

Objection by Bristol Walking Alliance to Planning Application 19/00664/F: Installation of a new pontoon, Floating Harbour Adjacent To Former Temple Way Bristol BS2 0JH

Bristol Walking Alliance objects to the design of the proposed pontoon as inadequate to be a City Centre walking route.

In planning application 19/00664/F it is proposed to build a pontoon walkway on the north side of the Floating Harbour underneath Temple Bridge.

In the Design and Access Statement, it is described as forming part of a 'city wide route' and that it '*...highlights the positive connections that the introduction of the proposed pontoon would have. Making direct connections from Temple Meads to the City centre along an attractive waterside setting.*'

This route was identified in the Bristol City Centre Public Realm and Movement Framework 2012 as part of the Harbour Walkway, and has been incorporated into a draft of the pending Bristol City Council City Centre Framework network of traffic-free routes.

We would wholeheartedly support such a pedestrian route if it was built to acceptable standards. However the current proposal falls short of what might be considered acceptable standards for pedestrian access in at least the following aspects.

- The pontoon would be only 1.8m wide, whereas an acceptable minimum standard for a walking route would be 2m clear width.
- The ramps at the eastern end of the pontoon are shown as in two parts, requiring the pedestrian to double back on themselves to reach the upper level. In the original planning application (16/06195/F) they were shown as a single straight ramp. It is not acceptable to force pedestrians to accept a detour from their desired route when a more direct one would be possible. A 180 degree turn halfway up the ramp will also be particularly difficult for access by those using wheelchairs or mobility scooters.
- The elevations show there will only be railings on the ramps, not along the middle water-level section. Given previous cases in both Bristol and Bath of people falling into the water from riverside walks, it seems this would be a safety issue.

If boat mooring is required, without railings alongside, this could potentially be provided via separate pontoons further along the harbour wall, reached from the water-level ends of the pedestrian route.

Though it seems there is no expectation that this route could be used by cyclists, and its limited width would not make this acceptable anyway, we suggest there should be signage to make clear that it should be for pedestrians only.

Bristol Walking Alliance
9 March 2019

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