Meeting: Date:	Traffic Management Meeting 7 January 2013
Subject:	Downs Road area, Dunstable – Results of Traffic Options Consultation
Report of:	Jane Moakes, Assistant Director Community Safety and Public Protection
Summary:	To report to the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services on the results of a recent public consultation on possible traffic management options and to seek the Executive Member's views. In addition, the report presents the petition received from the residents of Downs Road in support of Option 5 of the consultation.

Contact Officer:	David Bowie david.bowie@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Public/Exempt:	Public
Wards Affected:	Dunstable Manshead
Function of:	Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

To improve highway safety, facilitate the free flow of traffic and improve the amenity of streets for residents.

Financial:

The cost would vary significantly depending on the choice of option(s).

Legal:

Central Bedfordshire Council is the highway and traffic authority for the road network in the area of Central Bedfordshire. An important function of the authority is to manage the local road network in a safe, free flow and equitable manner. To be legally enforceable, any proposed traffic management measures need to be implemented under a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

Risk Management:

Failure to deliver an efficient, effective and enforceable road network would be detrimental to the safe and expeditious use of the road network and could be damaging to the local community as well as economic growth.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None as part of this report

Equalities/Human Rights:

Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Creating a safe, attractive and accessible public realm has a part to play in getting people out and about. One objective of implementing traffic management measures is to ensure that the most vulnerable members of the community have fair access to the public realm and are not disadvantaged by traffic conditions.

An efficiently managed traffic system is therefore crucial for allowing equality of opportunity.

Community Safety:

The inclusion of traffic management measures within the area under consideration is likely to have an overall positive effect on road safety and free movement of traffic.

Sustainability:

None as part of this report

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the results of the consultation exercise be noted, along with the contents of the petition and that approval to proceed with advertising Traffic Regulations Orders to implement Option 5 is granted.

Background and Information

- 1. This report follows an experimental closure of Downs Road that was implemented in October 2011, but was later removed following opposition from some local residents. Subsequent to that, a petition from Downs Road residents was received requesting alternative measures to reduce rat-running traffic in their road. As a result, the matter was reported to the Traffic Management meeting that was held on 27th March 2012. The decision was that the Executive Member granted permission to consult local residents on the five traffic calming options as identified in the report and any additional recommendations from residents and officers (7 options in total).
- Consultation leaflets and questionnaires were delivered to all households in late October 2012 and residents were asked to return them by 23rd November 2012. Completed questionnaires could be returned via a freepost envelope or on the Council's website.
- The consultation exercise involved all roads in the Downs Road area of Dunstable, namely Downs Road, part of Great Northern Road, Allen Close, Grove Road, Park Road, Barton Avenue, Borough Road, Blows Road, Howards Place, Half Moon Lane, Chichester Close, Apollo Close, Sundown Avenue, Norcott Close and Hillside Road.

4. Residents were all offered seven options:-

Option 1 – Closure of Hillside Road

Option 2 – Closure of Downs Road and Park Road

Option 3 – Traffic Calming across the whole area.

Option 4 – Traffic Calming in Downs Road only

Option 5 – One-way traffic in Downs Road and Park Road, plus closure in Downs Road

Option 6 – One-way traffic in Great Northern Road

Option 7 – One-way traffic in Great Northern Road, Closure of Hillside Road and partial Traffic Calming.

Alternatively they could opt for "leave it as it is".

Results and the Way Forward

	Count	%	Valid %	Houses per street/ road	% response per street/ road
Downs Road	113	17	17	73	155
Half Moon Lane	76	12	12	94	81
Sundown Avenue	73	11	11	107	68
Great Northern Road	49	7	7	133	37
Borough Road	41	6	6	56	73
Apollo Close	35	5	5	45	78
Allen Close	32	5	5	48	67
Norcott Close	30	5	5	40	75
Chichester Close	26	4	4	38	68
Howard Place	26	4	4	45	58
Grove Road	25	4	4	38	66
King Street	20	3	3	68	29
Blows Road	15	2	2	22	68
Barton Avenue	9	1	1	13	69
Park Road	9	1	1	14	64
Richard Street	6	1	1	31	19
Priory Road	5	1	1	41	12
Hillside Road	2	0	0	4	50
Other	54	8	8		
Total	655	100	100		

