

Comments by Bristol Walking Alliance on ideas for the proposed, Transport, Little Paradise Car Park and River Malago improvements around Bedminster Green.



Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA) welcomes some of the proposals that could enhance the pedestrian environment in all directions from Bedminster Green. However, there are a number of gaps and lack of details which we hope will be included in the next version later this year. Full comments are provided below.

Transport improvements:

Improvements for walking

The pedestrian crossings of the A38 are an improvement which BWA supports. We support continuous footways at junctions off the A38, eg Little Paradise and Stafford Street.

Whitehouse Lane

BWA feels that it would significantly enhance the area and promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport if Whitehouse Lane as far as Clarke Street were closed to motor vehicles for the short stretch alongside the Green (option 1). It would block off a rat run. It would enhance the Green itself, and pedestrian routes towards Windmill Hill and Bedminster station. It would also prepare the way for the ambitious plans that have been discussed before to change the orientation of Bedminster Station so that the main entrance was facing north.

This option seems to have been rejected based on the likely traffic movements to/from Windmill Hill. However, the main disadvantages put forward could be averted by creating filtered permeability at the Windmill tunnel, only allowing pedestrians and cycles to pass. Windmill Hill would remain fully accessible to residents via St John's and St Luke's Roads and the businesses around Whitehouse Lane would remain fully accessible via Philip Street and York Road. This would create a Liveable Neighbourhood on Windmill Hill, promote walking, cycling and public transport and eliminate rat-running. It would also reduce some of the traffic on Bedminster Parade which is a bottleneck at peak and delays buses.

If the closure option is rejected, it is important that the crossing from the Green towards Windmill Hill and Bedminster station gives pedestrian (and cycle) priority. Part of the proposals include "traffic management measures" in Windmill Hill - not just parking restrictions, and by closing the Windmill Hill tunnel to motorised traffic many of those traffic management aims might be achieved.

Access to buses

It is not clear if the new northbound stop on Malago Road is entirely replacing or supplementing the East Street northbound stop. Assuming that the East Street stop remains, then the proposals do not include enhancing the most direct walking links to the current East Street bus stop via Church Lane, the old cemetery and Church Road. Even if the East Street bus stop does not remain, this would remain a pedestrian desire line along with other roads leading to East Street as that is the main shopping/high street (also used for pedestrians heading to Cannon Street or North Street). Although bringing the north and southbound stops closer together on Dalby Ave, the proposals will potentially add to delay on northbound buses if they no longer go via East St. The proposals for a new bus lane along Malago Road will take a lot of financial resource and space and likely deliver a slower service and not address the main delay which is further north on Bedminster Parade. At peak times it is possible to miss a northbound metrobus at East Street by up to 4 minutes and been able to catch it on foot at either Parade or Redcliffe Way. Bedminster Parade needs bus improvements.

Walking links further afield

We support the proposed walking route north via Clarke Street and Stillhouse Lane. The route is not currently very pedestrian-friendly, and we look forward to seeing plans to improve it.

The documents fail to fully consider the implications for the pedestrian environment further afield, to/from the city across Gaol Ferry Bridge, but the Transport Assessment part 2 (p8) does acknowledge that the development will generate many walking trips from Warden Road to the Gaol Ferry Bridge. BWA agrees with BCC's assessment that this route is substandard. This has been partially acknowledged in the draft LCWIP. It is critical that this route is enhanced and current patterns of walking behaviour and routes are more fully assessed than has been done in the Transport Assessments (TA1 and TA2). The focus of the TAs (and the LCWIP) is the road network, but pedestrian flows tend to seek shortcuts such as up Acraman's Road and through St Paul's graveyard (maintained by BCC) to the Gaol Ferry Bridge, and up Whitehouse Lane/York Road to the Banana/Langton Street Bridge for Temple Meads. These routes need to be reviewed and improved. Perhaps the most serious issue for consideration is the capacity of the Gaol Ferry Bridge. It is already over capacity at peak and lacks space for two-way separated walking and cycling. It needs to have its width doubled or a new additional crossing needs to be built or both.

