



Kingsmead Square Reclaiming and pedestrianising the space

Public Engagement

September 2019

Engagement report

Kingsmead Square – Reclaiming and pedestrianising the space

Public engagement September 2019

The Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NES) team delivering the project comprises representatives from the following departments:
Environment and Design Practice (E&DP)
Business & Skills
Highways

Local councillors Sue Craig and Andy Furse have relayed feedback from members of the public and businesses to the project team. This feedback is recorded in the engagement reports.

Engagement report

Engagement with Kingsmead Square businesses and members of the public has been ongoing since the inception of the project in 2018. The previous public engagement event took place as part of the Forest of Imagination in September 2018.

During Summer 2019 B&NES engaged with businesses on and around Kingsmead Square regarding design development towards the proposed vehicle access restriction. Following this engagement event and further development of the project based on this feedback, a public engagement process was undertaken.

Public engagement events were undertaken on Kingsmead Square on Monday 23rd September 16:00-18:00 and Tuesday 24th September 12:00-14:00. Two parklets were in place on Avon Street and New Street during the two days to draw attention to the proposals and start the process of reimagining how the space could work.

The events were advertised in various news outlets online, in addition to the front page of the Bath Chronicle. The online press is included in Appendix 3 of this report. These articles prompted a few responses from the public who got directly in touch with the project team, rather than to attend the events.

At the events, boards were presented which detailed progress since the last engagement event along with design proposals for short term and long term interventions on the Square. These boards can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

Although the project team had open conversations with members of the public about the Square, the specific questions to prompt discussion were:

Would you like to see the space less dominated by vehicles?
What would you like to see in the space if vehicles were restricted?

This report details all feedback collected during the period of September-October 2019, including the two events on the Square and other contact with the project

team and local councillors. The feedback will be used to inform further design development.

Feedback

More than 50 members of the public engaged throughout the two events and direct contact with the project team and local councillors throughout September and October 2019.

The feedback received during this time was overwhelmingly positive about the proposal to restrict vehicular access. A number of suggestions in terms of detail and project delivery were received, which can be considered through the ongoing design process, however none of these were against the principle of the restriction.

Specific recorded comments are detailed in Appendix 2 of this report, however the following summarises the feedback under relevant headings.

The proposed vehicle access restriction

There was overwhelming support for the proposed vehicle access restriction and making the square a more people-focussed space, less dominated by vehicles.

Bath city centre

A substantial number of event attendees stated that they not only supported the Kingsmead Square scheme, they wished to see car-free spaces be delivered throughout the city. Milsom Street and Westgate Street/Cheap Street to Upper Borough Walls were specifically noted as places that should be restricted to vehicles.

Blue badge parking

Around 5 respondents specifically raised a concern around blue badge parking and that although the idea of creating a people-focussed public space is a positive one, many people use the Square for blue badge parking and this must be accommodated elsewhere. It was noted that the access restriction could make the space more accommodating and inclusive for all users by reclaiming 1,500sqm of space for pedestrians and cyclists. However, the requirement for accessible parking nearby will be considered in detail during the detailed design and delivery process. One member of the public requested that directions are given to alternate provision, allowing previous users of the Square to find other blue badge parking easily.

During detailed design the project team will assess the current usage of the Square for blue badge parking and where this can be reallocated.

Residents' parking

Some local residents have raised concerns that overnight parking bays on Avon Street will be lost until midnight when the vehicle access restriction is in place. The project team will explore opportunities for alternative provision as the project moves towards delivery.

Cycling provision

Requests for more cycle storage were made, specifically secure cycle storage where possible. It was noted that the design of the parklets could include cycle storage which would create additional provision on New Street and Avon Street.

Concerns were raised regarding how cyclists and pedestrians would share the space. Given the strategic nature of the cycle route through the Square, this route will be retained and it is considered that by reclaiming the whole roadway for pedestrians and cyclists, conflicts may be avoided due to sufficient width. It is also likely that cyclists will move through the space in a different way if pedestrians are in the carriageway. Gateway infrastructure, be that a gate or bollards, will allow cyclists through easily whilst also alerting users of the Square that the nature of the space is changing.

