

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of depositions from members of the public. Each deposition may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

Depositions received:

(ii) Deputation: George Street opening hours

There are very frequent bus services at both the top and bottom of George Street, with 30 buses per hour at the top and 22 buses per hour along Church Road at the bottom. People from Southwick, Mile Oak, Downs Park, Portslade and Hangleton all have a bus frequency of at least every ten minutes to and from George Street. Why is it felt it is necessary to increase car traffic in a shopping street when all the surrounding areas are so well served by bus? During the winter months when George Street is open to vehicles from 4pm there is congestion in Blatchington Road as cars queue to enter the street. The evening peak is already prone to traffic delays in the city and this will exacerbate the problem and cause delays to many bus passengers using these routes, including those coming to shop and spend time in George Street.

There is growing recognition nationally of the damage caused to bus services and air quality of growing congestion and this is reflected in our experiences in Brighton & Hove. In the last nine years' average bus journey times have increased by 14% in the city, greatly brought about by modest incremental measures combining with increasing volumes of car and van movements to increase delays and congestion. Though we have supported efforts to promote trade in George Street, this proposal to allow more cars into the street for longer may do nothing to assist trade but it will have a negative effect on vehicle movements and pedestrians. Experience shows that car drivers enter the street and then try to find a parking space, which in a narrow road with parking both sides, is not always easy. Cars have to wait behind a car that is reversing into a parking space, and the queues build up behind it, stretching back into Blatchington Road and causing congestion. Over time, as bus journey times lengthen, more buses have to be added to routes simply to maintain frequencies, thus adding to costs and putting pressure on fares, whilst slower bus journeys make the service less attractive.

An example of this is routes 5, 5A and 5B, which will be adversely affected by the George Street proposals. Before 2011 a single journey took 55 minutes; between 2011 and last year it took 60 minutes; now it takes 65 minutes. That's an 18% increase in journey time in six years, and now it takes four more buses to operate than it did before 2011, at the same frequency.

The City Council has a Low Emission Zone for buses in the City Council, and its own research shows that slow-moving traffic is a primary cause of poor air quality and narrow roads, that have a canyon effect, are worse than open areas. This proposal will immediately create significant slow-moving traffic in George Street and Blatchington Road, thus significantly worsening air quality using the City Council's own criteria. Brighton & Hove Buses has invested significantly in new buses to meet

the LEZ deadlines, yet elsewhere in the city the City Council is proposing to make air quality worse.

As someone who works near George Street and regularly uses it, it is a far more pleasant environment when it is not congested with three rows of stationary cars (one row parked each side with a traffic queue in the middle). One can regularly see unsafe reversing movements that mean that pedestrians have to constantly keep a lookout for reversing vehicles when they ought to be able to shop in a pleasant, car-free environment.

For all these reasons I would urge the City Council not to alter the existing arrangements. All the undersigned work within half a mile of George Street.

Supported by:

Mike Best (Lead Spokesperson)

J Dean

N Hill

L Taylor

C Ford

(iii) Deputation: Parking in Upper Hollingdean Road

We, the residents of Upper Hollingdean Road, wish to make a deputation to the next meeting to request residents parking controls on the street.

Our problem is that in the last year or two all the streets around us were added to resident parking control zones. Ditchling Road and flats to our south became Zone J, Hollingbury Road Zone G and so on.

We were informed of all these changes in January 2016, in a letter which said that Upper Hollingdean Road was also scheduled to be added to Zone J. Inexplicably to us, this never happened.

This leaves us as an island of free parking surrounded by resident permit controlled streets. As a result, of course, the whole road is always parked solid all day and night, and it is in practice impossible to park near our homes. We are on a bus route into town and within walking distance of London Road Station, so there is competition from shoppers, commuters and of course workers from the Hollingdean depot (as well as people from the nearby flats who don't want to use their 54 space car-park at a cost of £52 a year). The actual residents have almost no chance of ever parking. It usually takes 15 or 20 minutes driving around the areas beyond the controlled zones to find a space (causing annoyance to the residents there) and we end up walking half a mile back to our own road. The greatest problems are caused by the need to load or unload heavy items, drop off or pick up elderly relatives or small children: we have no option but to double park with the lights on which causes considerable congestion, holding up the buses and leading to occasional accidents. In consequence of the constant stress caused by the great difficulty of attempting to use a vehicle for normal purposes like taking a child to school or go shopping, the mood is often really ugly: people are extremely frustrated and there have been some unpleasant shouting matches in the street. The practice of hovering double parked or on the nearby double yellow lines in hope of a space has become common and adds to the congestion - and frankly danger - of the street.

This problem is the direct result of being surrounded by controlled streets. We understand that the Council is reluctant to allow Resident Zones to grow indefinitely by accretion, but we feel this really isn't a case of a road on the edge of a zone trying to get added, we are surrounded and have been put in an impossibly congested situation by apparently being overlooked when the January 2016 plan was put into effect.

All that is required is for a 200 yard strip along the north side of Upper Hollingdean Road between Ditchling Road and Hollingbury Road to be added to Zone J - as we were originally told we would be. Or, if an exception could be made and those of us living in this 200-yard stretch could buy permits for Zone J so we could park nearby, everyone would be delighted to cough up. It is clear from the space that is always available to Zone J permit holders in the streets around us there is capacity in the zone to add 11 houses.

Support for this deputation to the Council is absolutely unanimous - I should perhaps say vociferous - among the residents of Upper Hollingdean Road. I am limited to 12 names by the rules of the committee so here is a representative selection

Supported by:

Robert Deas (Lead Spokesperson)

Paul Beckett.

Felicity Beckett

Simon Topham

Tamara Spring

Rosco Faulkes

Jetta Elliott
Joshua Whittington
Sumaya Yuaf
Guglielmo Roccia
John Stanley
Ashley Barr