



Carlisle Station Gateway and Citadels Consultation Report - March 2022

Executive Summary

Cumbria County Council in partnership with Carlisle City Council, Network Rail and Avanti West Coast has secured £20 million of funding through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal for improvements to Carlisle Railway Station.

As part of the development of the project, project partners held a consultation period between Wednesday 22 September and Wednesday 03 November 2021. This included public events at Carlisle Railway Station and the Lanes Shopping Centre. The consultation process presented the public with initial designs for improvement over the four areas listed below with the opportunity to provide their thoughts and opinions on the scheme:

- ❖ **Court Square** - Partial pedestrianisation of Court Square and improved pedestrian connections to and from the station.
- ❖ **Station Interior** - Enhancements to the Court Square access, improved facilities for customers and an upgraded and welcoming entrance from George Square.
- ❖ **George Square (station entrance from James Street)** - Public car parking being relocated to George Square to reduce the vehicular traffic at Court Square together with drop-off and bus replacement services.
- ❖ **Sustainable Transport and Junction Improvements** - A focus on improving pedestrian and cycle connectivity.

Respondents reacted positively towards the pedestrianisation of Court Square, improved cycle provision, more pedestrian friendly areas at George Square and increased car parking facilities.

Comments made by the respondents have been recorded and will be used to advise the future direction of the Carlisle Railway Station project.

Introduction

This report summarises the Consultation event held Wednesday 22 September and Wednesday 03 November 2021. This event was the third consultation event held for the scheme and was timed at the completion of the RIBA stage 3 design process. Although the focus of the consultation was public engagement, specific events were held for key stakeholders such as access groups and local businesses.

Timeline

A summary of the main consultation events are as follows:

**22 September
2021**
Start of
consultation
period

06 October 2021
Consultation event for
strategic stakeholders
and local businesses
at Cumbria House

**08 – 09
October 2021**
Consultation
event at Carlisle
Railway Station*

*Weekday and weekend to try and
address the range of users at the station

**15 - 16
October 2021**
Consultation event
at The Lanes
Shopping
Centre*

*Weekday and weekend to try and
capture a spread of different users

**03 November
2021**
End of
consultation

Promotion

Flyers advertising the events were sent to local businesses located inside and the area immediately surrounding the station. 'Door drops' ensured local businesses received flyers advertising the consultation.

Twelve different social media posts were used to advertise the consultation event, and were each posted on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. Facebook insight statistics show the posts on this platform reached circa 61,000 people. Promotion also took place across the county council's 'owned' digital channels including **cumbria.gov.uk** and regular e-bulletins signposting people to a dedicated landing page for the consultation (**www.cumbria.gov.uk/CSGC**), this page received 1,490 views during the consultation. This activity was supported by Carlisle City Council's social media platforms.

The county council's Press Office secured coverage in all relevant local newspaper titles and across media outlets, including the BBC and ITV. Interviews were lined up with representatives from Cumbria County Council.

Signage and a consultation board were placed near the entrance and exits of Carlisle Railway Station, to capitalise on station-user footfall, summarising the purpose of the consultation and key dates.

The consultation

The public consultation was held between 22 September and 03 November 2021.

A consultation document was created to provide information on the proposed redevelopment of Carlisle Railway Station, alongside a series of complementary consultation display materials including large plans to assist the public with interpretation of the project. Materials were displayed at public consultation events and made available on the project website.

The primary method of consultation was through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was part of the consultation document which respondents could submit via the online version on the project website.

Opportunities to clarify information about the consultation were provided both through email, and at the public drop-in events.

Public consultation drop-in events

Public consultation drop-in events were held at Carlisle Railway Station on 08 October 2021 and 09 October 2021, The Lanes Shopping Centre on 15 October 2021 and 16 October 2021. The events were staffed by project partners, providing further information and answering questions.

The primary method for attendees to provide feedback to the public consultation was via a questionnaire. The questionnaire was available on the project website and direct feedback was captured during the consultation events.

A drop-in event was held at Cumbria County Council offices on 06 October 2021 with strategic stakeholders including local businesses within the area immediately surrounding the station.

Consultation responses have been summarised on the following pages. These summaries do not capture all comments made verbally during the events or received via the questionnaire/letter/email; they are included to give a general representation of the comments raised during the events and should not be taken to be exhaustive.

