

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 18 August 2023 09:17
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: Bus gate

Dear Sir/ Madam,
I am writing to object to the bus gates in Aberdeen city.

I run a small family business, and customers are finding VERY difficult to get to us. We have been in the same premises for 30years, and since the introduction of the bus gates and road works sales have fallen dramatically. With these in place, you're pushing everyone further away from the town centre, and will buy online. You are not encouraging people to take the bus...Can you imagine going shopping on a bus with 20 bags of shopping and 2 kids? Never going to happen I'm afraid.

You've spoken about bringing Union Street back, but this is another nail in the coffin for businesses.

Drop this idea straight away to save the town centre and the little shops left before they go under.

Best regards
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 December 2023 13:49
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: TrafficManagement
Traffic Management Bus Gates objection

Hi,

Just wanted to convey the message we consistently get from our customers on a daily basis, about how detrimental the road restrictions in the city are, particularly new bus gates, as our customers are reiterating their unwillingness to shop in town because of restrictions.

Whilst I appreciate these are to increase reliance on public transport, it just doesn't work for a city with so many rural towns around as the bus network is not extensive or reliable enough to convince people to use it. Our customers do not want to drive to a park and ride, then have to wait on slow public transport to get them in and out of town, much preferring to come straight to the city. The bus gates have also impacted our customers with mobility issues, the city centre needs to more accessible for everyone.

Previous concerns raised at the last BID meetings have not been heeded, re clearer signage instead of just "new bus gate in operation" on city peripheries. There needs to be clearer communication about the locations of the bus gates and what their purpose is as nobody knows what they are trying to achieve.

Our customers perception is that they would rather avoid Aberdeen city centre in its entirety and instead travel a considerable distance to other Scottish towns/cities to do their shopping.

Thank you for listening,
Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Regards,

ABERDEEN
ABERDEEN BRANCH MANAGER
[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 10 January 2024 21:47
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: Feedback on Bus Gates
Attachments: Screenshot_20231104_170955_Shopify.jpg

Hello,

I understand that the council are open for feedback on the bus gate measures put in place.

I'm the owner of Style for your Shape based at 2 Schoolhill Aberdeen. The shop has been open since July 2022 and the business was going from strength to strength.

In September & October there was a steady decline and then drastic drop in footfall to the city centre and to our store. Our sales plummeted and upon speaking to several other local businesses in the area its being felt all round. Our early Nov sales were also behind last year by 30%.

I've attached a graph representing our sales from May-Nov 2023 and its represented in the blue line. The dotted line is from same period last year.

I recently did a survey with my customers as to any reasons why they are being put off coming into city centre. Overwhelmingly the response was due to the bus gates and second after that was the expensive parking, followed by the exit of John Lewis and other stores.

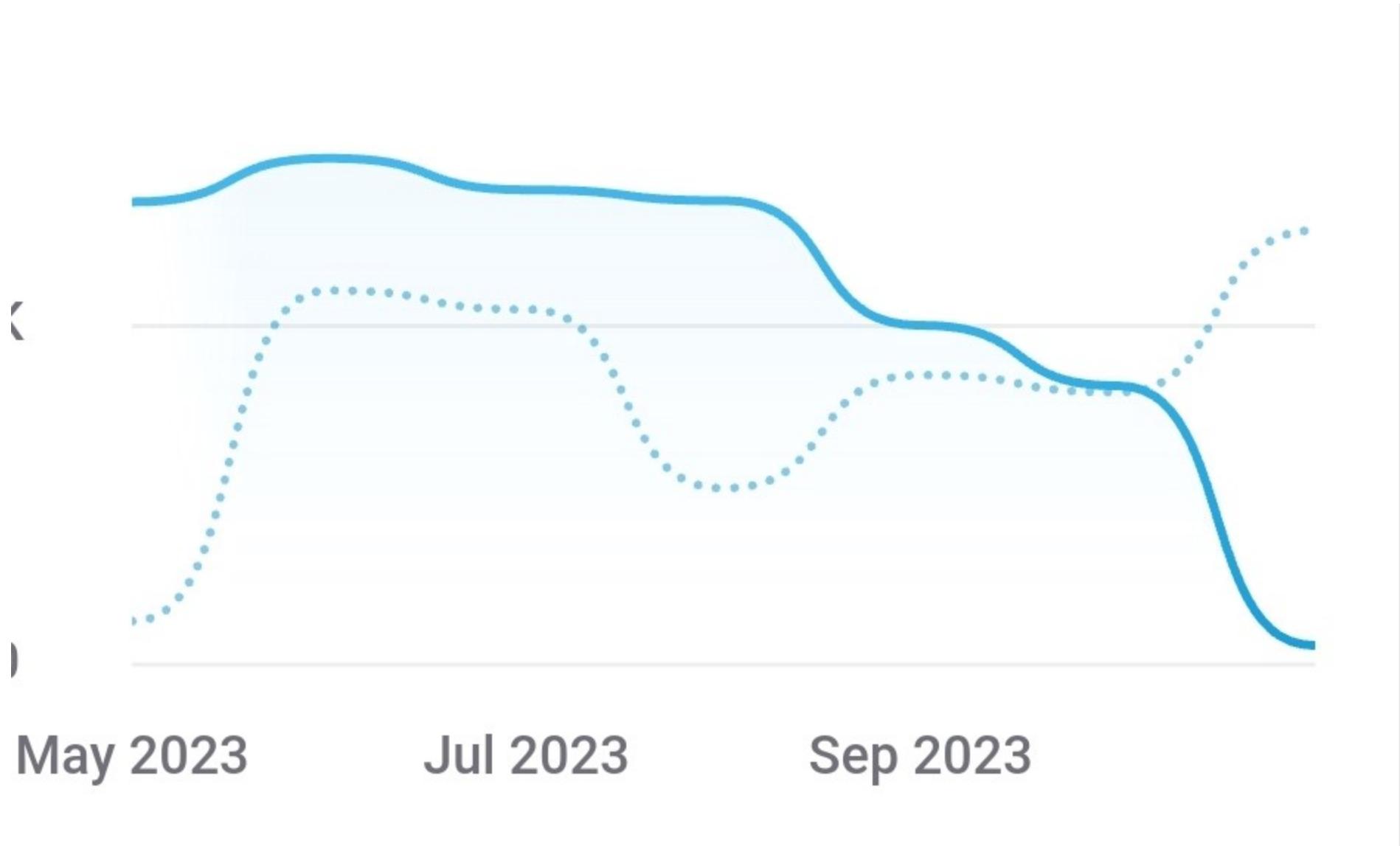
As someone who lives in the city centre I am used to the bus gates, but those who aren't always in the city aren't familiar with it and it's putting people off. You can see the timing of the bus gates vs the drop in sales. I know there are other factors at play, but I need to feed this back to yourselves and have already given feedback to Aberdeen Inspired. The lack of clear comms at the time has scared people away from the centre and its evident from any posts on social media that it's been a significant factor in the reduced numbers shopping in town, which had already been impacted since the loss of John Lewis & Debenhams.

