Fratton Road LTZ

This report prepared by Walter Menteth and Deniz Beck presents a proposal for the adoption of a Low Traffic Zone (LTZ) in the heart of Portsmouth, focused around Fratton Road.

The proposal addresses the need to improve Covid 19 public health provisions for users of commercial premises on Fratton Rd. to enable those premises to re-open safely while offering improved public space assets and instilling public confidence in use of the area.

Adoption of a temporary LTZ might also open opportunity for long term improvements, by testing.

The full impact upon high streets of Covid 19 are yet to be appreciated, but improving measures for future recovery, however, remains an imperative.
Through traffic on Fratton Road can be bye-passed readily between Lang Rd. (B.2152) / St Marys Rd., to the north, and Victoria Rd. North / Winston Churchill Avenue, to the south via on Holbrooke Rd. (A2030) which lies only 475m to the west,

Traffic circulating to and from the south east of the island can equally divert to the east via the A288 / A303.
Public transport in the locality is well provided with Fratton railway station to the south, a range of bus routes along Fratton Rd. and round the areas perimeter.

fig. 4
Detail of the proposed Fratton Low Traffic Zone (LTZ).
The narrow pavement widths and normally congested road make social distancing difficult for the commercial premises on Fratton Rd.

Additional space is needed for external retail, queuing for shops, and space for pedestrians to pass, to ensure as many of the commercial premises there can re-open as safely as possible. Improving the public realm will offer shoppers greater confidence to return to using the street.

This report proposes removing street parking and traffic, reducing the road width and allowing additional space as a temporary measure to allow pedestrian users the confidence to return to use the commercial premises safely.

**fig. 5**

The pavements on Fratton Rd. are narrow and normally congested.

**fig. 6**

Fratton Rd. - existing public health and commercial issues. Photo - May 2020, collaged.
The areas to the east and west of Fratton Rd, in the location of the proposed LTZ are distinct.

A 1060m long stretch of the ‘Heart of Portsmouth’ cycle highway, a proposal identified within the ‘Portsmouth Inspiration Study 2018’ that lies within this proposed LTZ, is incorporated within this proposal.

The total area of the LTZ identified by the black perimeter outline above is 0.68 km$^2$, with the west sector comprising 0.26 km$^2$ and the east 0.42 km$^2$. 
In the proposed L TZ, if the existing traffic management scheme is not augmented there is a risk of additional rat running between St Marys Rd. down to Walmer Rd.

The residential roads in this location are unsuitable and have insufficient capacity for additional dispersed traffic in the short or long term.

Without addressing the potential rat running it is unlikely that the proposed L TZ would be as favourable for the significant residential community in this quarter of Fratton.

By precluding rat running, opportunity for ‘Homezones’ and urban ‘SUDS’ resilience strategies might in future be adopted extensively (subject to local initiatives & public resources).

Vehicular traffic on Fratton Rd. can by-pass to the east on existing arterial routes, via St. Marys Rd., the A288 and the A2030.

The residential quarter to the east of Fratton Rd. has an existing traffic management scheme as shown, which it is proposed to augment.

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Without addressing the potential rat running it is unlikely that the proposed LTZ would be as favourable for the significant residential community in this quarter of Fratton.

By precluding rat running, opportunity for ‘Homezones’ and urban ‘SUDS’ resilience strategies might in future be adopted extensively (subject to local initiatives & public resources).
The strategy proposed is planned around a sequence of environmental cells which each retain full vehicular access. But there is no rat running, and it is anticipated that within each cell one way systems will be adopted wherever possible to release ground surface for public uses and environmental enhancements. This would enable environmental, landscape, public realm, health and wellbeing improvements at community/neighbourhood level. The cells are organic, indicative and subject to how each neighbourhood may best identify.
The city and neighbourhood focus on the commercial and civic activities along Fratton Road is retained. It is served by public transport, motability cars, bikes with night servicing along with enhanced pedestrian safety, accessibility and amenity.
fig. 12 (top) & 13 (below)
Aerial views of the proposed Fratton Rd. LTZ, looking north and south
It is proposed that Fratton Rd. has a single carriageway, regular bus passing places, extended stops and bike lanes while providing significant pavement widening.

This offers:

• Greater space for pedestrians on the street
• Opportunity for safe social distancing.
• Additional external space for use by commercial premises and for street trading.
• Opportunity to improve the street amenity.

This also allows the commercial premises to feel confident about re-opening safely following the Covid lockdown.

Improving the Public realm increases commercial footfall and public health by offering amenity and provisions that will also afford shoppers greater confidence to return to the street, in the short and long term (Five Years of Waltham Forest)
Although of variable width, Fratton Road typically has a four lane carriageway.

The indicative section diagrams illustrate opportunities to improve public realm assets with new facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, by reduction of the carriageway width.

The additional asset zones allow pedestrian users greater space to circulate, can accommodate queuing and seating externally to premises, external bike facilities, street trading and landscape amenity on a temporary, or permanent basis.
fig. 17 (top) & 18 (bottom)
Views of Fratton Road, during Covid 19 lock-down.
A + B - Fratton Rd. is closed to through traffic with access provided only for buses, bikes, motability cars, service and emergency vehicles (with night time servicing).

Access to Sheffield Rd. is retained from Arundel St., with no right or left turns onto Fratton Rd.

NOTES:
A + B - Fratton Rd. is closed to through traffic with access provided only for buses, bikes, motability cars, service and emergency vehicles (with night time servicing).

Access to Sheffield Rd. is retained from Arundel St., with no right or left turns onto Fratton Rd.

Residential areas having identified future opportunity to adopt ‘Homezones’ and ‘suds’ resilience strategies.
fig. 20
Accessibility to Fratton LTZ, the heart of Portsmouth

KEY
- Access for bus, bike and motability car.
  (with night time servicing)
- 'Heart of Portsmouth' cycle highway
  (Portsmouth Inspiration Study, Oct 2018)
- 3 mile radius, 15 mins indicative by bike.
- 1 mile radius, 20 mins indicative walking distance.
Authors:

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Walter is an architecture, planning and design practitioner, writer, researcher and educator. He is a director of Walter Menteth Architects, Project Compass CIC, and senior architecture lecturer at Portsmouth University. Walter’s received the inaugural RIBA President’s Medal for Research (2015), RIBA Presidents Award for practice-located research (2015), eighteen national architectural awards and he was a nominee for the Mies van der Rohe European (2000) Architecture Prize.

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Deniz is a Chartered Conservation Architect and founder of Deniz Beck Partners. She works on master planning and development of residential and conversion projects, specialising in heritage project, while supporting local organisations assisting on Heritage Lottery Fund bids. She is a part-time architecture tutor at the University of Portsmouth.

Deniz’s has received eight architectural awards, in recognition of the excellence of her work and has been a contributor to ICOMOS. Her works include: various works within Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth, a Grade II* listed Scheduled ancient monument (SAM), a planning application for a residential development and conversion of the Fraser Range (ongoing) and The conversion of Hot Walls in Old Portsmouth.

References:

Portsmouth Inspiration Study, Witteveen + Bos for Cycling UK. Oct 2018


Images:

Fig. 14, Portsmouth Inspiration Study, Witteveen + Bos for Cycling UK. Oct 2018

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