the **changes were good on the sunny side of the street**. **Removal of the bike stand** and **re-establishment of some car parks** was also mentioned.

16% of businesses interviewed on Irk Street have had **negative experiences** with the trials on Irk Street mainly citing that **parking has been effected for clients, elderly and the disabled**.

Main Street



36
business
responses

Of the 36 businesses interviewed on Main Street in Gore, **39% have had positive to very positive experiences with the changes on Irk Street**. Comments included that **the outdoor seating is great**, with a couple of interviewees mentioning that they have eaten their lunch there on occasion. Interviewees also cited that the trials in Irk Street have **made the area more welcoming, vibrant and pleasing to look at**.

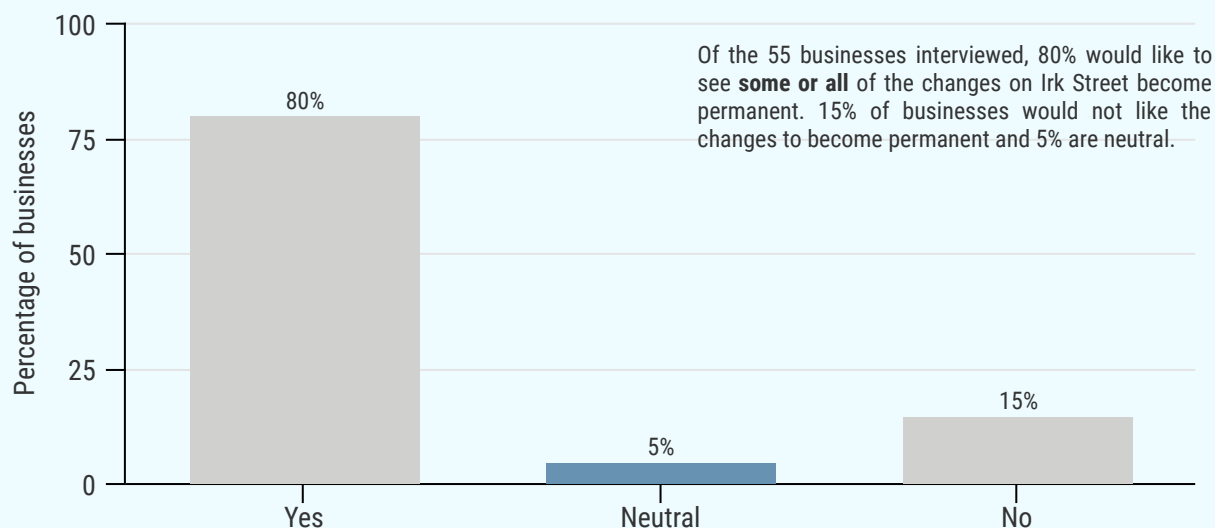
47% of interviewees on Main Street in Gore have **not been impacted by the changes to Irk Street**. A couple of businesses mentioned that their businesses **are too far away to feel any real impact**. Other comments received included that the changes will be **good in summer**, **there is less parking**, is good to see **people using outdoor seating**, **the traffic has not slowed** and the **courtesy crossing is dangerous**.

For the **14% of businesses** who have been **impacted negatively**, comments centred around there being **less parking**, especially for elderly and for those businesses wanting to use loading zones. A couple of businesses mentioned that it was **unfair that they pay for alfresco dining fees** now due to outdoor seating in Irk Street benefitting businesses there. **Streets being too narrow** was also mentioned.



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Would you like to see the changes on Irk Street become permanent?



55
business
responses

Irk Street, Gore



Of the 19 businesses interviewed on Irk Street, 15 would like for **some or all of the changes to become permanent** as they like the **look and vibrancy** that the trial has brought to Irk Street. A few businesses cited that the changes should only be made permanent on the **sunny side of the street** and that **car parking should be reintroduced, in place of the bike stands**.

