

Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA) supports retaining the trial closures of Cotham Hill to motor vehicles. Our comments mainly relate to the details of how a permanent scheme can most effectively be implemented. We encourage poor usage of the space to be designed out whenever possible.

What we support

We support the following, as shown in the consultation options A and B:

- Making the motor access closures along Cotham Hill permanent.
- The extension of the southern closure to the junction with Abbotsford Road.
- The widening of the footway on the south-west side of the southern closure - and removal of the hospitality structures that currently block it.
- Making a School Street in Aberdeen Road near St Peter & St Paul Primary School.
- Providing continuous footways at the junctions of Cotham Hill with Whiteladies Road, Hampton Park and Abbotsford Road.
- Adding disabled parking bays at the Cotham Hill ends of Hampton Park (x1) and Abbotsford Road (x2), and keeping the one at the end of Aberdeen Road.
- Increasing the number of street planters.

Though not shown in the consultation document, following discussion with officers we also support the following:

- Replacing the current access ramps with dropped kerbs and tactile paving. This should allow access from either footway to either end of each section of traffic-free road.
- The provision of a recycling and bin store on the roadway between the two traffic-free sections. This should prevent the need for bins to be left on footways. We hope this can be suitably landscaped, for example with panels and/or planters at each end, both to contain the space and to improve its appearance.
- Tightening the free space between the two traffic-free sections, including using kerbing, planters, street trees or similar immovable obstacles, as far as vehicle tracking will allow. This is to minimise the opportunities for parking and so reducing dependence on enforcement that relies on under-resourced teams.

Where we have concerns

We have reservations about how the following will be implemented:

- The footway space on the corner of Cotham Hill and Hampton Park.
To prevent the accessible footway being reduced in width to less than 1.8m, we suggest any areas used for hospitality or vending need to be demarcated, perhaps by contrasting colour, so that the space that must be kept clear for pedestrians is obvious to vendors and to customers. The continuous footway could possibly be extended further into Hampton Park to provide more space, allowing both an area for businesses spilling out on to the pavement and safe passage for pedestrians.
- The extent of footway widening.
The option text says 'Footways will be widened throughout the traffic free area where

possible'. In addition to the one section of footway highlighted for widening, we would like to see all footways be at least 2m wide, or if other constraints prevent this, an absolute minimum of 1.8m wide.

- The avoidance of sharp dips frustrating accessibility.
Where the road has a significant camber, care needs to be taken near dropped kerbs, including those next to disabled parking spaces, that there are no sharp dips that can make access difficult for those in wheelchairs and mobility scooters or for those pushing buggies or trolleys.

What further measures we would like to see

We additionally suggest:

- Aiming to reduce the occurrence of collisions at the junction of Aberdeen Road with Cotham Hill through careful design of junction geometry and signage. There is currently conflict between (1) the pedestrian desire line across Cotham Hill (e.g. to and from the school on Aberdeen Road), (2) the cycling contraflow and (3) the turning movements of motor traffic from Aberdeen Road into Cotham Hill - from both sides.
- Providing continuous footways at the junctions of Cotham Hill with Aberdeen Road, West Park and Woodland Road.
- Providing spaces for future e-scooter parking, as well as cycle parking, on the road rather than on the footway (as currently seen on the footway by the junction of Cotham Hill and Aberdeen Road).
- Planting trees where space allows at street corners or at ends of the traffic-free areas.

Several of the above comments suggest that having a welcoming, accessible pedestrian environment often depends on the details of implementation. BWA would welcome being involved when detailed designs are being prepared for the chosen option in the coming year.

The consultation process

We would like to reiterate our concerns about the way this consultation was presented. For example: two of the options are almost identical, except for making West Park one-way (for which there is no explanation); the changes to Aberdeen Road, including the School Street provision, are included in all options; the descriptions of the options are therefore repetitive, but have textual inconsistencies.

It would have been much better to highlight the proposed changes so that comments could be made separately. For example:

- Should Cotham Hill continue with motor access closures, or should it be made one-way?
- Should West Park be made one-way?
- Should Aberdeen Road be made one-way with a School Street section?

In addition, the option plans are too small to easily read the text or see details (e.g. disabled parking bays). It should be straightforward to allow the plans as drawn to be shown enlarged when viewing the website.

Bristol Walking Alliance

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