



John Richards
Public Realm
Environmental Services,
Cambridge City Council
The Guildhall
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CB1 0JH

24 September 2019

Dear Mr Richards

Closure of King's Parade: response from the University of Cambridge

The University welcomes the City Council's commitment to improve safety and security with the heart of Cambridge and in doing so the chance to remove significant amounts of traffic within an area that has some of the highest levels of pedestrian and cycle movements within the City. We envisage that this change of access will be the start of proposals to enhance a public realm within the centre of Cambridge that is reflective of this iconic city.

Having met with Council officers in recent weeks to discuss the proposals we understand that access for deliveries and servicing of buildings within the area will be safeguarded, as will the access required for ceremonial activities at the Old Schools and the Senate-House.

Overall the University of Cambridge is supportive of the proposals with specific reference to the relocation of a number of cycle parking facilities within the controlled area. However we wish to raise concerns regarding the proposed relocation of two disabled parking bays to the area immediately adjacent to the East Gate into Senate-House Yard (at the East end of the Senate-House) at Senate-House Hill. These are the following:

- University buildings in the vicinity have significant delivery and services vehicle movements through the adjacent loading area. Whilst these are generally restricted to normal loading times, there are a significant number occasions throughout the year when this space is required for longer periods. Restricted movements due to additional parking areas in this location would not only have a significant impact on deliveries and servicing but would result a poor quality parking offer for disabled users.

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- Senate-House Passage is a busy and narrow thoroughfare for pedestrians and cyclists and any additional vehicles parked in this location would significantly reduce the space available for these movements and result in an increase in the likelihood of incidents in an already heavily congested area.
- The University has graduation ceremonies and other formal events in the Senate-House and Yard throughout the year, details of which are attached. In the period October 2018 – September 2019, over 40 planned events took place requiring access either to the Senate-House via the East Gate or to the Yard, spanning a total of 86 days including set-up and dismantling.
- We recognise the need to make adjustments, however the operational requirements of graduation and of the site mean that on larger occasions up to 1,000 or more graduands per day must wait in precisely ordered processions outside the East Gate before moving directly into the Senate-House to graduate. Graduands have up to three guests each, who must also pass through this general area to access the Senate House via the South-East Gate and to exit the site afterwards (and many of the new graduates accompany them out by this route). On at least seven occasions a year processions exit via the East Gate to attend Church services in either Great St Mary's or King's College Chapel.

We understand the need to provide access to the City Centre for those with limited mobility, but we believe that there are a number of more suitable locations for the parking bays in close proximity that would be more satisfactory than the area adjacent to the East Gate. We are, however, supportive of any proposals which improve access for those with limited mobility.

The University looks forward to supporting the progression of the scheme and to working closely with the City Council's team to further develop King's Parade as an area of high quality public realm.

If you have any further questions or would like to discuss any points raised in this response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'ER', followed by a period.

Emma Rampton
Registry