

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

DOWNS COMMITTEE

14 April 2014

Report of: Dr Adrienn Tomor

Title: Pedestrian and cycle bridge over Bridge Valley Road

Ward: Clifton

Officer Presenting Report: Dr Adrienn Tomor

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Recommendation

- 1) That the Committee notes the update and makes comments as appropriate
- 2) That the Committee consider whether any financial contribution towards the funding of ecology and environmental surveys so that the project can be progressed to the Planning Application.

Summary

Consultation with relevant organisations and the general public has been carried out and planning application is currently being put together for a pedestrian and cycle bridge over Bridge Valley Road.

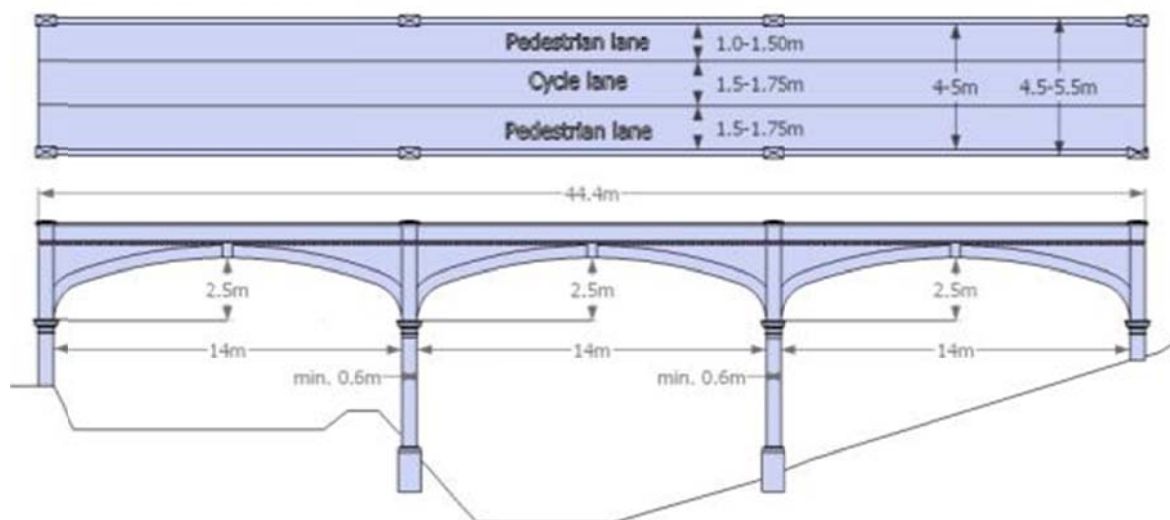
No objections have been highlighted by relevant organisations. Strong support from Sustrans, Bath City College, BRE and from the US has been received.

Feedback from public consultation was very positive, 75% of people were in support of the proposed bridge. Feedback also indicated that the number of crossings could double if there was a bridge over Bridge Valley Road.

The greatest challenge has been the ecology and environmental surveys due to the lack of funding. At the moment no progress can be made until funding has been secured for the surveys. Once surveys are carried out planning application is hoped to be submitted.

1. Draft design





- A zebra crossing or roundabout would be difficult to install due to limited visibility of the upcoming traffic around the bend and steep gradient of Bridge Valley Road.
- Proposed bridge to include segregated pedestrian and cycle lanes (cycle lane in the middle with pedestrian lanes on either side)
- Bridge width: 4-5m + parapets (4.5-5.5m total width)
- Bridge height over Bridge Valley Road: 5.7m to allow normal HGV vehicles
- Material: limestone, e.g. Portland stone
- Possibility for a small open-air sculpture park to be included on the Ladies Mile end with natural surfacing material (currently rough vegetation)

2. Traffic consultation:

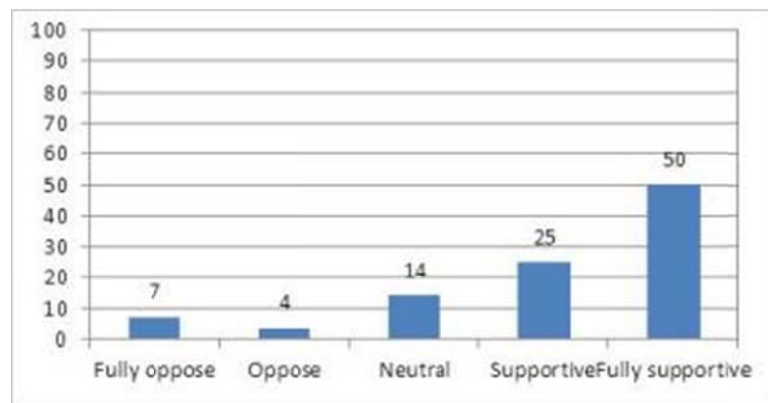
- **Downs Committee Traffic Subgroup** has been reformed and meeting scheduled for 10 April 2014
- **Sustrans:** very supportive
- **Bristol City Council Bridges and Structures Team:**
 - BCC Bridges Team would take the maintenance of the bridge over if it was built
- **Bristol City Council Traffic Management Group:**
 - Bridge to allow normal HGV vehicles
 - Road closure could be granted for the construction phase if necessary

