



Highfield Residents' Association

Transforming Cities – Portswood and Highfield Active Travel Zone

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Background information 2021 Initial Survey Results SCC Teams Presentation –

[Transforming Cities Portswood - Initial Survey Results 2021](#)

Supporting comments have been highlighted in blue

General Questions / Comments emailed to HRA Comms or raised at the October Books Consultation Event 04/10/2022 or following this event

- The Consultation event was not widely known about or publicised
- Why are there not more consultation opportunities – Tuesday 04/10/22 is impossible for me
- If you live north of Highfield ATZ there would be a lengthy detour to shop in e.g. Waitrose or Sainsburys
- The online consultation form has limited number of characters (255) to respond to questions or with ideas so it is not possible to write everything down
- Will the existing pelican crossing remain after the two new crossings are installed
- Where will replacement disabled parking bays be if we are no longer able to access those currently very handily placed by Boots
- Whether maintaining access for deliveries means for stock arriving or drivers collecting food orders in the pedestrian zone
- What is the point of a consultation in Autumn/Winter 2022 when works are already programmed for Summer 2023?
- The Council talk of making a vibrant centre of Portswood I think this will just about kill it
- I don't know how we would be able to get to Sainsburys from Westwood Road if you can't drive along The Broadway

- Has Highfield Primary School been consulted? Many parents use Brookfield Road to drop off and pick up. Do any pupils travel from south of Portswood Broadway? How would they get to school?
- Has the Nursery School (Highfield Nursery School) been consulted?
- How many other schools are in the area of the Highfield ATZ? Have they all been consulted?
- Are there any more detailed plans / maps rather than just simplified diagrams?

Five indicative slides have been taken from the SCC TEAMs Presentation (Ref. above)

- The initial consultation in **2021 had only 203** responses and not all questions were answered.

Q6: Are there any improvements you would like the council to make to improve travel and transport in the wider Portswood Area?

• Sample comments:

"Basically improve the environment for cyclists and walkers, reduce through traffic and enable cafes to spill out onto pavements"

"Bus lane and reduce clutter; also stop cars and vans parking on the pavements by installing metal bollards as they do in other cities. Also, have a better parking enforcement officers on the road;"

"Proper bike lanes separated by kerbs. More bike parking. Use on street parking space for outdoor dining"

"Install charging points for electric vehicles more generally where suitable locations are available."

"Potentially walking route signage that gives times between key destinations."

"More frequent bus service"

- There was no specific question about pedestrianisation of part of Portswood Broadway. The results (2021) stated that the views on any pedestrianisation were mixed.

What we have learned

- A majority of people walk within the local area however many respondees noted that they use the car when going to the supermarket – shopping is the main reason why people travel to Portswood Road.
- There is a general consensus agreeing with the council's Green City Charter and trialled cycle lanes in Portswood.
- There is support for introducing separated cycle lanes, reducing the speed limit, removing street clutter and increasing car parking.
- There an acknowledgement that bus facilities and services could be upgraded and improved.
- There are mixed feelings about the idea of pedestrianising the area.

Q5: Would you like to see any of the following improvements made to Portwood High Street?

• Answered: 195 Skipped: 8

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Widen footpath	7.69%	15
Separated cycle lanes	15.90%	31
Bus priority	1.54%	3
Reduce waiting times to cross	6.15%	12
Reduce the speed limit	10.77%	21
Cycle or scooter parking	5.64%	11
Remove pavement clutter	10.77%	21
Additional crossings	1.54%	3
More car parking	12.31%	24
Remove on-street parking	6.15%	12
Other (please specify)	21.54%	42
TOTAL		195

- Pedestrianisation of any part of The Broadway was not identified. Why is this now presented as ‘the plan’?
- There is no provision for anyone to make comments except online (or to ask an SCC employee to type in their responses on a tablet at the October Books event). This help wasn’t advertised. Is the consultation digital by default?
- Are all businesses aware of the current published scheme? Businesses had mixed perceptions regarding the idea of pedestrianisation in the area.
- Have the two major supermarkets been fully consulted as HRA has received comments for residents wanting to go to Sainsburys from the south and to Waitrose from the north and they would normally use The Broadway. Would the supermarkets lose customers

Telephone conversations with businesses

- To support the survey, members of the project team phoned businesses in the area to remind them to participate. During these phone calls, participants were asked to share their thoughts on travel and transport in the area and their comments were recorded.
- Generally, most people seemed to agree with the temporary cycle lanes, though this agreement was not unanimous.
- Some business employees that travel from afar commented that parking is bad in the area and they have to spend a lot just to park.
- Some respondents discussed the idea of pedestrianisation in the area with mixed perceptions.
- There is concern from some businesses about what would happen if on-street parking were removed.

- What would happen to the disabled parking bays – moving them might not be inclusive
- What are the demographics of the residential population of Highfield? Has that been taken into consideration?
- Many people attending October Books (4 October) were elderly. Many were confused. Many were angry. They wouldn't cycle or use a scooter. They might use a bus. They might walk but probably not from their home. All that I spoke to, used a car for shopping (food) as they couldn't carry much. They would not benefit from a pedestrianised zone.
- They would be discriminated against by not being able to drive to the supermarket of their choice.
- Is there potential for the pedestrianised zone to become a student hub to the exclusion of local residents?
- The survey results from 2021 state the 'Improvements people would like to see:

'Segregated cycle lanes; improved parking; reduced speed limit; widen footpaths'



Data sources: Traffic count July 2021, Floor data 2019, online survey data from November 2020, September/October 2021 on-street customer surveys

- Improved car parking was identified as a need, but improvements to the Westridge Car park are not planned so far. One resident described it as, 'a place where murders happen'
- No-one identified or prioritised a pedestrian zone or bus gate
- A resident from Lodge Road had received a letter about the October Books event. HRA helped to publicise the October Books Consultation to its members. Why did Highfield residents not receive letters?
- When will the AZT Community Co-design Event take place and where? Who will be invited?

The following comments have all been emailed to HRA

1. To HRA - Thank you for your recent newsletter.

I visited the Public Consultation and found some of it of concern, especially plans to curb traffic along Brookvale Road. This an access road for several roads which have no other means of reaching Portswood, especially the Oakmount triangle, and possibly the Uplands Estate, if there are restrictions at the end of Uplands Way and Orchards Way. These roads, and Highfield Lane particularly, are not served by public transport and a car is often needed to carry out a 'big shop'. Home delivery is not always the answer. The council's suggestion that traffic could go on the bypass is not often the case. It is not part of my local routes and certainly not if I am going up to the M3 or Romsey! Many local roads north of Portswood will become rat runs.

I am sure that you will watch these developments carefully. I know that some of the traders in Portswood are anxious as pedestrianisation is not always a success – Bittern is an example, perhaps?

I wish you well in any negotiations that you have with the City Council.

LF

2. I was pleased to meet you on Tuesday afternoon in Portswood.

Please find attached the Southampton Council /KPMG document of 2014 which describes Digital by Default as one element in a new Target Operating Model which will enable the council to reduce costs by :

- managing demand including stopping services in some areas
- allow the council to stop or reduce services
- encouraging residents to be more self sufficient
- make the council the provider of last resort
- Reducing staffing

C M

3. P:03/10/22

I have a dental practice in Bedford Place, where the Council imposed an "Active Transport Zone" the other year. This involved blocking Bedford Place to through traffic, as is proposed for Portswood.

The result was a dramatic drop in footfall and all the shops suffered great drops in their income. The customers told us that it was easier for them to take their business to similar shops in either Winchester or Salisbury. Bedford Place was in serious danger of becoming a dead zone.

That scheme was scrapped after the trial period, and the businesses gradually recovered their trade, although some trade has been permanently lost. If the similar, but permanent,

scheme is applied to Portswood, there will be an immediate drop in business and that drop will be as permanent as the scheme. Do we really wish to see Portswood become another dead part of Southampton?

The most polluting vehicle is one that is stuck in traffic. The traffic, bringing people into the Portswood shops, will be pushed into surrounding roads, and so the reduced pollution in Portswood Broadway is likely to create increased pollution for its immediate neighbours as a result of the increased congestion. Another consequence of the plan will be the inability to park outside shops in Portswood Broadway but there is no provision for improved parking nearby. People will simply vote with their feet, and wallets, by shopping elsewhere.

