

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD 1st October 2015

REPORT TITLE: ARENA TRANSPORT WORK UPDATE

Ward(s) affected by this report: Lawrence Hill, Windmill Hill, and City Wide

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Purpose of the report:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the transport work undertaken to assess the Arena Island development proposals following the meeting in June. A presentation on the main points will be made at the meeting. Councillors have also had the opportunity to attend an informal, more detailed briefing and discussion about the Transport Assessment (TA) work to date. The Board's views are sought.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board note the contents of the report and provide comments to feed into the consultation process.

Introduction

- 1) This report provides an update on the transport work undertaken to assess the Arena Island development proposals following the meeting in June. It highlights the key points emerging from the Transport Assessment (TA) work and provides updates on the areas that OSMB commented on at the last meeting. It should be noted that work is ongoing and the report should be read on that basis. The TA will continue to be developed until it is submitted with the planning applications. However, Members will have had the opportunity of a detailed technical discussion before this meeting, where assumptions and model outputs available at the time will be discussed. The TA will sit alongside, and need to be read with, other transport documents accompanying the planning applications, namely a Travel Plan and an Event Management Plan.
- 2) Proposals for Arena Island include a 12,000 capacity arena largely driven by music and entertainment events. Ancillary facilities for the Arena include

circulation areas, administrative areas such as office, production and press facilities, and a service yard with a loading area. In addition to the Arena venue, it is envisaged that Arena Island will encompass in the region of 24,000sqm of mixed use development including retail, offices, leisure and residential. A full planning application will be submitted at the end of October for the Arena and ancillary facilities. At the same time an outline planning application will be submitted for Arena Island which will set out how the sites adjacent to the arena could be developed over time, after the arena opens.

Context and approach

- 3) The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's policy on promoting sustainable transport, noting that transport can facilitate sustainable development and contribute to wider sustainability and health objectives. It states that *"the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel."* It goes on to say that; *"decisions should take account of whether opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure"*.
- 4) For major developments Government guidance requires that a Transport Assessment should be used to determine whether the impact of the development on transport is acceptable. The TA should set out the transport issues relating to the development. It should identify what measures will be taken to deal with anticipated transport impacts to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport.
- 5) The transport assessment work focusses on the impacts of traffic generated by the Arena. It is envisaged that the future development of Arena Island will utilise the access arrangements that the Arena will put in place, therefore it is considered that the 'worst case' assessment approach undertaken in the Arena TA adequately covers the relatively small additional traffic that the full Arena Island development is likely to generate. Given the position of Arena Island, close to a major transport hub, relatively low levels of car parking are likely to be appropriate for future Arena Island development. The transport implications of each development will be assessed as proposals come forward.
- 6) The Board is asked to note that additional traffic generated by the development must be assessed in the context of background traffic levels. The decision maker considering the application must judge whether there is a material impact from the development that needs to be mitigated. However, it is a principle of decision making that a developer cannot be asked to mitigate existing deficits. This is set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 which states that a planning obligation (s106) can only apply if it is: necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. In addition, the NPPF makes it clear that *'development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe'*.

- 7) The ambition is to provide a venue which encourages a choice of sustainable modes of travel. Arena Island is close to the city centre and sits alongside a major transport interchange where a range of transport options converge around the Temple Meads area. The aim is to encourage arena visitors to experience Bristol beyond just Arena Island and the transport strategy supports this vision. The strategy encourages the use of sustainable and active modes to improve health, contribute to air quality improvements and increase the environmental attractiveness of Bristol as a place to visit. Dispersed parking will reduce the impact on the highway network and, importantly, encourage visitors to contribute to the wider economy of the city. However, officers are fully aware that a lot of effort and joint working with our partners and the operator will be needed to achieve this goal.
- 8) It should be noted that the Arena venue capacity (12,000) is relatively small compared to other venues such as football stadia and an appropriately proportionate approach should therefore be taken.

The proposals

- 9) The full application for the Arena includes 200 car parking spaces associated with operator packages, 45 disabled user spaces and 200 cycle parking spaces. The outline application for the final form of development would retain the disabled and cycling spaces, whilst the operator's parking would be moved to another site.
- 10) The proposed internal design of the Arena is flexible – the configuration can be altered to accommodate a range of events. It is planned to hold approximately 20 events a year at a maximum capacity of 12,000. Other concerts / events will be from 3,000 upwards and could take place on any day of the week in no particular pattern. In total there are likely to be around 100 events a year. Between 6 and 12 weekends per annum would include family events during the daytime; for example, Disney on Ice, with 3 shows per day. A maximum of 6,000 patrons would attend this type of event. For large concerts, up to 400 staff will be working. The doors would open 90 minutes before the event start time. For multiple show days, the majority of the staff would be retained for all 3 sessions.

