



ST ANDREWS
PRESERVATION TRUST

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RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON STREET LAYOUT OF SOUTH STREET, ST ANDREWS

1. The consultation has been restricted to South Street. It should have covered the entire Royal Burgh of St Andrews, at the very least the whole of the Central Conservation Area. Whatever plans emerge for South Street need also to apply to Market Street, North Street, Bell Street, Greyfriars Garden, Logie's Lane, Church Square, College Street, Murray Park and the Scores.
2. The online survey is potentially flawed, as it has been adapted from a separate general survey tool, which in parts is not relevant to the specific situation in St Andrews. Other parts of the survey are leading, e.g. asking respondents to rank five interventions in South Street, and do not offer an open opportunity to comment on the future of the streetscape of St Andrews. Any conclusions derived from the survey should, therefore, be treated with a great deal of scepticism and are unlikely to be supported by the actual views of the people of St Andrews.
3. The timing of the consultation period over Christmas is indicative of the rush in which decisions will now be made. Fife Council failed to restore the status quo following the lifting of lockdown and has been tardy in conducting this consultation. This should have happened in good time prior to the lifting of the extended social distancing measures in autumn 2022.
4. It is entirely inappropriate for Fife Council to consider any planning applications relating to outdoor seating arrangements until this consultation exercise has been completed and conclusions regarding future arrangements have been formulated, decided and agreed.
5. The pavement extensions in South Street were put in place as a temporary measure during lockdown to ensure the health and safety of the public in terms of Spaces for People and also to enable certain businesses, notably in the food and drink sector, to remain viable while complying with spacing regulations. Since lockdown was lifted these businesses have been allowed to benefit commercially from increased floor space without having to apply spacing restrictions or pay any rental for the occupation of public property. They operated profitably prior to lockdown without outdoor seating.
6. Other businesses point out that they were given no such help and some complain that the loss of parking spaces has meant that their customers can no longer get parked near their premises. The business community is divided in its view of pavement extensions.
7. First and foremost, pavements are for pedestrians. Pavements are owned and have been paid for by the public and they are entitled to unfettered and unhindered right of passage along these walkways. The appropriation of public property for commercial gain is not acceptable.

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8. Providing a pedestrian detour around areas of tables and chairs is also unacceptable. These obstructions are a major source of inconvenience to pedestrians, especially those with sight impairment, wheelchairs or pushing prams (St Andrews Design Guideline 1). In some locations pedestrians are forced to walk on the road to avoid the tables and chairs put out on the pavement by businesses.
9. There should be no tables and chairs on pavements. However, the temporary arrangements during lockdown have shown that outdoor seating and the development of “cafe culture” is clearly popular with many visitors and some local people. If there is to be outdoor seating, then this needs to be done in a controlled way and should only happen where appropriate space is available “in a strip between the clear pedestrian zone and the carriageway” (St Andrews Design Guidelines, paragraph 4.30).
10. Businesses that wish to have outdoor seating, where appropriate space is available, should apply to Fife Council for planning consent and a licence may be granted. Rates and/or an appropriate rental should be charged. If it is agreed that parking space should be forfeited to allow this, the rental should be at least commensurate to the loss of parking income to Fife Council and to St Andrews. This will be a large sum and it will be for businesses that wish to have outdoor seating to decide if this outlay will be matched by their increased income stream from this source.
11. These arrangements will require strict enforcement (St Andrews Design Guideline 42). At present enforcement is significantly understaffed. The income to Fife Council and St Andrews derived from outdoor seating licences/leases, where granted, should be ringfenced to increase the level of enforcement in the town.
12. Areas of permitted outdoor seating should be clearly demarcated by studs or lines.
13. Repeated infringement of the terms of the licence would lead to the withdrawal of the lease and the revocation of the licence. Where other businesses without a licence repeatedly breach these terms, prosecution should follow.
14. A-boards and other items which impede the flow of pedestrians should not be permitted on pavements (St Andrews Design Guidelines, paragraph 4.37). More thought should be given to alternatives, such as fingerpost signs at street corners, as found in other busy tourist towns.



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15. Tents and marquees are totally inappropriate to the streetscape of central St Andrews (St Andrews Design Guidelines 38 and 41). These have nothing to do with enhancing “café culture”, but are simply a means of increasing floor space.
16. Measures to deal with other forms of street/pavement clutter, such as refuse bins, inappropriately sited parking ticket machines, abandoned bicycles chained to railings or cycle racks, should be formulated and enforced (St Andrews Design Guidelines 41 and 42).
17. We need to review how space can be found for:
 - Cycle lanes and cycle parks, so that St Andrews can be safe and convenient for cycle users.
 - Car parking arrangements both in town and out-of-town, so that vehicle congestion and air pollution can be reduced.
 - Ring-road/relief road options to reduce the number of heavy vehicles entering the Central Conservation Area with consequent damage to the fabric of the medieval town buildings and road surfaces.

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