I hope that you will be able to add these observations to the HRA's response. Good luck,

C M

4. I wanted to offer a few thoughts on the Broadway issue, bus gate etc. My initial feeling was that the proposal was a strongly positive idea and would improve our High Street. I'm in favour of reclaiming streets from cars, and improving the pedestrian amenity of city space etc etc. However, the effect on traffic and rat-running etc is an unknown, but one the council ought to have more information about, and until we properly understand that information I am not sure I can be 'for' or 'against' the High Street changes and the modal filter or traffic calming.

For example, the council ought to have data on what fraction of the cars that currently pass the bus gate location continue to Lodge Road and beyond (and vice versa). Those might reasonably be expected to go via TLW if the bus gate is installed. If that number is say 75%, I might feel happy that the effect on Brookvale etc might be small and mitigated by traffic calming or modal filters etc etc, and I would use my efforts to campaign for the best improvements for our High Street. If that number is instead 25% let's say, then the majority of the traffic is local, and we (including SCC) ought to worry about the increase in traffic on Brookvale etc - and the idea of Thomas Lewis Way rerouting is a red herring.

So, at this stage of the process, I would like the council to show the data and the logic for their traffic forecasts - assuming they have them. The council website talks about a number of further stages through the winter of finalising the overall scheme, so there remains time, and it would be wrong now to flatly object to modal filters, or the bus gate or the scheme as a whole at this stage. Instead I want the council to provide the data to

back up their case that this is a good idea for Portswood, e.g. including traffic data and forecasts. If they can't provide that data then we all have a strongly justified basis to object, and a stronger basis for any objection we make to be listened to.

I'm very disappointed that the council are providing so little information on this. For comparison, when cycle routes on the common were being planned three years ago, the Common Forum (volunteers) did some fantastic data gathering to show who uses the different routes, which helped to get everyone on the same page and in agreement about what the situation is. The council should surely have a comparable level of data gathering and modelling for vehicles passing through Portswood.

JT

5. I have seen the plans for the Portswood High Street online and visited the October Books consultation. Thank you for the opportunity to raise issues, and it is great achievement to be awarded a government grant for developments within Southampton city.

However, I still have issues and questions to raise, to be sure that the developments address the issues in the Portswood area as a whole - and don't sacrifice the surrounding areas.

In the past I have contacted both the local authority and the police about 20mph limit across Highfield residential roads and spoken to MPs when canvassing.

And following a canvassing conversation with Lisa Mitchell, I then voted Labour, truly believing that Labour would have local best interests at heart.

My concerns for the proposal for Portswood High Street are multiple:

1. Plans to block Portswood High Street will redirect traffic through ATZ. The roadblock option will never see enough support, as the number of residents it adversely affects vastly outnumber the residents directly affected by increased traffic past their homes.
2. Speed bumps are not a serious mitigation offer, even the police officer I spoke to previously said they make no difference, drivers just want the fastest short cut.
3. Appalled at lack of consideration for the community. Highfield works hard to build a strong community spirit, a rarity in city life. The school and the church are at the core, but there are also several Scout/Guides clubs, two busy pubs and many other activities - that will be affected hugely by the increase of through traffic.
4. Highfield Lane and the ATZ roads clearly need a 20mph limit where there are pedestrians passing between the church, primary school and junior school sites. (Glen Eyre and East Bassett have had them installed this month.)

5. Brookvale Road, Abbotts Way and Russell Place, by your own calculations, already suffer from a vast 75% non-local traffic using the roads as a quick cut through. To make changes toacerbate this, without any tangible, workable solution for residents, is negligent to the extreme.
6. When I questioned a representative at the October Books meeting on where this proposal sprung from, he said the bus companies are fed up with their buses not running on time, so they would like Portswood High Street changed to a bus only route. But they are not the only stakeholders in this decision, what do the local residents want? The shopkeepers?
7. There are metal bollards, set in concrete, in the pavements on the junction of Abbotts Way, Uplands Way and Brookvale Road, which are regularly flattened by speeding vehicles. For a pedestrian, this impact would be fatal.
8. Not only do we need to address the issue immediate safety, but with air pollution now the fourth biggest health risk, it is imperative urgent action is taken to stop excess traffic through a residential area heavily populated with families, nurseries, and youth clubs.
9. Within the proposal, the idea is to make Portswood a nice place to be, which is very commendable. However, it is unclear how a bus-only route will address the problems of clearly visible people, both during daytime and at night, that need urgent help with addiction and abuse problems including drugs, alcohol, gambling and gas canisters, and some with challenging mental health issues. A bus lane will not improve life for these troubled individuals, and until these issues are addressed, Portswood will not be a nice place to spend time.
10. The council needs to do all it can to protect the few green spaces in the city. The ATZ has mature trees, and precious ecosystem supporting wildlife and a thriving bird population, which will be decimated with an increase in traffic if the additional 12,000 vehicles, currently recorded as passing through Portswood High Street, divert into the ATZ.
11. The online survey was biased; questions were asked in a closed way – it impossible to share a true opinion on the impact of the proposal.

Thank you for your time and input to our community, I trust you will put forward these considerations to the development panel.

Kindest regards

CS

6. Transforming Cities: Portswood plans.

I believe that the Transforming Cities plans for the Portswood area are deeply flawed. Your proposals have attracted a not unexpected but quite remarkably passionate level of opposition from all quarters. However, I also believe that there are simple steps which *could* be taken to 'make the District Centre more attractive and a more enjoyable place to spend time'.

I support the objectives of reducing car use and increasing the use of alternative methods of transport. However, I would argue that we are not yet able to do this by banning 12,000 cars a day from using a junction. That number indicates that a very large number of people have to be convinced that they can do without cars before the measures might work. Given the local reliance on private transport shown by that figure I would suggest that, if the plan goes ahead, many people will avoid Portswood entirely and that the Centre's demise as a District Centre would ensue. The reaction of traders in 'key' shops with whom I have spoken, including Waitrose staff, supports this view. At present the part of Portswood nearest the Mitre junction has relatively few shops but the part from Westridge Road to Brookvale Road has more, and ones which attract local shoppers.

The plans for a Travel Hub may well be for an unnecessary feature. There is space on that site for further scooter and cycle parking and, if relatively minor improvements are made to the Broadway, then existing bus route patterns could be retained. For most there is no gain, and perceived or actual increased risk, from having to congregate in a crowded situation. Neither scheme proposed for an ATZ in Highfield is feasible. Neither would work but both are likely to have a disastrous impact on those living in Portswood Residents' Gardens Conservation Area and in neighbouring streets. Your paper questionnaire circulated at October Books didn't seem to have maps of the ATZs, which won't help those who are not using IT to respond. On your questionnaire it was not possible to choose neither option and the limited number of characters available for comments on this and other key points limited the value of our contributions. To pick up some other points of detail, no suggestion has been made for the management of the unadopted road behind the western Portswood shops: this is 12' wide but runs from beside October Books to Highfield Lane, bypassing the car exclusion zone. Option 2 indicates that more traffic would use roads leading into the Uplands Conservation Area, and these are Private Roads. What are the implications for the use of an even more congested Highfield Lane by the frequent emergency vehicles? Will the existing weight restriction of heavy vehicles using the Lane be rescinded?

Option 1 offers speed bumps etc. Has it not been shown that speed bumps increase noise and atmospheric pollution? They catch exhaust pipes and lead to changes in speed which generate extra exhaust fumes. The measures in that option are unlikely to be effective. Option 2 would cause ludicrous problems. To travel from a house in Brookvale Road between the Abbotts Way junction and Highfield Lane to Waitrose would require someone to travel there via Highfield Lane, The Avenue and Lodge Road, which is environmental nonsense and blatantly foolish. You argue that the traffic management schemes should be debated locally after the closure of Portswood Junction, but that is also nonsense: any

Portswood Junction changes should *follow* the testing and implementation of traffic management work elsewhere. This will be vital for the wellbeing of a generally elderly population in which many must depend on private transport even for local shopping. The roads affected have a considerable flow of pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, the PRG Pavilion in the Gardens is widely used by community groups including those who need transport to carry wheelchairs. The Tennis Club which also uses the Gardens in Abbots Way has 300 members who also at times need transport. Any additional vehicular traffic must be regulated and policed.

