

Bath locals say new traffic management plans would be 'commercial suicide'

Some said the plan would kill off the city centre and hurt businesses

SHARE



19

By **Emma Elgee** Senior Reporter

17:05, 17 JAN 2022

Bookmark

► See news near you

In
YourArea

Enter your postcode

Go



Bath locals have had a thing or two to say about the council's new "journey to net zero" consultation.

It has proposed, among other things, that the city would be split into four "cells" and that there would be no through traffic in the city centre.

There will only be one or two access points on each of the outer boundaries for vehicles and they will be prevented from passing from one cell to another, although movement for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport will be unrestricted.

READ MORE: [Hundreds gather to protest against police and crime bill in Bath](#)

LOADING

 **A map of the four cells proposed to remove through traffic from central Bath. BANES Council**

[Bath and North East Somerset Council](#) is drawing inspiration from Ghent, a World Heritage City in Belgium that in 2017 stopped traffic from crossing its centre. Critics pointed out that unlike Bath it is largely flat and has a ring road and a tram network.



viable and sustainable.

The consultation also says the council will consider demand management measures such as a congestion charge, public transport discounts, a workplace parking levy and staggered start times for business and schools.

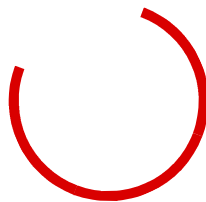
And it proposes moving freight by bike, train and even buses to cut the number of HGVs and says the city's park and rides will be upgraded into transport interchanges, an idea that has already been floated.

Bath Live readers have shared their thoughts on the proposals on our Facebook page and some of them are truly shocked.

Many expressed confusion about why Ghent was being used as a model when it is so different to Bath - it's not hilly and has much better transport with ring roads and a tram system.

Other's said that Bath's roads need a lot of work before a model like that could work and some suggested it will harm businesses and be "commercial suicide" to the city centre.

Looking for Bath's top stories in one place? [Sign up for our newsletter here.](#)



Andrew Wetherill said: "Note, Ghent...a largely FLAT city!!!"

Jane Wilkins said: "Does Ghent have hills?"

John Chapman went further and said the plan was full of "obvious flaws".

He said: "So Bath is now flat, with inner and outer ring roads and a high quality tram system?"

"The plan is very amateurish, started with the solution and made the challenges fit, and its full of contradictions/ obvious flaws.

"For a start, Bath's 'arterial' roads are mostly residential and quite narrow.

"So those roads get a cycle lane, displaced traffic and this fantasy mass transit (bus?) system. So the buses get stuck in the traffic and inevitable chaos around the centre?"

He suggested they look elsewhere for inspiration.

Mike Earle said: "So those south of the river will access the M4 motorway how? Ghent has an inner and outer ring road. Bath doesn't have an viable east-west, north-south routes that avoid the city centre."

Others said that the design would kill of the city centre as businesses would struggle with the new plan.

David Wilson said: "How do they think bars and restaurants will get their delivery without a HGV?"

Brenda Kurle said: "Bath council just doesn't want anyone to visit."



Richard Healey said it would be "commercial suicide" for the city.

He said: "Yet another council planning it's own city centre commercial suicide. Unfortunately this is on my doorstep. With Bristol's funeral service scheduled for this summer with the introduction of the CAZ (M&S made a well-timed exit), it's difficult to think of where I would go for my non bicycle-friendly shopping. Hmmm - out of town retail parks? Oh yes, there's always Amazon of course!"

Many said that before Bath could even think of following such a design it would need a ring road.

Chris Scource said: "Bath best spend some money and build a sensible ring road around the hole then."

Rob Hughes said: "Before they can implement this they need to construct a ring road first, just think of all the extra pollution and congestion on surrounding routes."

George Hunt said: "Considering the difficulties First Bus has getting along the bus routes, the roads around Bath need sorting first.

"Great to get buses out of the centre quickly, only to get held up by traffic congestion outside the city.

"Then we get the smug ones telling us how bad the bus company is."

Adam Matthew said: "If there is one sure thing, it's that Bath's road infrastructure needs something radical."

Edd Stacey said: "Build a ring road/bypass so us people that need to head down the A36 can avoid Bath. Do us all a favour."

'If there is one sure thing, it's that Bath's road infrastructure needs something radical.'



Michael Button said: "Reinstitute the trams, with main stations at the park and ride, and centre of town. If you build it, they will come. Make it a heritage style and tourists subsidise it."