The crossing into six dials at the Monmouth Street/Westgate Street junction was flagged as a concern as cyclists may enter Kingsmead Square at some speed.

Parklets

The principle of the parklets was well received and throughout the Tuesday event (with fair weather over lunchtime) they were used consistently. Specific requests that could be incorporated into the final parklet design were: fully accessible furniture, colour and materiality better suited to Bath, incorporated planting, cycling storage.

Two respondents noted that it wasn't clear whether the parklet on New Street belonged to Mission Burrito and thus for use by customers only or whether it was available to use by the public. This could be due to a number of factors including: the colour of the parklets and business branding, the position in the loading bay, the style of parklet, and that they are a new concept to Bath. This project team can attempt to resolve this through the design process, in addition to considering labelling them as 'open to the public'.

Animation

The Festive Food Market in the Square was referenced a number of times as the type of animation that the respondents would like to see in the space at other times of the year. Many people commented that by reclaiming the space from vehicles, more activity and events can be encouraged.

Long term intervention

The experimental vehicle access restriction is intended to reimagine the space to allow B&NES to understand how to best deliver a long term strategic investment in the public realm. Some respondents gave suggestions which should be considered as part of this longer term aspiration, should the experimental restriction be considered a success and made permanent. Some would like to see resurfacing and newer furniture in the Square, including two respondents who specified that any new furniture should be fully inclusive and accessible.

Other comments to note

- Emergency access should be full considered and facilitated.
- Table tennis could be a fun way to activate the space.

Next steps

The council will now apply to the Secretary of State for Transport for permission to carry out the proposed vehicle restriction. If this application is successful and the final plans are agreed by the council's cabinet members and local stakeholders, the pedestrianisation could be put in place during Spring 2020.

Final plans will consider in detail the specific suggestions received about the proposals, including provision of blue badge parking and cycle storage.

The primary contact for further feedback on the proposals is

Wendy Maden

Design Project Officer

Environment & Design Practice

Economy & Growth

Bath & North East Somerset Council

01225 477574

Email: wendy_maden@bathnes.gov.uk

Images of the engagement boards presented at the event are included as Appendix 1.

KINGSMEAD SQUARE VEHICLE ACCESS RESTRICTION

PUBLIC CONSULTATION SEPTEMBER 2019



Bath & North East
Somerset Council

PROJECT OVERVIEW & UPDATE

- **Proposed vehicle access restriction** during the hours of **11:00 and 24:00** with traffic reversed to enter from New Street
- Create a cleaner space with **better air quality** and greater **opportunity for cafe culture** on the Square
- **1,500m2 of roadspace reclaimed** to the public realm
- **Cycle and attending emergency services access** to be retained
- Manually operated infrastructure at gateways to prevent access during these hours, such as gates or bollards
- The **vehicle access restriction trial** would take place in 2020 for **12-18 months**, to test the idea prior to a final decision to make it permanent
- The **project aims** are to; create a **destination square**, focus on **pedestrians & cyclists**, improve **air quality**, support emerging **cafe culture** & provide **space for civic life**



