

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL
CABINET**

25 MARCH 2010

Report of: Strategic Director - City Development

Title: **South Bristol Link – Major Transport Scheme Bid**

Wards: Hengrove, Bishopsworth, Hartcliffe, Bedminster

Officer Presenting Report: Alun Owen, Service Director Major Projects
City Development

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RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet endorse the proposals for the South Bristol Link, and approve the submission to the Department for Transport of a Major Scheme Bid for Programme Entry.

Summary

The West of England sub-region is promoting a transport strategy that includes the South Bristol Link (SBL) as a combined rapid transit, road and pedestrian/cycleway. The rapid transit component would link routes that are being progressed between Temple Meads and Ashton Vale, and between the North Fringe and Hengrove.

The local objectives of the scheme are to:

- a. facilitate regeneration and growth in South Bristol;
- b. reduce congestion in South Bristol and adjacent areas of North Somerset;
- c. improve accessibility from South Bristol to the city centre and to strategic transport links, including the trunk road network and Bristol International Airport (BIA).

The Joint Local Transport Plan (2005/6-2010/11) includes the SBL, and the scheme is included in draft Core Strategies of both Bristol and North Somerset Councils. The importance of the sub-region's integrated transport programme has been recognised by Government and South West Region, when they earmarked unparalleled transport funds for the West of England projects over the next 10 years.

The project is a key component of our integrated transport strategy for the West of England and underpinned by the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study which is geared towards maintaining Bristol's economic competitiveness and prosperity, in the face of growing transport congestion problems if no action is taken.

The scheme has a benefit:cost ratio of around four, which being above two, is in the DfT's 'high value for money' category. The initial funding split between North Somerset and Bristol City Council is 50% each. This will be reviewed as scheme costs are finalised.

Two rounds of public consultation have confirmed a wide range of views with broad-based support from local residents' groups and businesses, but with some concerns expressed from those residents perceived as most affected by the proposals. The proposed scheme has the support of the West of England Partnership, Joint Transport Committee, the business community, the South West Regional Development Agency and South West Councils.

If the bid for Programme Entry is successful then, subject to the satisfactory outcomes of the various legal matters referred to elsewhere in this report, scheme construction could start in 2014/15 and be completed in 2016/17.

The significant issues in the report are:

The total estimated cost of the Link is £50.4 m. Of this total, £47.3 m will be sought from the Department for Transport (DfT) with the balance from local developer contributions.

- If this Package is approved by the Department of Transport then it will be necessary to proceed to detail design
- Public Engagement (para 2)
- Development of the preferred option (para 3)
- The scheme (para 4)

1. Policy

Relevant policies in the Council's Core Strategy include:

BCS1, South Bristol, which identifies South Bristol as a priority focus for development and regeneration;

BCS8, Delivering a Thriving Economy, which refers to provision of employment land and addressing barriers to employment; and

BCS10, Transport and Access Improvements, which supports the delivery of infrastructure.

2. Consultation

Internal

Traffic Management

City Transport

Strategic and Citywide Planning

Economic Regeneration

Finance

Land and Property

Legal

Urban Design

South Bristol Councillors

External

In the years leading up to development of the preferred scheme there have been several relevant public consultation exercises. These have included:

- Three rounds of consultation and information supply in developing the wider transport strategy for the GBSTS (2004-2006);
- Two rounds of public consultation as part of the A38-A370 Link Road Study (2001);
- Consultation associated with development of Local Plans and Core Strategies for the two councils;
- Consultation regarding shortlisted options for the SBL, November-March 2009¹.
- Consultation on the preferred option, November-December 2009.

Consultation regarding shortlisted options invited people's views about different transport modes and their concerns about each. Responses were considered as part of the process of identifying the preferred scheme that was subsequently taken forward. More people favoured a combined rapid transit/highway scheme than any other option.

Given that previous consultation had covered issues such as mode preferences, attitudes to congestion and accessibility, and concerns regarding transport in the wider area, the second round of public consultation for SBL (November/December 2009) aimed to gather views on the preferred scheme.

¹ 'South Bristol Link Options Consultation Report' (BCC/NSC, June 2009). Can be found on the West of England website: <http://www.westofengland.org/transport/south-bristol-link>.

The consultation included distribution of over 6,000 postcards to households in affected areas, notices to local press and other media, and printing of 3,000 pamphlets and questionnaires distributed via local libraries, community centres and at three public exhibitions. 95 questionnaires were returned plus 91 responses via the web site and 92 letters from individuals, groups and businesses.

A summary report of the consultation is shown at Appendix A.

Opposition to the scheme was generally found from the people perceived as being most affected by the proposals, including residents of King George's Road and Long Ashton.

Groups who have written expressing opposition to the scheme include:

- Hands Off Long Ashton;
- Bristol Green Party;
- Malago Valley Conservation Group;
- Alliance Against South Bristol Ring Road;
- Friends of the Earth
- Cliftonwood & Hotwells Action for a Sustainable Environment
- Whitchurch Group of Save Our Green Spaces

The views of those who support the scheme are that it will improve access, help regenerate South Bristol, be good for local businesses and form a valuable component of essential infrastructure. Support for the scheme has come from over 60 businesses, including those at Imperial Park, Symes Avenue, Hengrove Park, Cater Business Park and Ashton Vale, as well as from individuals and neighbourhood groups in South Bristol.

Groups supporting the scheme include:

- GWE Business West
- South Bristol Business Group
- Withywood Community Forum and Park Group
- The University of Withywood
- Better Transport Links 4 South Bristol
- Highridge Neighbourhood Forum

Businesses generally believe this scheme will significantly improve the prospects of regeneration in South Bristol.

Some responses, including that from GWE Business West, seek consideration of potential need for dual carriageway road and higher capacity junctions. Others would favour a different alignment, further west for the section between A370 and Highridge Common.

3. Context

The SBL is one of several major transport schemes in the Joint Local Transport Plan [JLTP] that are being promoted by the West of England authorities. The schemes that would directly link with the SBL are the Ashton Vale – Bristol city centre Rapid Transit and the North Fringe-Hengrove Package. The SBL would link the A370 with the A38 and the A4174 at Hartcliffe Roundabout adjacent to Hengrove Park.

The local objectives of the SBL are:

- To facilitate regeneration and growth in South Bristol;
- To reduce congestion in South Bristol and adjacent areas of North Somerset;
- To improve accessibility from South Bristol to the city centre and to strategic transport links, including the trunk road network and Bristol International Airport [BIA].

The schemes in the Joint Local Transport Plan form an integrated package of strategic measures geared towards addressing the transport problems of the West of England. The Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study, commissioned by the four local authorities, GOSW and the RDA, confirmed the need for such a programme of measures, including the South Bristol Link, public transport improvements, demand management, cycling and walking measures, to address the loss of productivity from congestion experienced by the sub-region at present (cost £300m per annum). The study forecast that without these interventions the congestion situation in Bristol would get far worse by 2026, leading to the city potentially losing its competitiveness.

On the back of this analysis, and given the importance of the Bristol “economic battery” powering the whole of the South West economy, the Regional Funding Allocation has included a huge programme of investment for the West of England over the next 10 years, and this scheme forms a major plank of that programme.

