

Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA) generally supports the improvements being proposed for Park Row and adjacent streets in the current consultation. However, we have reservations over the details of their implementation.

Support

BWA supports the proposed improvements that will make it easier for pedestrians to walk around this area of the City. In particular, we support:

- A new lights-controlled crossing of Park Row by the junction with Woodland Road.
- A new lights-controlled crossing of Park Row by the junction with Lower Park Row.
- The narrowing of the junction mouth at the bottom of St Michael's Hill.
- A single-stage lights-controlled crossing in front of the BRI main entrance.
- A raised table and build-out providing an improved crossing of Colston Street on the route to and from Christmas Steps.

Reservations

We have reservations over some of the details of the proposed measures, as detailed below.

1. Woodland Road junction

The plans show the removal of the existing pedestrian island in the centre of Woodland Road and its replacement by an island offset to the west. This means pedestrians will have to cross a 10m gap and negotiate, in a single stage: traffic turning into Woodland Road from two directions, traffic exiting Woodland Road, and a second downhill cycle lane. It is not clear that the re-sited island will improve vehicle turning movements, given as the justification for this change. In particular, vehicles travelling east along Park Row and turning into Woodland Road will have to negotiate a much sharper turn.

2. Bus stop boarders with cycle bypasses

There is potential danger to pedestrians when crossing the cycle bypass to board or alight from a bus at one of these stops. This is particularly the case for bus passengers using a wheelchair, or with a buggy or trolley who may need to approach perpendicular to the roadway since their turning ability is restricted on the narrow pedestrian boarding platform. It will therefore be important that:

- (i) The cycle bypass is at pavement level, to avoid pedestrians also having to negotiate two extra kerbs when boarding or alighting.
- (ii) It is made clear to cyclists that pedestrians have priority on the bypass, for example by using a differently coloured or marked surface for the bypass cycle lane at this point. This will be critical for the vision impaired who will have no indication of the existence of the cycle bypass by either kerb or tactile paving.

3. Single-stage crossing outside BRI main entrance

We accept that the central island for this 'single-stage' crossing cannot be removed for various reasons (including providing a space for vehicles beyond the crossing turning in to the BRI and space for vehicles before the crossing making way for ambulances). It will be important that the time allowed for pedestrians is sufficient for them to cross both lanes and the island in one movement. This will be particularly the case for the vision impaired, who should be given indication of the location of the island by tactile paving on both of its edges.

Consideration could be given to providing a countdown timer to give pedestrians guidance on how much remaining time is available to cross.

4. Cycle incursion into footway opposite Lower Maudlin Street

It is proposed to introduce an incursion into the footway, reducing its width to 1.97m, opposite the end of Lower Maudlin Street. This is in order to allow cycles to wait to turn right and go over the lights-controlled crossing into Lower Maudlin Street. This interruption to the footway kerb along Upper Maudlin Street, with a 50mm cycle kerb upstand, is likely to be a hazard to the vision impaired. This is particularly the case as it is close to the pedestrian crossing point and also to a reduction in width on the inner side of the footway due to the building line at this point, which reduces the effective footway width to 1.5m.

Further suggestions

We also suggest the following should be included in the proposals.

- Provide a continuous footway across the Lodge Street junction.
- Relocate disabled parking bays from the top end of Lower Maudlin Street, where they are currently on a slope that is too steep for wheelchair access from the footway, to a less steep section of the road.
- Widen the footway outside the shops on the south side of Colston Street between the new table crossing and Upper Maudlin Street, and move the parking to the other side of the road so that the pavement feels less enclosed.

Bristol Walking Alliance
16 January 2022

enquiries@bristolwalkingalliance.org.uk