EXPERIMENTAL VEHICLE ACCESS RESTRICTION 2020-2021



VEHICLE ACCESS RESTRICTION

LONG TERM ASPIRATION 2021 ONWARDS



TIMELINE SO FAR



NEXT STEPS



KINGSMEAD SQUARE VEHICLE ACCESS RESTRICTION

PUBLIC CONSULTATION SEPTEMBER 2019

SHORT TERM INTERVENTIONS 2020-2021



Bath & North East
Somerset Council



BEFORE



AFTER



1 GATEWAY



2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARKLETS



3 INCREASED TABLES AND CHAIRS



4 OUTDOOR GYM



5 CYCLE PARKING



Macgregor · Smith
Landscape Architecture

Appendix 2 – Event responses

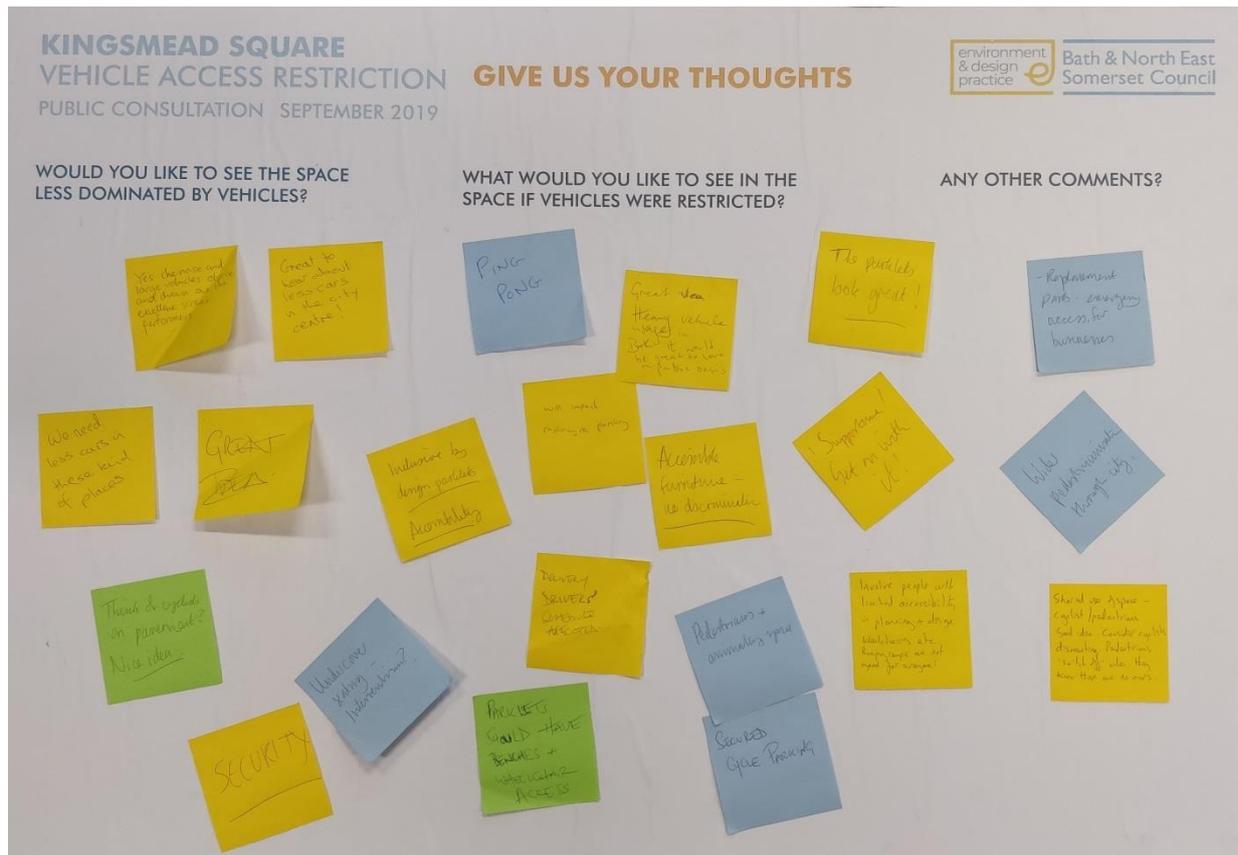
Monday 23rd September 16:00-18:00

18 respondents

Tuesday 24th September 12:00-14:00

Circa 32 respondents

Direct email and verbal communication to the project team and local councillors
5 respondents



'Car-free is the way we have to go across the city'

'It should be a more people-focussed space'

'Also close Milsom Street!' Also restrict access by Theatre Royal

'A nice idea but blue badge parking must be accommodated elsewhere'

'Activity in the space to recreate the feeling of the Festive Food Market'

'The parklets are really nice!'

'Wonderful project!'

'From a tourist's perspective, I'd much prefer less cars'

'Make parklets fully accessible and all furniture inclusive'

'Great idea – there's heavy vehicle use in Bath so it could be nice to have an oasis'

'Fully supportive - just get on with it!'

'There should be wider pedestrianisation of the city'

'More activity in the space would be nice'

'Secure cycle parking would be a great addition'

'Emergency access should be protected'

'Strongly support pedestrianisation'

'The parklets are great, I love the plants'

'Emergency access must be fully considered and resolved'

'Will there be directions to provision of other disabled bays?'

