

ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE ADDENDUM

4.00PM, TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

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ADDENDUM

ITEM	Page
45 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT	5 - 12

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for questions submitted by a member of the public.

The question will be answered without discussion. The person who asked the question may ask one relevant supplementary question, which shall be put and answered without discussion. The person to whom a question, or supplementary question, has been put may decline to answer it.

The following written questions have been received from members of the public:

(i) Park and Ride – Derek Wright

“In the last local elections both the Labour and Conservatives said they would introduce a Park and Ride. Bearing in mind that a term in office is four years can the Chair tell me if any progress has been made in finding a site, funding the project and do we have a time line?”

(ii) Valley Gardens Task & Finish Group- Serena Burt

“Can the Chair confirm that the Valley Gardens Forum will be a permanent member of the Task and Finish Group which is in the process of being set up - and as a key stakeholder will have oversight over phase 3 from this point onwards until completion?”

(iii) VG3 Environmental Impact Assessment- Adrian Hart

“I’m puzzled as to how or why the Chair could state at Full Council that a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment in line with EU Directive 2014/52/EU is not necessary and would not be carried out. Even if you are convinced that there is no legal obligation - which incidentally our advice contradicts - is there not a moral obligation to calm public concerns by commissioning such a study?”

(iv) VG3 Environmental Impact Assessment- Paul Crawford

“It is now formally accepted that VG3 represents low value for money; but the LEP justified funding VG3 because withholding funding would negate the benefits predicted for phases one and two. In my opinion, those benefits are just made-up numbers concerning things that would probably happen anyway: such as growth in knowledge sector employment and commercial floor space. But acknowledging this and with an inevitably negative EIA outcome the whole scheme's potentially disastrous effects on the City and its economy would become obvious and inescapable. Is this really why this Council is afraid of an Environmental Impact Assessment?”

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

Deputations received:

(i) Deputation: Veolia Waste Transfer Site

My name is Dominic Furlong. I'm the spokesperson for residents of the Round Hill area of Brighton who wish to raise a deputation about the fire at the Veolia Waste Transfer Site (WTS) in Hollingdean on 25 August 2019. This action is supported by the Round Hill Society AGM held on 16 October 2019. We have a series of questions across five areas of concern: (1) emergency access; (2) the sprinkler system; (3) smoke inhalation; (4) communication with residents at the time of the fire; and (5) communication about the investigation. Taken together, these issues specific to the latest fire at the site heighten more general concerns about (6) the passing of complaints between the Environment Agency and BHCC; and (7) the suitability and safety of the site location.

(1) Emergency Access Contingencies: Are contingencies for emergency access to the site now under review? Does the Council take a view about whether Veolia should have staff on site overnight?

(2) Sprinkler System: Is there to be a review of adequacy and effectiveness of the sprinkler system?

(3) Smoke Inhalation Residents would like more information about the materials burnt during the fire and ask for a robust assessment of the risks to public health posed by smoke inhalation from the fires at this WTS.

(4) Communication at the time of the fire: Will there be a review of emergency communication contingency plans?

(5) Communication about the Investigation: What external (non-Veolia) scrutiny of the investigation has been put in place given the potential risks to public health and safety? How will findings be shared? What's the expected timeframe? What's the latest information about the public meeting scheduled with Veolia?

(6) Passing of complaints between the Environment Agency and BHCC: Round Hill residents would like a review of the system of passing complaints between the Environment Agency and the BHCC Environment Team. Why don't local officers have accurate and up-to-date data on the nature and volume of complaints about the rotting smells and noise from the Veolia site?

(7) Suitability and safety of the site location: In the wake of the range of issues brought to attention by this latest fire at the WTS, we would like the Council to review the suitability and safety of locating a facility for handling local household waste and other waste imported from elsewhere within this densely-populated residential setting.