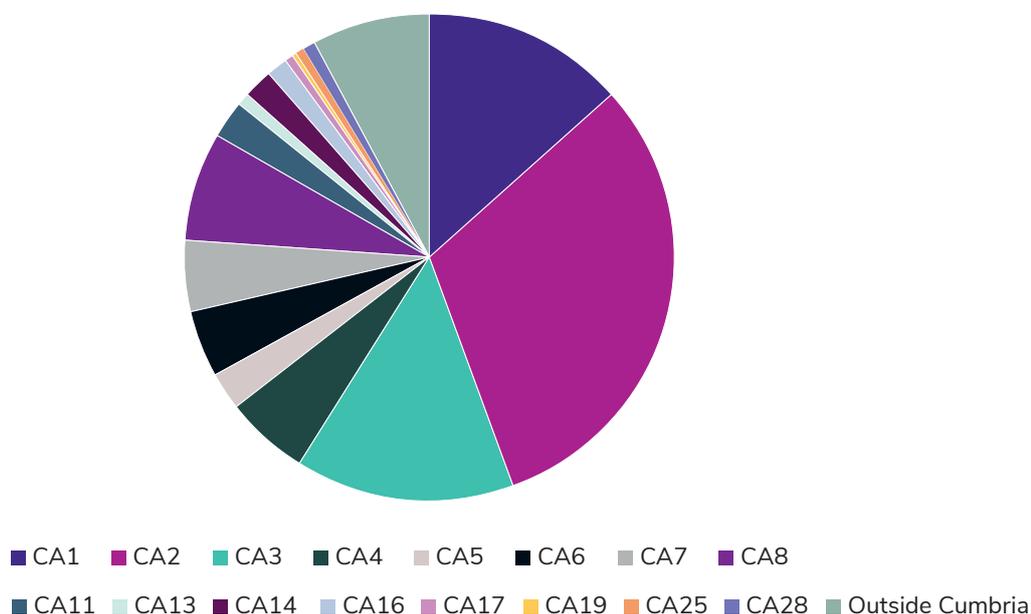
Consultation feedback

The four public consultation drop-in events were well attended and in total, 248 questionnaire responses were received, and the respondents were primarily from the Carlisle region with a small percentage from outside Cumbria.

Respondents by postcode districts

The graph below shows responses organised by postcodes. The majority of responses received came from the Carlisle area with CA1, CA2 and CA3 postcodes making up 59% of the respondents. Responses were received from people located within the Borderlands area and further afield.

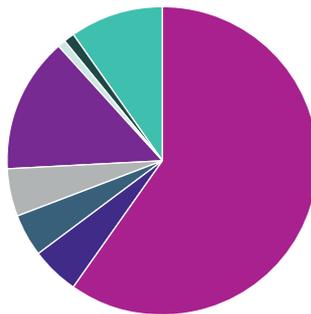
What is your postcode?



Reason for interest in the consultation

82% of respondents identified that their interest in the project stemmed from being a local resident. Nearly 20% of respondents identified as using the station for commuting purposes. The project team targeted station commuters by holding consultation events within Carlisle Station on Friday 08 October 2021 and Saturday 09 October 2021. Other reasons identified by respondents included Turkish baths user, station tenant and charity representatives.

Which of the following best describes the reason for your interest in this consultation?



The Scheme

The consultation focused on capturing respondents' opinions on the 'latest designs' for the scheme. This focused on the following key areas within the scheme:

- ❖ Court Square
- ❖ Station interior
- ❖ George Square enhancements
- ❖ Sustainable and junction improvements.

