



Report

HX7 Survey results re:

- Flood alleviation works
- A646 Improvements
- Keighley Road roadworks

6.7.2020

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Background

At a public meeting of the Hebden Bridge Business Forum on 12th Feb 2020, shortly after the latest flooding incident, the EA and Calderdale Council addressed the gathering to outline the next steps of the valley's flood alleviation scheme, which will be in Hebden Bridge. Following the long period of disruption due to the Mytholmroyd scheme, concern was raised that the scheme for Hebden would now add more economic disruption than would be the case, even after another flooding event. Some present were even asking if the scheme should go ahead at all, or at least be postponed whilst further consultation takes place about any real benefits. It was noted that in February, the town centre businesses bounced back much quicker than in 2015. That begged the question, that perhaps individual resilience measures are a more cost effective measure to be investing in going forward?

The HBBF had intended to physically survey its membership in March on this matter but the Covid pandemic halted that initiative. Adding the Covid-19 disruptions to the discussion, the A646 corridor improvement programme, plus the works on the Keighley Road, there were even more concerns from the business leaders that unless there was a review of capital infrastructure activities in the valley, businesses would be facing a prolonged economic disruption with serious consequences for small businesses in particular. There is belief that with the experience of the disruptive Mytholmroyd works, the latest flood and the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, the landscape has changed. The task then for the HBBF was assessing the desire for businesses and residents for postponements, and a moratorium on works, to allow for the concerns to be raised and representations to take place.

HBBF commissioned the UCVR to design an online survey to assess if these concerns were more widespread and to produce a report collating the views local businesses and residents.

Method

An online survey was drafted covering all three infrastructure projects; this was independently ethically tested for bias and neutrality and checked that the reply options were consistent with equal and measurable choice of response.

The survey was promoted by email to databases of businesses and residents in the HX7 post code. It was promoted on social media and on the Hebden Bridge website. The survey ran from 19 June to 5th July 2020.

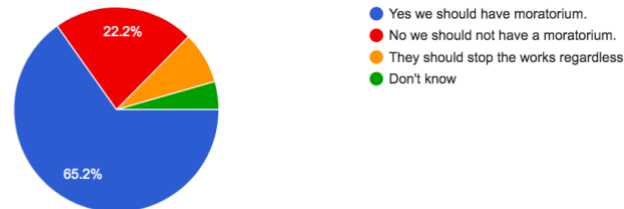
After 11 responses were removed for ineligibility, emails were separated out from data to provide anonymity. The data was then analysed to provide a detailed breakdown of sector preferences.

Headline figures

Responses when asked about the proposed flood alleviation works in Hebden Bridge:

Taking into account the disruption we have already had (including Covid-19), and now the proposed flood alleviation scheme and A646 corridor improvement works due, do you think we need to have a moratorium to reconsider, to engage with the businesses, residents and local authorities, and also research the economic costs, before we commit to potentially more disruption and potential business losses? Or should we just get on with the works?

135 responses

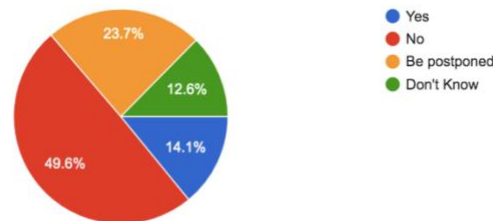


An overwhelming percentage (73.3%) would either like further consideration or no flood alleviation works. Of these the majority (68.7%) are businesses.

Responses when asked about the proposed A646 Corridor Improvement Programme (CIP)

Considering the potential economic and business costs, do you think the CIP should go ahead?

135 responses

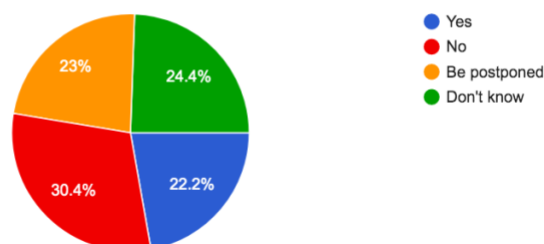


Only 14.1% think that the CIP works should go ahead. Of those who expressed an opinion 68 businesses (57.6%) and 31 residents (26.3%) would like the CIP works to either be postponed or not go ahead.

Responses when asked about the proposed Keighley Road roadworks

Do you think the Keighley Road roadworks should go ahead now?

135 responses



Of those who have a preference*, the vast majority (70.6%) would like the works to either be delayed or not happen at all. (*Excludes Don't knows)

Survey Findings

Of the 135 respondents, the majority of the respondents (62.2%) are businesses. 26 (19.3%) are a Hebden Royd business, 51 (37.8%) are residents only and 84 (62.2%) are both.

In the following analysis the 'Both' figures are included in the 'business' category.

Flood Alleviation Works

For the flood alleviation consultations:

- 41 (30.4%) (business 24, resident 17) knew about it and did take part
- 49 (36.3%) (business 33, resident 16) knew about it but did not take part
- 45 (33.3%) (business 27, resident 18) did not know about it

Of the 90 (66.7%) respondents that knew about the scheme:

- 10 (11.1%) (business 4, resident 6) are in favour of the scheme
- 18 (20%) (business 10, resident 8) are in favour of most of the scheme
- 36 (40%) (business 26, resident 10) are in favour of some of the scheme
- 11 (12.2%) (business 7, resident 4) are against the scheme
- 6 (6.6%) (business 3, resident 3) have no strong views about the scheme
- 9 (10%) (business 6, resident 3) did not look at the scheme

Of those who have an informed opinion, 64 (85.3%) are in favour of at least some of the scheme; 11 (14.6%) are against it. The businesses and residents have a very similar view – 85% of businesses and 86% of residents who have an informed opinion are in favour of at least some of the scheme.

