



The Bear Flat Association

for those living and working in the Bear Flat neighbourhood of the city of Bath

Liveable Neighbourhoods Consultation Response

1 Aims

Bear Flat Association supports the aims of the Council on Liveable Neighbourhoods. It is important, however, that measures such as low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) are not used in isolation. They should be part - but only a part - of the Council's armoury in tackling excessive traffic and promoting active travel. We support steps to reduce traffic in Bath such as through better use of park and ride, the CAZ and restrictions on parking in and around the city centre. Such steps must be taken *at the same time as* LTNs or the effects of displaced traffic will be detrimental, inhibiting public acceptance.

2 Bear Flat

In the case of Bear Flat we have the busy A367 (Wellsway and Wells Road) providing access to Bath city centre from the south. Except for Spring 2020, when the impact of covid-19 was first felt and many people stayed at home, the A367 is a source of traffic congestion, noise, air pollution and hazard to pedestrians. Bear Flat Local Centre, designated as such in the current Bath Local Plan is an important local community asset. But it straddles the A367. This road is also lined with many residential properties. More traffic on Wells Road and Wellsway would undermine air quality, cause additional noise and a deterioration of the environment in the local centre. Therefore, the impact of displaced traffic onto such a road needs to be carefully assessed when an LTN is proposed and monitored on implementation.

In fact, it is unclear how "liveable neighbourhoods" might apply to areas like Bear Flat with a major road through its heart. Clearer guidance on this would be welcome. We aspire to be a liveable neighbourhood but not if it means a deterioration for our local 'high street'.

The public realm on Bear Flat (e.g. pavement widths, pedestrian crossing facilities and green infrastructure) should be improved so that pedestrians have a safe and attractive experience. People are walking not only to and from the shops, but also in and out of the city centre. Bear Flat Association is currently preparing a vision paper showing how Bear Flat Local Centre could be improved and particularly the impact of traffic reduced.

3 Beechen Cliff School

Bear Flat includes Beechen Cliff School, which recently gained planning permission for development subject to a Travel Plan to encourage more sustainable travel practice by its staff and students, and reduce the impact of school parking in the surrounding residential area. The emerging Travel Plan should be aligned with the "liveable neighbourhoods" project, and it is hoped that Transport officers will be available to advise the School accordingly. The opportunity to teach the School's students about the challenges of transport and environmental policies and about the benefits of sustainable travel behaviour should not be missed by the School.

4 RPZs

The Residents' Parking Zone 18 was created on Bear Flat in Spring 2019, following a survey carried out by the Bear Flat Association. The RPZ has benefitted the area significantly and its continuation is widely supported by local people.

The one drawback of the RPZ is that it was designed for a purely residential area whereas Bear Flat has a local shopping centre and a range of commercial and community facilities. There are permits for residents and some allocations to others but none for staff who work at Bear Flat, some working unsocial hours or with journeys that do not lend themselves to public transport. The RPZ should have a system for permits to be allocated to businesses and others with staff.

Nick Francis, Chair
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Bear Flat Association

www.bearflat.org.uk

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