I can find no analysis of how Thomas Lewis Way would cope with several thousand additional vehicles. From the consultation session at October Books it appears that traffic management on the east side of Portswood is limited to making Belmont Road one-way (unspecified in which direction). There are no plans to enlarge the key Westridge Road carpark. No thought seems to have been given to controlling traffic even though Westridge Road, double-parked and narrow, is accessible from Thomas Lewis Way. No mention was made of the impact of traffic increase on the other narrow roads in the area. This is at best short-sighted and at worst irresponsible.

So what alternative action *could* be undertaken to improve the District Centre?

The first and most significant change would be to Introduce *and enforce* a 20mph speed limit on Portswood Road and all the surrounding residential streets That in itself might encourage traffic onto Thomas Lewis Way.

Review the existing pavement layout and bus stopping zones. Rectify some mistakes made at the last 'upgrading' e.g. the dips for water collection after rain.

If the 'bottleneck' on the pavement between the northbound bus stops outside Poundland could be eased by a metre or so then passage would be easier for pedestrians and motorised wheelchairs.

Restoring a longer filter lane left into Highfield Lane might help.

Actively discouraging more drink and food outlets and actively encouraging (perhaps through grants) the opening of new general shops would be extremely valuable.

Some improvements to the area are ones which could be introduced immediately and relatively cheaply.

Enforce the existing laws. Get patrols on the pavements stopping the abuse of disabled parking spaces, parking on pavements and bus zones, and fining those cycling and using scooters on the pavements.

Clamp down on littering in the District Centre and surrounding areas. Clear rubbish regularly.

Sort out the flooding which is a real nuisance around the Highfield Lane/Broadway junction and both nearby pedestrian crossings.

At the same time adjust the line of the pavement so that those turning left into Highfield Lane are less likely to mount or damage the kerb.

You may have a grant or unspent cash for the scheme but it's unwise to spend only to make things worse. There is a lovely noun: 'virement'. The Collins Dictionary defines it as "an administrative transfer of funds from one part of a budget to another".

LB (X3)

7.

- Just a note to say we love the Portswood plans and can't wait to have a more pleasant environment. There are so many reasons to support this I won't list them as I'm sure others have (ask if they haven't!)
Not sure if modal filters near Winn Rd would work, but traffic calming if not. Thanks,
- We went to the October books event, and aim to attend on Tues. Unfortunately the modal filter plans (that are completely unrealistic due to difficulty/impossibility of right turns onto The Avenue from Winn and Westwood Rd) seem to have over-ridden a lot of peoples thoughts. It's a shame we couldn't have had the HRA briefing in advance and pointed out that the modal filter suggestions were unrealistic. Someone drew some other suggestions for modal filters (on the OTRA chat) so I hope these have been forwarded. Thank you
- I've found the alternative modal filter plans C, D & E and worked out how to message the person who drew them.

Please pass on to HRA that it's 2 issues - and suggest keeping them separate in the meeting!! Thank you

DW (by letter)

8. Dear Mr Hammond

Portswood Broadway and Highfield ATZ

I am writing to ask for information regarding the planned Portswood Broadway and Highfield Active Travel Zone, for which you are currently running a consultation.

For background, I am generally in favour of developments that reduce car use and reclaim street space for pedestrians and low carbon transport modes, including cycles and public transport. So, my initial reaction to the schemes was positive, but on closer inspection I am concerned that they may not provide the positive benefits that are envisaged. From discussions with neighbours and the two local residents' associations, I see many of us have similar concerns.

Some of these concerns could be alleviated if additional information can be provided by SCC, and if an optimal Highfield ATZ is designed. Key additional information relates to these two questions:

Question 1: How much of the current traffic that passes the planned bus gate location is 'local'.

More specifically, what percentage of the cars that currently pass the bus gate location continue to (or originate from) the Portswood Road – Lodge Road – Thomas Lewis Way junction? This question is important, because it indicates how much of the current Portswood Broadway traffic is likely to re-route via Thomas Lewis Way. Your website currently quotes through traffic proportions for longer and shorter north-south sections of Portswood Road, as '25%' and 'at times up to 50%' respectively, but these are not the most relevant section.

If the percentage of 'through' traffic is in between these values, say 35%, then does this mean that 65% of the current Portswood Broadway traffic is 'local', so will not naturally go to TLW, but will instead want to pass through Highfield? What would this correspond to as an increase in traffic in the Highfield area (e.g. Brookvale Road)? Is this a rise by 10%, 50%, 100%, 200% or 500%, for example? (ignoring any reduction in journeys from behavioural change that results from these works). This helps to inform on the need for a Highfield ATZ if the bus gate is present, to mitigate a potential rise in traffic.

The answer to question 1 is also important to inform us how many journeys will be lengthened by the bus gate (and any Highfield ATZ). The 65% 'local' journeys will be lengthened by taking TLW or other alternatives if the bus gate and Highfield ATZ are created. For example, my weekly trips to Sainsbury's or to the 29th Southampton scout hut¹ are currently 1.1 km and 1.9 km respectively, each way. With the bus gate and Highfield north-south split, they become 2.9-3.8 km and 3.4-4.2 km respectively (with the variation depending on how Highfield is split). All local journeys that currently pass the bus gate location or which cross from north to south Highfield will have comparable lengthening by 1.5-2.5 km. This is because the alternative north-south routes are either TLW (via a southerly detour to Lodge Road) or the Avenue. This is a far greater inconvenience and added car journey length compared to, for example, the St Denys ATZ. In that case, no journey is lengthened by more than around 400 metres, due to the dense road layout.

Can you therefore estimate the potential additional car-km that will be created if 65% of the Portswood Broadway traffic takes an extra 1.5-2.5 km detour? (recognising that this ignores reductions in car use from behavioural change). Your website quotes 12,000 vehicles per day using Portswood Broadway, which translates to an extra $0.65 \times 12,000 \times 1.5-2.5 = 11,700-19,500$ car-km per day.

Question 2: Has ANPR been considered, with or without an opening barrier / rising bollards system for the Highfield ATZ.

I recently completed the SCC consultation on ANPR use for 'School Streets' and other locations. It appears that this uses ANPR to enforce no-vehicles zones near schools for part of the day, while allowing local residents to continue using the road for access. This seems like an excellent scheme, and I assume that SCC therefore has expertise in maintaining databases of local residents' registrations for traffic enforcement.

This technology may offer an option to avoid the journey-lengthening for local residents that is discussed above in the Highfield ATZ. Could you provide modal filters for the Highfield ATZ that allow local residents through, based on ANPR? This would eliminate the additional journey length for local residents/journeys but would also prevent non-local traffic from rat-running through Highfield, instead directing them to the TLW option. Physical bollards or barriers may or may not be part of this scheme. It appears that other local authorities have used systems of these types, and it appears to be a technology that SCC is adopting for other purposes, as per the recent consultation.

¹ A car is necessary for (i) a week of family shopping and (ii) small children travelling after dark

I look forward to either a direct reply related to my questions, or to seeing information related to my questions being released through the public sources. I will be attending the HRA-hosted event later this month and look forward to the continuing consultation.

As I mentioned at the start, I am generally in favour of the types of scheme that are proposed for Portswood and Highfield. However, in this instance it is not clear whether the current proposals will genuinely reap benefits. The TLW re-routing is a long way round for local traffic, and the bus gate plus the Highfield ATZ creates a wide barrier to north-south car flow stretching from the Avenue to TLW, which is a significant obstacle for local car-based journeys. However, positive answers to the two questions above could help to alleviate these concerns.

Yours sincerely,

DW

9 October 2022.

9. Good afternoon,

Transforming Cities, Portswood and the Highfield Active Travel Zone

Just to let you know before tomorrow's meetings (which we unfortunately cannot attend) that we went to Portswood on Friday to attend the so-called community consultation event about the closure of Portswood Road. We were expecting to have the opportunity to express opinions but were told by the Councillor that they were only there to give information and answer questions, and not to listen to people's point of view.