5. The following table shows the number of replies received per street.

The consultation leaflet and questionnaire were delivered to 825 households, so this is a very good response rate. However, it is noted that 113 replies were received from residents of Downs Road, which contains 73 households. This could be because more than one person per household submitted a genuine response to the consultation. The possibility of "multiple voting" aimed at slanting the results in favour of a particular option has been discounted as a review of the responses shows that only 8 returns were identical. It is also believed that some residents of Down Road originally submitted an additional questionnaire opting for option 5 after further discussion and consideration with other Downs Road residents. The petition received from Downs Road residents (Appendix C) clarifies their preference.

Leaflets and questionnaires were <u>not</u> delivered to King Street, Priory Road or Richard Street, nor those households of Great Northern Road that would not be directly affected by any of the options. Whilst the on-line questionnaire was open to the public, this explains the low response rate from those streets. Residents of those roads returned an on-line response.

	Ye	es	N	0	Don't	know	Тс	otal
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Allen Close	20	63%	12	38%	0	%	32	100%
Apollo Close	7	21%	26	76%	1	3%	34	100%
Barton Avenue	1	11%	6	67%	2	22%	9	100%
Blows Road	9	64%	5	36%	0	%	14	100%
Borough Road	8	20%	33	80%	0	%	41	100%
Chichester Close	6	25%	17	71%	1	4%	24	100%
Downs Road	86	77%	26	23%	0	%	112	100%
Great Northern Road	25	51%	22	45%	2	4%	49	100%
Grove Road	8	32%	17	68%	0	%	25	100%
Half Moon Lane	15	20%	59	79%	1	1%	75	100%
Hillside Road	1	50%	1	50%	0	%	2	100%
Howard Place	14	54%	10	38%	2	8%	26	100%
King Street	6	30%	14	70%	0	%	20	100%
Norcott Close	5	17%	22	76%	2	7%	29	100%
Park Road	2	22%	7	78%	0	%	9	100%
Priory Road	3	60%	2	40%	0	%	5	100%
Richard Street	5	83%	1	17%	0	%	6	100%
Sundown Avenue	27	39%	40	57%	3	4%	70	100%
Other	17	31%	37	69%	0	%	54	100%
Total	265	42%	357	56%	14	2%	636	100%

6. When asked "Do you feel that traffic cutting through this area is an issue" the following replies were received:-

Overall 56% of those responding answered "No", but in Downs Road 77% answered "Yes". The only other roads where more than 50% of residents felt that cut through traffic was an issue were Allen Close, Blows Road, Great Northern Road and Howard Place.

7. When asked for their preferred option for tackling cut through traffic the results were:-

	Count	%	Valid %
Leave as it is	375	57	58
Option 5: One-way Traffic in Downs Road and Park Road, plus Closure in Downs Road	63	10	10
Option 3: Traffic Calming (Road Humps) - A comprehensive traffic calming scheme covering virtually all roads in the area	61	9	9
Option 4: Traffic Calming (Road Humps) in Downs Road only - a traffic calming scheme using road humps covering just Downs Road	57	9	9
Option 1: Closure of Hillside Road - A physical closure of Hillside Road near its junction with Mayfield Road	40	6	6
Option 2: Closure of Downs Road and Park Road	25	4	4
Option 7: - One-way Traffic in Great Northern Road, Closure of Hillside Road and Partial Traffic Calming	17	3	3
Option 6: One-way Traffic in Great Northern Road	10	2	2
Total	648	99	100
Missing	7	1	
Total	655	100	

Clearly "leave as it is" is the favoured option across the area as a whole. Option 5 is the second most favoured option as this is the one that a majority of residents of Downs Road have chosen.

There appears to be some support across the area for options 3 and 4 (both traffic calming), but the numbers are relatively small when compared to those who said "leave as it is". The "leave as it is" option is not surprising when the vast majority of roads within the consultation area are unaffected by the current traffic problems.

8. Appendix B shows a breakdown of option preference on a street by street basis.

These indicate that "leave as it is" is strongly favoured in virtually all roads i.e. those roads which do not currently suffer from the traffic problems. The exception being Downs Road itself where 49 (44%) respondents support option 5.