Those that have said that they don't want the trials to become permanent cite **lack of parking** as the main concern. A couple of businesses on Irk Street would like for the **stage and bike stand to be removed**.

Main Street, Gore



Of the 36 businesses interviewed on Main Street Gore, **29 would like for all or some of the changes to become permanent**. These businesses advised that the trial **changes make Gore look more appealing** (apart from the artificial grass) and that they **like the outdoor seating**. Some of these businesses would like for their to be **more car parking reintroduced** (including loading zones). A couple of businesses mentioned that they would like for the **stage to be removed** and for the **courtesy crossing to be changed into a pedestrian crossing**.

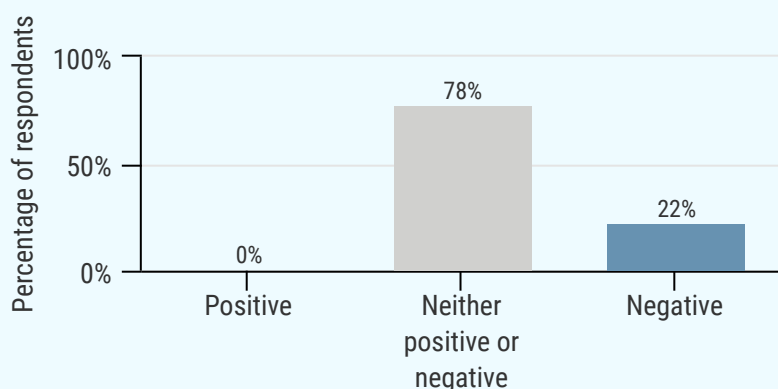
Of the five businesses who do not want the changes to become permanent, one is concerned about safety in relation to the **streets being too narrow**. Another is concerned that their business on Main Street has to **pay fees to offer alfresco dining**.



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Business Interviews - Analysis

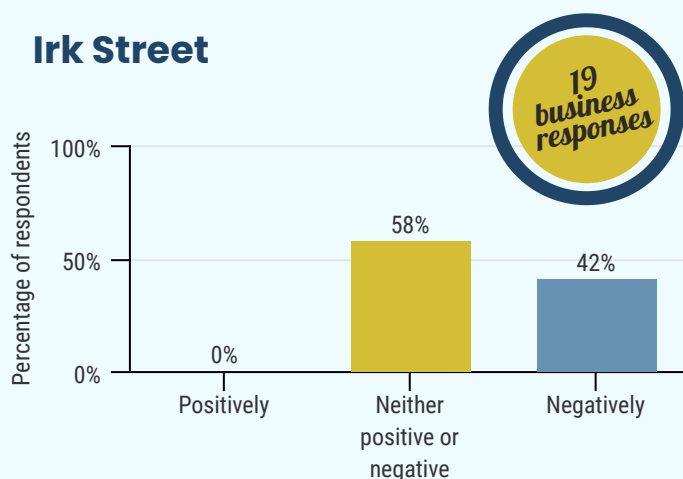
How has the loss of car parks in the area impacted your business?



55
business
responses

Of the 55 businesses interviewed, 78% were not effected by the loss of car parks in Irk Street. 22% of businesses interviewed have been impacted negatively.

Irk Street

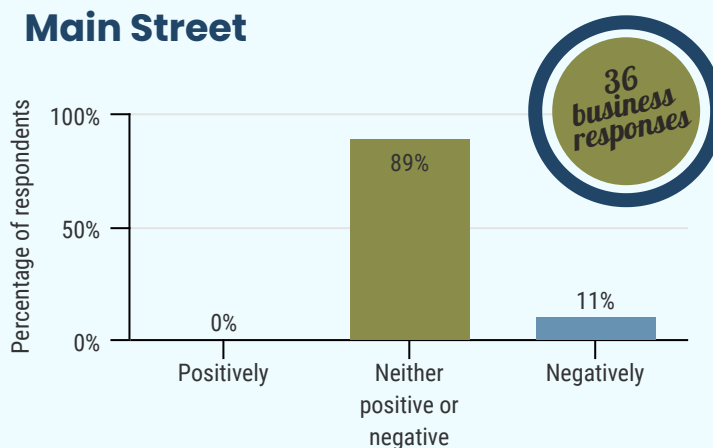


19
business
responses

Of the 19 businesses interviewed on Irk Street, **58% have not been impacted** by the loss of car parks in the area. Businesses advised that **people are still coming into their business** and that there has been no negative effect.