Following this disappointment, we would like to know when, where and how residents will be able to express their opinions and say how they will be affected by the proposed scheme. We have already completed the on-line questionnaire but found the tone was biased towards the premise that people were automatically in agreement with what was being proposed. The format made it impossible to convey any adverse comments or issues that would create problematic consequences. Into the bargain their original Perception Survey was scientifically flawed, and not representative in numbers and demographic of persons surveyed.

Best regards,
I and G SH

10. I have not been able to keep up with the proposals for Portswood but I have just looked at what little information there is on the SCC website.

As far as I can make out, they are intending to prevent/deter use of Brookvale Road - presumably as a link from Highfield Lane opposite the church to the Waitrose junction. That will make things pretty unworkable for most Highfield residents. It would also be the kiss of death of Waitrose (already hobbled by SCC permitting a grossly oversized and ugly

Sainsburys at the other end of the district centre) as its client base would be cut off - it already looks underused and John Lewis (loss making last year) will be having to make cuts of unprofitable operations.

From an aesthetic point of view the scheme for the Broadway is a disaster - ugly signs, road markings and the pervasive use of cat-sick pink road surface (as we have at Omdurman/Highfield Roads) - the whole thing looks like a tacky monument to the primacy of traffic engineers, rather than a cohesive environmental improvement.

From what you know of the scheme, am I wrong? If not, I shall make comments along these lines by Friday.

S and Z H

11.

1. If the Broadway is to be 'restricted', covering it in cat-sick pink surfacing shows not an iota of aesthetic sense - they have not done that outside the Guildhall - why Portswood? SCC please do some joined up thinking about the appearance and character of the area, which cannot be left to transport engineers alone. Also the cost of doing that surfacing could be better spent on tree planting and providing secure storage for cycles etc. (I have twice had £1k bikes, properly locked, stolen within minutes and have never used my bike since to access Portswood or the city centre).
2. How will people in Highfield move about in cars - which some of us have to - if use of Brookvale Road is restricted (accepting that some restraint on Russell Place may be appropriate)? That will also lead to the demise of Waitrose which depends on custom primarily from the Highfield/Bassett areas.
3. Plant more trees - the pavements/overall space are plenty big enough - a couple of small specimens are illustrated but some substantial ones (as were planted on University Road) along the length of Broadway could transform the feel of the area (cf London Road which would be very bleak without the trees). The constraint is no doubt SCC's ultra-precautionary approach to Southern Water's threat to sue if roots damage their drains (and potentially eat into their profits) - which begs the question of a holistic approach to environmental improvements. (SW should be a public organisation with public interest objectives as it used to be when SCC ran drainage).

S H

12. To HRA:

1. If you wanted to deliberately devise a scheme to put the traders of Portswood Broadway out of business, it's hard to imagine a better one than the scheme proposed.
2. The idea that the traffic along the Broadway is mostly through traffic does not chime with the fact that the parking spaces are almost all occupied most of the time. The cars parked there constitute local traffic, parked there to use the local shops.
3. I myself am quite often 'through traffic' because I can't find a parking space and have to go round the block again.
4. The idea of providing more seats for disabled people is nonsense if they can't get to them because parking spaces no longer exist.
5. One was left by the meeting with a strong impression that the council's priority is not the wellbeing of the community it exists to serve.
6. Worse still, it was clear that the community does not have a veto over a plan which is likely to be hugely detrimental to it.
7. The council has not made a clear case for changing the status quo. But the downside of what is proposed is glaringly obvious.
8. If the council were to prioritise the community, it would be obvious to it that they should give the money back. There is no reason to spend money on silly schemes just because it is on offer.
9. The money could be spent on far more worthwhile projects. What happened to intelligence and common sense?

MP

13. I attended the Consultation Meeting last night. Happy to give my view below, IN FAVOUR of the proposal.

- I acknowledge the benefits are somewhat nebulous and I don't feel have been particularly well articulated by the Council representatives; however I feel any steps we can take to improve air quality in the immediate vicinity of Highfield/Oakmount Triangle would be a good thing.

- As regards the Active Traffic Zone in the Brookvale Road area, this could be a stumbling block. I believe serious consideration should be given to using ANPR to allow local residents to still use the local roads. Whilst tradesmen, visitors and delivery drivers would need to take a circuitous route, this would allow residents to drive in and out of the area freely.

SW

14. "Thank you to HRA for facilitating the discussion about the above project. Afterwards I asked the chap if there were plans to allow a right turn up Highfield Lane from the Swaythling end of Portswood Rd. He said it was an option under consideration. I have seen nothing about this option. This will cause a great deal more traffic to use Brookvale Rd as a rat run. Highfield Lane's traffic volume has already noticeably increased. A further increased volume is even more danger to the schools, church etc. please bear this in mind when supplying feedback. He expressed surprise that this was the first time this was mentioned; not as surprised as me!"

CJ

15.

1. I get the impression from the Council staff that the Grant Money needs to be spent on this or a similar project,

--however, this may be at the detriment of the quality of life of the local residents.

The option of "doing nothing" is not being considered by the Council as this would mean losing the grant money.

This mind-set is reflected (in my view) in the questionnaire that they designed (and I completed) where maintaining the "status quo" was not really presented as an option.

2. No details have been given of the tendering process for the work. Was an open and fair tendering process used?

Were bids from other contractors considered? Why was Balfour Beatty selected when the details of the plan have yet to be agreed?

3. Has an Impact Assessment been made of the likely impact of this plan on the businesses in Portswood?

4. With the existing ATZ plans, the Traffic and Parking Load on other roads not in the ATZ area

(e.g. in Westridge Rd, Highfield Lane, Shaftesbury Avenue, Welbeck Ave.)) will be significantly increased.

Can steps be taken to mitigate this ?

e.g. increased parking restrictions, traffic calming measures?

5. Highfield Lane is currently used as a main route for Emergency Services (e.g. ambulances) from the St Denys/Bitterne areas to the General Hospital.

The traffic load on this route is at least equal (probably greater) to that on Portswood Rd.

The traffic load on Highfield Lane will become significantly greater under this new plan, and hence this will have a serious effect on the emergency services.

6. Why was the designated ATZ region chosen? Why was that group of streets chosen?

Why was an equivalent ATZ area NOT chosen on the other side of Portswood Rd?

e.g. to include all or part of Westridge Rd---as this road is likely to see significantly increased parking and traffic under this plan

for traffic between Portswood Rd and Thomas Lewis Way.

I hope these comments are useful and will be considered by the City Council team.

Many thanks to you and your colleagues for your work on this and, of course, other issues,

JD

16.

"Can't wait to be able to walk safely around Portswood High Street. It will increase pedestrian dwell time and be great for business. And finally having pedestrian crossings as Bevois hill."

CZ

17. Issues of Concern regarding the Proposed Closure of Portswood Broadway

We wish to express our opposition to the closure of Portswood Broadway and the problematic consequences to local residents. The historic communities of Highfield/Portswood are unique, and their spirit and cohesion would be damaged by the proposals to the detriment of the city.

The proposal to close the thoroughfare will increase overall pollution and create environmental problems. Many of the aims of the scheme could be achieved without closing Portswood Broadway.

Perceptions Survey Portswood 2020

- From the outset the Survey was flawed. Sample of only 203 people so impossible for the data to be representative of a demographic cross section.
- Only 1.54% people said they wanted priority for buses, which is insufficient data to justify these proposals to close Portswood Broadway.

On-Line Survey- Portswood Corridor

- The tone was biased towards the premise that people were automatically in agreement with what was being proposed. The format made it impossible to convey any adverse comments or issues that would create problematic consequences.

Lodge Road/Portswood Road Junction

- These costly proposals are in excess of what is required to improve this junction, and out of proportion in relation to perceived gains.

Portswood Broadway (including Portswood Road/Highfield Lane/St Denys Road junction)

- Closing a major arterial road has major consequences and transfers the burden of traffic onto adjacent roads and their residents.
- The proposals are disregarding of the adverse effects on local residents.
- The resulting increase in traffic along Brookvale Road is unacceptable.
- Funnelling this additional traffic along Thomas Lewis Way is an acceptable aim, but in case of an accident gridlock would ensue due to closure of no alternative route through Portswood.
- The over-riding aim appears to be for the benefit of the buses at the expense of the

wider context, especially the residents whose needs are ignored.