Charlotte Hanna said she thought public transport needed to be better first.

She said: "It's not just about safe cycle routes. The hills around Bath make cycling quite difficult, even for the most fit people. With current bus services unreliable and insufficient people are forced to use a car. '

"Invest in public transport, improve options for school pupils and students, extend bus services and cut the cost of bus travel, then deter commuters from driving into the city. There must be a carrot as well as a stick."

Another person said that little thought was being given to the impact the plans would have on surrounding villages - especially Westbury.

Shirley Paget said: "Very nice to hear about BANES thoughts for the traffic going through Bath but they have no concern whatsoever about some of their decisions that resulted in heavy vehicle diversions causing havoc through already overrun villages and towns in Wiltshire.

"The people in Westbury were already choking on vehicle fumes - thank you BANES for making it worse. I believe they are meant to be co-operating with Wiltshire Council to help on this but obviously only talk not action type of co-operation."

RELATED ARTICLES

> **Bath 'vulnerable' to student housing and it must stop says MP**
SomersetLive

> **Movie star Charles Dance takes a good ribbing in Bath show**
SomersetLive

The council is asking residents to give their views on the proposals it believes are needed to effect a shift to public transport, walking and travel by bike that will be needed to deliver its net zero ambition.

Councillor Warren, the cabinet member for sustainable travel, said: "This is a pivotal moment in our journey to net zero, and I think everyone who travels around our area will be interested in these ideas and want to have their say on them.

“We have introduced the first charging clean air zone outside of London and are currently working with local communities on our liveable neighbourhoods programme. But to go further we need your help with a more fundamental rethink of how we get around our area - and the big changes we will need to make to our transport system to get to carbon neutrality by 2030.

“We know that large numbers of people currently have no choice but to use their cars as they don’t have safe cycle routes that they can use away from traffic or don’t have a reliable or frequent enough bus service.

“Reductions in car use can only come if we start providing more cycle facilities, better public transport facilities and a safer transport network.

“Together we have the power to turn the climate emergency around but it’s going to require all of us to make a change in the way we travel, which could be made possible through Journey to Net Zero.”

SIMILAR ARTICLES TO THIS



The consultation closes on February 7. [Click here](#) to respond.

Residents will have the chance to ask questions at a webinar at 6pm on January 24. [Sign up here.](#)

Want our best stories with fewer ads and alerts when the biggest news stories drop? Download our app on [iPhone](#) or [Android](#)

RELATED ARTICLES

> **The Bath pub which is in a 'blissful' location**
SomersetLive

> **Hundreds gather to protest against police and crime bill in Bath**
SomersetLive

Follow SomersetLive

Facebook

Twitter

Comment

Here's The Amount You'll Actually Get From Equity Release

Equity Release Zone | Sponsored

If you own a mouse, you will never turn off your computer again.

Combat Siege | Sponsored



Get a Free quote for Private Medical Insurance with Save Money Market

Save Money Market | Insurance Quotes | Sponsored

Loading...



NEWS ALL

TOP STORIES >



TV

This week's mobile speed camera locations in Somerset

TRAFFIC & TRAVEL

Fears of landslips on popular Somerset cliff walk

SOMERSET

UK weather: 'Beast from the East' return fears as sub-zero temperatures to blast country

WEATHER



SOMERSET

Two more weeks of roadworks pain for frustrated locals

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

Toad rescue mission to close key road for six weeks

BATH

Band of locals tackle council in parking row

BATH



TRAVEL

Ten year plan launched to make Somerset flood resistant

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

A look inside the Somerset wife's brutal murder of her husband after bubble and squeak joke

CRIME

The beautiful Somerset city that feels like a thriving market town

SOMERSET



[NEWS](#)

[SPORT](#)

[WHAT'S ON](#)

FOLLOW US



[InYourArea](#) | [MemoryLane](#) | [Discount Codes](#) | [Mirror Bingo](#) | [OK! BeautyBox Subscription](#) | [Hopsmore Beer Club](#) | [Public Notices](#) | [Buy a photo](#) | [Marketplace](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Work for us](#) | [Advertise with Us](#) | [Competition Rules](#) | [How to Complain](#) | [Corrections and Clarifications](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [Cookie Notice](#) | [Newsletter Signup](#) | [Syndication & Licensing](#) | [RSS feeds](#) | © 2023 Local World |