

Highfield Residents Association Analysis of SCC Traffic Level Data and Commentary PB phase 2 BJC/HRA

SCC traffic movement data was transferred to a spreadsheet for easier comparison from the four traffic levels maps on the SCC website

(Ref: [Highfield ATZ maps](#))



Portswood Project Phase 2 Consultation Traffic Movement Data and Projections										
Road	April 2023 Datum	No Mitigation			Light Touch ATZ			Road Block ATZ		
		Projected	Variation April 2023	% Var	Projected	Variation April 2023	% Var	Projected	Variation April 2023	% Var
Portswood Road (Sainsburys)	11000	6500	(4500)	-41%	7100	(3900)	-35%	7100	(3900)	-35%
Portswood Broadway Bus-Gate Zone	13800	500	(13300)	-96%	500	(13300)	-96%	500	(13300)	-96%
Portswood Road (Brookvale-Westridge)	14500	3500	(11000)	-76%	3500	(11000)	-76%	3500	(11000)	-76%
Portswood Road (Brookvale-Lodge)	12000	7400	(4600)	-38%	6400	(5600)	-47%	5900	(6100)	-51%
Highfield Lane	10200	9000	(1200)	-12%	8000	(2200)	-22%	7800	(2400)	-24%
Upper Brookvale	3800	5600	1800	47%	4400	600	16%	250	(3550)	-93%
Lower Brookvale	5100	7200	2100	41%	5700	600	12%	4800	(300)	-6%
Abbots Way	1600	3400	1800	113%	2700	1100	69%	92	(1508)	-94%
Russell Place	1600	3400	1800	113%	2700	1100	69%	41	(1559)	-97%
Winn Road	2300	1700	(600)	-26%	1400	(900)	-39%	1900	(400)	-17%
Westwood Road	3500	3300	(200)	-6%	2700	(800)	-23%	2700	(800)	-23%
Thomas Lewis Way (Location not specified)	21000	26000	5000	24%	27500	6500	31%	29000	8000	38%
Total Traffic Movements	100400	77500	(22900)	-23%	72600	(27800)	-28%	63583	(36817)	-37%

Traffic movement has been surveyed in both directions
<https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/tcf/eastleigh-to-southampton-corridor/portswood-project/additional-information-and-assessments/>

ATZ roads in yellow

Commentary on Portswood Project Phase 2 Consultation Traffic Movement Data and Projections (SCC give no commentary)

The traffic movement data was obtained on a weekday over a twenty-four hour period. The data has been transferred to a spreadsheet for easier comparison from the four traffic levels maps on the SCC website (Ref: [Highfield ATZ maps](#))

It is important to note that the figures do not refer to individual vehicles but traffic movements past a survey point. Most vehicles travelling through the area could have been recorded more than once in the figures (for example, a vehicle travelling from the Avenue to Sainsburys appears five times in the data as it passed survey points on Westwood Road, Brookvale Road, Portswood Road, Portswood Broadway and Sainsburys).

The roads in the ATZ are shaded yellow, red text represents a predicted reduction.

Comparing the overall traffic movements between April 2023 and projected movements with a Bus gate installed, there would be between 22,900 and 36,817 fewer traffic movements overall. No information is provided on where these have gone, as increases in the Thomas Lewis Way traffic have been included in the figures.

It is not clear where on Thomas Lewis Way the data was collected. This would have an impact on the relevance of the data to the Portswood scheme.

With a Bus gate in place and with **no mitigation**, traffic movements increase in certain roads of the ATZ and reduce in others.

With **no mitigation**, the variation would be an increase of 20% vehicle movements, not actual vehicle numbers, within the ATZ. In this scenario, no residents would be forced to make any material change in their vehicle travel as there are local ways around the Bus gate.

With **Light Touch** mitigation, the variation is a decrease of 2% in vehicle movements. No residents would be forced to make any material change in their travel by vehicle as there are local ways around the Bus gate.

With **ATZ Road Blocks (Filters)** in Abbots Way and Brookvale Road the variation predict a decrease of 37% in vehicle movements. This would restrict the movement of residents by vehicle splitting the community in two.

The ATZ

The Questionnaire information text concerning the ATZ and all of the questions have been transcribed in a separate document. However it is not until you read the questionnaire text that this additional information is available. There are some important points to note.

Exact text from the questionnaire is in [blue](#).