Projects have been brought forward in accordance with the overall programme, and the next crucial milestone is to submit bids for programme entry now, in spring 2010. Doing so will ensure the West of England retains its recently acquired reputation for delivery.

In October 2009 the Joint Transport Executive [JTEC] approved the concept of the South Bristol Link [SBL]; that is, a combined orbital highway and Rapid Transit with adjacent foot/cycleway between the A370 and Hartcliffe. Later the same month, the Executive Members (with responsibility for transport) of Bristol City and North Somerset Councils approved an ‘inner’ alignment as the ‘preferred’ option for public engagement in November and December 2009; this scheme is outlined in Figure 1.

On 4 February JTEC considered a number of public statements and officer presentation prior to discussing the scheme. Executive Members were supportive of the scheme going forward and unanimously endorsed the South Bristol Link. They recommended the bid to this Cabinet meeting and a meeting of the North Somerset Council Executive being held on 23 March.

Prior to consideration by JTEC there were several years of option appraisal, comprising:

- Review of the evidence base, including the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study (GBSTS, Atkins, 2006) and the A38-A370 Link Road Study (JMP, 2002);
- Developing a 'long-list' of potential options;
- Building a transport model to compare options;
- Distilling the long-list of options down to a 'short-list' of 5 options by considering how they performed against the project objectives and whether they would be deliverable and fundable;
- Comparing, appraising and reporting on the performance of the 5 options using Department for Transport [DfT] criteria;
- Public and stakeholder engagement (November to March 2009) and reporting on the opinions received;
- Collecting additional data and updated the transport model;
- Identifying a preferred option;
- Linking with the other major transport schemes in the Joint Local Transport Plan [JLTP] that are being promoted by the West of England authorities.
- Public and stakeholder engagement on the preferred option (November and December 2009);
- Bid preparation for submission to DfT (subject to Member approval).

4. Proposal

The preferred scheme is shown on Figure 1 and described from north to south, A370 to Hartcliffe:

The SBL Rapid Transit starts from the Long Ashton Park & Ride site. The single carriageway highway has a separate roundabout junction, with dedicated slip roads, with the A370 Long Ashton Bypass, south-west of the Park & Ride site. The latter is considered to be a better way of merging link road traffic with the A370, rather than combining it with

the heavy traffic on the B3128 (from Clevedon) and then merging with the A370; to do so would require the rebuilding of the existing A370/B3128/Park & Ride junction, which would add significant cost to the project (~£9m) and could have an adverse impact on the adjacent Ashton Court Estate.

The Rapid Transit and highway routes head south across Ashton Vale, merging at a junction that would provide access to South Liberty Lane; both routes are safeguarded in the North Somerset Local Plan as the 'blue' and 'red' routes respectively.

At the point where the Rapid Transit and highway meet a signal junction and a Rapid Transit stop (Brookgate) would serve South Liberty Lane. The combined Rapid Transit/highway then crosses underneath the main railway line, which requires a new bridge structure to permit two highways lanes, two Rapid Transit lanes and a foot/cycle way.

South from the railway bridge, the SBL climbs the Colliters Brook valley to a new junction with the A38, which requires a southbound highway climbing lane for slow vehicles.

The junction with the A38 would be a roundabout with partial signal-control to manage the interaction between general traffic and the Rapid Transit vehicles; some of which would continue along the SBL to Hengrove Park, others along the A38 to BIA. A Rapid Transit stop (Castle Farm) would permit interchange between BIA and Hengrove Park services.

South-east of the A38, the Rapid Transit vehicles would use segregated bus-ways in the centre of the route; the highway lanes would be on the outside and a parallel foot/cycle path would be provided. The SBL would cross the northern part of Highridge Common.

SBL leaves Highridge Common at the junction of Highridge Green/Highridge Road/King George's Road, which would be signal-controlled and with an adjacent Rapid Transit stop. SBL would follow Kings George's Road, which would be widened to 2-lanes for general traffic and 2-lanes for Rapid Transit with residents' parking and landscaping areas on both sides, a foot/cycle path on the north side and a footway on the south.

The SBL junction with Queen's Road and Hareclive Road would be signal-controlled, with adjacent Rapid Transit Stops; in between, the SBL would follow the safeguarded alignment and its layout would be similar to that on King George's Road. Beyond the Hareclive Road junction, the SBL follows Whitchurch Lane to the Hengrove Park roundabout with the same layout of general traffic and bus lanes. Crossing facilities would be provided to minimise severance. The Rapid Transit continues to a new terminus at the South Bristol Hospital to be built in Hengrove Park.

The SBL would build on the Rapid Transit that should be running between Ashton Vale and Bristol city centre by the time SBL is completed. The services using the SBL Rapid Transit route would comprise:

- A new service between the city centre - Ashton Vale – Hengrove Park, running every 18-minutes during the day, it would link with the proposed North Fringe – Hengrove Package Rapid Transit route;
- The BIA Flyer, running every 10-minutes, which with new vehicles, would divert from its existing route via the A38 to take advantage of the segregated, and more reliable route via Ashton Vale.

Public rights of way would be maintained, with diversions if required.

A package of complementary measures would be implemented with the SBL, comprising:

- Traffic management on the B3130 through Barrow Gurney to preserve the forecast traffic flow reductions;
- Traffic management on Kings Head Lane, Bishopsworth Road and Whitchurch Road to facilitate pedestrian crossings and improve safety;
- Improved traffic signal control through Cumberland Basin gyratory.

The scheme is anticipated to have a positive impact on the regeneration of South Bristol; to reduce congestion relative to the 'Do Minimum' scenario; and to improve accessibility from South Bristol to the city centre and to strategic transport links, including the trunk road network and BIA. More information on the performance of the scheme against the local objectives is summarised in Appendix B.

5. Other Options Considered

The Option Selection Process:

The option selection process was described in the report to the Joint Transport Executive [JTEC] Meeting of 1st October 2009; the main points are summarised below:

- The project has followed DfT's prescriptive guidance on the development and appraisal of major transport scheme bids;
- The project started with a wide range of options in terms of route alignments and modes (i.e. car, bus, Rapid Transit, rail);

- The project team undertook a first sift of options to leave five options that were appraised in more detail and were the basis for public/stakeholder consultation between November 2008 and March 2009;
- The five options shown in Figure 2 were assessed against DfT and local objectives, it was concluded that Options 4 and 5 (combined highway and Rapid Transit) performed best and should be taken forward, but enhanced with the highway component extended from the A370-A38 section to Hartcliffe as well (to help deliver better the local objectives);
- JTEC approved the enhanced Option 4 and 5 (Figure 3) for further assessment, following which the Executive Members (with responsibility for transport) of Bristol City and North Somerset Councils approved enhanced Option 4 (combined highway/Rapid Transit on an 'inner' alignment) as the 'preferred' option for public engagement in November and December 2009.

6. Risk Assessment

The main risks for this project are considered to be:

- Lack of sufficient RFA funding (scheme delayed or cancelled);
- Lack of local funding for preparatory costs (scheme delayed) ;
- Lack of local funding for the local capital contribution (scheme delayed);
- DfT delays in making decisions (scheme delayed);
- Changing political priorities (scheme delayed or cancelled);
- Difficulty in securing requisite statutory powers (scheme delayed);
- Need for utility diversions (increased cost);
- Cost overruns;
- Construction of railway under-bridge (increased cost, delay).