9. There have been suggestions that residents and non-residents could have influenced the results by submitting multiple questionnaires via the on-line system. This is entirely possible. However, when analysing the results only 8 suspect responses were received (responses submitted in sequence and all selected the same answers). This does not have a significant impact on the overall results.

A total of 365 paper questionnaires have been returned, the vast majority of which are known to be genuine because of the type of paper used in the consultation process. A large number of replies contain individual comments, which tends to validate the responses as being submitted by local residents. The fact that the area contains a number of streets, each with relatively few households in each means that if there was significant "multiple voting" this would show up in the results. In summary, whilst it is impossible to determine with any certainty whether any such activity took place, it does not appear to have occurred to any great extent and if it has it has not had a significant impact on the overall results.

- 10. The questionnaire gave residents the opportunity to submit any comments or suggestions. Many of those provided expressed strong views opposing any further traffic management measures in the Downs Road area. This is not surprising when it is understood that those roads in question do not currently experience any traffic related problems.
- 11. In summary, taking the area as a whole there appears to be very little support for any of the 7 traffic options in any road other than Downs Road. The clear favourite amongst Downs Road residents is option 5 and is supported by the petition.

However, this presents something of a dilemma because there is little support for any of the options from the other roads in the area. If option 5 were to be pursued it would transfer some (approximately half) of the traffic currently using Downs Road into other roads, notably Park Road, Borough Road and possibly Grove Road. However, unlike some of the other options within the consultation leaflet, full access into and through the area is still permitted. Indeed, one way systems are consistent with the approach taken to traffic management in the other quadrants of Dunstable. Residents of Park Road, Grove Road and Borough Road are in favour of "leave as it is".

11. Whilst the area taken as a whole has expressed an opinion to "leave as is" the majority of those views are from roads which are currently not suffering from traffic related problems. Installing traffic calming measures in Downs Road only might therefore be seen as a reasonable compromise as it would address any speeding concerns that residents have and might dissuade some drivers from cutting through the Downs Road area. However, only 10 (9%) residents of Downs Road chose that option, so there doesn't appear to be significant local support for traffic calming. The residents of Downs Road favour option 5 and as this option still provides free access into and through the area and will only divert some of the traffic to other roads it would appear on balance to be the best option to pursue.

Appendices:

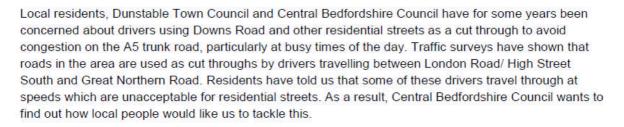
- $\begin{array}{l} \mbox{Appendix A} \mbox{Example of consultation leaflet and questionnaire} \\ \mbox{Appendix B} \mbox{Drawing showing proposed parking restrictions} \\ \mbox{Appendix C} \mbox{Petition from Downs Road Residents} \end{array}$

APPENDIX A



...on reducing cut through traffic in the Downs Road area of Dunstable

Central Bedfordshire



A number of ideas have been developed in conjunction with residents and locally elected Councillors. These are all intended to reduce the attractiveness of the roads to drivers who are looking to avoid the congestion on the A5, but at the same time minimising inconvenience to local residents. The ideas are described below as options and we want to know your opinions about them.



OPTION 1 - Closure of Hillside Road

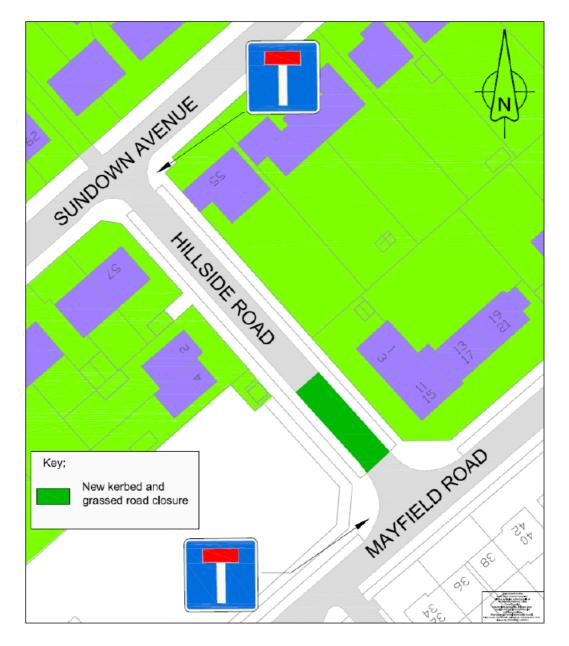
This option would close Hillside Road near its junction with Mayfield Road to vehicular traffic

Advantages

- · A simple proposal which would cause minimal inconvenience to local residents.
- The closure would split the area, thereby stopping traffic trying to cut through between Downside and Great Northern Road.