Recent incentives have been announced for other cities who are offering free parking in city centre locations (this was in run up to Christmas). I've since seen information on free bus travel at weekends in January.

The continuous 10 week period of loss making when it is usually a steady busy period has really hit the business hard and I'm unsure how long Style for your Shape and other business will be able to survive. Just this week we have seen the announcement about Haigs no longer making profit to run their premises at Schoolhill. Once our lease is up in Jan 2025, it's highly likely I will need to exit the city centre as customers aren't travelling as frequently into town.

I'd be happy to meet up and have a discussion over some of these topics in person too.

Thanks



From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 12 January 2024 16:11
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITY CENTRE, ABERDEEN) (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) (EXPERIMENTAL) ORDER 2023

I'm not even sure why I am wasting my time writing this - as it looks like the civil servants who run the council have already decided what is going to happen to this once beautiful city. They are intent on killing the city centre completely.

Since the re-introduction of the "bus gates" we have seen a shocking decrease in footfall. So worrying is the decrease in footfall - I can not see our business surviving in it's current format, for another year. Yesterday - we estimate we had as little as 10 customers in the shop all day! This is a disaster for us. The months of September through to February are the months that create the profits to keep us going all year. This year - that hasn't happened.

I feel subjecting us to an "Experiment" after getting through what is easily described as the most difficult time for retailers - is just cruel. Do you seriously want to kill off all remaining retail on Union Street? If so - you are doing a great job.

How do our customers from the North of the city get to the closest car park to us which is the NCP Shiprow car park? (Yes I know - a three mile detour!). Utter nonsense.

Everything you are doing seems to be for the benefit of First Bus and Union Square - intentionally taking traffic and ultimately footfall and pushing it down to Union Square. This totally stinks of corruption, I am not surprised that there is such little respect for the civil servants who seem to be intent on ruining this once beautiful city.

Union Street is a mess - we have seen dramatic changes since Teso moved in next door. Beggars, drug dealing, underage drinking, vaping, general anti social behaviour everywhere we look. Never a day goes by without the police having to attend. Staff being scared to leave the shop at certain times - due to well "know characters" in the area. The pavement is filthy with gum - and embarrassingly dirty over weekends.

Our end of Union Street is feeling like a dead end - you have effectively made the east end of Union Street a bus gate, scaring off customers and trapping drivers who are not local to Aberdeen.

I hear First Bus figures are up - well please take it from us - FOOTFALL is well down!

How are locally owned companies going to be compensated if your Experiment fails?

For and behalf of Annie Mo's Ltd

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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 13 January 2024 11:22
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: Aberdeen City Traffic Route Complaint

Good morning,

I am writing to you to express my major concern regarding the recent road routes and bus gates within Aberdeen City Centre and the purpose of this email is to encourage the council to rewind on the damage which is already becoming apparent.

I personally require my car for work as I need to attend sites throughout my day which can be miles out of Aberdeen, therefore other modes of transport are not possible. However I would be open to using the bus on weekends if it were to be cost effective.

Since the bus gates and part closure of union street to cars I have had to change my route to and from work. This has resulted in a longer driving time and more mileage on the car i.e going against what your efforts are of reducing pollution. This extra 10 minutes on what used to just be a 10 minute journey has meant I no longer get to my gym class and have had to cancel due to frustration of always having to rush to get there.