The main risks of not agreeing to the course of action as set out in this report are as follows:-

- Failure to secure RFA funding with subsequent damage to credibility and reputation for the City Council and sub-region, and consequent risks for future funding bids
- Failure to deliver the transport infrastructure that is needed to support the regeneration of South Bristol
- Failure to contribute to the policies identified in Bristol's Core Strategy

The action taken to mitigate these risks is:-

- Securing funding from councils' capital, developer contributions and other third parties
- Maintaining close liaison with DfT
- Engaging suitably experienced consultants
- Early and on-going discussion with Network Rail
- Following appropriate processes for planning applications, Side Road Orders, Traffic Regulation Orders, etc

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

One of the outcomes of the scheme will be enhanced transport infrastructure that will help contribute towards regeneration and the creation of job opportunities, which will be available for all sectors of the local community.

Through including provision for both rapid transit and road, the link caters for those who are reliant on a car as well as improving the travel opportunities for those without cars, people who currently have no public transport on the line of the link.

Consultation to date has been of a general nature in the sense that it has been undertaken without being specific to identifying possible equality issues. Further detailed Equality Impact Assessment work will be undertaken as the project progresses, especially in connection with planning applications. The Part 1 Screening Assessment is included as Appendix C.

8. Environmental Impact Assessment

Work completed to date indicates that the SBL should deliver long term environmental benefits for Bristol's carbon footprint and local air quality, and these outweigh the short term impacts outlined within the Eco Impact Assessment (Checklist at Appendix D). This is due to reduced congestion in other locations and the assumption of a modal shift from private vehicle to public transport. More detailed and comprehensive surveys and studies will be required to confirm these findings

The proposals include the following measures to reduce the impacts:

- Full Environmental Impact Assessment to be undertaken for the Scheme, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999.

- Mitigation to effect the emission of Climate Changing (Greenhouse) gasses.
- The construction of the Scheme should aim to achieve CEEQUAL (Civil Engineering Environmental Quality Assessment) “Very Good” standard as a minimum.
- The production of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, in accordance with the requirements of ISO14001.
- Mitigation to address Bristol's vulnerability to the effects of Climate Change.
- Mitigation to address the use of raw materials for construction and operation of the Scheme through a Scheme Sustainability Appraisal and the CEMP.
- Energy efficient, low-emission Rapid Transit fleet to be used.
- Mitigation to address changes in the appearance (townscape and visual impact) of the city.
- Mitigation to address the risk of land, air, water, noise and light pollution at the construction and operational stage.
- Mitigation to address impact on nature conservation and biodiversity at the construction and operational stage.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal The legal implications arising from the subject matter of this report are wide ranging and complex and will require careful management and co-ordination to ensure that when the project timetable is set, it can be delivered on time and on budget.

The City Council as the relevant highway authority and traffic authority for its area has numerous statutory duties and powers in respect of highway generally and traffic management. In this connection, it has policy objectives set out in the JLTP.

In order to deliver the proposal, use may be made of the usual planning permission procedures and, in appropriate cases, compulsory purchase powers. This will need to be progressed in tandem with North Somerset as much of the route lies within that Council's area. Since the proposed rapid transit component of the scheme does not involve the laying of physical apparatus in the public highway (e.g. rail tracks), there is no obligation to seek an order under the Transport & Works Act 1992.

In order to segregate or otherwise regulate part of the highway for the use of buses only, it will be necessary to promote traffic regulation orders. These also involve public advertisement of proposals. In addition, provision of pedestrian crossings requires publication of a statutory Notice also involving the invitation of objections. Whilst, in Bristol it is not anticipated that compulsory purchase will be needed, because the land is within Council ownership, in North Somerset the scheme involves acquisition of private land. This may involve compulsory purchase orders. It is almost certain that a Public Inquiry will be required and it is normal that a single inquiry takes place and considers the full range of objections that would be likely to arise from planning issues, and the various orders.

Timetables for bus services are registered with the Traffic Commissioner. The scheme will not involve the Council(s) setting timetables as such, but the measures outlined in this report should lead to the desired outcomes in terms of timely operation of services.

It should also be noted that there are special rules in connection with bridges carrying highways across railways and it will be necessary to liaise with the relevant railways authorities in this connection. Any affected public rights of way may require diversion by due statutory process including, for example, side road orders.

If the Green Belt is affected requiring planning permission in either the Council's or North Somerset's area, permission can only be granted in 'very special circumstances'. Whilst the routes have been safeguarded for many years in statutory plans of both North Somerset and Bristol, such development would constitute a departure from the Joint Structure Plan and national policy. The matter would need to be referred to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, and this matter would be considered as part of the Public Inquiry.

With regards the common land at Highridge Common, as part of it is required for the scheme, it will need to be partially de-registered. This involves making an application to the Secretary of State for Environment

Food & Rural Affairs (Defra). Whilst it is anticipated that equivalent exchange land can be provided - if objections are received, the public inquiry would need to be held before the application can be decided. It is possible that compulsory purchase powers may need to be exercised in order to secure exchange land.

Reference has been made in this report, to developer contributions to part fund the scheme. Such payments can be secured by way of planning agreements as part of the terms of the planning permissions in appropriate cases.

In the event of various approvals and consents referred to above being granted and the link road being constructed, there may be further issues such as compensation payments to adversely affected householders.

Detailed legal advice will be required for each stage of the delivery process.

Legal advice given by: P Malarby, Senior Solicitor
(Highway & Transport)

Financial

Revenue Following completion there will be revenue costs falling upon the City Council to maintain the carriageways and associated pedestrian and cycleways that will be met by existing budgets

Capital The total estimated implementation cost of the scheme is £50.4m, of which £ 47.3m will come from DfT's Regional Funding Allocation (RFA)

If the local contribution of £3.1m cannot be achieved through developer and sec 106 contributions it will be met from LTP allocations. The RFA allocation of £47.3m is fixed and therefore any increase on the above implementation costs would need to be funded by Bristol City Council and North Somerset. To mitigate this risk there is a contingency of £6m included within the Quantified Risk Assessment

The two Councils are required to fund all the pre programme entry feasibility costs estimated at £1.1m.

Post programme feasibility costs, to final approval, are estimated at £6.9m of which an estimated further RFA

contribution of £2.8m will be provided.

The balance of funding required for both elements of these feasibility costs will be met by the authorities on the basis of a 50/50 split between Bristol City Council and North Somerset. It is anticipated that developer contributions or LTP monies will provide this funding

Financial advice given by: Peter Barralet, Finance Team Manager (Major Projects)

Land Within Bristol, the scheme is mainly on land within Council ownership. The scheme crosses Highridge Common and replacement land may be on land that would need to be acquired from private landowners. In North Somerset the scheme is on land that is mainly in private ownership, which would have to be secured through agreement or CPO.

Personnel There are no personnel issues arising from this report.