'I'd like to see more seating and resurfacing of the square'

Concerns around crossing on Monmouth Street and Westgate Street

The space around Sainsburys Local is more problematic

The public realm design for Saw Close has been disappointing, it is not imaginative enough

Change is welcome

Enthusiastic and supportive

'As regular users of Kingsmead Square it would be good to have some disabled parking either at the new entrance or exit of Kingsmead Square in the proposals. At present, many cars use the area of New Street where the two laybys are'

Home / News Headlines / Politics

“Parklets” to be demonstrated as part of Kingsmead Square consultation

THURSDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2019

BATH ECHO NEWS TEAM

BUSINESS, COMMUNITY, POLITICS



A plan to make Bath’s popular Kingsmead Square car-free every day is being consulted on with the public by Bath and North East Somerset Council.



A concept design for New Street | Image © Macgregor Smith

The council’s proposals will see vehicles restricted from accessing Kingsmead Square daily during the hours of 11am to midnight to encourage a café culture, walking and cycling and reduce air pollution.

The concept of reclaiming parking spaces will be demonstrated on 23rd and 24th September when mini parks the size of a single car parking space, known as parklets, will be temporarily installed in New Street and Avon Street to provide seating and planting.

Council officers will be at the parklets to discuss the access restriction proposals along with associated proposals to animate the space and get feedback from the public on Monday 23rd September from 4-6pm and on Tuesday 24th September from 12-2pm.

The vehicle restriction is proposed to begin in April 2020 for up to 18 months.

Public and business consultation undertaken between September 2018 and January 2019 has informed the proposals.

Businesses in the Kingsmead Square area were re-consulted in July 2019 and their requirements continue to contribute to the final plans.

Councillor Joanna Wright, Cabinet Member for Transport Services, said: "The business consultation we carried out in July explored in detail plans for new loading bays, possible improvements to commercial recycling and layout of outdoor tables and chairs to enhance the city's café culture.

"Many businesses showed real enthusiasm for the access restriction and associated improvements to the square.

"This is not only about a café culture though, more importantly it is another step towards encouraging people out of their cars, improving air quality and making the city a cleaner and greener place to be.

"We now want to hear the public's views on our plans to create an important car-free space in our city."

Emma Savage, co-owner at Grace & Ted in Kingsmead Square, said: "We've been supportive of these proposals since the beginning. Not only will it create a more pleasant and useable space for all, it will help to make the area safer for pedestrians.

"Kingsmead Square is a bustling and thriving part of the city, full of brilliant businesses who want to continue to improve the area. This scheme will only serve to make our community even better."

The parklets are manufactured by Vestre, a highly sustainable company who use 100% renewable energy sources for manufacture and have a carbon-neutral factory, as well as using environmentally-certified Scandinavian timber.

The parklets will also be in place on Milsom Street over the weekend of 21st and 22nd September as part of the Love Milsom Street event, which will remove cars from the street.

When you can have your say on proposal to ban vehicles from Kingsmead Square

The scheme was initially proposed in 2018

SHARE 72 SHARES

COMMENTS

By **Max Baker** Trainee Digital Reporter
06:00, 10 SEP 2019 | **UPDATED** 09:18, 10 SEP 2019

Enter your **postcode** for local news and info

Enter your postcode

Go

In YourArea



Kingsmead Square could be vehicle free during the day under a new proposal

Sign up to FREE daily email alerts from [Somersetlive - Bath Live](#)

Enter your email

Subscribe

We will use your email address only for sending you newsletters. Please see our [Privacy Notice](#) for details of your data protection rights

Residents' views are being sought on the proposed banning of vehicles from Kingsmead Square in Bath.

At the end of 2018, Bath and North East Somerset Council put forward a proposal to ban vehicles from the square between the hours of 11 am and midnight.

ADVERTISEMENT

yourparkingsp

Book parking in advance save up to 7

Pre-book now

MOST READ

1



'I just sit and cry' - Grandmother's 'horrendous' Christmas stay at Somerset ho

2

Why strai 'dots of li

Since then, public consultations have been run, along with a business survey.

SHARE

Further consultation is planned and residents are being invited to have their say on the scheme again.

Council officials will be at Kingsmead Square as part of the Therapeuticity Festival between September 23-24 to chat through the proposals with residents and local business owners.