42% of businesses interviewed cited that the loss of car parks on Irk Street has had a **negative impact** on their business. Comments included that people are **using parks that are located onsite while not shopping at their business**. Some have received complaints from the public saying that they **went elsewhere due to lack of parking** and some are concerned about the **lack of safe parks** for elderly and disabled.

Main Street



36
business
responses

Of the 36 businesses interviewed on Main Street in Gore, **89% were neither positively or negatively** impacted by the loss of car parks on Irk Street. Comments included that **people need to walk to the shops anyway**. However some did cite that they **do miss the parking** and that the **elderly want to be able to come straight into their business**. The **cluttered loading zone** was also mentioned.

Only **11% of businesses** interviewed on Main Street in Gore had been **impacted negatively** by the loss of car parks. Again, the **cluttered loading zone** and **lack of parking for elderly** was mentioned.

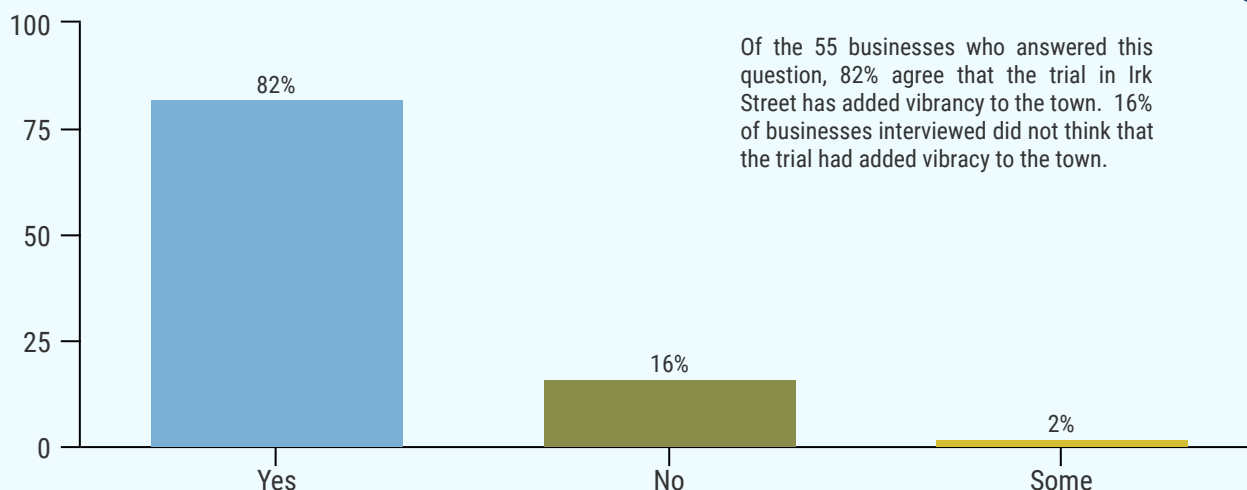


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Business Interviews - Analysis

Do you think that the trial in Irk Street added vibrancy to the town?

55
businesses



Irk Street

19
business
responses



16 businesses
Yes



3 businesses
No

16 businesses on Irk Street agree that the trial in Irk Street has added vibrancy to the town by making the street **look more appealing** (by adding more colour through flowers and greenery) and busy (by **drawing in more people to the outdoor seating**). A couple of interviewees felt that Irk Street now has **feel about it like Esk Street** in Invercargill.