- The improvement in timetabling for the buses over this small area of their route does not justify the adverse effects to residents and the huge expense.
- Many of the improvements can be achieved without closing Portswood Road/Broadway.
- Closing roads in Highfield, eg. Brookvale Road/Russel Place will force all residents to incur extra mileage/time/pollution/energy in order to drive to areas that they would otherwise be able to reach directly.
- Traffic calming measures are known to produce additional pollution and noise affecting the wellbeing of residents.
- Shops could lose trade from no passing motorists and it is rumoured that Waitrose will close if the scheme goes ahead.

Portswood Travel Zone

- Travel Hub does not require the closing of Portswood Road/Broadway.

Highfield Active Travel Zone

- All the elaborate and expensive proposals for an ATZ would be unnecessary if Portswood Road/Broadway were left open.
- It is clear that the vast majority of people shopping/eating in Portswood already do walk or cycle when feasible.
- It is not acceptable to force all the residents to incur environmental problems plus additional pollution by driving further to reach any destination if modal filters are introduced. Multiply this, which will be about four miles extra per trip, by all the thousands of people who will be affected and it becomes a huge adverse environmental impact caused by the proposals.
- All visitors, deliveries/trades people will likewise incur additional mileage and environment harm.
- For residents, what were short journeys on safe quiet roads would become roundabout trips on more dangerous and busy roads, eg. The Avenue and/or Thomas Lewis Way. Many residents will be forced down Winn Road to make the difficult and dangerous right hand turn onto The Avenue, plus the lengthy queue of cars which will form. This will slow the buses, negating any gains from possible improved journey times through Portswood!
- Road closures will divide communities, and weaken the unique atmosphere.
- Speed humps produce additional air pollution for pedestrians and residents and noise pollution.
- Increasing traffic/pollution on residential roads is a threat to wildlife, especially the wide variety of garden birds and insects that currently flourish. Also, the area is home to hedgehogs and bats that are already endangered.

The benefits that may be achieved by the closure of Portswood Road/Broadway, notably the improvements to the buses, will come at a considerable detriment to the wider community. We strongly believe that improvements can be made to the areas in question without closing this major thoroughfare.

I and G M

18. At the HRA/consultation meeting yesterday, you asked for further ideas that HRA might pass on to the Council. Here are three that have occurred to me as a result of the meeting.

1. Much was made of a perceived need to improve public transport between the north of the city and the city centre. However, no mention was made of the dedicated public transport route that duplicates several of the bus routes under consideration, namely the railway. Any integrated public transport should take all modes of transport into account. Has SCC done this? Why are they not considering an improved rail service?
2. Can SCC be confident that the Portswood "bus gate" will significantly improve bus journey times north south if they do not know the knock-on effects of closing Portswood Broadway to cars? They admitted that their modelling of traffic flow was incomplete, and that they know very little about the local traffic, i.e. the three-quarters of the car traffic that enters the old Portswood highway but does not pass straight through. If they don't know where this traffic is going currently, how can they predict which roads will become more congested if Portswood Road is blocked? Might this slow the buses down and cause an *increase* rather than the desired decrease in bus travel times?
3. Most seriously, there are likely to be catastrophic effects on the Portswood shopping area south of the "gate". Combined with the proposed restrictions on turning northwards at the Lodge Road/Portswood Road junction, the "gate" will make vehicle access to the SCC Westridge Road car park and the Waitrose car park extremely difficult from *all* directions (north and west Highfield, Bassett, Bevois Mount, Inner Avenue, Hampton Park, St Denys), to the extent that shoppers who live more than walking distance away will likely go elsewhere. The Portswood shops are already on the edge of viability, witness the high proportion of charity shops, no sign of repairs to the burnt-out buildings opposite Waitrose, no tenant for the Blockbuster/Gorillas building etc. What is the point of improving the northern end of Portswood Broadway for shoppers if the remainder becomes a wasteland? Does the Council have any plans to counteract this?

JB

19.

Portswood Consultation Feedback

Whilst we support the idea of discouraging through-traffic from using Portswood High Street and being encouraged to use Thomas Lewis Way during rush hours, we have very significant concerns about the current proposals.

We are concerned that the recent electronic feedback form did not provide a democratic way of responding, as the questions were slanted only towards the bus/taxi only option between The Mitre and Westridge Road, rather than a genuine consultation, with the option of either suggesting constructive alternatives, or disagreeing with it. The space for feedback had only limited characters, so any comments were limited.

Consequently, there are a number of points that we would wish to raise:

- We have lived in the Highfield area for some 40 years now, and consider that we know the city well, having worked in most areas during our working careers.
- We frequently walk to Portswood, and occasionally use our car if we have particularly heavy items to collect, or if the weather is particularly inclement.
- At rush hour, and at either end of the school day there is a significant amount of traffic in the Highfield and Portswood area. Over the years, many drivers have used rat-runs to avoid the more congested roads. Priory Road, Aberdeen Road, Richmond Road, Brookvale Road are some such examples.
- The recent road works on St Denys Road ironically seem to have had a negative effect, as it is now not unusual for traffic at busy times to back up to Highfield Church, along Highfield Lane.
- During the working day however, Portswood Road is relatively calm, and often it is not necessary to use a pelican crossing / traffic lights to cross, as there are long spaces between vehicles. We would not consider doing this in Shirley, for example.

- As a pedestrian, we consider our greatest risk is from cycles and scooters, many (if not the majority) of which use the pavements rather than the road – even in areas where there are designated cycle ways such those as towards the Lodge Road junction.

- We do not support the introduction of a permanent buses/ taxis/ cycles only section in Portswood, as we are sure this will have a negative effect on the various shops and businesses that operate there.

- We are basing this on a range of reasons:-
 - The pedestrianisation of Bitterne village spelt the death knell for many of the shops that thrived whilst it was open to vehicles.
 - It has been suggested that the closure of Bedford Place had a negative effect on businesses in the area.
 - One of us grew up in a thriving market town in the West Country, which had a very narrow High Street (which needed no traffic calming, as only one vehicle could go through at any one time!) The town council felt that a short by-pass, of only about 500m, would resolve the problem. The traffic flows through the town very well, and few people visit the centre, despite there being vehicular access. The shops and businesses in the town steadily declined and the majority closed. Older people may recall there was a television programme about trying to bring this town back to life, presented by Greg Wallace. Sadly, his efforts did not produce a long-lasting result, and the once bustling centre is no more.

- We have seen the impact on Waitrose of the recent short-term closure of Brookvale Road, and fear that this shop would not continue to trade if these plans were to go ahead.

- The same would be said for shops such as Iceland and Farmfoods, as well as the smaller more locally focused shops.

- If the Travel Hub and the Highfield Active Travel Zone are both introduced, should we need to take our car, via the Avenue to Waitrose

the distance is 2.4 miles, if via Thomas Lewis Way it is 1.7 miles from my house, as opposed to 0.5 mile at the moment.

- If the Highfield Active Travel Zone does not go ahead as far as blocking off roads are concerned, then Brookvale Road will continue to be used as a rat-run, or access route for those living in neighbouring roads, such as those on the Oakmount triangle. There will also be increased traffic through the Uplands Estate, which is a private estate. The very considerable costs for any traffic calming measure in this area would have to be borne by homeowners living there.
- Some have expressed the view that residents could have their shopping delivered. However, for isolated older residents this is not necessarily a positive option, as doing their own shopping, might provide the only opportunity they have to speak to someone during the day. In addition, they may not be able to walk to get their shopping.
- It has been said that buses will be able to travel more fluidly, however, as a regular bus user, we have never seen Portswood Road as the bottleneck, but areas nearer the city centre are, so the Travel Hub would change nothing.
- We fully support the idea of introducing traffic calming measures in Brookvale Road, Russell Place and Abbots Way in order to minimise them being used as rat-runs.
- Could someone reassure us that these proposals have the full support of all of the shops, restaurants and businesses in the area?
- Have other options been looked at?