The festival is a week long event between September 20-27 aimed at making the city more people and nature friendly.

S READ MORE

Today's Top Stories

			
'Worst Christmas ever' at restaurant	Body found in Somerset river	Children rescued from car in floods	Celebs who turned down Christmas honours

The proposal

BANES council says the banning of vehicles at Kingsmead Square would increase opportunities for café culture and outdoor tables and chairs.

The council's website states: "Kingsmead Square is an important gathering space and arrival route to the west of the city centre.

"Its potential as a vibrant city space is yet to be realised. With a view to rebalancing the city centre in favour of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, Bath and North East Somerset Council is considering a vehicle access restriction in Kingsmead Square.

"The council's highways and design specialists proposed a vehicle restriction is introduced every day, between the hours of 11am and midnight.

"The road would be closed through use of locked bollards (emergency services would have access). Outside of these hours vehicles would be allowed as usual, enabling access to the flats, shops and cafes for essential loading, servicing and refuse collection.

"It would reclaim 1,500 square metres of road space and improve the atmosphere and environment, giving priority back to pedestrians.

"Subject to community support, funding is available to implement a vehicle access restriction trial (known as an 'experimental traffic regulation order'), during 2019-21.

"The trial would last 6 to 12 months, and would allow this proposal to be tested and adjusted before a final decision is made on whether to make it permanent. Once permanent, further improvements to the square will be possible."

What have people said already?

During informal consultations in September and December 2018, the council spoke to around 200 people, several of whom were residents, about the proposal.

According to the BANES Council, the points raised included:

- The majority of people felt it was a good idea, with many people commenting that Kingsmead Square was one of their favourite spaces in the city
- Others mentioned that a pedestrianisation programme should go further and include additional streets like Westgate Street and Saw Close
- One Kingsmead Square resident expressed concern about increased loading pressure on Monmouth Street
- Four others mentioned that they had safety concerns about crossing Monmouth Street as vehicles, including buses, do not slow down through this shared space
- One tour guide based in Bath said that the removal of coach park toilets and moving coaches to Odd Down will mean people will stop visiting Bath
- Five people mentioned the need for secure cycle parking and one suggested an electric bike charging point for Kingsmead Square
- Two people expressed concern for the loss of parking, particularly blue badge parking on areas with double yellow lines

ITV REPORT

11 September 2019 at 1:39pm

Council proposes banning vehicles from Bath's Kingsmead Square



An artists impression of a car-free Kingsmead Square Credit: Bath and North East Somerset Council

Bath and North East Somerset Council has proposed plans to make the busy Kingsmead Square area in Bath car-free during the day.

The public will be consulted on the plans, which involve closing Kingsmead Square to all vehicles between 11am and midnight each day.

The council is hopeful that pedestrianising the area will develop a 'café culture', as well as reducing air pollution levels by encouraging more people to walk and cycle.

A series of consultations have already taken place between September 2018 and January 2019, helping the council to develop the plans. Businesses in the Kingsmead Square area were also re-consulted in July.

In a show of how parking spaces can be 'reclaimed', the council will be taking over spots in New Street and Avon to create temporary mini-parks known as 'parklets'.

The parklets will be open on the 23 and 24 of September, and will have seating and greenery installed.



The council say pedestrianising the Kingsmead Square area will help lower pollution levels in the city Credit: ITV News

“*The business consultation we carried out in July explored in detail plans for new loading bays, possible improvements to commercial recycling and layout of outdoor tables and chairs to enhance the city's café culture. Many businesses showed real enthusiasm for the access restriction and associated improvements to the square.*

This is not only about a café culture though, more importantly it is another step towards encouraging people out of their cars, improving air quality and making the city a cleaner and greener place to be. We now want to hear the public's views on our plans to create an important car-free space in our city.

– COUNCILLOR JOANNA WRIGHT, CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT SERVICES

Council officers will be at the parklets to discuss the proposals on banning vehicles in the square and get public feedback on Monday 23 September from 4-6pm and on Tuesday 24 September from 12-2pm.

The vehicle restriction is proposed to begin in April 2020 for up to 18 months.

Last updated Wed 11 Sep 2019