Unfortunately the common conversation at the moment in my workplace is that people don't bother to go in to town because they don't want to risk a ticket which is extremely concerning considering these are local aberdonians who you'd think would be completely comfortable driving in the centre of their hometown. This to me confirms it must be even harder for visitors navigating their way round and just so uninviting and unpleasant which it shouldn't have to be. For example if my extended family now visit from the Scottish borders I would opt to drive them around to ensure they don't get unnecessarily fined!!!! (good, working people visiting Aberdeen, trying to see the place and happy to spend money, being put off entirely by a high chance of being fined). There's TOO many restrictions and it's damn right robbery in my opinion. We're already being charged to park outside our own house! (Another reason for people to move out of town). If this becomes a trend this will be doing worse for the environment!

The routes are pushing cars away from the city centre parking and in turn people are deciding to instead shop online or visit towns out of Aberdeen (who can blame them?). This frustrates me greatly as my family have a business on Union Street (Annie Mo's) of which they own the property. It has been a totally stressful time maintaining hope over what have been a bad few years in retail. My sister whom works full time for the business tells me of the decline in footfall and unpleasant characters (older males taking money from children to buy them vapes etc. (assuming keeping the change!) hanging around outside, ambulances coming for the same suspects overdosing almost daily, known drug deals (All of which has been reported to the police and council - however police say it's a council matter, council say it's a police matter and nothing seeming to get done about it)). However keeping to the topic of the transport we both think since cars are not going past and the footfall decline of people getting in to the centre to go shopping it's having a more and more dangerous feel and shoppers feel almost in the minority against people hanging around which is a major turn off. (Most people coming in to the shop are commenting and are in agreement with my comments above).

From a business perspective obviously we need deliveries. There is no rear access to our building so the only way is the front door. The business is struggling as it is, so deliveries within a certain window is simply unaffordable for the business to pay for. We obviously cannot dictate an external courier to when they can deliver - coming up from down south they'll arrive when they arrive. If they have to stick to certain windows that'll again cost even more to the company, by double handling every delivery from the warehouse again which it cannot afford. I've had naive comments in the past where people assume because my mum owns a company she must be 'well off' - personally for the stress she's had to endure I wish she was. No nice cars or big houses, no summer holidays to show for 30 years in business just the pressure and stress of keeping a long standing business afloat. No help given during covid or with business rates. It's little wonder there's so many empty units because it's just not worth the stress.

Then we look at cycle lanes? How will that work with deliveries and the danger of that? That's something that will need thought out, as surely can't be a repeat of the beach. (Passenger door opening on to cycle lane).

To summarise if the council were serious about clean air they'd be looking at the harbour rather than putting cars on loops of Aberdeen. All that's happening is a knock on effect and a bigger incentive than ever for people to support your chain retail parks, drive through McDonald's, amazon deliveries etc.

Changing topic, are you able to confirm when plans for relaying the cobbles in Carnegies brae will be happening? Is there anything preventing this being done before the completion of the new market or will it be done later in the programme? Or is it ever going to be done? Already established businesses 'The Tunnels' on Carnegies Brae and presumably Unit 51 too, are two operating businesses facing challenges of trip hazards on their doorstep. I think redoing this would be of huge benefit to the safety of nightclub users.

Generally I don't have a major issue with the very central part of union street being closed to cars but open to busses and taxis but everywhere else should have the restrictions done away with. Busses should not be allowed to stop outside The Tivoli as this was the main issue with tailbacks that started this problem in the first place. The road was not purpose made for more than one bus to be stopped there at any one time.

Appreciate an acknowledgment of this email and look forward to response in due course.



Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 18 January 2024 14:18
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITY CENTRE, ABERDEEN) (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) (EXPERIMENTAL) ORDER 2023 - Objection

Hello,

I write in response to the above experimental order.

I live in the city centre. I am a personal proponent of walking and cycling but this is not suitable for all people, at all times. I do have to and choose to traverse the city by car on occasion. In a free society people should be able to choose their method of transport.

I run a legal consultancy in the city centre which has personnel who travel in from countryside locations in the shire and also have caring responsibilities, the combination of which require car transport.

I have concerns that ACC is using a legal framework which expends tax payer funds on 'acting now, checking it is ok later'.

This aside, the bus gates / lanes are choking off many city centre routes and access points. I find it near impossible to drive from east back to west, having to do much additional mileage to circumnavigate. The route videos published by ACC on various platforms are subject to the derision they deserve. Given that the LEZ has been implemented to apparently reduce emissions, this all seems to be at odds.

One might conclude that ACC is intent on turning the city centre into even more of a ghost town than it already is.

Kindest regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Director / Principal Consultant



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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 18 January 2024 18:12
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: Bus gates

As a business in town that is Finnies we feel the bus gates are especially preventing the older generation as well as all other potential customers from coming into the city centre.
Please get rid of them they are assisting in destroying our city centre. Many thanks. [REDACTED].
Kind regards
[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

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[Thurs 9.30 – 7pm](#)



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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 19 January 2024 09:09
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: FW: Objection to Traffic Management Order

Good morning

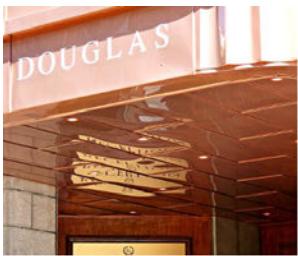
I would like file my objection to the traffic management experimental order 2023 as I believe the new roads management set up will have a negative impact on our futures business.

