

ITEMS REFERRED FROM FULL COUNCIL (23 October 2014)

Deputations received:

- (i) **Deputation concerning Hollingbury Road Closure-(Spokesperson) – Ms. R. Entwistle**

Application for permanent closure of the junction between Hollingbury Road and Upper Hollingdean Road to non-essential motorised through traffic

In the middle of August this year the junction between Hollingbury Road and Upper Hollingdean Road was closed for essential sewage works for a period of 4 weeks. This closure had a substantial positive effect on us, the residents of Hollingbury Rd. Normally Hollingbury Rd carries a lot of through traffic and the absence of this meant that the street became an area of focus for the community. In that, people began socialising, meeting new neighbours, hanging out in the street and parents allowing their children to play in the street.

A small group of us got together and agreed this change had brought about a positive experience for the residents and after carrying out a more extensive survey of the street (the results of which are included with this deputation) we decided to apply to the council for the permanent closure of Hollingbury Road to non-essential through traffic. We do not doubt that this will have displacement effects which will impact negatively on residents living on adjacent streets. However, in the main, we believe that most of these can be mitigated by the implementation of traffic calming measures. We believe this proposal aligns well with Brighton & Hove council's current transport document in terms of contributing to better safety and health and improving quality of life. There already exists a precedent for closure as set by a nearby road, Hollingbury Park Avenue.

Before I conclude I would like to mention that on a few recent occasions, a neighbour went to observe what the traffic flow was like on Hollingbury Road compared to Ditchling Road. After several minutes observation on both of these roads, it was found that whilst Hollingbury Road was backed up along the street with through traffic, Ditchling Road was fairly empty of cars.

In view of the evidence we have presented, the result of the street survey, and of an ongoing petition with 117 signatures to date that we submit here with this deputation, we ask the council to explore with us the possibilities of a permanent closure of Hollingbury Road to non-essential through traffic.

Supported by:
John Anderson
Tim Clark
Paco Torres
Ian Elwick

Note: The Deputation was supplemented with a petition signed by 117 people that read as follows:

“We, the undersigned, are interested in applying for a permanent closure of Hollingbury Road to non-essential though traffic.”

Negative outcomes

1. Displacement effects. There are likely to be several displacement effects of closing Hollingbury Road, mainly due to increased traffic flow in neighbouring streets. However, Ditchling Road, which is a main road, and Roedale Road are both fairly wide streets where the impact is likely to be relatively small.
2. Increased accident risks on neighbouring streets. It is likely that one effect of traffic flow displacement will be to increase accident risks on other streets. However, most of the increased traffic flow is likely to be on Ditchling Road rather than any of the residential side streets. Given the provision of controlled crossing sites on the main streets, the increase in accident risk might be quite minor.
3. Provision for controlled access maybe costly to implement. There would need to be a provision at the junction onto Upper Hollingdean Road to give access to essential motor vehicles (e.g. police/fire/ambulance & bin lorries). However, although we did not witness this, it appears that the bins were effectively collected without access through the lower end of the street.
4. Hollingbury Road residents will be forced onto alternative routes. This may well be considered a negative aspect of closure.

Positive Outcomes

1. Elimination of a rat-run. Much of the traffic that uses Hollingbury Road does so to short cut the route between Fiveways and Upper Hollingdean Road. Forcing this traffic onto the wider Ditchling Road would be safer and unlikely to impact negatively on journey times and fuel usage.
2. General reduction in accident risk. Although the street has recently been provided with pedestrian crossing build-outs, the volume of motor traffic means that this is still not an especially safe road to cross. Vehicles still tend to accelerate above the 20mph limit between speed ramps and the crossing at the junction with Upper Hollingdean Road which receives a high volume of pedestrian traffic associated with the school run can be quite tricky to navigate when traffic is queuing on the downhill side. Closure of street will substantially reduce the volume and speed of traffic using the road.
3. Elimination of HGV through traffic. Although large HGVs are officially barred from using Hollingbury Road it is not that uncommon for these to make use of this route and struggle to negotiate the turn at the bottom of the hill safely.
4. Decreased pollution. Elimination of through motor traffic will decrease pollution on the street. It is not that uncommon for motor vehicles to queue for fairly long periods on the downhill side of Hollingbury Road with their engines running.
5. Safe pedestrian route connecting to the Dip. Hollingbury Road provides an important pedestrian route used extensively during the school run. For younger children, parental supervision is generally necessary to cross Hollingbury Road. However, closure of the road to through-traffic would provide a much safer pedestrian route linking Hollingbury Place to the pelican crossing at the junction of Upper Hollingdean Road and Ditchling Road. This would encourage more walking, rather than driving to school.
6. Improved social amenity. Within hours of the street being closed it was apparent that a quite substantial change in the atmosphere on the road had occurred. The most obvious effect was one of increased social activity between neighbours, particularly children. Permanent closure of the street would maintain this change making the road a focal community space.

7. Improved amenity for maisonettes and upper floor flats. Many houses on Hollingbury Road are divided into separate dwellings, commonly a maisonette and garden flat. The upper dwellings rarely have any access to an outside space. Closure of the street makes the road area much more attractive as a recreational space and this is likely to have a substantial positive impact on these residents.

Survey of Hollingbury Road residents (number of participants = 62)

1) I would like Hollingbury Road closed permanently to non-essential through traffic

Strongly disagree	Strongly agree			
0%	0%	0%	17.74%	82.26%

2) Hollingbury Road is used as a rat run

Strongly disagree	Strongly agree			
1.61%	0%	3.23%	17.74%	

3) Cars travelling on Hollingbury Road invariably speed even though there are speed bumps

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
0%	1.61%	3.23%	22.58%	
72.58%				

4) Even though HGV's are not supposed to use Hollingbury Road, we still have a high volume of HGV's that do come down from the five-ways junction

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
0%	1.61%	1.61%	30.65%	66.13%

5) Elimination of through motor traffic will decrease pollution on the street

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
0%	0%	4.84%	14.52%	
80.64%				

6) The crossing at the Hollingbury Road/ Upper Hollingdean Road site is dangerous with the amount of traffic that uses this road as a cut through (particularly during the school run)

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
0%	0%	0%	19.35%	80.65%

7) Closure of Hollingbury Road will improve social amenity for all residents of the street

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
0%	0%	0%	22.58%	77.42%

8) Closure of Hollingbury Road will create a safer cycling route (connecting Ditchling Road to Upper Hollingdean Road)

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
0%	1.61%	3.23%	16.13%	79.03%

9) Closure of Hollingbury Road will create a safer pedestrian route connecting to the dip (particularly during the school run)

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
0%	0%	1.61%	22.58%	75.81%
56				