3. Public engagement activity:

- 15 March 2014, Open Day Engineers House (ca. 100 people)
- 29 Jan 2014 - Stoke Bishop Neighbourhood Partnership Forum (ca. 100 people)
- 21 Jan 2014 - Neighbourhood Partnership Traffic Working Group meeting (ca. 40 people)
- Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge AGM (ca. 40 people)
- 12 Dec 2013 - Bright Club Bristol (ca. 100 people)
- Upcoming: Clifton Rotary club
- Upcoming: Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE Dorchester)

4. Feedback from Open Day (15 March 2014)

- 100 people came to the open day
 - 28 feedback sheets received
- Summary from feedback sheets:
- Usage: Number of times people cross the bridge per month = 48
Increase in crossing if there was a bridge per month = 48
(This means crossings would double)
 - How much are people in favour of the proposed bridge?
 - Oppose (4%)/Fully oppose (7%): 11%
 - Neutral: 14%
 - Supportive (25%)/Fully supportive (50%): 75%(This means that 75% of people are supporting the idea)



Feedback from Open Day: How much are people in favour of the proposed bridge (in %)? (Ca. 4% = 1 out of 28 responses)

5. Media publicity:

- 15 March 2014 (ITV West Country) <http://www.itv.com/news/west/story/2014-03-15/new-footbridge-planned-to-link-clifton-with-the-downs/>
- 15 March 2014 (BBC Bristol) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-26562515>
- 16 March 2014 (Bristol Post) <http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/2-million-bridge-planned-Clifton-Bristol/story-20816916-detail/story.html>
- 5 March 2014 (Bristol24-7) <http://www.bristol247.com/2014/03/05/views-wanted-latest-plans-bridge-valley-road-bridge-18385/>
- 25 Feb 2014 (Worldnews.com) http://article.wn.com/view/2014/02/25/Open_Day_to_present_proposals_for_a_pedestrian_bridge_over_B/
- 25 Feb 2014 (Bristol Post) <http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/Open-Day-chance-plans-valley-road-bridge/story-20695533-detail/story.html>
- 9 July 2013 (BBC) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-23224236>
- 19 Nov 2013 (Bristol Post) <http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/Plans-pedestrian-bridge-wins-support/story-20097825-detail/story.html>
- 19 Nov 2013 (BBC Bristol) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-25000921>
- 14 Nov 2013 (Bristol Post) <http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/safe-crossing-pedestrians-bridge-far-Downs/story-20076990-detail/story.html>

6. Green City 2015

- The project can probably be included in the Green Capital 2015 programmes, although it is unlikely to receive financial support at the moment

7. Ecology surveys and Avon Gorge

- **Ecology and environmental surveys** have been the greatest challenge so far due to the lack of funding. Funding is needed to progress with the surveys for the planning application.
- Collaboration with future proposals of the **Gorge and Downs Project Partnership** has been suggested to link the bridge with developing access for the Avon Gorge as part of the bigger picture. (No positive response has so far been received.)

8. Education, research, international interest:

- **Bath City College** is interested in joining in with the project and sending their apprentices to work on the bridge 
- The **Masonry Advisory Council, Illinois, US** is also interested in joining in with the project and sending their craftsman to train on the bridge with the view to start promoting the building of new masonry arch bridge in the US as long-lasting, low-maintenance infrastructure solutions. A joint US and international advisory board for building new masonry arch bridges is currently being set up, led by the Bridge Valley Road project team. 
- The **Building Research Establishment** has agreed to include the project as one of their national pilot studies to validate the upcoming **BREEAM infrastructure scheme** that is under development. 

9. Timescale

- April/May ecology surveys (if funding is available)
- May/June submitting planning application (depending on surveys)
- Application for consent through the Commons Act 2006 - Section 38 to be submitted after reply for planning application has been received.

10. Funding

- The project is on hold until funding is found for ecology (in the range of £5000) and arboricultural surveys (£1500). Is the Downs Committee able to contribute any funding?
- Possible funding sources for building the bridge (to be applied for after planning application has been submitted): research, educational and apprenticeship programmes, sponsorship, history/heritage, arts, skills, cycling funds, etc.