Main Street

36
business
responses



29 businesses
Yes



1 business
Only some



6 businesses
No

29 businesses located on the Main Street in Gore agree that the trial in Irk Street has added vibrancy to the town. Interviewees felt that the **outdoor seating** has created a good atmosphere for eating which has increased street appeal as well as made the street appear more social. Many thought that the **changes would be better appreciated in summer**.

Six businesses did not believe that the changes in Irk Street had created any vibrancy from where they are located, however a couple of businesses did think that this may **change in summer**.

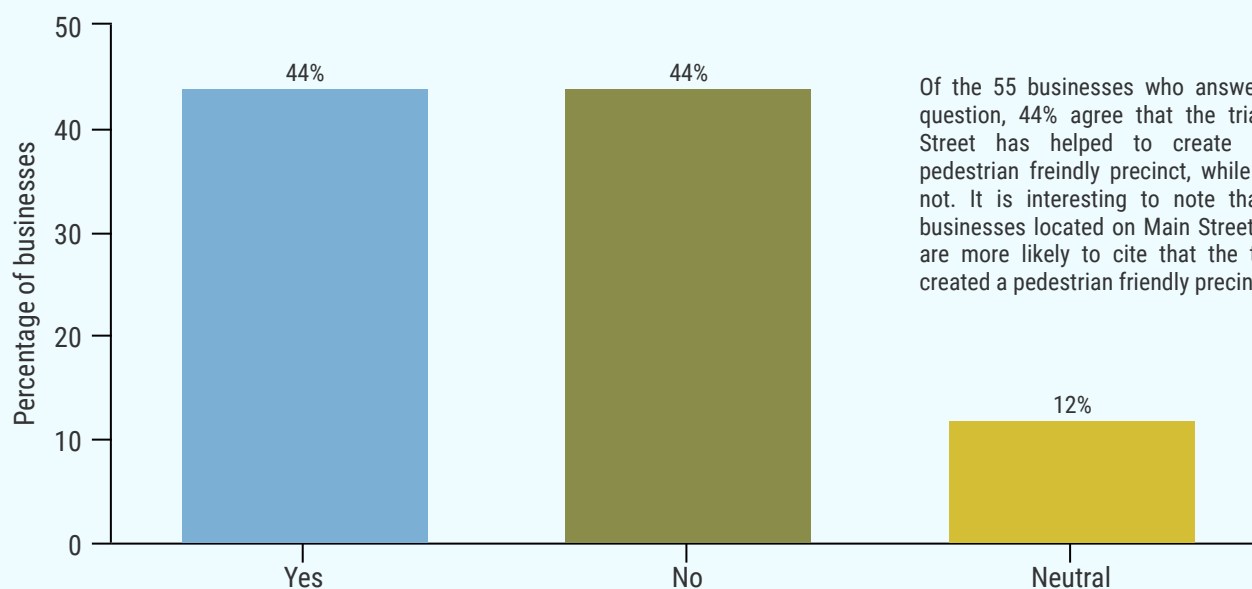


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Business Interviews - Analysis

Do you think that the trials in Irk Street have helped to create a more pedestrian friendly precinct?

55
businesses



Of the 55 businesses who answered this question, 44% agree that the trial in Irk Street has helped to create a more pedestrian friendly precinct, while 44% do not. It is interesting to note that those businesses located on Main Street in Gore are more likely to cite that the trial has created a pedestrian friendly precinct.

Irk Street

19
business
responses



5 businesses
Yes



2 businesses
Neutral



12 businesses
No

12 businesses on Irk Street **do not think** that the trials have helped to create a pedestrian friendly precinct. The main reason for this is that they believe that the **courtesy crossing is dangerous** (as people don't know the rules) with some interviewees citing that it either be taken away or changed into a pedestrian crossing.

Of those five businesses who do think the trials have helped to create a more pedestrian friendly precinct, the main reason cited is that **traffic has now slowed** due to narrower streets.