Comments on the Transport Assessment documents (walking topics and wider)

BWA feel that some false assumptions have been made in the TA1. Some journeys are currently made to/from Bedminster station with a change at Bristol Temple Meads and so these cannot just be dismissed.

It is not clear to BWA why pedestrian trips towards Bristol Temple Meads are assumed to use Bedminster Parade rather than the more direct (and more pleasant) route via Whitehouse Lane and the Banana/Langton Street Bridge. This route is acknowledged as the main route that students on foot will take and would inevitably be used by many other pedestrians.

The map in TA1 (Figure 3.2) showing existing walking and cycling provision seems to completely overlook the existing walking provision and also omits key cycling provision such as kerb-separated routes on Prince Street and elsewhere. No analysis of walking routes as currently exists has taken place, or if it has these have not been marked on the maps. This needs to happen and the appropriate map needs to be produced. The indicating the NCN 3 dated 2/18 is not applicable as this route has been closed for nearly two years due to collapse of Chocolate Path into the New Cut.

The bus trip assignment diagram in TA1 (Figure 7.4) is wrong as northbound passengers are not shown to return home to the Dalby Avenue southbound stop. They seem to have been wrongly assigned to the northbound stop at evening peak.

The car trip assignments in TA1 appear to be unrealistic if Whitehouse Lane remains open. If it is open then people will continue to use it at peak to avoid congestion on the A38/ Bedminster Parade.

In the second TA assessment document, it is stated (p8) that improvements will be made to the crossing facilities at the junction at the exit of Windmill Hill and Whitehouse Lane. Whatever the eventual solution for Whitehouse Lane, this improved crossing needs to be on the pedestrian desire line with walking and cycling priority. This could take the form of a continuous footway or parallel crossing.

Little Paradise car park: at first sight, it would seem wrong to build a new car park, but BWA welcomes the proposal to consolidate car parking in one place, so people don't go from one area to another to find a free space which increases air pollution and the additional circulating traffic is detrimental to the walking environment. Having the parking within a short walk from East Street seems appropriate. It is noted that the overall number of parking spaces has been reduced by a

modest amount and this is in line with the One City Climate Strategy to reduce car miles by 40% by 2030. Reduction in motorised traffic enhances the walking environment. It is multi-storey, but at three storeys (with the top storey not covered) this does not seem too overbearing.

We have a number of suggested improvements:

- With a significant increase in motorised traffic proposed for Little Paradise due to both the increased car park capacity and the extending of Leicester Street, the footways need to be improved so the pedestrian environment between Malago Road and East Street via this route is enhanced; the footway on the eastern side of the road is currently extremely narrow and should be widened
- It is unclear why the car park entrance is being moved from the east to the north side – this increases the distance that cars need to travel and takes them unnecessarily around a blind corner, causing many additional conflicts between turning vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists moving from Leicester Road to East Street; the car park entrance should not move
- The inclusion of a lift adds additional height, significant cost and takes a lot of space. Why is this necessary in addition to the stairs? Fully accessible parking spaces can be provided on the ground floor and those using the first and second floors can easily walk down using the stairs
- It is important that the car park is visually acceptable to the owners of properties that surround it. Living walls on each side could provide a welcome green addition to this area and could turn a potential eyesore into another community asset, with the car park operators taking responsibility for watering and the associated costs coming from parking revenue – green infrastructure also makes the walking environment more attractive
- The impact on the residents of St Catherine's Court (also owned by BCC) due to loss of light due to these proposals should be fully explored and the walkway here on the south side of the car park needs to be well lit so that it is perceived as safe by those on foot – it is concerning that this walkway will no longer be overlooked from the north and is therefore a safety concern for pedestrians

Malago improvements: BWA supports the plans to open up more of the River Malago, which will create a more pleasant walking environment where it coincides with walking routes. The water volumes are low, and the proposals seem to take account of this. The proposals need to make clear who will be responsible for maintaining twice-a-year the proposed changes relating to the Malago and areas bordering it – is that the Council or the developers? The treatment of the Green is interesting with half given over to a flood mitigation scheme and the creation of an amphitheatre as a performance space. The latter would appear to be a welcome new community asset which could be a pleasant destination for leisure walking. At other times the seats could provide resting places for those who need to sit down for a while.

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