Appendices: Appendix A - Summary Consultation Report

Appendix B – Performance against Scheme Objectives

Appendix C – Equalities Impact, Part 1 Screening

Appendix D – Eco Impact Assessment Checklist

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Background Papers:

South Bristol Link, Option Appraisal Report, Mott MacDonald, February 2009

South Bristol Link, Options Consultation Report, June 2009

Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study, Atkins, June 2006

A38-A370 Link Road Study, JMP, 2002

Joint Local Transport Plan (2006/07-2010/11)

South Bristol Link, Report to JTEC, 1 October 2009

South Bristol Link, Report to Joint Scrutiny, 22 January 2010

South Bristol Link, Report to JTEC, 4 February 2010

Figure 1: South Bristol Link Preferred Option

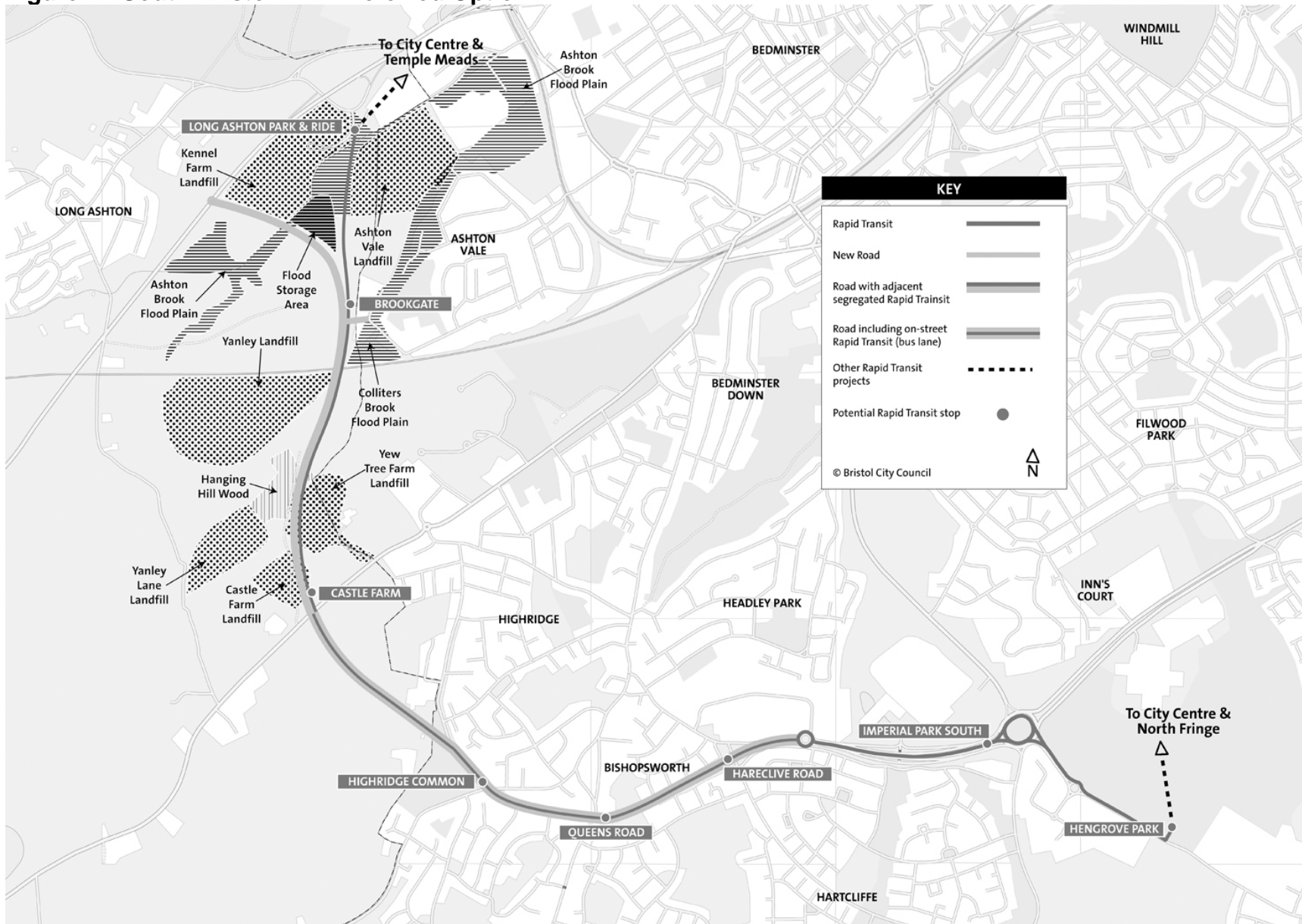


Figure 2: South Bristol Link Options, February 2009

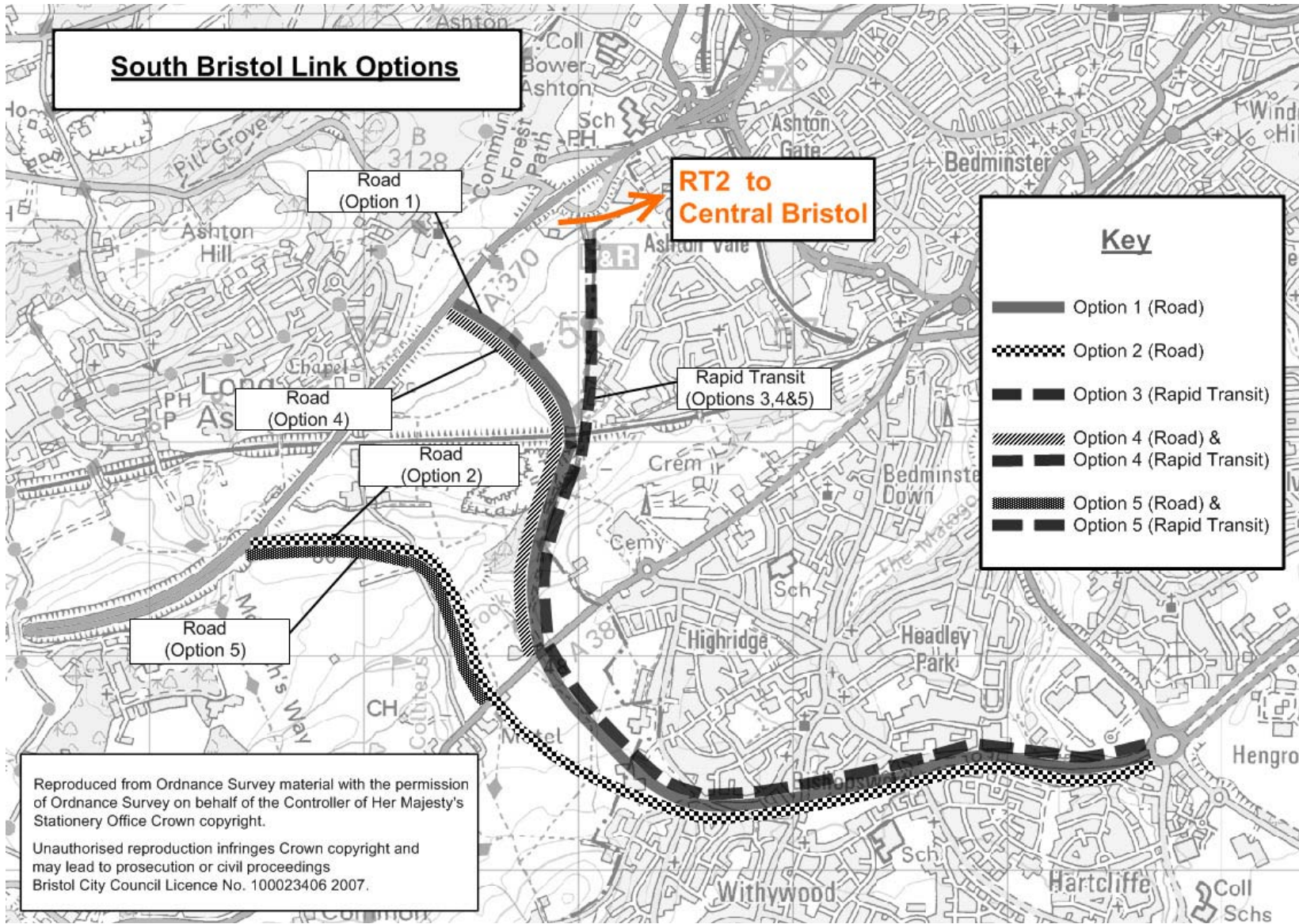
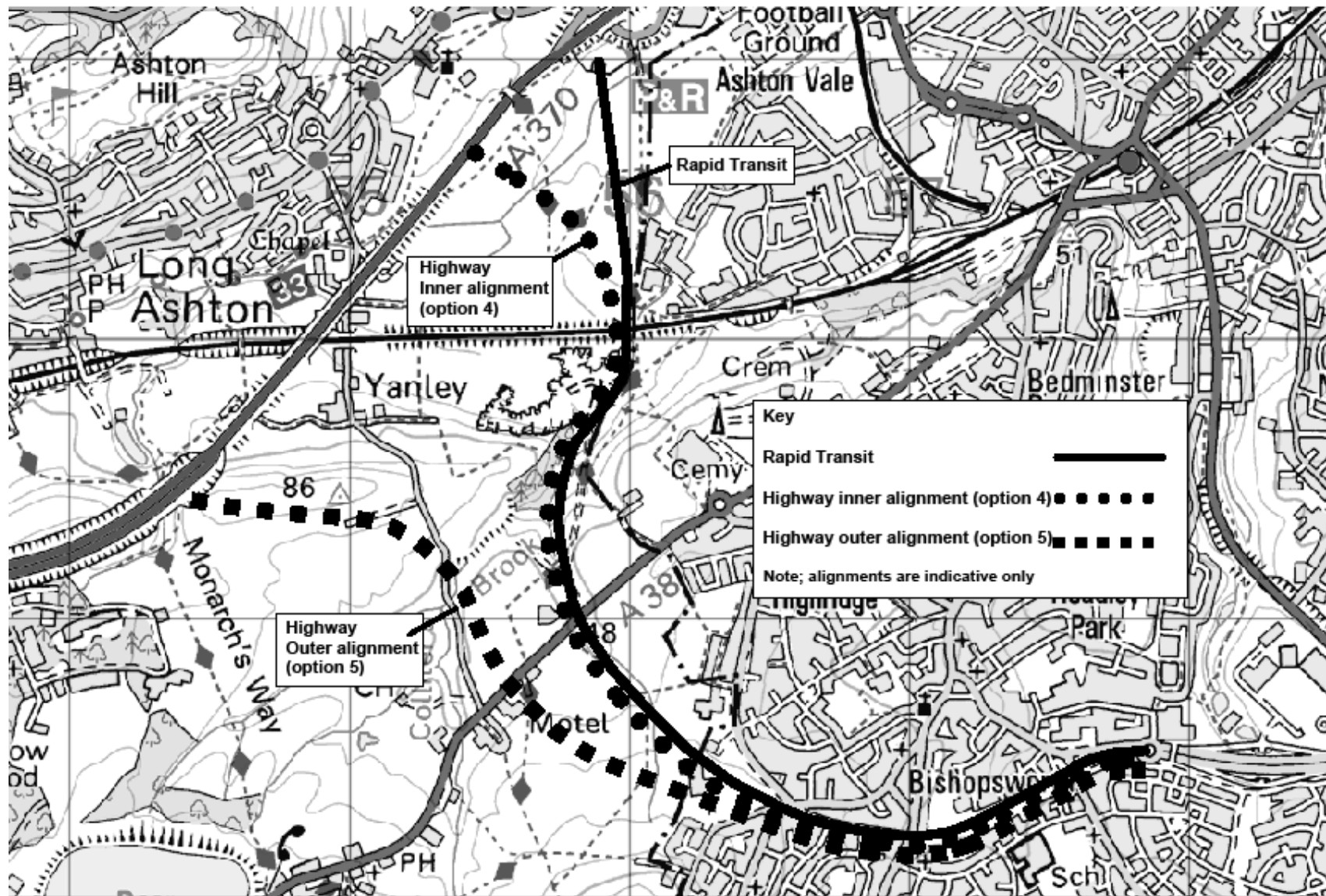


Figure 3: South Bristol Link Options for Further Appraisal, September 2009



Scheme Consultation - Summary

Introduction

The Preferred Scheme was developed following an extensive process of option appraisal. Previous consultation on the short-listed options was reported in June 2009, and was used to help develop the scheme that was the subject of the second round of consultation held in November/December 2009.

The scheme comprises a combined rapid transit and single carriageway road with adjacent cycleway and footways. Between the A370 and the A38 the rapid transit follows a segregated route and there is a link to Brook Gate and South Liberty Lane. South and east of the A38, the Preferred Scheme includes Rapid Transit on segregated busways in the centre of the single carriageway road and in residential areas, traffic islands are provided to enable safe crossing by pedestrians. The scheme was refined early in the consultation process to respond to people's concerns about severance and lack of prominence given to public transport.

Public consultation