Main Street

36
business
responses



19 businesses
Yes



5 business
Neutral



12 businesses
No

19 businesses (50%) located on the Main Street in Gore agree that the **trials have helped to create a pedestrian friendly precinct**. The main reason for this is that traffic now moves slower in the area.

12 businesses interviewed did not believe that the trials have created a more pedestrian friendly precinct. The main reason cited is that the courtesy crossing is dangerous and confusing for both drivers and pedestrians. Two interviewees advised that they have almost been hit when crossing the road.



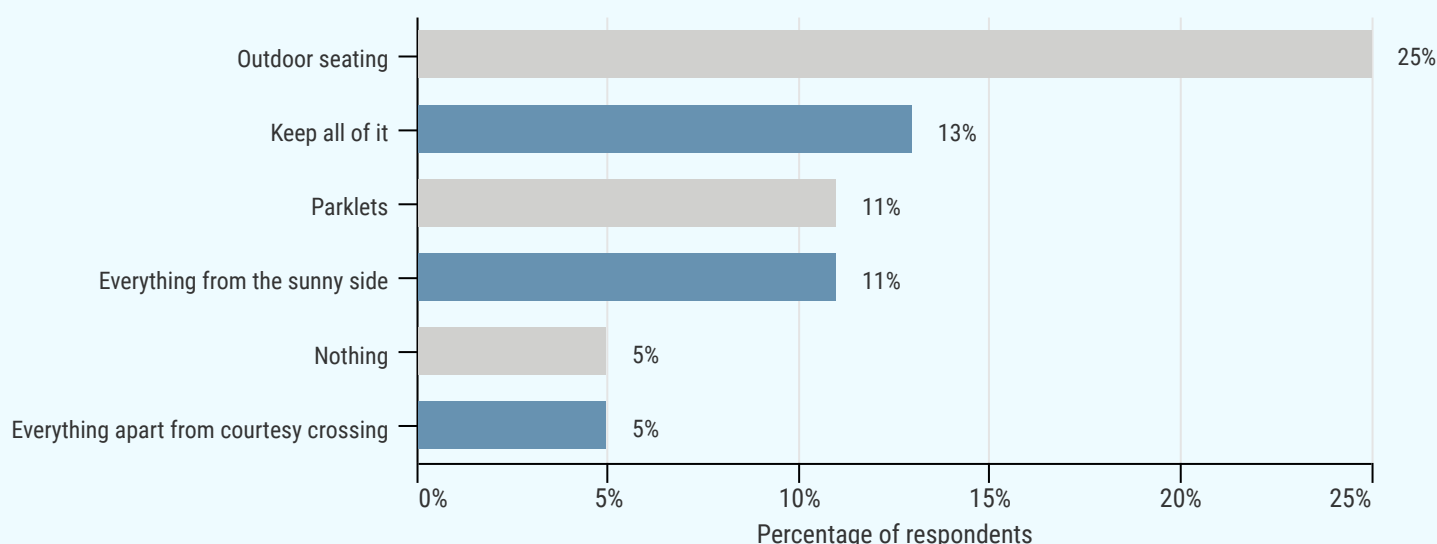
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Business Interviews - Analysis

84
comments

Thinking about the trial changes on Irk Street, what aspects would you like to keep permanently?

All businesses on Main Street and Irk Street



There were 84 suggestions to this question from the 55 businesses located on Irk Street and Main Street in Gore. Of these suggestions, 25% related to keeping the outdoor seating and a further 13% of comments related to keeping everything. 11% of comments respectively related to keeping the parklets and everything from the sunny side of the street.

