

Comments by Bristol Walking Alliance on Old City Streets Consultation

Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA) wholeheartedly supports the proposals in the Old City Streets consultation which cites some of the benefits of the scheme - creating a welcoming space, improving air quality, enabling more outdoor social and cultural activities and boosting footfall for local businesses. We agree with those benefits and think that additionally the scheme will:



1. Improve road safety and therefore increase use of the area by families and by those with restricted mobility.
2. Encourage development of the area as a major tourist destination.
3. Enable small shops and business to extend their retail areas by utilising pavements, thus improving their commercial viability and encouraging the take-up of vacant premises.
4. Ease market day overcrowding in Corn street, which often makes the street very difficult to use, especially by people with restricted mobility.
5. Complement the appeal of St. Nicholas's Market and enhance the experience of walking between Broadmead and the Centre.
6. Remove the increasingly serious problem of cars driving around the area looking for parking, as well as dangerous and obstructive pavement parking by delivery vans.
7. Address the problem of narrow pavements, which cannot be resolved by any other means.
8. Reinforce the message that within Bristol's neighbourhood centres pedestrians should have a higher priority than vehicles.

Concerns

We are concerned that the changes will not be enough on their own and need to be accompanied by physical street changes in order to encourage the wider use and appreciation of some of Bristol's most valuable streetscape. The following measures should be included:

1. Additional cycle parking at the perimeters of the area.
2. Physical barriers, such as bollards, to ensure that vehicles do not inadvertently enter the restricted area. Alternatively ANPR cameras could be acceptable but consider that a 'signage only' solution would add to the potential for accidents.
3. Where signage is necessary we ask that it be kept to a minimum and that it respects the surrounding historic fabric.
4. Tree and flower planters would be a cost effective measure to improve the streetscape.
5. Benches, lighting and other well designed street furniture will help create a welcoming space.
6. Segregated cycle paths should be extended to the area from all directions.

Conclusion

We are very much in support of this outline proposal but ask for it to be urgently drawn up in detail, identifying specific measures, traffic orders, timings for the proposed delivery window and changes to the physical streetscape. We believe that pedestrianisation is the only way to ensure meaningful reductions in vehicular traffic in this area but suggest that it needs to include sensitive aesthetic measures to ensure that the space can be used safely and effectively. Unless funding is allocated for a fully worked scheme, we are concerned that these proposals may be delayed.

Bristol Walking Alliance

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