Such as:-

- a. Making it more difficult to drive up from Bevois Valley towards Portswood
- b. Encouraging traffic from Lodge Road to continue onto Thomas Lewis Way
- c. Ensuring that the traffic flows freely along Thomas Lewis Way, rather than backing up for a long distance to the traffic lights with Stoneham Way.
- d. Considering a "buses only" section in Portswood Road, only during rush hours.

D and R F

20. To Highfield Residents' Association:

Thank you for hosting the public consultation regarding the Council's proposals for the Portswood and Highfield areas and opening it to non-members of HRA. I live in Manor Farm Road, very near to Bitterne Park Triangle and Portswood is my main shopping centre, so I have a great interest in the current proposals.

I usually drive to Portswood because I combine as many errands as I can thus limiting car use. I am now elderly and cycling, walking or scooting is not an option, nor is a bus when I have things to carry, but I use one when appropriate. I usually shop in the morning and traffic is not a problem either in the Broadway or Abbots Way/Russell Place, but when I go to the University in the evenings, then there is more traffic and I allow for it.

The present proposals will affect the footfall in the shops very greatly if carried out and people will find other places to shop rather than be forced to take longer and more expensive and time-consuming routes. Parking on the kerbside in the Broadway is necessary for shoppers and people are not going to carry heavy bags to the well subscribed charity shops if they cannot park very near.

I am told that one will be able to use Westridge Road to access the car park. This is effectively a single-track road because of the double parking which is necessary for the residents, and can therefore be very difficult to negotiate. I was also told on Tuesday evening by an official that I would be able to drive out of Westridge Road and turn left into the Broadway - does this mean that cars can drive up the Broadway and then do a U turn to go back down again hoping to find a kerbside parking place or is all parking to be stopped along there?

Buses are only useful if one lives fairly near the stop and there is a stop near one's destination. They are no good at all when delivering or collecting heavy or bulky loads. Putting on extra buses will just make extra clutter on the roads and not stop car use. The No. 7 service from here is very good and never over full.

If the shops are to remain viable then this project for the Broadway should be shelved. The price to be paid is perhaps more traffic at certain times of the day - so be it. Trying to push cars down on to Thomas Lewis Way will just encourage people to shop elsewhere. The statistics given at Highfield Hall showed that 75% of traffic visiting Portswood did stop. The 25% which did not stop was probably mostly made up of people needing to go that way to commute to and from work from their home. Thomas Lewis Way has 8 sets of traffic lights between the motorway roundabout and Lodge Road and forcing even more cars on to it is going to cause gridlock at busy times in the same way that the cycle lanes at the top of the Avenue caused on to M.3, until they were removed.

Living in any city is going to come with traffic problems at certain times of the day. There are long queues in and out of the city mornings and evenings in all routes as there are in all places. The city council is encouraging people to come and visit and businesses are being given incentives to set up here. Eastleigh is busy building hundreds of new houses all around the perimeter of Southampton and those residents will come into the city for business, shopping and leisure. All this will make more traffic and shutting down a few

local roads will make problems worse for other people in other roads, as has the block in North Road, St. Denys.

I think most of the other proposals are cosmetic. Portswood is essentially a local shopping area with already more than sufficient coffee houses with places for people to socialise inside or outside, if they so wish.

I was disappointed in the reaction by the planners to the man who had to push to try and find out why we were not given the option 'To do nothing' and to the man who asked about what survey had been done with the retailers. Neither got anything like a satisfactory answer. Do nothing gets my vote and I shall seek out the petition to sign against the proposals.

cc. 3 Portswood Councillors.

D T

21. Dear HRA Secretary,

I've just filled in the survey the Council have put together - and I found myself saying on various occasions that it seemed designed more or less to enable validation of what's already planned. There was no real consultation about things like the effects on surrounding roads like Thomas Lewis Way - where increased traffic flow might lead to problems if there were an accident. (How could ambulances get to those who need them, for instance?) Obviously, I'm in favour of anything that makes our city greener - and any such scheme comes at a price for someone - but proper consultation needs to happen, and I wasn't sure that this was proper consultation.

Best wishes,

J McG. HRA member - resident Donnington Grove.

22. Good afternoon James,

I have completed the public consultation on the Transforming Cities Portswood Corridor proposals.

The comment areas were very limited at 255 characters - this is an important and significant proposal which will have a major effect on the local residents and it's not possible to address these issues in fewer characters than a tweet allows. I am a member of Highfield Residents Association (HRA) who listed your email details so I hope that you can take my (extended) comments into account.

Need

I completed the original consultation and, from the results, neither this solution nor the need was identified by any significant numbers of respondents. Better pavements, improved cycleways, 20mph speed limits were identified as priorities. This project feels like a solution desperately in search of the problem.

Data

Some data on through traffic was presented at the project consultation but, in discussion with the project team, there appeared to be limited or no data modelling on the consequences for roads outside of the ATZ - Lodge Road and Highfield Lane are already heavily loaded and the effects on these routes does not seem to have been assessed.

Cycling

I regularly cycle across and around the city. There are some good routes but much more frequently cycleways are not continuous or linked together sensibly. For example, a lot of work has been done on the Thomas Lewis Way/ St. Denys Road intersection but, once a cyclist has crossed Thomas Lewis Way they are quickly dumped back into the main traffic flow without a cycle lane or segregation. The same applies to the proposals for the Portswood - Bevois Valley route, isolated areas of provision (Portswood Broadway, Lodge Road) linked with much less safe routes on the main carriageway. I would be happy to cycle these routes with you or one of your project team to illustrate these issues.

Through Traffic

Four times a week at peak times I drive from my home in Westwood Road to the University Sports grounds at Wide Lane, Eastleigh. I don't often have significant problems or encounter delays on this part of the route so it is not apparent to me what time savings buses will make if Portswood Broadway is closed, again no data on this was available at the consultation I went to. If this has been modelled it should be published, I do suspect the possible time savings will be marginal compared to the total journey length.

Commerce

Portswood Broadway has a reasonable mix of shops, services and food outlets. Have these premises been surveyed? I am concerned that pedestrianisation will lead to Portswood resembling the pedestrianised Bitterne High Street which is now a rather sad mixture of charity shops, discount retailers and empty units. There are no improvements planned for the car park at Westridge Road which is unattractive and rather threatening after dark, this isn't going to encourage visitors and will affect the commercial premises.

Alternatives

It appears to me that the wishes expressed at the original consultation could be achieved in full by:

- Removing the on-street parking on Portswood High Street
- Enhancing Westridge Road car park
- Using the saved space from the on-street parking to expand the pavement area and provide a complete cycleway from St. Denys Road to Brookvale Road
- Improving the bus stops as proposed
- Using smart signal technology to improve bus transit times
- Imposing a 20mph speed limit along the High Street and surrounding areas

I was disappointed that I found myself opposing a scheme that, if it had addressed the expressed wishes of the original consultation, I would have enthusiastically supported.

Best wishes,
T C

23.

I have completed the consultation survey, but as stated at the Highfield Centre meeting on Tuesday it has very limited opportunity to comment in any detail, and no opportunity to say n/a to several of the questions.

I live on Welbeck Avenue, and I have a concern that

1) the university side of Portswood/Highfield has the potential to become cut off from the city side of the Broadway if the most extreme traffic calming measures come into place. For example to reach Waitrose residents would have to go via the Avenue and Lodge Road. As the traffic development there is to slow down access to Portswood from the south, this would become extremely difficult.

2) Extreme traffic calming would also affect access to leisure facilities such as the Tennis Club, which runs a lot of classes and hold regular group meetings, the day nurseries and after-school clubs etc. These facilities are heavily supported by local residents from all parts of the area. While I accept that it would make walking more attractive, many people move around the area under time constraints such as taking/collecting children etc.

3) this may increase the volume of traffic coming through the University and down both Welbeck and Church Lane. We have only recently pushed to have these roads reduced to 20mph to improve safety. Any increase in traffic volume can only have a negative affect and have an impact on road side parking as local people will seek out places to access the area from. There did not seem to be any consideration given to this.

I am not opposed to trying to uplift our area, and recognise that it may have a positive impact on air pollution, but if the aim is to improve the area for all residents, then I think that greater consultation is needed as to how local residents use the area. The consultation document did not succeed in this.

With many thanks for all the hard work you are doing on this,

P B

24.