In November 2009 a programme of public and stakeholder consultation was launched including a series of exhibitions and presentations, and through the publication and distribution of a consultation leaflet available at consultation venues and via the West of England Partnership website, as well as through Bristol and North Somerset websites. Throughout the consultation period, stakeholders and members of the public were invited to telephone, write or email with questions or comments about the proposal. Venues for public consultation were:

Exhibition Venues	Date
Geoff Cargill Hall, The Withywood Centre, Queens Road, Withywood.	Monday 2nd November 2009
Jubilee Pavilion, Long Ashton Community Centre, Keedwell Hill, Long Ashton.	Tuesday 3 rd November 2009
Ashton Vale Youth Club, Silbury Road, Ashton Vale.	Wednesday 4 th November 2009

Consultation was publicised through the distribution of over 6,000 postcards to households in affected areas along with notices to local press and other media. 3,000 pamphlets and questionnaires were printed and distributed via local libraries, community centres and at the three public exhibitions. From these, 95 questionnaires were returned. There were also 91 responses via the web site and 92 letters were received from individuals, groups and businesses.

Stakeholder Consultation

The exhibition programme was supported by a series of stakeholder meetings with local forums and interest groups, as tabulated below:

Date	Group
21 October 2009 & 29 January 2010	South West Bristol Advisory Group ¹
26 October 2009	Councillors & Parishes, North Somerset
29 October 2009	Local Ward Councillors, Bristol
16 November 2009	'Pride of Place' (@Symes, Hartcliffe)
10 December 2009	Better Transport Links 4 South Bristol
15 December 2009	GWE Business West
16 December 2009	Cater Business Park
29 January 2010	NRSWA, Co-ordination Meeting ²

Consultation Reponses

There were two forms of response:

- (a) 'Open Unstructured' responses from individuals and businesses, sent in by letter and email; and
- (b) 'Structured' responses to the consultation questionnaire submitted as hard copies and online.

