

Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA) believes the design of the public realm around the Temple Quarter developments is crucial to creating an accessible, effective and pleasant place for people. We set out the key improvements we would like to see as part of these developments.

BWA is a consortium of organisations and individuals campaigning to improve Bristol's walking environment. We want to create an environment for pedestrians that is welcoming, safe, convenient and inclusive.

This is our response to the consultation on the draft **Bristol Temple Quarter Development Framework** (TQDF), based on the document of that name published in January 2023. We understand that some of the proposals are still at an early stage, but believe there are certain essential components that must be designed into the future plans.

We support the guiding principles set out in the framework. A good pedestrian environment is particularly associated with the principles of 'Integrated and Connected' and 'Quality Spaces'. We would like to be involved at later stages as more detailed plans emerge.

We make our comments under these headings:

1. Pedestrian access to Temple Meads station.
2. Pedestrian routes to/from Temple Meads station.
3. Pedestrian access to bus services at Temple Meads Station.
4. Provision of public toilets at Temple Meads Station.
5. Wayfinding.
6. Pedestrian routes within St Philip's Marsh.
7. Green spaces within St Philip's Marsh.
8. Design of pedestrian routes.

1. Pedestrian access to Temple Meads Station

We understand that the planning work for Temple Meads station has been running for several years, and that the major decisions have been made. But the remaining detail is important.

We welcome the proposals for better pedestrian access to Temple Meads Station. This includes a major new entrance concourse on the northern side, a vehicle-free space beside the current main entrance, access from the university campus via a new eastern entrance, and a new approach over the railway bridge from the new southern transport gateway.

In particular, we would expect to see the following:

- Direct, step-free, shallow ramped access between Brunel Way and the northern concourse entrance.

- Step-free public access (not just for railway travellers) across the railway bridge between the station and the new southern transport hub.

We would have liked to also see greater permeability from one side of the station to the other. Unfortunately we understand (as per section 6.6.7) that the proposed new eastern entrance from the university campus will be for rail travellers only. With the further development of St Philip's Marsh, which includes significant new residential accommodation, there will be greater demand for pedestrian routes from the east into the city centre, so this decision is regrettable.

2. Pedestrian routes to/from Temple Meads Station

We understand that the Council has responsibility for highways, and therefore the TQEZ project does not control all the access routes to the station, including road crossings. But the project can play an important role in influencing the Council's priorities.

While immediate access around the station is to be improved, it is less clear that the pedestrian routes leading to and from the station will be improved.

2.1 Routes from the south and west

Routes from the south and west are poor and currently involve walking alongside or crossing very busy roads.

In particular, the shared pedestrian/cycle infrastructure between Temple Meads and Three Lamps junction along the A4 is one of the worst in the city.

We noticed that Figures 79 and 88 show a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the River Avon parallel to Bath Bridge. However, during our recent walkabout in the area, we learned that this is not in fact part of the current thinking – it should be!

In addition, discussions should take place with Network Rail on how it might be possible to provide in the future an additional pedestrian route alongside the existing A4 road bridge over the railway lines.

The new single-stage crossing of the north end of Temple Gate, along the route of Brunel Way, is an improvement. However, the current pedestrian crossings at the foot of the station ramp are tortuous and send pedestrians along an unpleasant central reservation away from the desire line.

The crossings at the southern end of Temple Gate, on the north side of the Bristol Bridge gyratory, are also staggered and not segregated from cyclists. With the expected increase in active travel, these crossings need to be improved.

A new pedestrian connection is shown in Figure 88 running alongside the river and linking Bath Road to the new southern entrance to the station. ***However, this does not align with any of the Bath Road crossings and so is ineffective.*** It would be better to continue the proposed pedestrian route beside the railway over the river southward alongside the railway lines and behind the new car park to connect with the pedestrian crossing to the south-east of the Bath Bridge gyratory. This would also connect with the main pedestrian/cycle route into the Mead Street area.

2.2 Routes from the north

The majority of passengers on foot will approach the station through the north entrance. The route from Brunel Way looks set for major improvement once the current car park area is redeveloped, which is very welcome.

The treatment for the pedestrian access routes from other directions needs more detailed consideration. We note several references in Section 6.6.3 to improvements for the routes to the northern entrance; they seem to be on the right lines, but we would like to be involved when the details are discussed.

We welcome the suggestion that the 'shared space' loop will be removed at the northern end of the Friary. We note both the private car drop-off point on Temple Back East, and the requirement for servicing access beyond that on to the Friary. The enforcement of the restriction of private cars on to the Friary will need to be robust, perhaps using ANPR cameras. Similarly for private cars coming east along the eastern arm of The Friary, there needs to be effective enforcement to stop them going beyond the roundabout.