Other comments received that received less than 5% of mentions included the following:

- Remove courtesy crossings
- Remove bike stands
- Keep flower beds
- Remove stage
- Keep roundabout
- Keep lighting
- Change courtesy crossing to pedestrian crossing
- Keep courtesy crossing
- Not worried
- Remove tubs on corner
- Widen the roundabout
- Replace car parks
- Add a taxi stand
- Keep bike stands

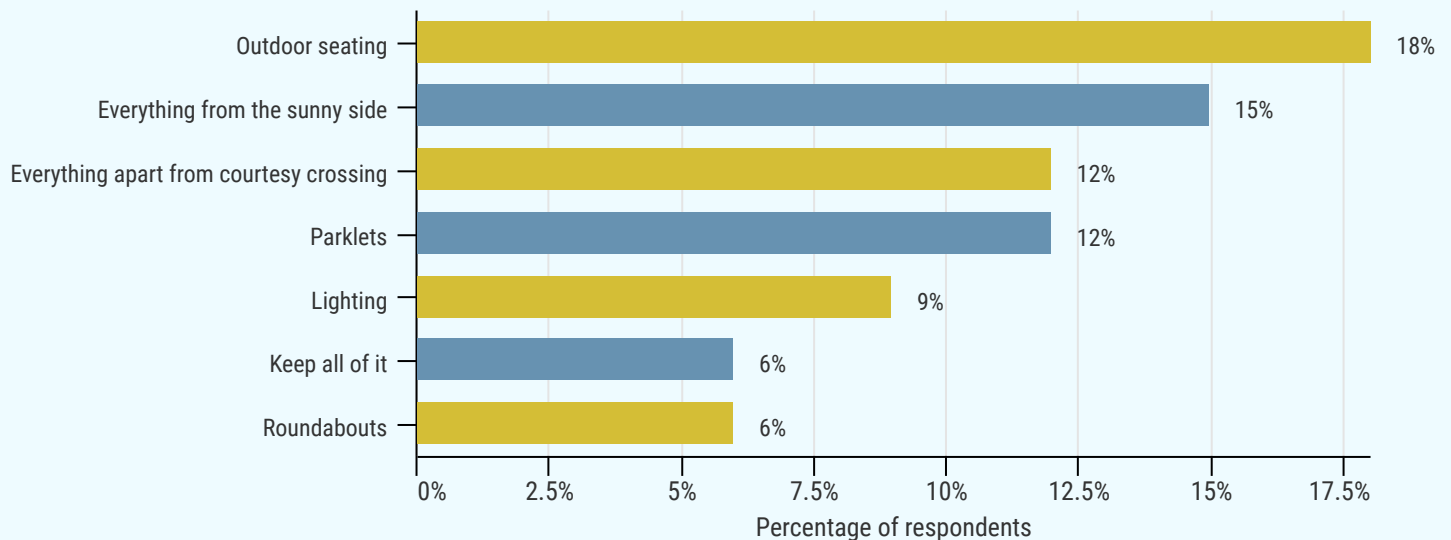


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33
comments

Thinking about the trial changes on Irk Street, what aspects would you like to keep permanently?

Irk Street businesses



There were 33 suggestions to this question from the 19 businesses located on Irk Street. Of these suggestions, 18% related to keeping the outdoor seating and a further 15% of comments related to keeping everything on the sunny side of the street. 12% of comments related to keeping everything apart from the courtesy crossings and a further 12% of comments related to keeping the parklets.

Other comments received that recieved less than 5% of mentions included the following:

- Keep the bike stands
- More greenery
- Remove the bike stands
- Remove the stage
- Replace car parks
- Add a taxi stand