Responses included letters and emails from:

- An MP and Dundry Parish Council, supportive in principle but seeking assurances regarding public transport
- 68 businesses and employers, including BIA, overwhelmingly supportive,

¹ Includes representatives of North Somerset Council and Parish Councils, Bristol City Council, Environment Agency, Highways Agency, Natural England, Avon & Somerset Constabulary, local developer interests

² New Roads & Street Works Act. Includes representatives of utilities companies, Environment Agency, Network Rail, transport operators

with some issues regarding points of detail and often concerned at time being taken to proceed

- Bristol Primary Care Trust strongly support the development of public transport services and improved infrastructure for walking and cycling, but oppose the building of road infrastructure, which they consider increases Bristol’s dependency on individual motorised transport.
- Business representatives, GWE Business West and Cater Road Business Park, some reservations over detail but want SBL built soon
- Local Interest Groups, including Hands off Long Ashton group (HOLA), Alliance Against the South Bristol Ring Road, Green Party, Malago Valley Conservation Group and others, opposed, mainly on environmental grounds
- Local Interest Groups, including Highridge Neighbourhood Forum, Withywood Community Forum and Park Group, and others, supportive mainly seeing the link as improving access for South Bristol
- Environmental Stakeholder Groups, including Natural England, the Environment Agency and Avon Wildlife Trust who will require further detail and mitigation measures as the scheme is developed
- Seven members of the public with views for and against

Responses were also received in nearly 190 returned questionnaires. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section asked four questions:

- 1) How will you benefit from the scheme?
- 2) How can the scheme benefit others such as businesses and local neighbourhoods?
- 3) What are the main concerns about the scheme?
- 4) How would you improve the scheme?

The second section asked for respondent’s place of work (if a business) or home postcode, to help indicate potential travel needs. Most of those opposed to the scheme live in southwest Bristol, especially King George’s Road, and in Long Ashton. Support is more widely distributed but with a large majority coming from locations in southwest Bristol.

The main issues raised in responses to consultation are summarised below:

	Benefits	Concerns	Improvements (suggested by one or more)
Business Community/ Major Employers	- improve transport links, - reduce congestion, - reduce journey times, - create better access for local people - encourage more businesses to the area - confidence in S Bristol	- disruptions during construction, - single carriageway may not be adequate - time taken to build - possible local bottlenecks	- dual carriageway, - extending it further to Hicks Gate roundabout - reduce the number of junctions.
Local Interest		- not improve journey	- need more details on

Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reduce congestion and pollution - easier traffic movements - provides better access - investment in S Bristol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> times - not aid in regeneration of South Bristol. - destroy green belt - increase carbon dioxide emissions, -loss of wildlife habitat - increased noise levels. - impact on King Georges Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cycle routes
Environmental Groups		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impact on landscape, biodiversity and the ability of people to access the natural environment. - financial and environmental cost - loss of ecological and green infrastructure value. - impact of the scheme on Highridge Common, Hanging Hill Wood and Colliter's Brook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -undertake Flood Risk Assessment - need full EIA
Members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reduce congestion - reduce travel times - better balanced transport system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - damage to the green belt -reduce travel times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - redesign specific junctions - extend route to Hicks Gate roundabout, M32 etc
Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - easier access for staff and deliveries, - congestion relief along other key routes - new employment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gaining planning permission, - delivery of the road, - speed limits, - alternative route preferred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -western A38-A370 route for highway preferred
Questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reduced traffic (less noise and danger) on some residential roads - congestion relief on important routes - better access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -severance / splitting communities - increase in congestion and pollution - few people using RT - loss of greenbelt - King Georges Road problems - adverse effect on passing trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need good affordable public transport - don't do it, rail scheme better - need dual carriageway - improve existing roads

Performance against Scheme Objectives

The performance of the scheme against the local objectives is summarised in the following paragraphs:

1. To facilitate regeneration and growth in South Bristol.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) reported in 2007 show that approximately one quarter of Lower Super Output Areas in the South Bristol Regeneration Area fall within the 10% most deprived in England. Since IMD 2007, unemployment rates have further deteriorated such that, for instance, male unemployment in Filwood and Hartcliffe has almost trebled in the past two years.

The SBL is being progressed as an integral part of a package of measures to support economic growth in the area and to improve access to new employment opportunities for local residents. It is considered critical that accessibility to existing employment and housing sites is improved in order to encourage developers and private sector organisations to invest in South Bristol.

Relatively poor transport connections between South Bristol and the wider strategic transport network are regarded by businesses to be a barrier to investment and hence job creation; similarly, poor connections hinder local people accessing employment opportunities. Better public transport helps the most people (including those without cars) to get to and from employment elsewhere, whilst better highways are considered more effective in encouraging local business to locate in the area. The preferred scheme, which combines both public transport and a new highway link, would therefore maximise the potential for regeneration and growth. Studies have shown that the job creation potential of a combined rapid transit/highways scheme is significantly greater than either on its own.

The scheme will lead to improved accessibility for ten key employment sites in South Bristol, and thereby contribute to the creation of some 4,000 to 5,000 jobs. This will also result in an overall improvement in the quality of jobs that will be created on these sites. In addition, the commitment to the SBL would be taken as a clear signal to the private sector that local and national policy makers are tackling the current poor perception of South Bristol's ability to address its economic problems.

2. To reduce congestion in South Bristol and adjacent areas of North Somerset.

Initial transport modelling shows that, on opening, the Rapid Transit service would carry around 200 passengers between Hengrove Park and central Bristol in the AM peak hour. This will increase significantly in the years after opening and as the sub-regional network grows. It will also increase in response to other transport initiatives and projected changes in the relative attractiveness of car travel.

Preliminary modelling of traffic flows for the AM peak hour at opening show improved conditions on some of the most congested links in the road network. Even small reductions in traffic flow translate into significant reductions in congestion. For 2031 the improvements are correspondingly greater. The forecast increase in traffic on King George's Road indicates traffic levels remain lower than on Kings Head Lane, a comparable local residential road.

AM Peak Hour, 2016	Do Nothing	With SBL
Link Rd at railway crossing	0	1070
Long Ashton Village	410	350
A370 Long Ashton Bypass	2300	1810
B3130 Barrow Gurney	1160	910
Winterstoke Rd	2520	2400
King George's Road	130	440
Kings Head Lane	640	560
B3130 Winford	770	710

Notes The above excludes the complementary measures outlined previously, which would help provide traffic flow reductions on parallel routes (to the SBL).

3. To improve accessibility from South Bristol to the city centre and to strategic transport links, including the trunk road network and BIA.

Improving accessibility is concerned with enabling people to have better access to the city centre, the wider transport network and to BIA regardless of car ownership, income or age. Since car ownership in the South Bristol urban area is relatively low, it follows that the Rapid Transit would be beneficial, making non-car access to BIA, Ashton Vale and the Cumberland Basin in particular easier.

