

Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA) offers our response to the current proposals from the perspective of Bristol pedestrians. We regret that the proposals for the A4 do not cover the section between Bath Bridge and Three Lamps junction in Bristol.

Background

When it was first proposed that the bus corridors around Bristol should be the subject for highways improvements, we were pleased to see that walking and cycling were a significant focus alongside buses.

When we gave our initial comments on the A4 Bristol to Bath Corridor Improvements in September 2021 [1], we highlighted a set of general measures we would like to see included and identified some areas for specific improvements.

Areas highlighted for pedestrian improvements included the section between Bath Bridge (which spans the New Cut by Temple Meads) and Three Lamps junction and the section along Brislington Hill.

Current proposals

The current proposals have been developed in more detail for the part of the route in the Bath & NE Somerset Council area, particularly for walking and cycling. However there are some significant changes within the Bristol council area (our focus) that deserve comment.

The consultation asks for views on three options. All three options will improve the pedestrian experience at Brislington village centre, which we support. We would not rule out either of the longer-term options, but we recognise that both involve some difficult trade-offs on which it is difficult to judge.

Overall, we support moves to improve bus services and to reduce the detrimental effects of through traffic in residential areas. While we do not have an opinion on the best route for through buses, we see potential benefits for local pedestrian movement. We also fully support the segregation of cycle routes from footways.

At this stage of development, the proposals include very few improvements specifically for pedestrians. We assume that later more detailed proposals will do so, and we reiterate the comments we made in our response to the consultation in 2021, for instance improved crossings of side junctions and better pedestrian crossings. The two longer-term options would lead to less traffic and a calmer environment for pedestrians along much of the A4, which we would support.

Brislington Hill

We would welcome either of the longer-term options which propose removing through traffic (except buses) from Brislington Hill. We are also pleased to see the replacement of the pedestrian overbridge here with a signal-controlled street-level crossing, as we suggested in 2021. This should make Brislington village a much more pleasant place for walking.

Lodekka to Three Lamps

In Option 1, this section of the route would have through traffic removed (except buses) providing a better local walking experience. However, this is at the expense of the current green space for walking provided by the former railway line.

In Option 2, there would be little change to the amount of traffic along this section, and so little change to the walking experience. Rerouting buses along the railway line between Sandy Park Road and Eagle Road might make catching a bus more difficult in this area.

Three Lamps to Bath Bridge

We still believe the section of the A4 Bath-Bristol route between the Three Lamps junction and Bath Bridge (over the Avon New Cut) should be within scope for these proposals. The narrow footway on the east side of this road is currently shared between pedestrians and cyclists. It is woefully inadequate for the amount of walking and cycling traffic it supports.

The map showing the proposed Three Lamps junction for Option 1 seems to indicate that it would allow a new cycle lane to replace one of the current southbound traffic lanes along this stretch. This segregation of cycling from the footway is sorely needed, though it is not mentioned in the accompanying text or the questionnaire.

[1] **Response by Bristol Walking Alliance to the A4 Bristol to Bath Corridor Improvements Consultation**, 10 September 2021 (<https://bristolwalkingalliance.org.uk/2021/09/10/a4-bristol-bath-corridor/>)

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