3. Pedestrian access to bus services at Temple Meads Station

A key part of providing an integrated transport interchange must be to enable easy transfer between trains and buses. Ease of transfer includes having short, sheltered, well-understood routes involving minimal road crossings.

No bus stop should be more than a 200m walk from the station entrance.

Currently to get from platforms 13/15, used by most London trains, to the northbound bus stop for the number 1 and 2 bus services is a walk of over 550m including crossing a major road.

Bus stops are spread out in several directions, making it particularly hard for visitors to identify where to go. Access to bus stops would preferably be by covered walkways, at least for most of the distance, to ease transfer between public transport modes even in poor weather.

We note that Figure 80 shows a northbound bus stop at the foot of the current station ramp. This may be an error, but, with the addition of a single-stage pedestrian crossing of Temple Gate, this would be a much better alternative to the stop on Victoria Street.

4. Provision of public toilets at Temple Meads Station

We understand that Network Rail will be providing public toilets, which are accessible without the need to purchase a rail ticket, in the new northern concourse. This is an essential facility given the importance of this as a major transport interchange.

We would also strongly suggest additional public toilets are provided as part of the southern transport hub.

There should be 'Changing Places Toilets' for disabled people as part of the provision.

5. Wayfinding

We are pleased to see that the TQDF document (section 6.5.4) considers the need for effective wayfinding information at an early stage, rather than as an afterthought, and note Figure 80 showing potential locations of 'monoliths'.

However, wayfinding is not just about signposting. It is made much easier if the routes to significant destinations are direct and uncluttered. Difficult routes may need continuous guidance through ground markings or surface treatments.

We think the waterway route from the station towards Castle Park, Broadmead and Old City is under-used because it is difficult to find, and wayfinding could help people to find it.

6. Pedestrian routes within St Philip's Marsh

We understand that the plans for St Philips Marsh are the least well-defined, that the timeline for it extends over 10-30 years, and that the project team will work on a Development Framework in parallel with developing Temple Meads.

It is clear that the St Philip's Marsh area will need strong planning guidance if it is to achieve the desired goals. We are already aware of developers making ad hoc plans in the absence of an overall masterplan.

The current framework identifies the riverside walking/cycling route as a key element. It will be critical that this is improved to modern standards (LTN 1/20), providing segregation between pedestrians and cycles/scooters. We see this fitting in well with future flood prevention measures along the riverbank, but only if the building frontages along the riverbank are pulled back from the current building line. At present, there is no oversight of the river path from the buildings adjacent to it, and any redevelopments should remedy this.

There is a potential pedestrian bottleneck where the riverbank path exits onto Feeder Road / Cattle Market Street. Currently it would be necessary to pass by the proposed university bus stops and enter through the university campus to reach the new harbour walkway. At peak times of student movement it could be expected that this route will be congested. Consideration should be given to a more direct connection along the edge of Totterdown Basin.

We would strongly support the provision of additional pedestrian bridges across the River Avon and the Feeder Canal as shown in Figure 179.

There should be additional primary and secondary traffic-free walking routes through the centre of the St Philip's Marsh area as well as those shown around the perimeter, in order to meet the 'Integrated and Connected' guiding principle.

7. Green spaces within St Philip's Marsh

Section 2.5.9 on public realm and green infrastructure provides a good analysis of the need for more open space, and better and more accessible open space, in St Philips Marsh. We note section 10.6.4 Public Realm and the Built Environment, which lists possible key open spaces. The list relies on the riverside, Sparke Evans Park and Netham Park as the only large open spaces. All these large spaces are on the periphery of the area.

Given the development pressures, we think that it will also be critical to allow for adequate public parks and green spaces within the St Philip's Marsh area, distributed to be close to residential developments, in order to meet the 'Quality Spaces' guiding principle.

8. Design of pedestrian routes

We suggest a more detailed plan is produced of significant pedestrian routes in the TQDF area than that shown in Figure 79.

The Bristol Central Area Plan of 2015 identified primary and secondary pedestrian routes (shown in TQDF Chapter 2 Figure 26) and set appropriate standards for each category.

This approach should be applied to the pedestrian routes around Temple Meads, across to St Philip's March, and out to the surrounding districts that border the development area.

Given the large amount of development proposed in the Temple Quarter area, we strongly recommend analysis is carried out of future potential pedestrian flows, similarly to the way vehicle flows are modelled. This should take into account the significant increase in residential population in the area and the desire for a greater switch to active travel to mitigate the climate crisis.

The design of pedestrian routes, in terms of width, lighting, accessibility, crossings etc. should be based on these future potential flows and the way they relate to pedestrian comfort in the urban environment (c.f. guidelines used by Transport for London), in order to meet the 'Quality Places' guiding principle.

BWA will be keen to get involved in the next, more detailed, level of consultation which we hope will address the issues we have raised.

Bristol Walking Alliance
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