My main issues are as follows;

- The overall communication of this experimental order to businesses and the general public has been very poor, and caused a lot of confusion
- Access to the hotel is very difficult for guests that do not know the area, and we are receiving a lot of negative feedback from our guests, especially those coming from north of the city
- The signage was initially very poor, and although this has been slightly improved, visitors to the city are struggling to see the signs until it is too late
- Accommodation guests, events and meetings are looking at out of the city venues rather than the Aberdeen Douglas Hotel for future events as access is deemed to be difficult
- This will potentially cripple an already under pressure city centre retail market, especially Union Street
- People will not automatically move to public transport, and cars should still have better access to the city centre, and businesses within the city
- The hotel is investing heavily within Shiprow Village, trying to promote and improve the area, and these restrictions are making it more difficult to secure the trade professionals that we need to complete works with some unwilling to come into the city centre, and this is before the LEZ comes in from June 2024

These are my thoughts, and opinions of some of our guests on behalf of our business.

Regards



ABERDEEN
DOUGLAS
HOTEL



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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 19 January 2024 15:01
To: TrafficManagement
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Feedback on Road Layout Proposal - Aberdeen
Attachments: Aberdeen Council Objection to Bus Gate 180124.pdf

Please find attached a letter in response to the planned road layout change including the bus gate in Aberdeen.

We look forward to receiving a response in due course.

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
E [REDACTED]

Q-Park is a registered company – No. 1721817. Registered UK office; 1 East Parade, Leeds, LS1 2AD



Q-Park Ltd.
1 East Parade
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS1 2AD

Transport Strategy & Programmes
Aberdeen City Council
Ground Floor North
Marischal College
Broad Street,
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

18/01/2024

Dear Sir/Madam

Road Layout Proposal – Aberdeen

We write regarding the recent proposal to change the layout of the roads into Aberdeen City Centre.

Q-Park are the parking operator for The Trinity Centre and offer a safe and secure parking experience for all parkers who visit the shopping centre and the wider city. As an award-winning operator of 677,000 parking spaces spanning 7 countries, we understand the need to improve the liveability of urban environments which can involve alterations to road layouts and traffic flows. We also understand how quality parking locations can support those goals.

In our opinion the changes that you are proposing will result in a net disbenefit to city centre visitors. Those travelling from the west of the city to the Trinity Centre parking facility cannot access the site in the most logical way. The introduction of a bus gate will mean that visitors traveling from the west will no longer be able to turn right from Union Street to the car park. This change will not only impact on the Q-Park facility but also impact other car parks in the close vicinity of the Trinity Centre.

We understand that the Shopping Centre have already submitted a detailed summary of the wayfinding challenges and we fully support the detailed feedback that has been given. In addition to the logistical aspect of the change we also need to highlight the economic and societal challenges that the change will make.

Congestion – Trinity Centre is a key destination which attracts a large majority of parkers who are not regular visitors and it's important, especially in the current climate, that visitors have an easy access route to the city. If the route is not logical for visitors in an unfamiliar city the outcome will be the creation of search traffic around the area, thus creating more congestion and so adding to the environmental issues that we're all trying to minimise.

Public Safety – The Trinity Centre attracts many families and if visitors are forced to park further away and walk then that will involve crossing multiple busy roads heading into the city. Public safety should be paramount.

Economic – The economic impact of this proposal will not only damage Q-Park but also the retail sector within The Trinity Centre and beyond with a resulting reduction to the public purse. Shoppers travelling by car have a larger spend than those walking or travelling by public transport. The impact of this change is likely to reduce the number of tenants within the centre and therefore a reduction in business rates payments.

We look forward to receiving your feedback and we hope that you can support the businesses and visitors that make Aberdeen a thriving city by amending the scheme accordingly.

Kind Regards,



Head of Commercial – UK&I

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 22 January 2024 12:43
To: TrafficManagement
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITY CENTRE, ABERDEEN) (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) (EXPERIMENTAL) ORDER 2023 - Objection obo National Car Parks Limited

Attachments: NCP Shiprow Aberdeen Objection.pdf; Shiprow alterantives.jpg; Shiprow only access now.jpg; Shiprow previous access.jpg

Good afternoon,

Please find attached comments submitted on behalf of our client National Car Parks Limited, in relation to THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITY CENTRE, ABERDEEN) (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) (EXPERIMENTAL) ORDER 2023.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"THE CHALLENGE WE FACE IS TO CREATE THOUGHTFULLY DESIGNED, AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING SPACES, IN EVER-INCREASING NUMBERS, THAT OFFER SOMETHING MORE FOR THOSE WHO OCCUPY THEM."

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Traffic Management and Road Safety
Operations and Protective Services
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 11
Second Floor West
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

22 January 2024

Dear Sir or Madam,

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (CITY CENTRE, ABERDEEN) (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) (EXPERIMENTAL) ORDER 2023

Montagu Evans LLP act on behalf of National Car Parks Limited (NCP) and write with reference to the above Order. As the Council will be aware, our client operates the NCP car park, Shiprow, Aberdeen.