Respondents were asked whether, taking into account the previous and current disruption (including Covid-19), the proposed flood alleviation scheme and A646 corridor improvement works due, they think that there should be a moratorium to reconsider, to engage with the businesses, residents and local authorities, and also research the economic costs, before potentially more disruption and potential business losses are committed to:

- 88 (65.2%) (business 60, resident 28) responded Yes we should have moratorium
- 30 (22.2%) (business 12, resident 18) responded No we should not have a moratorium
- 11 (8.1%) (business 8, resident 3) responded They should stop the works regardless
- 6 (4.4%) (business 4, resident 2) responded Don't know

An overwhelming percentage (73.3%) would either like further consideration or no flood alleviation works. Of these the majority (68.7%) are businesses.

A646 Corridor Improvement Programme (CIP) works

Most respondents (77%) (104 - business 69, resident 35) know about the CIP works. 31(23%) (business 15, resident 16) do not.

Responses to whether the CIP should go ahead, considering the potential economic and business costs are:

- 19 (14.1%) (business 8, resident 11) Yes
- 67 (49.6%) (business 47, resident 20) No
- 32 (23.7%) (business 21, resident 11) be postponed for:
 - 6-9 months - 2
 - 1 year - 9
 - 18 months - 2
 - 2 years - 6
 - More consultation/assessment - 6
 - After other roadworks - 1
 - Other/not sure - 6
- Don't know 17 (12.6%) (business 8, resident 9)

Only 14.1% think that the CIP works should go ahead. Of those who expressed an opinion 68 businesses (57.6%) and 31 residents (26.3%) would like the CIP works to either be postponed or not go ahead.

Keighley Road Roadworks

107 (79.3%) (business 63, resident 44) respondents know about the Keighley Road roadworks starting in July 2020 and 28 (20.7%) (business 21, resident 7) do not.

The respondents use the Keighley Road for:

- Business use* - 75 (55.5%) (all respondents)
- Leisure only - 40 (29.6%) (business 17, resident 23)
- Appointments - 6 (4.4%)
- 14 (10.4%) (all respondents) do not use the Keighley Road

* Customers, staff and owners

Of the 121 road users, 62% is for business purposes.

Responses to whether the Keighley Road roadworks should go ahead now are:

- 30 (22.2%) Yes
- 41 (30.4%) No
- 31 (23%) be postponed for:
 - 6-9 months - 5
 - 1 year -11
 - 18 months -3
 - 2 years -2
 - 3+ years -1
 - More consultation/assessment -4
 - After other roadworks - 3
 - Other - 2
- 33 24.4% Don't know

Of those who have a preference, the vast majority (70.6%) would like the works to either be delayed or not happen at all.


Conclusions

The majority of respondents are business owners providing a significant sample of the local business community. It is therefore reasonable to assume from the data that there is serious concern that the infrastructure projects on top of previous three years of flood alleviation works in Mytholmroyd, this year's flooding and covid-19 disruptions, will have a substantial effect on their livelihoods and that of their employees.

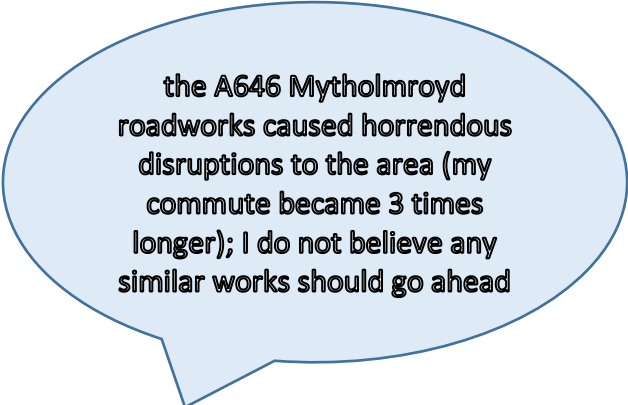
Responses to the Hebden Bridge flood alleviation works show a mix of views on the merits of the scheme but the majority of the respondents reflect the view expressed at the HBBF meeting in February that, the landscape has changed since the EA consultations, and therefore a moratorium should take place to explore in more detail, the cost benefits of the scheme and other options to improve business/home resilience.

With the same concerns as above the respondents are clearly of the opinion that the proposed CIP works will have a negative impact. With only 14.1% in favour of it going ahead it is clear that this project is seen as something either not wanted or is not timely for the economy.

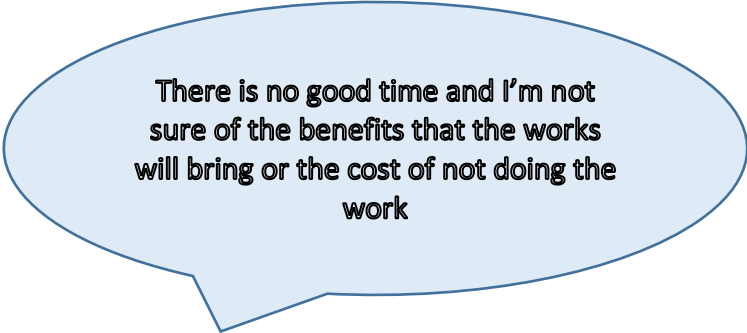
In respect of the Keighley Road works, which at the time of this report are imminent, the data suggests that had consultation taken place both residents and businesses would have preferred this project not to have gone ahead or to have been postponed.



At least one year - the disruption in the last five years has been too much.



the A646 Mytholmroyd roadworks caused horrendous disruptions to the area (my commute became 3 times longer); I do not believe any similar works should go ahead



There is no good time and I'm not sure of the benefits that the works will bring or the cost of not doing the work