Disadvantages

 This option would probably be only a partial solution because drivers would still be able to use other roads, such as Half Moon Lane and Borough Road, to enter the Downs Road area.



OPTION 2 - Closure of Downs Road and Park Road

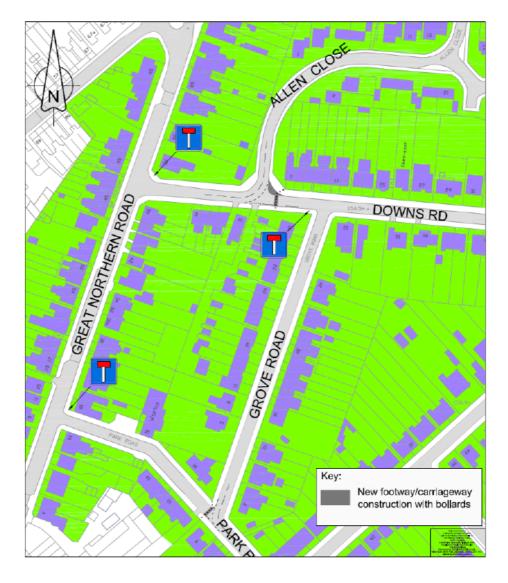
The Council previously implemented an experimental closure of Downs Road between Grove Road and Allen Close. This was removed because residents felt it did not effectively tackle the traffic issues for this area because traffic diverted to Park Road. This option now includes the closure of Downs Road and Park Road.

Advantages

- The additional closure of Park Road would stop drivers simply switching from Downs Road to Park Road.
- This option would be an effective means of stopping drivers using Downs Road and Park Road to reach Great Northern Road.

Disadvantages

 This may inconvenience residents who would be forced to use either the Borough Road or Half Moon Lane junctions with High Street South to enter and leave the area. This would inevitably create delays, particularly for residents wanting to turn right onto the A5.



OPTION 3 - Traffic Calming (Road Humps)

This option would provide a comprehensive traffic calming scheme using road humps covering virtually all roads in the area.

Advantages

- Would still enable all traffic movements to take place, both by residents and non-local drivers.
- · Would force everyone to travel through at speeds more suited to a residential area.
- The speed-reducing measures could discourage drivers looking to avoid the A5, thereby reducing the volume of traffic through the area.

Disadvantages

 Speed humps will slow everybody down however some people dislike road humps because they find them inconvenient.



OPTION 4 - Traffic Calming (Road Humps) in Downs Road only

This option would provide a traffic calming scheme using road humps covering just Downs Road. Advantages

· Would still enable all traffic movements to take place, both by residents and non-local drivers.

• Would force everyone to travel through at speeds more suited to a residential area. Disadvantages

- The relatively small number of speed-reducing measures is unlikely to bring about a large reduction in the numbers of vehicles cutting through the area.
- Speed humps will slow everybody down, however some people dislike road humps because they find them inconvenient.



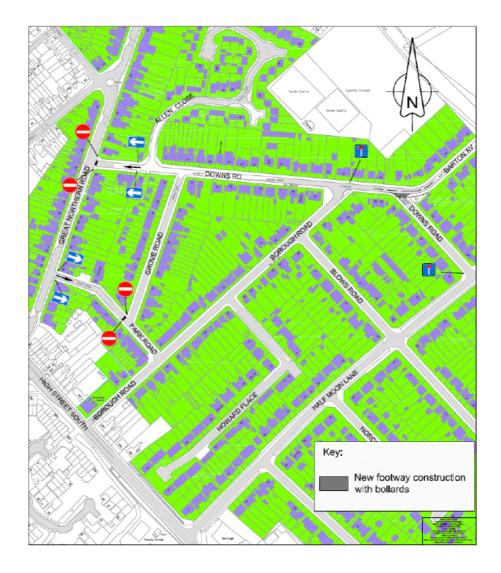
OPTION 5 - One-way Traffic in Downs Road and Park Road, plus Closure in Downs Road