Supported by

Dominic Furlong (Spokesperson)

Rob Stephenson

Jenn Price

Marigold Rogers

Jane Power

Davy Jones

Stuart Chapman

(ii) Deputation: School Traffic Situation in Westdene

To make walking to school safe in our area, we are asking for permanent, timed 'School Street' closures to occur around Westdene Primary School, on Bankside and Barn Rise (section between greens), at drop off and collection times. The procedure for School Street closures has been clearly set out in the 'Hackney Toolkit' and we are asking that this be rolled out at Westdene as soon as possible, before a serious accident occurs. Westdene School sits on an island. The roads around it allow only one car to pass. The school site is sided by Dene Vale, Mill Rise and Bankside. In Sept 2016, the catchment was 1.5km. All routes are affected by traffic, dangerous driving & illegal parking.

The side gate (Bankside)

- Parents have turned this into a drop & drive entrance. There are no School Keep Clear markings and no double yellow lines, so parents simply drive right to the gate, just in front of the crossing and drop their child straight out of their car. This blocks the road and the car doors swing out into the very narrow pavement, already full with children and buggies. Driving parents then often watch their child walking into school whilst rolling their car forward, which has resulted in many near misses.
- On the other side of the street, residents often park their cars in front of their garages, blocking the pavement. Parents with children and buggies often have to walk out into the road.
- All of the cars in the traffic jam have their engines running, right next to the walking children.
- Most mornings the jam is backed up to the corner, covering drop kerbs to access the library and school office. My child was nearly knocked down here by a driver reversing without warning.
- The final issue in this Bankside/side gate area is the "Voluntary one-way system", supported every single week in the school's messaging to parents. There's no signage so anyone who doesn't drive here regularly doesn't know. One delivery van or taxi causes immediate danger and often drive on to the pavement or reverse over the crossing. I was struck by a taxi doing this.
- Closing Bankside at the top end every school drop off and pick up seems to me the only way that the situation can be solved, as residents have previously rejected a permanent one-way and in any case that wouldn't stop parents doing 'drop & drive', it would rather encourage it, making it even easier.
- The bottom gate: Here too there is wilful use of the double yellows and the School Keep Clear lines as a handy drop-off point and people 'drop & drive' here too. The road markings are also inconsistent, meaning a child using the area designated to cross is unseen. On Monday 18th November, we saw multiple instances of this. On this drop kerb crossing right by the gate I have seen maybe 5 people nearly run over, only stopped by parents shouting, tapping cars and generally yelling. The bottom gate is as intensely pressured as the side gate and it would be straightforward to close this road too, before the crossing from the Green, as there are no residents living on the rest of the road.
- Crossing points: There are no properly marked crossings to reach the school.
- Dene Vale (near Ascension Church) - Crossing here is very dangerous: a very wide junction full of parked cars and either fast or blocked traffic going both ways. Visibility is shocking, the "Voluntary one-way" also persists here: parents 'know' but other motorists don't.
- Mill Rise (across Highbank and Bankside) - Every day I see ~5 illegally parked cars which stop on double yellows, road corners & drop kerbs, making crossing the road dangerous, even for adults.

- Eldred Avenue: The school traffic jam happens every day, causing gridlock on a bus route.
- Stress: School words, Operation Crackdown, encouragement of walking to school, none of it has worked. The situations I've described lead to stress, trauma and in the end, anger. People parked across pavements, idling their engines may swear, shout or verbally abuse pedestrians, a very negative community experience. Our son walks to school on his own and the biggest danger he faces is from other parents in cars. The Council needs to properly support this area to create a healthy, peaceful and collaborative situation in which children arrive to school happy, exercised and ready for the day.

Related solutions: I would like to see the Council call a proper meeting for driving parents, to instigate/enforce using the Park & Ride at Withdean Stadium and getting Walking Buses set up.

Supported by

Sarah Kingdom (Spokesperson)

Kim Willis

Sophie Broadbent

Emily Clark

Maud Lott

Judith Hook

Katherine Morton



APPENDIX Photos 1-6 SIDE GATE BLOCKAGE, narrow pavement vs car doors, blocked crossings; jam to Eldred Ave



Photos 7-13 BOTTOM GATE BLOCKAGE, 'keeping clear' and other illegal, dangerous parking