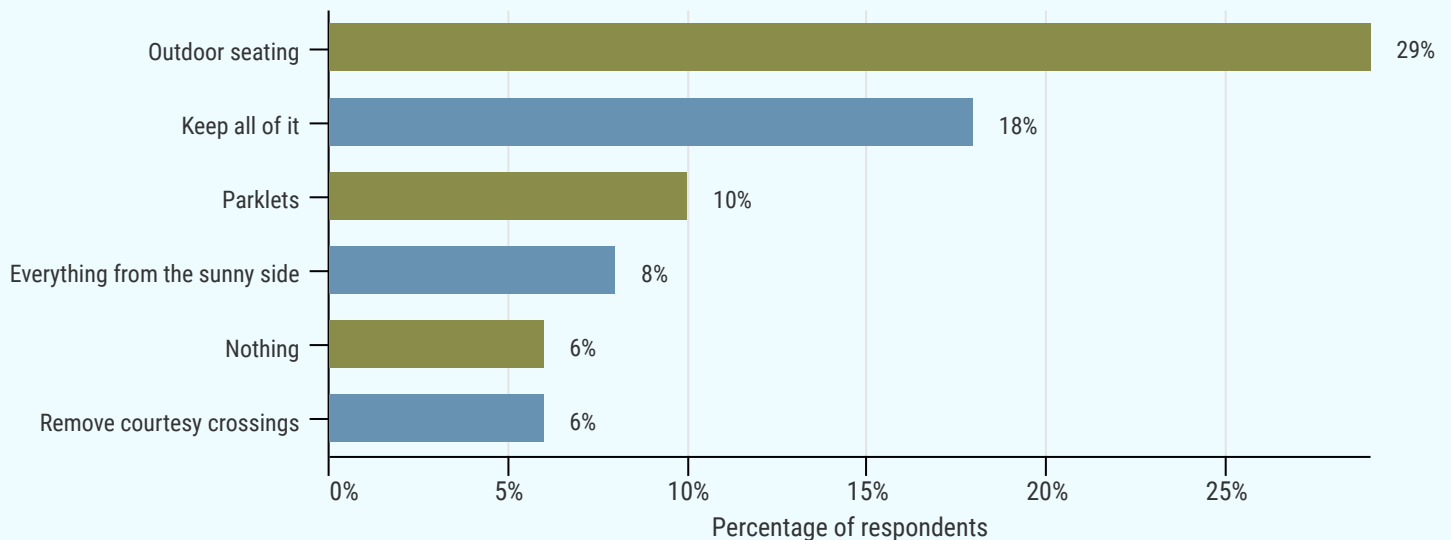


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51
comments

Thinking about the trial changes on Irk Street, what aspects would you like to keep permanently?

Main Street businesses



There were 51 suggestions to this question from the 36 businesses located on Main Street. Of these suggestions, 29% related to keeping the outdoor seating and a further 18% of comments related to keeping all aspects. 10% of comments related to keeping parklets and a further 8% of comments related to keeping everything from the sunny side of the street.

Other comments received that recieved less than 5% of mentions included the following:

- Remove bike stands
- Keep flower beds
- Remove stage
- Change courtesy crossing to pedestrian crossing
- Keep courtesy crossing
- Not worried
- Remove tubs on corner
- Keep roundabout
- Widen the roundabout

