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Planning Application No. 13/03108/F to Bristol City Council: South Bristol Link Scheme
Planning Application No. 13/P/1204/F2 to North Somerset Council: South Bristol Link Scheme

21 August 2013

Dear Sir/ Madam

Bristol Cycling Campaign objects to the proposals laid out in the above Planning Applications on the following grounds:

- The schemes is not an appropriate transport solution for the current times as it will lead to creating environmental problems due to both increased motor vehicle usage and damage to the countryside area. Greener options such as rail could provide much greater benefits.
- The scheme has the same problems as the other “Metro Bus” schemes that we have also objected to in terms of poor return on investment; little benefit to non-motorised users; poor cycling provision
- We believe that there is a strong case for a cycle/pedestrian link connecting Long Ashton-Ashton Vale-Withywood-Hartcliffe, in its own right. This has been identified in earlier cycle network plans and we understand that Mr. John Grimshaw has suggested some alternative route options. This should be designed to link with origins and destinations and to minimise visual intrusiveness.
- We support comments made by other parties with respect to the need for quality cycling provision in any such scheme for it to go ahead.
- We have provided specific cycling comments on the proposed layout with reference to drawing numbers, in the attached pages.
- This response was produced to short timescales at a difficult time of year. Should the scheme be progressed we would want to have more detailed input and ongoing discussion.

Yours Sincerely
Martin McDonnell
Secretary, Bristol Cycling Campaign



SBL cycle/pedestrian provision

General comments

There are a number of general problems with the proposed provision, which falls well short of Bristol's 8-80 vision for cycling.

- A 3m width without a 0.5m buffer or verge alongside high speed roads offers inadequate protection from passing vehicles (draughts from large vehicles; spray; street furniture). In practise this 3m width is likely to be reduced by encroaching vegetation over time unless there is a very good maintenance regime. It appears that street lighting columns are randomly placed in the cycletrack in certain locations, which will create multiple hazards. We consider that a 3m width is inadequate in view of these factors, and expected future growth in cycling levels, particularly if the consultants' projected growth in employment is correct. Cycle Infrastructure Design states that 3m for unsegregated shared use should be regarded as a minimum (8.5.3). Also, Design Manual for Road and Bridges (Chapter 7) states:

7.22 It is desirable to provide physical separation between NMU routes and carriageways. For pedestrians and cyclists the preferred separation between the NMU route and the carriageway is 1.5m, with an acceptable separation of 0.5m. The higher value of 1.5m should, where possible, be used on roads with speed limits in excess of 40mph. If a hardstrip is provided, this can be considered as part of the separation. Where new routes are introduced, street furniture and all vegetation (except grass) within the separation distance should be removed or the verge widened.

- The detailed design and treatment, particularly as there are a number of junctions, is what might be expected for pedestrian provision rather than a purpose designed cycletrack for a commuter design speed (20mph, see table 8.1 Cycle Infrastructure Design). See table below for examples. The south Bristol section is stop-start in nature with 6 junction crossings and associated delays to cyclists and pedestrians, which will encourage people to use the road instead, which should therefore operate at 20mph. Throughout, cyclists and pedestrians are likely to experience greater delays at crossing points than motorised users, giving an inbuilt incentive to use cars
- The case of lighting the road on the rural section is low (due to visual impact, cost and on-going energy use). However lack of lighting will discourage cycle and pedestrian use, and therefore some form of lower key lighting should be implemented.
- The cycle and walking provision will need to tie in with both existing and planned (strategic) networks, which will require a comprehensive review of existing and new signing. We find no evidence of this being provided.
- A separate cross-country cycletrack linking up with local communities would be preferred to this roadside cycletrack proposal.



Detailed comments

Page 5.1.5
The cycletrack needs to continue east of the Cater Road access to tie up with Malago Greenway connections. SBL should achieve continuity as it is doing for motorised traffic. This will involve dealing with the pinch point at the pedestrian bridge on this section.
There is no treatment to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross the Cater Road RAB jn, or for cyclists coming from Cater road to join the cycletrack
No separate access from the cycletrack to Lidl supermarket. Cycletrack stops at an arbitrary point at the mouth of the Lidl access
Access links from Selly Walk etc should have radii at jn with main cycletrack
Cyclists will be 'pinched' in the elongated central strip
Harelive Road : no cycletrack geometry on north side
Whitland Road and Old Whitchurch Lane offers a quiet route but there is no cycle link into it from the scheme
5. 1.4
No radii/effective geometry at Queens road jn
Multiple crossings of private drives King George Road-not clear how cycletrack priority and safety will be provided. Cyclists may well choose to us the carriageway, although median strip will ensure that they are pinched by traffic.
Sandburrows Road: no protection or proper geometry
Queens Road: no proper radii/geometry
Highridge Road is the natural extension of Malago Greenway towards Chew Valley. Traffic flows are light but traffic levels increase dramatically under this scheme, thereby ruining an existing NMU route.
Severance between housing to the E of SBL and the Common with uncontrolled crossings. The islands themselves will create pinch points for cyclists
5.1.3
Accesses to fields: proper geometry required to pull cycletrack back from the mouth of the jns
A38 2 stage Xing: should be a properly designed lead in to the crossings.
Bus stop to NW of A38 RAB: cycletrack not properly designed to sweep around the back of it.
Sections with vehicle restraint system: has additional 0.5m clearance been allowed?



Bristol Cycling Campaign comments on Planning Applications
Bristol No. 13/03108/F and North Somerset No. 13/P/1204/F2

5.1.2
On elevated section cyclists and pedestrians exposed to winds. What fencing etc is proposed?
At South Liberty Lane link jn, island doesn't appear to be wide enough
What are the ramp design gradients where cycletrack crosses the railway? Or is it proposed to use existing tunnel (lighting?). Plan not clear.
5.1.1
There doesn't appear to be an adequate arrangement for the cycletrack to link in with the AVTM maintenance track, with poor forward visibility on the bend
On the link to AVTM, the cycle route crossing is likely to be blocked when more than one bus n/b is stopping
The cycle/pedestrian route uses the farm accommodation crossing which is often muddy