Briefly stated, since the introduction of the Order our client's operation have been significantly adversely affected as a result of the imposition of access and egress restrictions locally.

Consequently would make the following objections:-

- NCP Shiprow is one of Aberdeen City Centre's key car parks serving a variety of business and tourist traffic. Access to city centre for a variety of users, including those that are reliant on the private car, is paramount in ensuring vital and viable city centres, both sustaining footfall and generating income. The operation of the Order significantly impedes access to and from the Shiprow site.
- As the attached plans demonstrate the introduction of the changes to the access and egress to the car park have been significant and have already been seen to be significantly affecting patronage of the car park with evident longer term issues for its continued operation. We have attached 3 copies of the map surrounding the Aberdeen Shiprow Car Park; the first shows the previous access routed prior to the new bus gate changes; the second shows the current available routes and the third shows possible alternatives including right turn access from Virginia Street on to Shiprow or Shiprow becoming 2 way from Union Street down to Shore Brae.
- As it currently stands the access to the City Centre as a result of the Bus Gates / Lanes is marked and is having a noticeable impact on the operation of the carpark which has already suffered in recent years due to the economic downturn.

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- NCP have begun to engage with initiatives that are in place to improve the area including the 'Our Union Street | Aberdeen City Centre' campaign which itself is further undermined by the Order changes. In this respect we would note that the challenge to ensure the future success of the city centre seems larger than just NCP.
- We are aware that neighbouring tenants of properties experiencing similar issues relative to the revised arrangements which cannot be sustainable and risk the relocation of business, services and personnel from the City Centre.

We await the Council's acknowledgement of the receipt of this objection.

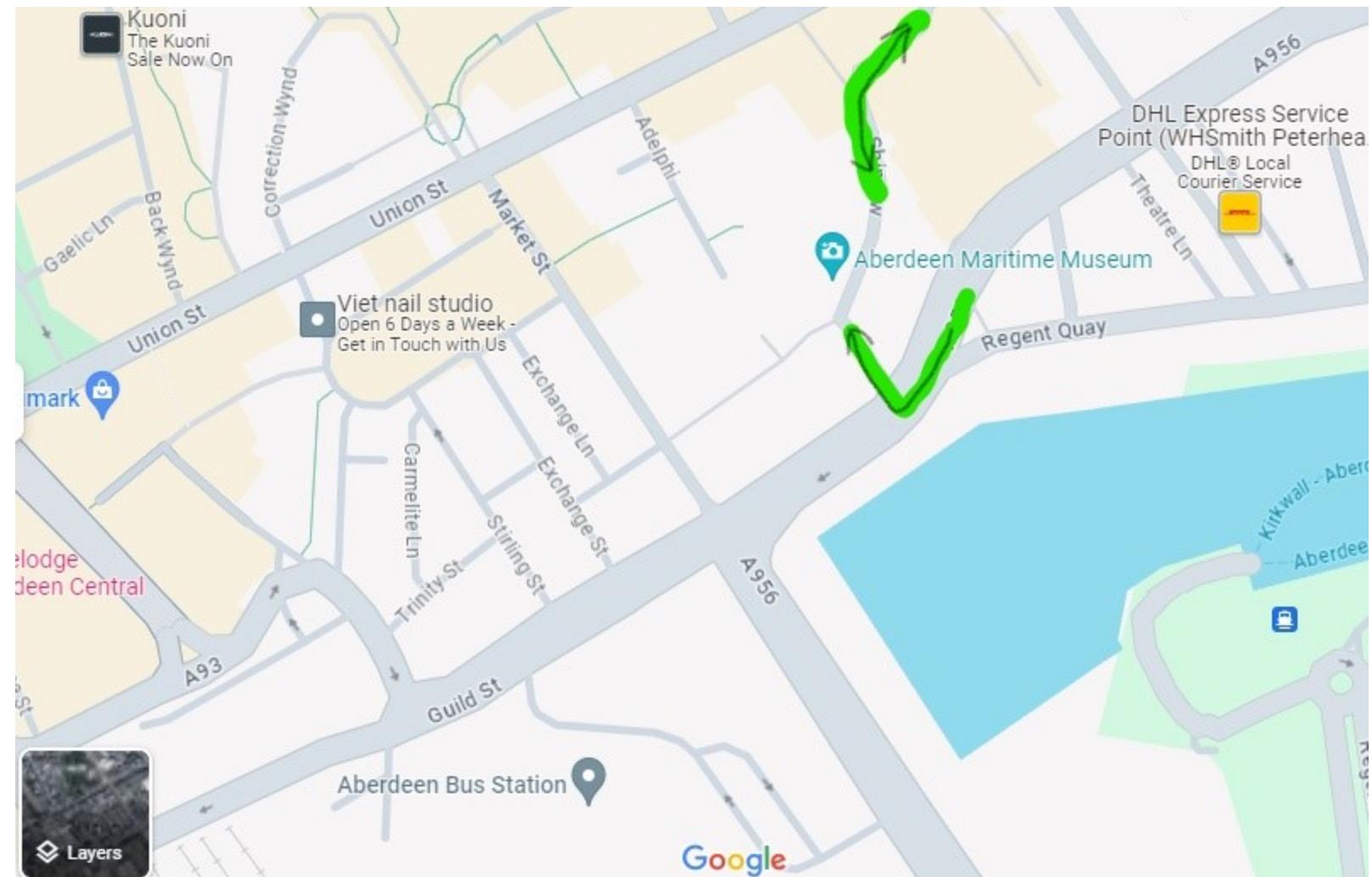
We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our client's concerns in more detail with the Council in due course and await confirmation of your availability in this respect.