From the commentary on the Questionnaire the following conflicting statement are made:

[‘and the impact the introduction of an Active Travel Zone \(ATZ\) would have \(if the community wishes to have one – to be decided in community co-design\). ‘](#)

[‘Bus gate + no mitigation - This is not something that would be implemented’](#)

This needs to be clarified by SCC officers.

Further on:

[‘We understand that by installing filters, local journeys will need to find a new way to travel to their destinations around the filters which may increase local journey times for local residents.’](#)

Although it is stated that there will be community input into the ATZ style, only two options have been proposed. There seems to be no possibility of proposing alternative solution including that of not implementing any mitigation measure within the ATZ.

Only two options are given – Light Touch and Road Block (Filters). What consideration has been given to Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) for all residents’ vehicles within the ATZ? Ref: [Example proposed East-Reading ANPRS](#)

It is local residents who will be affected by the Bus gate plans. Journey times, additional fuel costs, and general inconvenience to residents will result.

Filters are road blocks for vehicles but allow bikes, scooters and pedestrians to pass.

[‘This would however result in quieter residential roads which will make walking, wheeling and cycling more pleasant and safe.’](#)

The vehicle movement data (see spreadsheet) shows that only the road block scheme would result in quieter local roads. In this scenario, residents would be restricted in the routes they could take to leave and arrive at home. This may spread Highfield residential traffic

along Burgess Road, Highfield Lane, Grosvenor Road, The Avenue, Lodge Road and possible Outer Avenue cut-through ways where this is possible. Wider impacts have not been assessed.

Local residents are more likely to already walk, cycle or possibly take a bus to Portswood.

Lodge Road end of Portswood Road

Traffic movement projections of the effect of the Bus gate on Lodge Road and the directing of additional traffic along Thomas Lewis Way from south and north is missing. Lodge Road is a single carriageway road with some on street parking, and already carries a heavy east / west flow of vehicles. If more traffic uses Lodge Road, because roads in Highfield are closed, it may be that long traffic queues would result adding to car emissions from waiting traffic.

It is understood that the improvements to the junction of Lodge Road and Portswood Road have already been approved; that it will be made more difficult to turn left into Portswood Road from Lodge Road. If the current left turn filter lane is removed, then traffic trying to go straight on to TLW may be held in long queues backing up traffic at these lights.

Travelling south, the TLW ends in a pinch point into a single traffic lane at Bevois Valley. Vehicle movements are predicted to increase by at least 38% on TLW. What effect will this have on traffic jams at this pinch point?

Several buses use Lodge Road. What effect will an increase (unknown/not predicted) in vehicle movements along Lodge Road have on bus times along Lodge Road?

Highfield Lane

It is understood that there may be plans to allow vehicles to turn right at the Sainsburys' traffic light junction into Highfield Lane. This would increase the projected vehicle numbers on Highfield Lane and change projections in the proposals.

Why has this idea not been included in the Proposals?

A Phased Approach

'We are currently investigating the phased introduction of the bus gate should the proposals move forward. We would also be able to provide temporary additional paving along the Broadway to provide the extra pedestrian space the bus gate would allow us to install.'

The Council's phased approach means that the Bus gate would be installed as the first phase with the (2) ATZ options being trialled in 'phases'.

It seems unlikely that there would be any option to have any phased approach if it did not include the Bus gate (which would not be reversed). For example, the option of beginning with an enforced 20mph scheme all over Highfield would not be possible.

It is believed that the Bus gate will be implemented, even if there is a high level of local objection, in order for the Council to secure the Central Government funding.

Conclusion

There is serious conflict for residents who might agree that Portswood centre could be improved, that alternate, greener forms of transport should be encouraged or that the air could be cleaner at the cost of their locality being subjected to restrictions in vehicle movement which affect them personally and splits the community in two.

It is believed that residents local to Portswood centre already choose to walk or cycle when visiting and leave their car at home. However there is a high proportion of elderly people living in Highfield who need their car when doing a supermarket shop. For them walking, wheeling and cycling are not options. Even travel by bus is not a realistic option as they may need their car for heavy bags. The Bus gate splits the two major supermarkets, Sainsburys and Waitrose, and should the road block ATZ be implemented, residents would have to use a long detour to reach the store on 'the other side'.