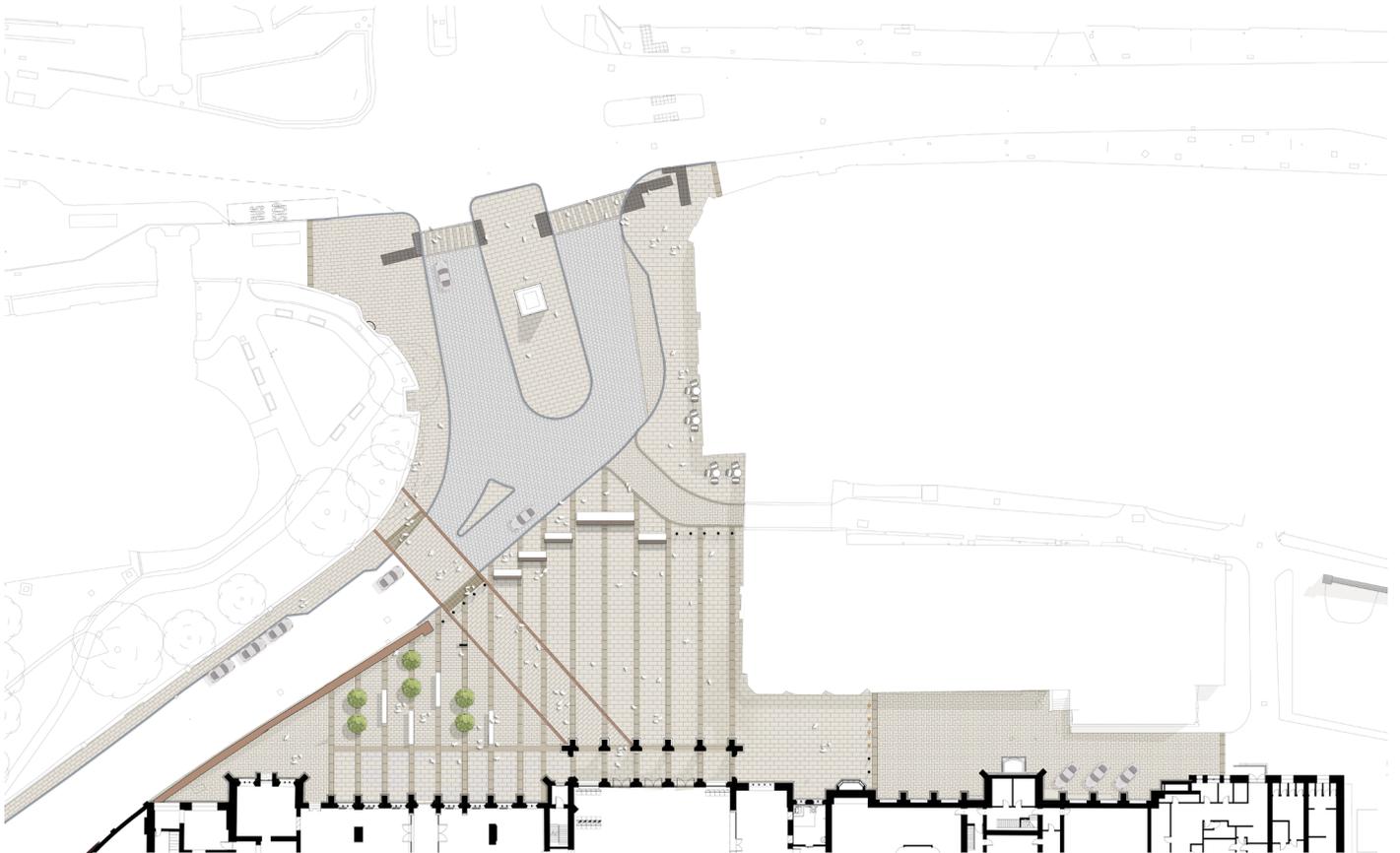
Court Square

Respondents reacted positively towards the proposed improvements for Court Square with 85.3% supporting the proposals.

Supportive comments were received regarding the pedestrianization of Court Square. Comments included that pedestrianising the area will help to create an attractive and welcoming gateway for Carlisle. The current proposals look to create a public space however some respondents suggested that the plans should go further into including more green space.

Respondents also highlighted that the pedestrianisation of Court Square will help to improve pedestrian safety to those entering and exiting the Station. The removal of vehicles within the area helps to reduce the potential for pedestrian / vehicle conflict within the area. These comments were further supported by several respondents reacting positively to removal of the replacement buses from Court Square.

Several respondents said they would like to see the proposals for improved accessible access into the Station to include disabled car parking spaces.



Station Interior

The proposed improvements for the station building and interior were supported by 90% of respondents.

The public supported the station interior proposals to improve pedestrian and cycle access to the station. Respondents highlighted that the improved access and connectivity to the station will enhance the use of the station. Respondents however suggested that the proposals should include improved signage to assist with efficient user navigation throughout the station. As previously mentioned, signage and way finding will be considered as the scheme develops.

Respondents reactively positively to the proposal of decluttering the station platforms and improving the overall aesthetic of the building.