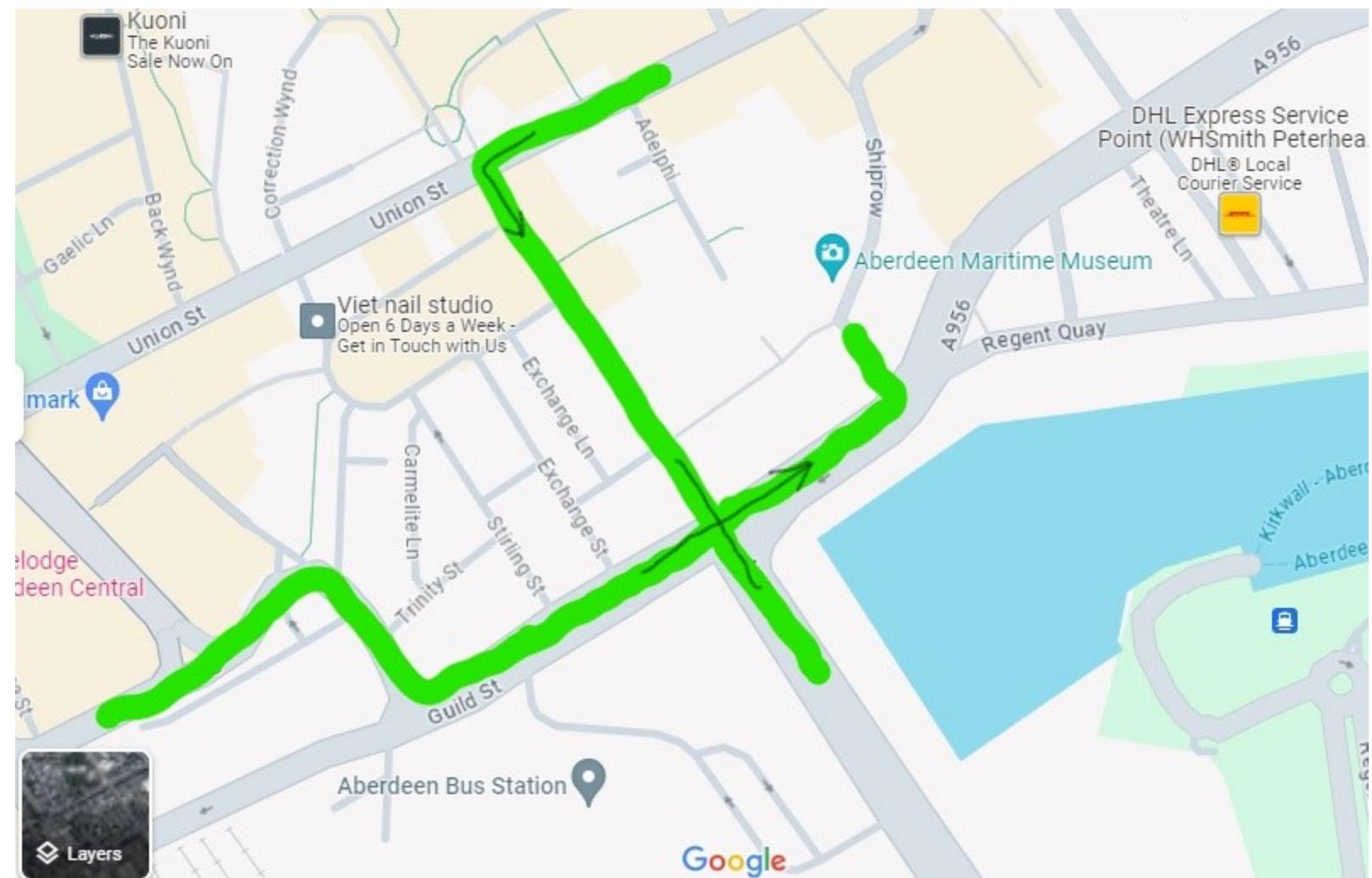
Yours sincerely,

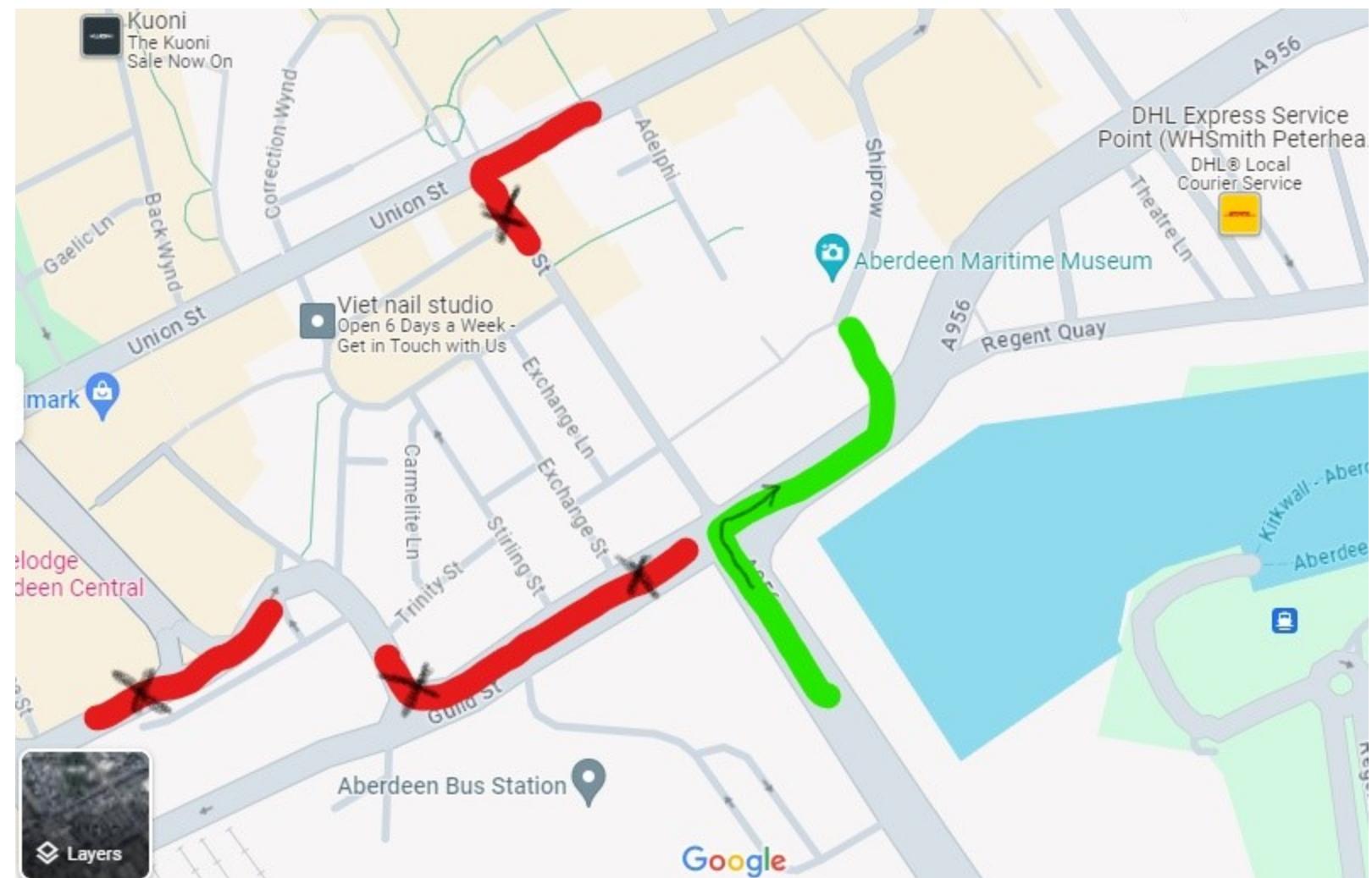
[REDACTED]
Senior Planner

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]







From:
Sent:
To:

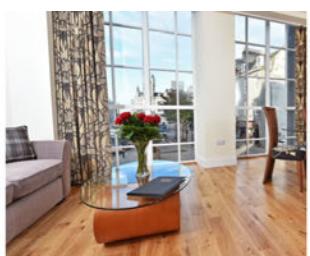
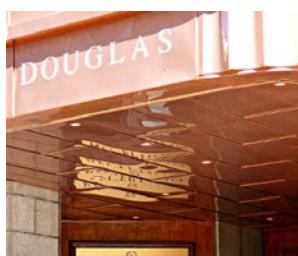
[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
19 January 2024 18:50
TrafficManagement

OBJECTION TO THE EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ORDER

The current experimental traffic management has had a major negative impact on business levels at the Aberdeen Douglas Hotel. The new bus gates on Market St have made it so difficult to get to our hotel and although there are alternative routes to get here they are very long, complicated, restrictive, confusing etc, I understand that GPS guidance now includes the Bus Gates, however it is still proving almost impossible to direct customers over the phone as to how to get here to drop off people or luggage.

I understand the need to reduce vehicle emissions and to improve air quality in the city centre, however **people** make a city, and by introducing these measures we are deterring visitors to Aberdeen. Our Hotel relies heavily on business generated from within a 1 hour radius of the city, with many guests familiar and knowledgeable of the roads layout. Since the roll out and poor signage, people are afraid and generally confused, as to how to legally access their destination, ultimately making the decision **not** to come at all.

Aberdeen's ongoing economic challenges and uncertainties are a major concern for us, we are working hard to sustain the business we have built over the past 18 years and I fear the effect of these experimental traffic measures have not been fully thought through. I fear we will continue to see a drop in people using our city centre, as we already see businesses shutting on a monthly basis I am really worried for the future of Aberdeen City Centre



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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 21 January 2024 16:14
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: Aberdeen city centre bus gate objection

Hello

I am writing in regards to the consultation on the aberdeen city centre bus gates and wish to offer my objection.