Local bus services currently take 40/50-minutes in the peaks (Hartcliffe to the centre), but with frequencies of 10/12-minutes, average waiting time would be 5/6-minutes. Rapid Transit via SBL would take around 30 minutes from Hartcliffe to central Bristol, but service frequency would be every 18-minutes, so average wait time would be ~9-minutes. Hence, passengers from Hartcliffe/Bishopsworth with access to the SBL Rapid Transit would have a choice between SBL Rapid Transit (faster, better quality, more reliable but less frequent) and local bus (slower, but with higher frequency).

Ultimately, the goal of the West of England is a network of Rapid Transit routes; in South Bristol, this would be provided by both SBL and North Fringe to Hengrove routes.

Rail is not an easy option for many people in South Bristol, other than those who live within walking distance of Parson Street and Bedminster stations; however, the West of England is also promoting two other major transport schemes that would improve rail (Bristol Rail Metro and Portishead re-opening), which would complement SBL and the North Fringe-Hengrove Package.

The highway element of SBL would be signed as the new strategic highway route between Hengrove Park and the A38, A370, A4 Portway and thence to the M5 motorway; it would supersede the current (congested) route via the Parson Street gyratory and Winterstoke Road (as well as the various rat-runs, such as Kings Head Lane). Similarly, the signed route to BIA from the motorway network (M5 Junction 18 at Avonmouth) would move from Parson Street gyratory and Winterstoke Road to the SBL.

It is not anticipated that the highway element of SBL would significantly improve car access into the city centre; however, by transferring some orbital movements off the local South Bristol highway network, these radial routes to/from the city centre would benefit, which would facilitate introduction of bus priority measures and Rapid Transit (i.e. the North Fringe to Hengrove Package routes).

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL
Equality Impact Assessment – Part One - Screening

Part one of an EqIA – the screening – should be carried out at the planning and development stage of a policy, project, service, contract or strategy. This form should be used in conjunction with the guidance and as the first part of a full EqIA.

Name of policy, project, service, contract or strategy being assessed	South Bristol Link – Preparation of Major Scheme Business Case
Directorate and Service	City Development – Major Projects
Names and roles of officers completing the assessment	Mike Sweet (Project Manager)
Main contact telephone number	0117 903 6707
Date	4 th March 2010

South Bristol Link

Project summary

The West of England sub-region is promoting a transport strategy that includes the South Bristol Link (SBL). The scheme comprises a single carriageway road, rapid transit and adjacent cycling and pedestrian route. At its northern end the rapid transit links with the Ashton Vale-Temple Meads Rapid Transit; at its southern end, near the proposed new South Bristol Community Hospital, it links with the planned North Fringe - Hengrove rapid transit route.

The local objectives of the scheme are:

- To facilitate regeneration and growth in South Bristol;
 - To reduce congestion in South Bristol and adjacent areas of North Somerset;
 - To improve accessibility from South Bristol to the city centre and to strategic transport links, including the trunk road network and Bristol International Airport [BIA].

1. Identify the aims of the policy, project, service, contract or strategy and how it is implemented

	Key Questions	Notes / Answers	Any actions needed? By whom?
1.1	Is this a new policy, project, service, contract or strategy or a review of an existing one?	New project / service	
1.2	What is the main purpose of the policy, project, service, contract or strategy?	<p>To facilitate regeneration and growth in South Bristol.</p> <p>To reduce congestion in South Bristol and adjacent areas of North Somerset.</p> <p>To improve accessibility from South Bristol to the city centre and to strategic transport links, including the trunk road network and Bristol International Airport [BIA].</p>	
1.3	What are the main activities of the policy, project, service, contract or strategy?	<p>To develop a major scheme business case, for submission to the Department for Transport at the end of March 2010 for funding.</p> <p>For potential development, design and procurement of the scheme between 2014/15 and 2016/17.</p>	

1.4	Who are the main beneficiaries? Whose needs is it designed to meet?	People, businesses and employees in South Bristol	
1.5	Which staff carry out the policy, project, service, contract or strategy?	<p>Combined staff of West of England partnership, Bristol City Council and North Somerset Council</p> <p>Transport projects and associated teams during development.</p>	
1.6	Are there areas of the policy or function that could be governed by an officer's judgement? eg. home visits "where appropriate". If so, is there guidance on how to exercise this to prevent any possible bias/prejudice creeping in?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Elements of the project / service rely on an officer's judgement, however key decisions are subject to members (Cabinet approval) and Department for Transport decisions.</p> <p>There will also be extensive public and stakeholder engagement as part of the planning application process.</p>	Planning applications will require more detailed assessment of scheme's impact on different groups in the community.
1.7	Is the Council working in Partnership with other organisations to implement this policy or function? Should this be taken into consideration? eg. Agree equalities	<p>Yes</p> <p>The project is a sub-regional transport project established through the West of England Partnership Office.</p>	

	<p>monitoring categories Should the partnership arrangements have an EqIA?</p>	<p>The project is jointly promoted and funded by BCC and North Somerset Council.</p>	
<p>1.8</p>	<p>Taking the six strands of equalities, do you have any initial thoughts that any of the six equalities strands have particular needs relevant to the policy or function?</p> <p>Or is there anything in the policy, project, service, contract or strategy that you can think of at this stage that could discriminate or disadvantage any groups of people? ie.</p>	<p>This project is the first stage in preparing a business case to apply for funding to achieve a transport improvements for Bristol.</p> <p>This screening EQIA links into other major transport schemes in the Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP), which include key projects such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Fringe- Hengrove Package • Cycling City • Ashton Vale to Temple Meads Rapid Transit. <p>The above key projects are either in the process of or will need to complete an EQIA.</p> <p>It is recognised that some equality groups may have specific concerns / issues which will be established in detail as the project progresses.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement with equalities representatives to be undertaken throughout</p>	

	<p>Gender (include Transgender) Disability Age Race Sexual Orientation Faith/Belief</p> <p>Do any other specific groups have particular needs relevant to the policy, project, service, contract or strategy?</p>	<p>the scheme development process.</p> <p>Some of the area's of concern will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability groups request that new infrastructure is fully DDA compliant and that service delivery from Providers is regulated and appropriate enforcement powers are considered. • Older people are concerned as to whether the concessionary fare scheme will apply to the new services. • As the fares in Bristol are already high Equality groups on a low income are concerned that the cost of travel will increase. • The presence of new infrastructure can inhibit or add risk, real or perceived, to existing patterns of movement • Request that the project monitors the services being provided as the new routes could effect other bus routes, which could then mean less choice for vulnerable individuals. 	
1.9	Did you use any data to inform your	The scheme is derived from the 2005 Joint	

	<p>initial thoughts above? What data do you already have?</p>	<p>Local Transport Plan (JLTP) and Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study (2006).</p> <p>These assessed the current and forecast transport needs for the sub-region and identified the rapid transit scheme as part of the solution for those issues.</p> <p>The JLTP was based on consultation and analysis of user needs and demands for the transport system this included information about existing public transport services and equalities data as well as social inclusion and accessibility data (amongst others).</p>	
<p>1.10</p>	<p>Are there gaps in the data that require you to do further work? What are these gaps?</p>	<p>Further consultation with representatives from equality groups is needed to help inform the more detailed design of the scheme.</p>	<p>Engage with equalities groups in developing scheme details.</p>

If the result of the screening process is that there is the potential for a significant impact on any equality group or if any equality group has significantly different needs, then a full equality impact assessment must be carried out. If you are unsure please seek advice from a directorate or corporate equalities officer.

Additional comments / recommendations

The draft screening Equalities Impact Assessment for the South Bristol Link – Preparation of Major Scheme Business Case has been signed off at this stage as it is being presented to Cabinet in March 2010.

Recommendations

Further equalities work with stakeholders will need to be progressed as the project moves forward.

As this project links into other major transport schemes in the Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) attention will need to be given to the following key projects so that issues / concerns that overlap are identified and considered.

- North Fringe- Hengrove link
- Cycling City
- Ashton Vale to Temple Meads Rapid Transit.

The signing of this screening form has been agreed on the basis of the above recommendation.

Signed: Bob Fowler

Service Manager

Date: 8th March 2010

Signed: Jane Hamill

Directorate Equalities Adviser

Date: 8th March 2010

Eco Impact Assessment Checklist

Title of report: South Bristol Link
Report author: Julia Barrett (Mott MacDonald)
Anticipated date of key decision: 25 March 2010

Summary of proposals:

Recommendation that Cabinet endorse the proposals for the South Bristol Link and approve the submission to the Department for Transport of a Major Scheme Bid for Programme Entry.

This Eco-Impact Assessment summarises the resultant environmental impacts of such a project.

Will the proposal impact on	Yes/ No	+ve or -ve	If yes...	
			Briefly describe impact	Briefly describe Mitigation measures
Emission of Climate Changing Gases?	Yes	- ve	In the short-term, Greenhouse Gas emissions during construction of the Scheme would be expected to be increased for the immediate locality.	Rapid Transit vehicles to be high specification, low-emission vehicles. It is expected that the Scheme would relieve congestion at other locations within the Bristol network, resulting in an overall reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions from idling vehicles for example within the Bristol area.
		- ve	At Operation, private vehicles and Rapid Transit Vehicles would emit Greenhouse Gasses.	The construction of the Rapid Transit Scheme should aim to achieve CEEQUAL (Civil Engineering Environmental Quality Assessment) "Very Good" standard as a minimum.
		+ ve	On opening, it is anticipated that the South Bristol Link will give a small reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions, compared with the Do Minimum scenario, based on recent modelling (260210)	
Bristol's vulnerability to the effects of climate change?	Yes	- ve	<p>Flooding:</p> <p>The Scheme would cross several areas of Environment Agency designated flood zones. Additional hardstanding created by the Scheme and associated increased speeds and quantities of surface water runoff have the potential to exacerbate flooding in these</p>	In accordance with PPS25, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) would be submitted for the Scheme, which would require the approval of the Environment Agency. The aim of this FRA is to identify and assess flood risks from all sources of flooding both to the Scheme and from its

The appearance of the city?	Yes	+ ve	Highway improvements such as the upgrading of surfaces and street furniture are likely to improve local townscape and visual impact.	A full Environmental Impact Assessment would be undertaken for the Scheme, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. This would include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, and would detail appropriate mitigation measures such as screening planting. This should be undertaken in consultation with the BCC Urban Design and Landscape Teams.
Pollution to land, water, or air?	Yes	Un-known	The Scheme is expected to result in a small overall improvement in Local Air Quality (PM ₁₀ and NO ₂) but more detailed studies are needed to confirm the nature and location of local impacts. Demolition & construction works may cause accidental pollution to land.	A CEMP would be employed during construction, to be written in accordance with ISO14001 Environmental Management Systems. This would incorporate measures to reduce construction impacts of noise, emissions to air, lighting, dust and contamination for example of the Scheme, The Contractor's performance in this area would be considered during the tendering process.
		- ve	Demolition & construction works may cause accidental contamination of local watercourses and surface water drains.	In addition, the Contractor must work in accordance with guidance issued in all relevant Environment Agency Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPGs).
		- ve	Demolition & construction works may produce increased emissions & dust. Noise would be created during construction works.	
		- ve	Light pollution may cause a Statutory Nuisance to nearby residents.	In order to limit light pollution, all lighting should be directional and light cut-off canopies provided.
Wildlife and habitats?	Yes	- ve	The Scheme would have no direct impact as a result of damage or disturbance for the majority of international and	A full Environmental Impact Assessment would be undertaken for the Scheme, in accordance with the Town and

		<p>statutory designated sites for nature conservation. However, the Scheme proposals would require land take from the known foraging and commuting grounds of both greater and lesser horseshoe bats, which are primary reasons for the designation of the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC. There would be an adverse impact to the non-statutory designations of Colliters Brook Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Ashton Vale Fields SINC which the proposed Scheme runs through and adjacent to.</p> <p>Hedgerows which are categorised as Important under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 are expected to be affected as a result of the Scheme.</p>	<p>Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. This would include an Ecological Impact Assessment, and would detail appropriate mitigation and compensation. This would act to reduce or eliminate potential adverse ecological impacts. Mitigation measures should include an ecological watching brief with works undertaken under appropriate Natural England Protected Species licences which would ensure the minimisation of construction phase disturbance and disruption. Land take would require compensation in the form of suitable habitat creation. The provision of alternative commuting and dispersal corridors such as replanted hedges and hop-overs would also act to reduce the impact to bats.</p> <p>All internationally designated sites within 2km of the Scheme would require an Appropriate Assessment Screening Matrix under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (As Amended). The matrix would determine the likely impact of the Scheme, identify the necessity for Appropriate Assessment and additional mitigation measures to reduce and/ or eliminate this impact.</p>
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Consulted with: Antony Lyons

Summary of impacts and Mitigation - to go into the main Cabinet/ Council Report

Work completed to date indicates that the SBL should deliver long term environmental benefits for Bristol's carbon footprint and local air quality, and these outweigh the short term impacts outlined within the Eco Impact Assessment. This is due to reduced congestion in other locations and the assumption of a modal shift from private vehicle to public transport. More detailed and comprehensive surveys and studies will be required to confirm these findings

The proposals include the following measures to reduce the impacts:

- Full Environmental Impact Assessment to be undertaken for the Scheme, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999.
- Mitigation to effect the emission of Climate Changing (Greenhouse) gasses.
- The construction of the Scheme should aim to achieve CEEQUAL (Civil Engineering Environmental Quality Assessment) "Very Good" standard as a minimum.
- The production of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, in accordance with the requirements of ISO14001.
- Mitigation to address Bristol's vulnerability to the effects of Climate Change.
- Mitigation to address the use of raw materials for construction and operation of the Scheme through a Scheme Sustainability Appraisal and the CEMP.
- Energy efficient, low-emission Rapid Transit fleet to be used.
- Mitigation to address changes in the appearance (townscape and visual impact) of the city.
- Mitigation to address the risk of land, air, water, noise and light pollution at the construction and operational stage.
- Mitigation to address impact on nature conservation and biodiversity at the construction and operational stage.

Checklist completed by:

Name:	Mike Sweet
Dept.:	CD, City Transport
Extension:	x36707
Date:	5 March 2010
Verified by	Sustainable City Group