

Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA) supports the aspirations for improving the public realm that are part of the Frome Gateway Regeneration. We welcome many aspects of the Framework, but have a few concerns.

Positive Objectives and Proposals

We support the regeneration objectives that are relevant to improving the public realm:

- Improved connectivity
- Amenity space
- Green infrastructure
- River Frome restoration
- Health and wellbeing

In particular, we welcome the following specific proposals:

- Prioritise pedestrian and active travel movement to improve walkability
- New crossings over Newfoundland Way and the River Frome
- Enhancements to Pennywell Road to improve pedestrian safety and create a more attractive, green street with less traffic and lower speeds
- New public pedestrian route on north side of river lined with active uses, building frontages and views along Riverside Promenade
- Improved at grade pedestrian crossing across Newfoundland Way
- Network of streets which are attractive and safe for walking with active frontages and improved public spaces
- Pedestrian focused area with no vehicular access
- New River Frome Wildlife Walk on the east side of the river

Concerns

1. Shared use along riverside

As the area is developed, it should be expected that there will be more pedestrian traffic along the riverside. With promotion of active travel, there should also be more cycle/scooter traffic along Concorde Way. This makes it all the more important to reduce conflict between pedestrian and cycle traffic.

It would be preferable to have delineation of modes along the riverside, but it is not clear that this is easily achievable. Pedestrians are likely to want to both be near the greenery of the park and to be able to view the river (particularly with the suggested Riverside Promenade). Pedestrians will be there predominantly for health and leisure rather than travel purposes, whereas cyclists will be using this route for through travel. The mismatch of movements in terms of both speed and direction will be hazardous.

If, as proposed, the north end of the industrial zone could be used as a local distribution hub, the use of this route for cargo bike traffic would introduce a further hazard.

We suggest that Pennywell Road should have a properly segregated cycle route that would be designated as the main cycle commuter route into the city centre from Junction 3 and the future distribution hub. However, it would require a better southern connection.

2. East-West cycle route

If, as proposed, an improved bridge over Newfoundland Way will support both pedestrian and cycle traffic, it will be important that this is segregated.

Furthermore, the cycle route that connects from that bridge, through the south end of Riverside Park, across the existing bridge over the Frome and through the Peel Street Open Space to Pennywell Road should also allow segregation of pedestrians and cyclists.

Clear signage and surface markings will be needed, particularly at junctions, and especially where this east-west route crosses the north-south Concorde Way at the river. Pedestrians will potentially feel unsafe with the risk of cyclists coming from four different directions.

3. Wildlife walk

The new walkway along the east side of the river is welcome, particularly because it will be pedestrian-only, with greenery to promote nature and wellbeing.

However, it may take some time for sections of this walk to be completed, depending on the rate at which development takes place.

While oversight from new buildings can help make this a safer route, we have some concerns that excess height of adjacent buildings may overshadow it and make it less welcoming for both people and wildlife.

We ask that restrictions on building height and spacing are made to ensure adequate sunlight reaches this route through the year.

Bristol Walking Alliance

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