As a local business owner (Gamola Golf on Market St), we have seen a decrease in public footfall coming into store since the introduction of the bus gates, with many customers complaining of confusion on how to come into Aberdeen whilst avoiding the bus gates. Many have stated that they have chosen to go elsewhere instead of Aberdeen to avoid the bus gates. This is having a negative impact on our business.

On a personal level, living in Newburgh, Aberdeenshire and commuting into the city centre on a regular basis the bus gates have caused significant access issues to myself and other staff within business, causing diversions and detours. This is causing longer journeys and increased pollution. Unfortunately for me personally the public transport on offer from Newburgh is not adequate/regular or reliable to be able to use and alternate

Overall I do not see any benefits of the bus gates and only have negative concerns caused by these.

Following on from covid and reduced footfall in the city centre we should be doing everything to make the city more inviting and accessible for all. The bus gates in my opinion do not offer this and instead are acting against this.

If you require any additional information, please get in touch

Best regards

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 22 January 2024 20:43
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: Aberdeen City Bus Gates

I am writing to lodge my objection to the current implementation of bus gates in Guild Street and connecting roads. As a business owner in the harbour area, Aberdeen Tile Distributors Ltd, I have seen a significant reduction in footfall since the bus gates were introduced. Not only do they discourage local customers from navigating the alternative routes they discourage potential customers from surrounding Aberdeenshire to actually coming into the city centre. Our premises are in Virginia Street which as you will note is not served by any bus route but realistically our product is too heavy for clients to carry on a bus and have to be transported by car or van.

Even our own delivery vans are having to follow diversions to avoid the bus gates which obviously adds to our fuel costs and in turn increases the fuel emissions, which is the main reason that the planners are using for the implementation of said bus gates.

I have emailed Councillor Michael Hutchison three times, twice before the bus gates were introduced and once since they became live to voice my concerns but unfortunately he has not replied to me.

Surely those appointed by the citizens of Aberdeen and their paid employees must consider the views of those they represent and realise that the only outcome of continued bus gates will see a further decline in our city centre. In recent weeks we have seen local business close down citing the implementation of the bus gates as being one of the reasons. Unless we can encourage more people to come into the city then many more local businesses will be forced to cease trading making many more unemployed.

The Council use the emission readings at Market Street / Virginia Street as there main excuse for the bus gates. Obviously the emissions are high at this point as you have the harbour, train station and bus station all in the same area, not just vehicles.

The decision makers in this city should be honest with the public and admit that bus gates are just another tax on the citizens and visitors of Aberdeen.

Signed : [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]
Sent: 23 January 2024 23:16
To: TrafficManagement
Subject: Bus gate objection

Hello

I am writing as someone who is involved in two family businesses, Annie Mo's and Cafe Drummonds I hope this email will make a difference and that the bus gates will be removed.

With having two family businesses within the stretch of the mile of Union Street I can tell you the daily struggles that we are facing. Less foot fall and customers scared to visit us as they worry about getting a ticket or where to park. The last 5 years has been hard as a business with Covid, brexit, scaffolding outside the shop, cost of living crisis and this is yet another thing that feels like it is trying to destroy us. At this time we really need help and support from the council but it's the worst we have ever had with footfall at an all time low. Thank goodness the business has a website or else we would be another shop to be boarded up and closed. We have customers that travel from across Scotland to visit us and they are struggling with new road layouts, how to get to the shop and on occasion recently have received tickets for merely driving past the shop (on a route their sat nav takes them). Our like for like sales for January this year compared to last year are sitting at half of the value and the bus gates lowering footfall is one of the main things impacting this.

Please can you rethink the effect the bus gates are having on local and independent businesses. As someone who will eventually inherit the company the current situation is giving me a lot of anxiety and is a daily worry. I walk from Great western road to Annie Mo's 6 days a week for the last 8 years of working in the shop. I've noticed the stretch of union street getting increasingly dirty. The stretch where there is bus only is scary and when cars could go along here it felt significantly safer. I often get harassed by drug users and teens not to mention the fact that the street lights in that area have not been working for the last 6 months. The trial was set up to improve the pedestrian environment and this is just not the case. The pavements on union street are very wide already and unnecessarily widening them won't make a bit of difference if there is no one there to use them.

Widening the pavements and adding separated cycle lanes will significantly impact most businesses on union street who only have the capacity to load and unload into the front of their premises. With our business we have large items moving in and out of the shop every day and crossing cycle lanes will be an additional safety hazard.

Your aim is to reduce pollution in the city but yet cars are having to drive a much further distance to avoid the city centre. I hear people on a daily basis in the shop and online air their views that there is nothing to come into the city for yet we are expected to pay very high rates. Aberdeen city centre is in a state of emergency and I know if you had a business in the area you would also be crying out for help. Please get rid of the bus gates and let us compete with out of city retail parks in order to see our city centre back with a buzz and people wanting to visit.

I don't want to see my home city like this, unsafe and boarded up due to self inflicted restrictions. I don't believe the reduced bus travel times comes anywhere close to balancing out the negative impact of low traffic. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards

