

Dear Environment, Transport & Sustainability committee

TRO-8a-2021 Surrenden Road

I am writing in support of the proposed Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), but also in support of a resident proposal regarding the crossovers found on the north side (and two on the side south) of Surrenden Road in Patcham Ward (see Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: the north side of Surrenden Road in Patcham Ward

As can be seen from Fig 2 below, Surrenden Road in Patcham is very narrow, and due to parked cars on the south side of the road, essentially a single-file road. This results in frequent traffic jams, especially when buses use the road, hence the urgent need for the CPZ.

It can also be noted that there are substantial crossovers on the north side of Surrenden Road (and two on the south side), a feature special to this section of road, from Ditchling Road to Braybon Avenue, which allows residents to park their cars off-road, in front of their properties, significantly reducing the need for on-road parking.

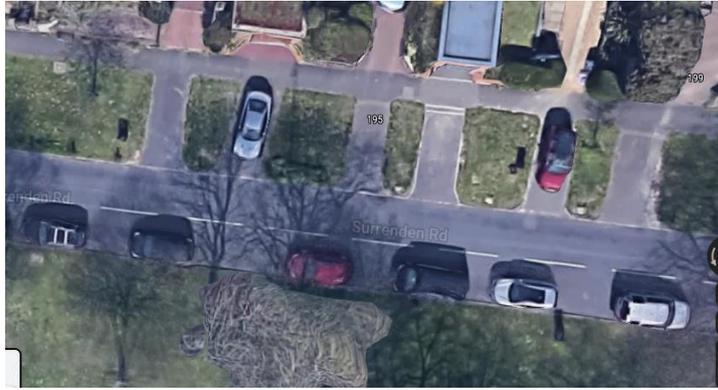


Fig. 2. Surrenden Road – essentially a single lane road

It is this special feature of the road which residents wish to maintain after the implementation of the Controlled Parking Zone. If they could not continue to do so, they would be required to park on other streets in Patcham and Withdean Wards, increasing the difficulty of parking in those areas, which, needless to say, already have significant parking issues.

One proposal is that these crossovers be protected by Access Protection Markings (white lines). Practice varies between individual Councils and within Brighton regarding crossovers. Crossovers elsewhere in the city are indicatively protected with a white line. Around Hove station, there are white lines instead of double yellow lines over dropped kerbs within a parking zone (see Fig. 3).



Fig. 3: white lines near Hove Station in a Controlled Parking Zone

It is my feeling that residents' concerns should very much be taken into consideration a) because the Controlled Parking Zone is to assist safe parking, not to remove perfectly safe parking unnecessarily, and b) the Zone will only properly work with resident cooperation.

There is also a similar precedence for this request, as outlined below in a report from the London Borough of Bromley (Report No. ELS06272 agenda item 5), which suggested an exemption for parking on vehicle crossovers taking into account the diversity of the highway network:

- 3.19 If an exemption for parking on vehicle crossovers were to apply, the vehicle must be parked in such a manner that it created no hazard to pedestrians or other road users, did not obstruct sight lines at junctions, and did not obstruct access or cause obstruction to the free flow of traffic. The criteria for such an exemption would relate to road safety considerations and the position of a clearly defined route for pedestrians and the clear access of the crossover to the edge of carriageway
- 3.20 Due to the diversity of the design of the borough's highway network, it would not be possible to apply an exemption of all crossovers as this would clearly not be practicable. Any exemption could only apply where there is a clearly defined footway for pedestrians and a long crossover area. It is envisaged that this would affect only a small number of streets in the borough, predominately in areas with pavements combined with wide grassed amenity and/or highway verges either side of the pavement. Members may wish to consider an exemption for such streets permitting parking on a vehicle crossover on the frontage owner's side of a clearly defined pavement (e.g. between the clearly defined pavement and the boundary of the property).

As can be seen in Fig. 2 above, vehicles parked on the crossovers in Surrenden Road do not obstruct pedestrians using the clearly defined footway, as mentioned in paragraph 3.20 above, nor obstruct sight lines for vehicles, as mentioned in 3.19.

It must be remembered that the existing driveways and garages for a number of properties on both sides of the road are completely impractical for the residents' needs, because they are insufficiently wide and/or too steep for the driver and passengers to embark and disembark from a medium-sized modern family car. The reason the crossovers are in current use at a number of these properties is because the existing driveway/garage is totally impractical for families with children and adults needing assistance who cannot embark/disembark and/or be "dropped off" and left at the property alone.

CPZs are usually designed to allow residents to have more chance of parking closer to their homes, but if crossover parking on this road were removed it would have the *opposite* effect. As well as impacting parking in neighbouring roads there will be many more resident cars parked on Surrenden Road itself, particularly in sections where, at the moment, on street parking is relatively light.

Road safety is a key concern. Because the top of Surrenden Road is essentially single-file because of parked cars, the heated arguments that can develop and that I have witnessed due to excess visitor parking, and because of the cars trying to navigate each other in a tight space, there is significant hazard to parked cars and pedestrians. This would only be exacerbated if cars currently parked on crossovers could no longer do so, and were forced to park on the road.

The considerable number of short term visitors who are currently causing residents parking problems on Ditchling Road and in Surrenden Road will still be causing these problems during the unrestricted hours of the scheme (i.e. most of the time), but within a more restricted area. Short term visitors include Hollingbury park users, dog walkers, cyclists and hikers who frequently park their cars and use the shared walking/cycle path to access Stanmer woods, Hollingbury woods, Hollingbury fort, visitors to Varndean school, Varndean college and Fiveways, and park and ride visitors from outside the city. Residents who are unable to use their driveways and garages as outlined above are extremely concerned that they will have nowhere to park except outside their own CPZ area.

In short, I support the residents of Surrenden Road in continuing their practice of parking on crossovers, and that this should be protected, because a) they have a parking precedence which should be respected b) it would help the parking situation across two wards c) it would not hinder pedestrian access d) it would increase safety by reducing the amount of on-road parking e) the issue has been identified by other councils as an acceptable solution f) it would not affect the overall purpose of the Controlled Parking Zone in reducing on-road parking.

Because it is such a unique situation, how parking on crossovers would be implemented requires thought. Residents propose that either these crossovers be protected from non-resident obstruction either a) with Access Protection Markings (white lines) or b) with double yellow lines with specific exemption to allow parking on tarmac crossovers of sufficient (specified) dimensions. Unlike other areas of the city, the extremely wide grass verges on this section of road are already protected from parking initiated by residents and facilitated by the council in previous years.

Residents would also be very grateful if officers could consult with them and utilise their local knowledge regarding where passing places might be situated most effectively to improve traffic flow.

It must be remembered also that the significant cost of these large crossovers has been borne by the residents themselves, not by the council, and many residents (not the council) have paid to improve and maintain these crossovers in recent years.

Residents would like to make it clear that they do not wish to avoid paying for resident permits by parking on their crossovers; indeed it might be helpful to utilise the existing resident permit system to ensure that the crossovers are used appropriately.

My key request at this stage is recognition that Surrenden Road is a very long, diverse highway, requires bespoke solutions for different areas, and that the crossovers in Patcham Ward provide an opportunity to reduce on-street parking on surrounding streets while being able to introduce a CPZ which most residents in this stretch of Surrenden Road are in favour of.

I have written in full support of the CPZ, which is clearly needed to reduce congestion, but would also like the issue of parking on crossovers investigated, urgently, to help reduce on-road parking, and to continue to allow residents to park safely without having to cross this busy road to access their properties.

I trust that the committee will give due consideration to this proposal.

Yours faithfully

Cllr Alistair McNair