Supportive comments received highlighted the benefits in improving the subway within the Station. The improvement to the station opens up the station allowing the building to be accessible from both sides of the station. Respondents did state that opening up the subway will require additional lighting and CCTV to ensure user safety.

A small percentage of respondents suggested that escalators should be considered within the scheme as this may improve movement around the station.

A number of comments were received asking for clarity on the proposed retail offer for the Station. Respondents were asked within this consultation to identify what retail provision they would like to see within the station.

George Square

Respondents reacted positively towards the proposed improvements for George Square with 77.5% supporting the proposals.

A large proportion of respondents highlighted that the relocation of car parking provision to the George Square entrance of the station would be beneficial as this would increase the car parking capacity currently offered at the station. Concerns were raised highlighting that sufficient disabled car parking facilities will be required at the station.

Comments were received on how beneficial the George Square entrance will be for users accessing the station, making it easier for users to enter and exit from the Southern parts of Carlisle. A number of suggestions were received highlighting that the entrance and the George Square entrance should include more greenery and seating to make it more welcoming area for pedestrians.

A number of respondents were keen to see greater pedestrian access to the Turkish baths.

The public further supported the addition of cycle hubs to the George Square entrance and the relocation of rail replacement buses from Court Square to George Square.



Sustainable Transport and Junctions

87% of respondents supported the proposed plans for sustainable transport and junction improvements.

The junction improvements were positively received by respondents that highlighted that the improvements to the junctions should help to reduce the congestion around the Station.

Several respondents supported the improved sustainable transport for Carlisle including improved pedestrian and cycle access into the Station. Positive comments were also received of the installation of the electric vehicle charging points.

Respondents stated that the scheme should include sufficient pedestrian areas.

Comments received suggested that access to public transport from the station should be improved and included within the scheme.

Further Comments

Respondents were asked if they had any further comments regarding the project proposals. The majority of comments received fell into the following three categories:

- ✦ Retail
- ✦ Turkish Baths
- ✦ Heritage

Retail

Respondents were asked to identify which retail provision they would like to see within Carlisle Station. Food and drink, Café / bar / Restaurant and Newsagents were the highest scoring items.

Turkish Baths

Many respondents raised concerns about the future of the Turkish Baths and stated that they would like to see the retention of the Baths.

Heritage

A number of respondents highlighted the significance in maximising the heritage aspect of the station and the surrounding area.

Cycle Provision

There were multiple comments relating to cycle provision within the station. Throughout the consultation process respondents highlighted that cycle parking should account for bikes with paniers, trailers, folding bikes.

Summary

Overall, the results of the public consultation generally showed positivity towards the progression of the proposals for the Carlisle Station Gateway Project. From the responses received through questionnaires and feedback from the consultation events items like the pedestrianisation of Court Square, increased parking provision at George Square, improved cycle provision and maximising the heritage asset were all positively received by respondents. The project team will take into consideration all of the feedback received and work with the contractors to incorporate suggestions where possible.

Summary of key themes

You Said	We'll do
You'd like to see the front of Court Square more pedestrian friendly.	We are working to reduce the pedestrian/ vehicle conflict by reducing the volume of vehicles on Court Square.
You would like to see increased green spaces around the Station.	As the scheme develops the project team will work with the architects to look at including more green spaces into the scheme.
You'd like to see increased safety measures in and around the station for example improved lighting and increased CCTV facilities.	When finalising the scheme design the project team will look into including improved lighting and CCTV.
You wanted the Turkish Baths to be protected.	The Turkish Baths is a separate project to the Carlisle Station Gateway and designs assume the Turkish Baths will be retained.
You said you would like secure cycle parking at both entrances to the station.	Cycle parking will be accommodated at both entrances to the station.
The distance from Southern Entrance to platforms may be challenging for some users.	Consideration for improving accessibility for blue badge parking to the Northern Entrance particularly for users of Platform 4.
Concerns were raised about the loading at the front of the station remains a key requirement for local businesses.	As the designs progress, we will undertake further engagement with local businesses to develop loading and unloading arrangements.

Next Steps

The comments included in the questionnaire responses have been recorded and will be considered and incorporated into the scheme where practical.

Cumbria County Council, Carlisle City Council and partners are now closely working with contractors to develop detailed designs for the Carlisle Station Gateway project.

Further specific consultation events will be held as required as design detail is developed.