Downs Road would be made one-way, only allowing traffic to travel from Allen Close to Great Northern Road. Park Road would also be one-way, only allowing traffic to travel from Great Northern Road to Grove Road. Downs Road would be closed at its junction with Barton Avenue. Advantages

- Closure of the most favoured routes available to drivers travelling through the area in a northwesterly direction (towards Great Northern Road) with the remaining routes being indirect and hence less attractive as a cut through to the A5.
- Drivers travelling through the area in a south-easterly direction (towards Downside) would be forced to use Park Road, Borough Road and Blows Road, which is likely to be less attractive than remaining on Great Northern Road to access High Street South.

Disadvantages

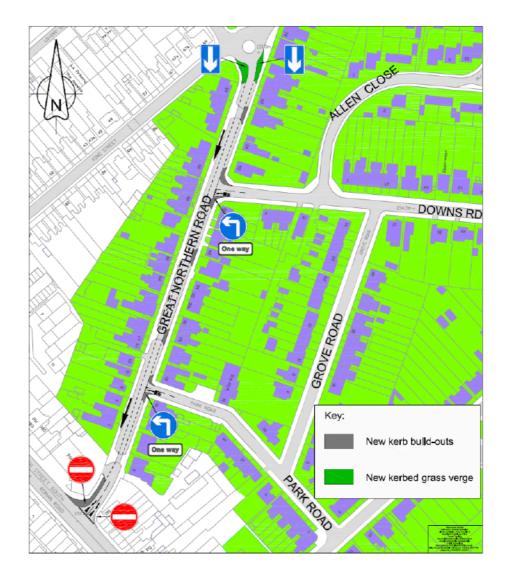
· Would create inconvenience to residents, particularly those living on the one-way sections.



OPTION 6 - One-way Traffic in Great Northern Road

Great Northern Road would be made one-way, allowing traffic to travel from the Richard Street roundabout to High Street South only.

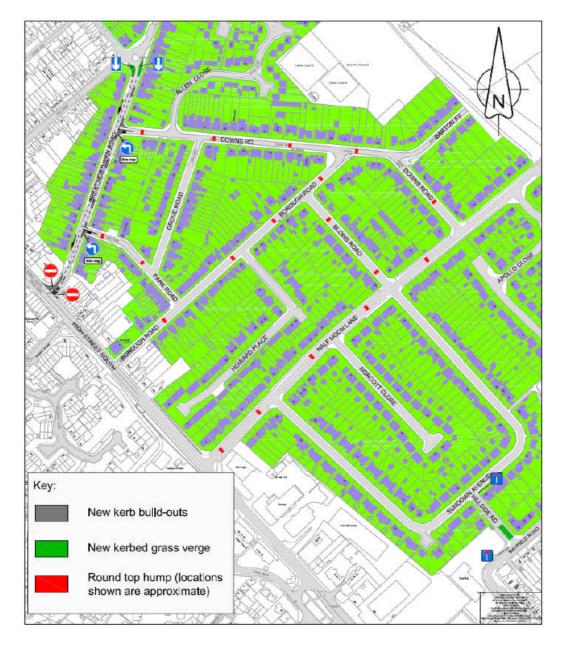
- Advantages
- Likely to be very effective in deterring cut through traffic through the area in a north-westerly direction (towards Great Northern Road)
- Disadvantages
- Would not affect drivers travelling through the area in a south-easterly (towards Downside), although surveys indicate that there is less cut through traffic in that direction anyway.
- · Would cause inconvenience to residents by removing the route to and from Luton Road.
- May lead to an increase in traffic in King Street by drivers using it in a north-easterly direction as an alternative to the one-way part of Great Northern Road.
- May lead to an increase in vehicle speeds in Great Northern Road due to the removal of opposing traffic.