I am sorry I was not able to attend the meeting on Tuesday. The idea is probably good in theory but many things I do it agree with, the narrowing of the road which is inevitable if the pavements are to be widened, which is one thing. In the present economic climate is it the time to spend this large sum of money on something that might not work! Another thing it mentions that there will be greening and even art but who will look after this - is there a budget for this.? I collected a questionnaire which I will send off. Sorry sent this off too soon - if there is a petition to sign against this do you know how I can be included. Thank you.

R B

25.

Dear Councillors

I'm a resident of Highfield, Furzedown Road.

I fully support the pedestrianisation of Portswood High Street. We urgently need measures to reduce car use - for our own health immediately and for the health of the planet in the medium term. I think the proposed measures to cut private through traffic do not go far enough.

Pedestrianising Portswood High Street would bring the area into the present day and make it a much more pleasant place to be.

Pushing cars into smaller areas and making car journeys more difficult is the only way we are going to get out of our comfortable cars. We all love our cars with the seats adjusted just the way we like them and the atmosphere just right. People will only leave their cars if we develop a hostile environment for cars (to use a phrase). Lots of people I've been talking to are worried about the cars being forced somewhere else, but presumably our overall objective is to drastically reduce car usage.

We also need to provide alternatives. I was horrified at the Conservative Council offering free city centre parking in the evening to encourage people back into town. I would have suggested free bus journeys into town at night instead. There is a problem with the buses at the moment. We're regularly waiting an hour for buses in the past couple of weeks. Providing free bus journeys is the gold standard to which we should aspire.

To make this area of Portswood more pleasant, perhaps the toilets should be reopened and maintained. There's nothing in the plans about making Westridge Road more pleasant. The anti-social drinking and drug taking needs to be managed, particularly in this area.

Am not sure how much this nodal approach to traffic will actually change things. Yes, having more frequent, reliable and known bus times will encourage bus use, but the city really needs a fully integrated bus network rather than a fragmented one run by with different companies. It's all about connections and routes to neighbouring areas. For example, the bus offering from Highfield to Romsey has steadily declined.

Bike riding is also all about connections and routes. One bad crossing can put off bike riders. For example if you're cycling to town down the Avenue and then you want to turn right across the traffic to go down London Road, it's very difficult. Another example of a problematic turn is if you're cycling up the Avenue and you want to turn right to go to Avenue campus, you can't get across the traffic. Slightly further afield but definitely relevant is the new bike path on Stoneham Lane. There is a bike route but not on the most dangerous winding area near Channels Farm Road and BTC.

I've completed the questionnaire regarding the proposed changes to Portswood, but it doesn't provide enough space to express my views so I thought I'd write more here.

Kind regards

N L

26. Dear Gordon,

I must say I am at a loss to understand what is going on with regard to the meeting the other night about the scheme.

Both I and my husband, think it is a good idea to shut a part of Portswood Broadway to traffic and encourage through vehicles to use TLW instead .

This would improve both the environment and air quality on the Portswood Road and make it far more pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists shoppers and bus passengers.

Obviously, there is a risk of neighbouring roads become rat runs but wouldn't it be easy to use simple traffic calming methods such as 20 mph speed limits and physical barriers acting as chicanes to mitigate that risk? These could and should be monitored to mollify local resident opinion.

We spend a lot of time visiting family members in Saint Denys and Bitterne by foot or bicycle and measures already in place in St Denys have greatly improved the environment of the area.

Some of the barriers have been planted with wild flowers by local residents and look lovely.

I also fail to understand what the concerns about the drop in passing trade is. I have raised this in several local shops and they tell me this is not an issue for them.

Most people from the locality state they walk to Portswood or park in one of the 2 public and 2 supermarket car parks available, all of which are remain accessible with the plan.

If you were driving through the area en-route to Eastleigh or the city centre perhaps for work I think it's very unlikely you'll park up to browse round the shops.

Finally should we all be regarding it as a right to drive to Waitrose, it's certainly something which we need to think about more carefully with the current climate crisis. It is noteworthy that many branches of Waitrose nationally are trialling loans of cycle cargo trailers to allow people to do their weekly shop with a bicycle and the branch here could be encouraged to follow suit.

kind regards,
C T

27. TRANSFORMING PORTSWOOD BROADWAY PROPOSAL (TPBP)

These comments are provided jointly by my wife and who reside at Avenue Court, Westwood Road SO17 1TX and are presented in the plural form – 'we'.

Comments at this stage are offered, and to be considered, as neither for or against the TPBP as seen and understood to date from various information provided by Southampton City Council (SCC), and responses from SCC officers, at the recent public meeting held at Highfield Church Hall on 8 November 2022 and arranged by Highfield Residents' Association (HRA).

A - Background & Understanding

1. From the initial information provided by SCC, responses were sought to the proposals by end 2022 to enable works to commence later 2023.

2. It now appears the latest round of consultations and meetings is the first stage in this process and should this proposal proceed, or any alternative be agreed, work will now not be undertaken until 2024.
3. We are unsure whether TPBP has been conceived; (a) just to use the potential funding available from Government for this type of scheme – irrespective of whether it has been fully researched and actually works, or (b) to actually fulfil a need that enhances the current situation, and that all relevant studies and data collected from interested parties have been collated and can be seen to benefit all affected parties.
4. On the information provided to date, and the questions/queries raised at the recent public meeting, and responses provided by SCC officers, it would appear to be A-3a above!
5. If correct in this assumption (to A-3a above), then to consider undertaking a scheme that is not fully researched with defined benefits assessed and agreed by all interested parties, the process is flawed. It would be suicide to proceed, and certainly no commercial business decision would be made without full assessment, as the company/entity would falter or go into liquidation!
6. On current assessment of the position to date, and with known information/data to date, TPBP is not remotely at a stage currently being presented – it is far too early.
7. No matter what has been said by SCC officers, the source of the funding from what is understood to be a £57M ‘Active Travel’ pot, will have initially been from the taxpayer!

B – Assessment/Comments

1. Detailed consultation needs to be had with all stakeholders/affected parties; (1) residents; (2) traders along Portswood Road and other roads/areas off Portswood Road; (3) public transport providers; (4) Southampton and Solent University.
2. SCC officers did not answer questions as to whether local traders have been consulted to date – reasoning appears they have not!
3. All comments need to be assessed and conclusions agreed (with all interested parties) based on commercial, economic, environmental and practical consideration. To date this has not been done!
4. It is imperative that local knowledge of how Portswood as a whole operates is garnered from those who live, work and operate in/around Portswood, to even remotely consider how to deal with its traffic issues and what to present to resolve/improve them.
5. It would appear certain footfall and traffic counts are out of date and taken prior the pandemic lockdown. Due to all the recent unforeseen circumstances, we find ourselves in a very different living, working and economic environment.
6. Data on through traffic (‘TT’) appears contradictory and not fully detailed - SCC website states 25% TT & 75% local traffic, but the consultation information states 75% TT and 25% local traffic – which is correct?
7. It is not acceptable to state 75% or any specific percentage of traffic along Portswood road is TT. Does the study demonstrate/record how much of this traffic turns-off into tributary roads, to say Sainsburys, Waitrose, existing car parks, doctors, dentists, residences and other destinations etc?
8. Traffic traveling west comes along Portswood Road from the junction with Burgess Road, and traffic travelling east comes from the city centre via Bevois Hill. How can all this traffic be legitimately considered TT? TT would logically travel along Thomas Lewis Way and not turn-off to go along Portswood Road/The Broadway and get snarled-up, unless it was for a specific destination (see B-7 above). Therefore, the assumption that all traffic along Portswood Road (both ways) is TT is flawed. The TT is actually along Thomas Lewis Way - exactly what this route was designed-for!