Key Questions:

- What is the main objective of the Scheme?
- Is the Bus gate central to the Council securing the Central Government funding?
- Could other options for the ATZ be genuinely considered?
- Why is there no data on impact on bus times or mention of the Uni-link bus service?
- What is the likely impact on Lodge Road / Bevois Valley end of Portswood Road?
- Is the opening of the right turn at the Portswood /Highfield Lane (Sainsburys') traffic light junction planned?
- What would it be like to live in a Highfield split community?

Appendix

SCC TEXT Taken from the Questionnaire which contains additional information

Impact on Local Roads

As part of Phase 1 of consultation in November 2022 and at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting in February 2023, the council was asked to provide updated traffic counts and modelling data for the 2nd phase.

In April 2023, council officers commissioned additional traffic counts by setting up sensors across the Portswood area.

Officers then commissioned an assessment of traffic movements, to record existing flows along with the predicted impact of the installation of a bus gate at Portswood Broadway and the impact the introduction of an Active Travel Zone (ATZ) would have (if the community wishes to have one – to be decided in community co-design).

ATZ Traffic modelling: vehicles per 24 hours (both directions)

Existing Levels, April 2023: This shows the existing levels of traffic flowing through the area on a normal weekday in April (figures are number of vehicles per day in a 24 hour period on the road).

Bus gate + no mitigation: This shows the impact on traffic flows along the Broadway and local roads should a bus gate be installed with no mitigation measures included, with the majority of traffic diverted to A335 Thomas Lewis Way. This is not something that would be implemented and is purely for demonstration purposes.

Bus gate + Light-touch ATZ: This shows the impact on traffic flows should a bus gate be installed with a light touch ATZ.

A light-touch ATZ for Highfield would include new pedestrian crossings, speed cushions, priority buildouts to deter people from driving through residential streets, with the majority of traffic directed to A335 Thomas Lewis Way. This would help reduce overspill from the proposed bus gate and in most cases reduce traffic from existing levels.

This would lead to increased traffic levels on some local streets, but a significant reduction of traffic in the area as a whole. The final mix of interventions to deter people driving through residential streets would be based on community co-design.

Bus gate + ATZ with Traffic Filter on Russell Place and Brookvale Road: This shows the impact on traffic flows should a bus gate be installed with an ATZ, which would include a traffic filter on Russell Place and on Brookvale Road.

Traffic filters prevent motorised vehicles from passing through that area, without preventing people who walk and cycle. The predicted modelling shows that with the introduction of the ATZ and the traffic filters in these locations the roads around this area would be preserved for local residents and deliveries access only and prevent all through traffic.

Similar arrangements already exist in Outer Avenue (filters at Alma Avenue and at Avenue Road) and have just been introduced in St Denys (Kent Road, North Road and the existing filter at Horseshoe Bridge).

We understand that by installing filters, local journeys will need to find a new way to travel to their destinations around the filters which may increase local journey times for local residents. This would however result in quieter residential roads which will make walking, wheeling and cycling more pleasant and safe.

Should an ATZ be implemented in the Highfield area, the council would further engage with the community to conduct co-design workshops in order to make sure that this scheme is designed to best protect and serve the community. No decision will be made on the style of Active Travel Zone (either light touch or with traffic filters) without community input into the process.

The workshops and implementation of the measures that are designed with the community would take place in Winter 2023 ahead of any works on Portswood Broadway.

Impact on Portswood Broadway

The result of this assessment can be seen in the figures above. The updated survey has shown around 13,000 vehicles passing through the Broadway each day, with approximately 70% travelling through without stopping. The introduction of a bus gate between Westridge Road and Highfield Lane would prevent this traffic from passing through the area, with up to 8,000 predicted to shift onto A335 Thomas Lewis Way. The remaining traffic would choose the Avenue or shift to easier modes of travel such as public transport.

Assessments show that A335 Thomas Lewis Way can take the additional traffic as a result of the improvements the council has implemented along this route to remove pinch points, improve signals and provide additional turning lanes.

For further information on this please see the section related to Thomas Lewis Way Improvements.

Please note: This assessment is a worst-case scenario and does not take into account any overall shift towards more sustainable options such as people choosing to walk or take a bus to replace a car trip, which is common to see with proposals such as this.

Ref:

<https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/tcf/eastleigh-to-southampton-corridor/portswood-project/additional-information-and-assessments/>