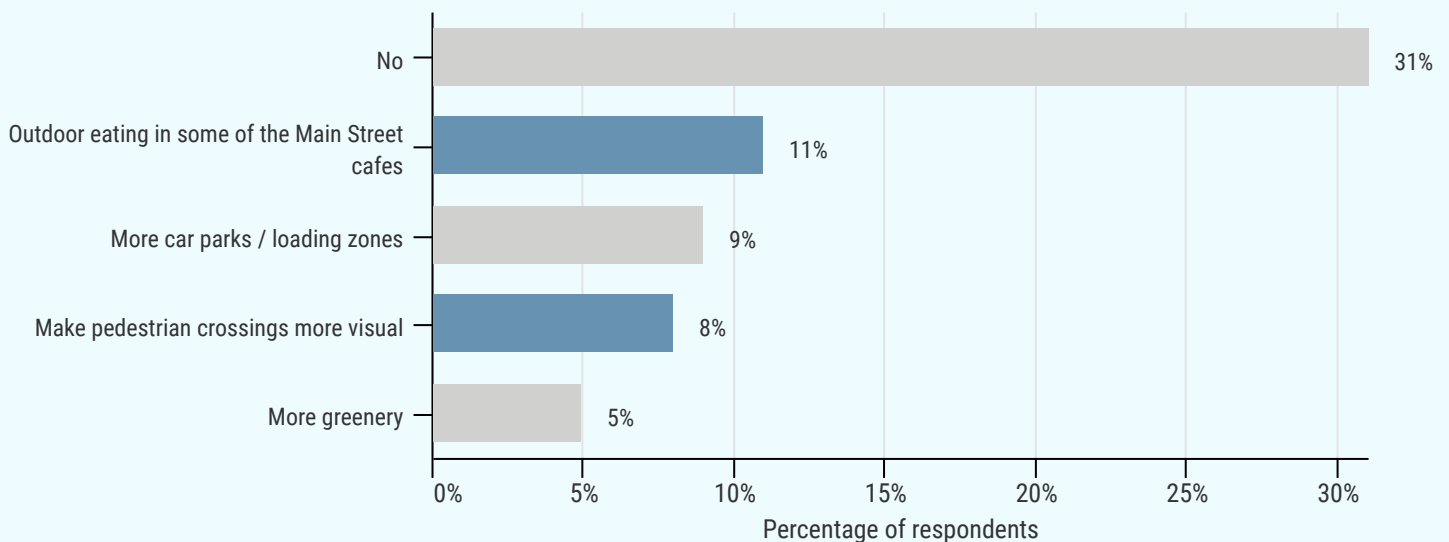


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64
comments

Do you have any further ideas that would enhance vibrancy and create a pedestrian friendly precinct within the township?

All businesses on Main Street and Irk Street



There were 64 comments received by businesses in relation to other ideas that would enhance vibrancy and help to create a pedestrian friendly precinct within the township. Apart from not having any ideas (31% of comments received), 11% of comments received from businesses related to setting up outdoor eating areas outside some of the Main Street cafes. 9% of comments received related to creating more car parks (for elderly and disabled) and loading zones and 8% of comments related to the pedestrian crossings being more visual (by removing a tree on the Main Street).

Other comments that recieved less than 5% of mentions included the following:

- Close Irk Street off
- Good quality footpaths
- Would like the lights left up
- More pedestrian crossings
- A good personalised theme
- Cover from rain
- Gore is old fashioned. They hate change
- Judderbars to slow traffic
- Just one pedestrian crossing on Irk Street
- Less vegetation
- Make parking free once a month
- More greenways
- More parklets on Main Street
- More roundabouts has releaved congestion
- More secure areas for kids
- Move courtesy crossing
- Pedestrian crossings stop flow of traffic
- Remove trees
- Wider parking for elderly



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Business Interviews - Analysis

Do you have any other comments on the overall trial from a business perspective?

Below are further individual comments and suggestions received by businesses in relation to the overall trial.

Irk Street Interviewees

- Bike lanes will not work
- Brings vibrancy
- Good that council has tried something
- Good lighting at night
- Gore is conservative
- Erect hanging baskets
- We haven't experienced any business loss
- Has not affected our business
- Create a raised pedestrian crossing in the middle of the straight (Irk Street)
- It's a talking point
- Lack of consultation at the start
- Residents losing car parks is negative
- Safer for pedestrians
- Street could do with a good waterblast and paint
- Tables are not stable
- Wrong time of year to trial

Main Street Interviewees

- Allows people to come to town and spend more time shopping.
- Always for a change if it makes a difference.
- Better consultation and more thought.
- Put in another disability park.
- Good work.
- Has not affected us.
- Increase the number of car parks.
- Like the bike stands.
- Looks good at night.
- Make it fair. Do it for all hospo establishments.
- Only need one crossing.
- Plant greenery.
- Thought there would be more lighting.
- To have a vibrant town you need a vibrant main street. We pay excess rate to be on Main Street.
- We also pay for alfresco dining.
- Will increase shopability.