OPTION 7 - One-way Traffic in Great Northern Road, Closure of Hillside Road and Partial Traffic Calming

This would be a combination of the elements included in options 1 (Closure of Hillside Road), 3 (Traffic Calming - Road Humps) and 6 (One-way Traffic in Great Northern Road). The traffic calming measures would be concentrated on those roads that carry most rat-running traffic. Advantages

- The measures are likely to be very effective at lowering the numbers of drivers travelling through the area, particularly those heading north-west (towards Great Northern Road).
 Disadvantages
- · As with Option 6, it would affect routes available to residents.



Proposed 20mph Speed Limit

Whether or not any of the options for reducing the traffic trying to avoid the A5 are implemented, Central Bedfordshire Council still intends to promote a 20mph speed limit in this area of Dunstable as part of the Council's commitment to introducing them in all of the town's residential streets. The implementation of a 20mph limit in isolation would probably bring about only a small reduction in actual vehicle speeds, but if used in combination with physical traffic calming measures could be more effective. A 20mph speed limit is unlikely to result in a significant reduction in the numbers of vehicles travelling through the area.

Please let us know what you think

We have put forward options in this leaflet that we feel are the most practical way to reduce cut through traffic in the Downs Road area of Dunstable. We want to hear your views.

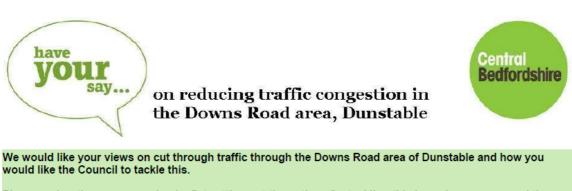
If you are happy with the way things are and want the present arrangements to stay the same then please let us know.

Please complete the attached questionnaire with your views and return it in the prepaid envelope to us by 23rd November 2012. Alternatively you can complete this questionnaire online at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations

What happens next?

We will look at the responses we get back and decide how best to take the proposed options for reducing cut through traffic in the area forward. We will write to you to inform you of the outcome of this consultation exercise and let you know what we plan to do next. If there is local support for any of these options we may need to carry out further consultation, particularly if legal restrictions are involved, such as one-way systems. We would expect any measures to be implemented in mid-2013.

For more information about the proposed options in this consultation, please contact Gary Baldwin by telephone on 0845 3656116 or by e-mail to centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk



Please review the accompanying leaflet setting out the options for tackling this issue in your area and then give us your views by completing this short questionnaire. Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed pre-paid envelope by 23 November 2012.

Alternatively you can complete this questionnaire online at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations

Q1	Are you a:			
	Local resident	Local business	Com	munity/ voluntary organisation
	Other			
	Please specify other	1		I
Q2	If you are a local reside	ent or business, which street o	do you live in or are base	d on?
	Great Northern Road	Park Road	Howard Place	Sundown Avenue
	Downs Road	Barton Avenue	Half Moon Lane	Norcott Close
	Allen Close	Borough Road	Chichester Close	Hillside Road
	Grove Road	Blows Road	Apollo Close	Other
	Please specify other	I		
Q3	Do you feel that traffic	cutting through this area is an	n issue?	
	Yes	No		Don't know
Q4	We have developed se	ven options for reducing cut t	hrough traffic in the Dow	ns Road area of Dunstable.
		he accompanying leaflet.		
	Please indicate which	of these is your most preferre	d option for tackling cut t	hrough traffic in this area
		like the traffic schemes to stay		
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	Option 1: Closure of	Hillside Road - A physical closure	of Hillside Road hear its juncti	on with Mayneid Road
	Option 2: Closure of	Downs Road and Park Road		
	Option 3: Traffic Caln	ning (Road Humps) - A comprehe	nsive traffic calming scheme c	overing virtually all roads in the
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	Option 4: Traffic Caln	ning (Road Humps) in Downs Ro	ad only - a traffic calming sch	eme using road humps covering
	just Downs Road.		, ,	5 1 5
	Option 5: One-way Tr	affic in Downs Road and Park Ro	oad, plus Closure in Downs	Road - Downs Road would be
	one-way only from Alle	n Close to Great Northern Road, P sure of Downs Road at its junction v	ark Road would be one-way fr	
	Grove Road and a clos	are of Downs Road at its junction v	with Darton Avenue	
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	(One-way Traffic in Gre	eat Northern Road). The traffic calm		
	carry most rat-running	traffic		
	Leave as it is			

Q5	Do you	have any	comments	or suggestions	you would like to make?
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ut you			

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The following information will help us when considering your opinions and to make sure that we're getting the views of all members of the community. The answers will not be used to identify any individual. Our data protection statement is provided at the end of this form.