9. It was raised that rather than a drastic Bus Gate closing-off a section of Portswood Road completely, could limiting measures not be put in place further east along Portswood Road to take some traffic off earlier and onto Thomas Lewis Way – say via left-turn at the crossroads with Mayfield Road and left-turn between Bowden Lane and Arnold Road etc., prior getting to The Broadway! Traffic travelling west could similarly be further directed along Thomas Lewis way from the junction with Bevois Hill. Very easy and inexpensive to deal with via technology (cameras), signage (Notices) and limiting access say during certain periods!
10. How will elderly residents from the western end of Westwood and Winn Road and other similar locations, get to Sainsburys for a main shop say once per week? Simple calculations show an additional 1.25-mile round trip. This goes against the principles of TPBP being environmentally friendly and reducing vehicle use. In certain circumstances TPBP will increase vehicle use/mileage!
11. TPBP outlines improvements to the Westridge Road car park. At present this car park is awkward/difficult to enter/exit, the surface poor, and spaces far too tight for modern cars. Any improvements would need to include a reduction in spaces and not insignificant works to the entrance, exit and surface. It is presumed these works would not come from the ‘Active Travel’ pot, and therefore unlikely to be done at the same time as TPBP, leaving a part of the current overall TPBP concept unfinished.
12. Access to the car park behind Farm Foods and Iceland at the western end of Portswood Road, would also have limited access opportunity – drivers are not going to ‘go around’ just to get to a car park. They would go elsewhere and affecting trade on Portswood Road.
13. How would people drop-off donations to charity shops along Portswood Road? Currently we, and others, frequently donate and park outside, run-in drop-off, and on-move. This is the same process for those shopping and seeking to be picked-up when burdened. This would not be possible with the TPBP design and Bus Gate as it stands.
14. Adding yet more cyclists and scooter riders to this area will cause concern. Dedicated lanes for cyclists could be beneficial, subject to pedestrians not having to cross these lanes often (and with shopping as they will not have used their cars as forced to travel by bus) and needing to be aware of cycle speeds.
15. As for scooters, the meeting highlighted major concerns among the attendees – scooters travel at speeds, regularly without lights, with 2+ people on-board, and take little or no regard to correct highway etiquette or the Highway Code. These users are not monitored or challenged by those in authority – either administratively (SCC/scooter operator) or practically (Police/ traffic wardens etc). Portswood could become an unregulated speedway!
16. The ATZ at this time is a ‘red-herring’. Until the TPBP - in whatever form or not at all – is agreed, the requirement(s) for an ATZ cannot be considered/planned. There are many ways to deal with the surrounding roads once a TPBP design is formulated and finalized.

C - Summary/Conclusion

1. Without being disparaging, how many SCC officers working on TPBP live within say 1.5 miles of Portswood and really understand the situation ‘on the ground’? Is this just a hypothetical and ideological engineering exercise without any detailed analysis on what is actually required just to access the ‘Travel Active’ pot?
2. Is TPBP fitting the criteria/need of Portswood, or easy access to the ‘Travel Active’ money pot and becoming a sabre-rattling crusade for SCC and SCC officers? To date, the information provided and responses provided by SCC officers, particularly at the general meeting, does give cause for concern in the lack of true understanding about this area.
3. The current questionnaires are largely irrelevant – they are too vague and do not ask the right questions.

4. The TPBP considerations must surely start with details outlined in B-1, B-3 & B-4.
5. The current TPBP in its current form has many significant problems that will create issues rather than resolve them!
6. As outlined in B-8 above, why would those seeking free-flowing traffic movement want to come through Portswood in any event – it has to be for a specific reason. Be inventive and set-up some limiting measures!
7. In the current TPBP plan has a right-turn been considered at the Portswood Road/Highfield Lane junction for traffic traveling west along Portswood Road
8. Has a one-way option been considered?
9. By creating a ‘no travel zone’ might this in turn create a white elephant? Larger pavements, more tables and chairs outside, free-running cycles and scooters, all making it unattractive/unsafe for those in the older age group. What happens a night - large groups of students/youths able to freely wander around/along The Broadway and along Portswood Road with little need to worry about safety (no vehicles etc). This would make it unattractive for living above commercial premises and roads off Portswood Road. The very nature of Portswood local centre could be destroyed!

We are not objecting to the principle of smartening-up Portswood, and we suspect many others locally would concur, but is this the right scheme? The current TPBP really needs a drastic review/overhaul.

Regards
G & S H

10 November 2022

28. Thought you might be interested to see the attached is an image of the scheme already in place at Cantell School, Violet Road, Southampton SO16 3GJ.

Using it in the ATZ (Brookvale Road, Russell Place and Abbots Way) may be the middle ground to those opposed to modal filters (road blocks), and those who will suffer the impact of increased traffic (most feel speed bumps won't be effective at reducing pollution and traffic volume or increasing pedestrian safety).

29. Hello James

I would like to add the following comments regarding the Portswood Broadway Transforming Cities proposals. I am against the proposal to make part of Portswood Broadway a bus gate thus prohibiting cars from travelling down the full length of the road. I have also completed the questionnaire but found the survey was biased towards agreeing with all proposals. The character limit of 255 was too restricting and has made me also complete this separate response. There was no overall comment box after the final set of questions. The last set of questions was ridiculous. It was a * so I had to reply to all. There was no N/A choice. I could not reply that I did not use an e-scooter or motorbike!!!!

Having attended many of the consultation opportunities I have not been convinced by the arguments for such a radical solution to a problem that I am not sure actually exists. It seems more that it is an idea for spending the Government money.

- I am surprised to learn that if I travel from Westwood Road to Sainsburys via The Broadway it is counted as 'through traffic'. Surely that is a local journey. Have such journeys been calculated as through traffic to prove a need to reduce through traffic?
- If I was forced to make such a car journey because The Broadway was closed to cars, I would drive further, pollute more, waste more fuel and take longer.
- I couldn't do this type of journey by bus because I couldn't carry my shopping home.

The proposed scheme has not highlighted any environmental benefit except bus travel times possibly being 3 minutes quicker.

The opportunities for an enhanced environment in a sterile street has not been exploited. There are no trees in Portswood. Surfaces have been illustrated as red/pink impervious tarmac. This almost puts me off the most. Why would anyone want to spend time in a district centre that looks like the one illustrated.? Were any surveys conducted before the planning process about how people spent time in the district centre.

Even the proposals do not achieve safe joined up cycle routes, the new cycle crossing of Thomas Lewis Way being an example of this. I wonder if that was money well spent?

The overall scheme does not reduce traffic but squeezes it onto other surrounding roads. The three ATZ options put forward simply create bottlenecks elsewhere e.g. on Highfield Lane or Brookvale Road as has been demonstrated by road closures while Brookvale Road has been partly resurfaced this last week.

Local knowledge does not seem to have been sought from the outset but has come into play too late in the planning process.

The fact that Highfield had already been accepted as being part of the city-wide 20mph scheme (Spring 2023) was not considered and it doesn't seem as if the current team was aware of this fact. It should have been considered in the Portswood proposals as part of a Southampton City Council travel plan.

BC

30. Portswood Broadway Project

I found that the questionnaire was very limited in the questions it asked and was also skewed towards getting the desired responses of the author, with insufficient space in the comments boxes to add further thoughts.

Although the term 'wheeling' includes mobility scooters, the questionnaire was non-inclusive in not considering others with mobility problems who are dependent on a vehicle and need disabled parking close to their destination.

As a survey, it surely cannot provide a true and representative result, therefore I wish to add my responses and comments in an email.

- For all the benefits listed, it is still a poor idea to close an important traffic thoroughfare for such a short distance, creating a considerable increase in traffic and pollution with the resulting congestion at junctions generally around this area of the city.
- If the ATZ in the area of Brookvale Road, Abbots Way and Russell Place was also to introduce Bus Gates, the problems will be considerably compounded possibly for hundreds of households.
- Being elderly and with mobility issues and a disabled parking permit, I am unfortunately totally dependent upon my car or others to drive me. To think how many miles I would have to add to an otherwise short journey to access Portswood shops south of the Broadway project would be expensive in terms of fuel and time and frustration. It would be difficult for me to access the library, Boots, and most of the shops included in the closed off area.

Routes that I might have to use should this project go ahead:

Highfield Avenue, The Avenue, Wynn Road/Westwood Road, Brookvale Road
This route in reverse to get home would necessitate attempting to turn right onto the Avenue from Wynn/Westwood and then again turning right down Highfield Avenue – both hazardous

Highfield Lane, St Denys Road, Thomas Lewis Way, manoeuvring junctions to get onto Portswood Road heading north - plus journey in reverse to get home.

J E