Q6	Are you:	Male		Fen	nale
Q7	What is your a Under 16 yrs 16-19 yrs	- -	20-29 yrs 30-44 yrs	45-59 yrs	65-74 yrs 75 yrs +
Q8	disability if he/sl	he has a physic		ent which has a sustai	a person is considered to have a ned and long-term adverse effect on
Q9	To which of the Asian or Asia Black or Blac Please specify of	an British :k British	you consider you b Chinese	elong?	White British
Q10	What is your p	ostcode?	Thank you f	or your views.	

Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed pre-paid envelope by 23 November 2012

Data Protection Act 1998

Please note that your personal details supplied on this form will be held and/or computerised by Central Bedfordshire Council for the purpose analysing feedback to proposals for tackling cut through traffic in Dunstable. The information collected may be disclosed to officers and members of the Council and its' partners involved in this consultation. Summarised information from the forms may be published, but no individual details will be disclosed under these circumstances. Your personal details will be safeguarded and will not be divulged to any other individuals or organisations for any other purposes.

Information classification: Protected when complete

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			of Hillside Road	e Road		_		-	Option 4: Traffic		Downs Road an	ad and	Option 8: One		Road, Clo	Closure of		
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	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Allen Close	=	34%	2	9%	=	34%	4	13%	5	9%	-	3%	•	%0	-	3%	32	100%
Apollo Ciose	8	96%	•	%	•	%	ŝ	14%	s	14%	2	8%	•	%0	•	%0	35	100%
Barton Avenue	2	78%	•	%0	•	%0	•	%0	6	22%	•	%0	•	%0	•	%0	8	100%
Blows Road	9	33%	•	%	•	%0	5	13%	ო	20%	64	13%	•	%	ر	20%	15	100%
Borough Road	58	71%	-	2%	•	%	9	15%	ლ	2%	-	2%	-	2%	•	%0	41	100%
Chichester Close	4	68%	4	16%	•	%0	5	8%	2	%8	•	%0	•	%0	•	%0	53	100%
Downs Road	27	24%	•	8%	•	8%	4	4%	9	8	4	44%	5	2%	-	1%	111	100%
Great Northern Road	27	55%	ر	%9	2	4%	s	10%	4	%	2	4%	en	8%	ر	8%	40	100%
Grove Road	8	80%	-	4%	•	%	-	4%	-	4%	-	4%	•	%0		4%	52	100%
Half Moon Lane	8	68%	7	3%	-	1%	÷	14%	2	%	6	3%	•	%0	-	1%	76	100%
Hilside Road	-	50%	-	50%	•	%0	•	%	•	%	•	%	•	%0	•	%0	2	100%
Howard Place	4	85%	-	4%	•	%0	4	15%	m	12%	-	4%	•	%0	•	%0	58	100%
King Street	8	100%	•	%0	•	%0	•	%	•	%	•	%	•	%0	•	%	2	100%
Norcott Close	8	73%	-	3%	•	š	-	3%	4	13%	•	8	-	3%	-	3%	8	100%
Park Road	9	87%	•	%0	•	%0	-	11%	-	11%	•	%0	•	%0	-	11%	æ	100%
Priory Road	5	50%	•	%0	•	%0	-	25%	-	25%	•	%0	•	%0	•	%0	4	100%
Richard Street	-	17%	•	%	•	%0	64	33%	•	*0	•	*0	-	17%	2	33%	0	100%
Sundown Avenue	4	65%	₽	18%	2	3%	0	8%	•	%0	-	%	-	1%	2	3%	71	100%
Other	35	96%	2	4%	•	%0	0	11%		15%	-	2%	-	2%	•	%0	8	100%
Total	368	58%	9	%9	38	4%	5	10%	8	×8	8	10%	₽	2%	9	3%	639	100%

APPENDIX B

Appendix C