Existing transport schemes and measures

- 11) Notwithstanding any specific improvements associated with the Arena proposals, a series of large scale infrastructure schemes are committed and will provide improved accessibility to Arena Island. These schemes include:
 - Temple Gate – the remodelling of the Temple Circus area to improve the environment for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and a simplified highway network;
 - Temple Greenways – a package of schemes to improve walking and cycling accessibility to the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone area, including Arena Island;
 - MetroBus – a network of high capacity bus rapid transit routes which will provide improved reliability and frequency of public transport serving the area;

- MetroWest – a programme of rail enhancements to deliver improved frequency and capacity of cross-Bristol services, including new rail lines and stations.
- 12) The West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has been successful in obtaining Cycle City Ambition grant funding for promoting cycling in West of England. Bristol will benefit from this funding with proposals for a 10 year plan of improvements focusing on a route connecting Bristol City Centre Promenade and the River Crossings. Infrastructure schemes will provide benefits in and around the Arena site.
 - 13) The broad package of transport measures currently being developed and delivered will help to reduce travel demand by private car and improve accessibility to Arena Island for Bristol's residents.

Approach to assessing the transport impacts

- 14) The approach adopted to the transport work has been to assess the visitor catchment area and transport mode used to travel to Arena events. This information is then used to understand the potential effect this would have on the highway network. The TA identifies a potential package of measures likely to influence the modal split in favour of non-car travel that will reduce the impact on the highway network.

Visitor catchment

- 15) The assessment work has identified that Arenas typically draw attendance from a drive-time catchment of 60 minutes. As Bristol faces competition for events held geographically in the south-west, and also potentially extending north and east towards Birmingham and London respectively, the 60 minute drive time is considered to be a realistic visitor catchment. This catchment area journey time is also consistent with other TAs prepared for UK Arena sites, most recently the Leeds Arena planning application in 2009. For a typical event it is assumed that 42% of visitors will come from within the West of England area, half of which would be from within Bristol, with the remaining 58% travelling from outside the West of England but within an hour's travel time.
- 16) Reasonable assumptions have been made in the model on the basis of available evidence. In reality the catchment for events will vary depending on the artist or the type of event, its rarity value, whether there are similar events at other venues, cost and so on. Many events will have a more local catchment for which a wider range of travel options will be available, including local buses, cycling and walking.

Visitor arrival profiles

- 17) At the meeting in June Councillors asked that the profile of arrival times of visitors be looked at again. This has been done and the TA now assumes an arrival period of 3 hours, based on a 30:30:40 split for the three hours preceding events (16:30 – 19:30).

Mode of transport

- 18) Travel mode splits have been drawn from the experiences of other arenas. A worst case scenario of 80% of visitors to the Arena arriving by car has been assumed based on similar visitor attractions and information in a technical database, normally used to for this purpose (TRICS).
- 19) An average car occupancy of 2.4 has been used for car and taxi visitors during an evening event on both a weekday and a Saturday. For a 12,000 capacity event based on a worst case of 80% travelling by car, this results in 3,600 additional vehicles on the network over the three-hour arrival period.
- 20) The 'worst case' of an additional 3,600 car trips does not take into account any enabling measures that will be put in place to encourage the use of other modes. Without enabling measures in place to encourage a higher proportion of those visitors to travel by more sustainable modes, that worst case figure could be lower: for example, the type of event might attract a higher proportion of visitors by coach. In addition, it is important to note that Bristol has a high proportion of use of more sustainable modes of transport, particularly cycling, compared to many other areas which will be included in the TRICS database. The assumed high proportion of visitors arriving by car (80%) which is being used as a worst case, is probably an overestimate.

Emerging model outputs

- 21) As referred to above, work on the TA is ongoing and model outputs relating to the effect of the additional vehicles on the local and strategic highway networks, are emerging. At the meetings, officers will update Councillors and explain the outputs to date.
- 22) At the meeting in June, officers were specifically asked to look at the possible effects of the development on the A4 / A37 Three Lamps junction. This has been investigated. This work shows that the proportion of car-borne visitors expected to arrive via the A37, is circa 7.6%. Looking at a 12,000 capacity event on a weekday, this would equate to about 270 vehicles over a three hour arrival period from 16:30-19:30. In the worst hour the volume would be about 100 vehicles (40%). Significant changes to the Three Lamps junction to accommodate this level of flow 20 times a year would not be justified by the Arena development.
- 23) Some possible alterations to the junction have been considered, for example to create a right turn from the A37 onto the A4, but it is considered that they would have a negative effect on the capacity of the network to accommodate existing traffic flows and result in significant queueing. This would have a detrimental effect on the movement of traffic across the network as a whole. A relatively minor increase in traffic levels associated with the Arena development needs to be balanced against the capacity-reducing impact that change to the junction might have on operation of the network in every peak hour over the year as a whole.
- 24) As referred to above, the Arena development cannot be required to rectify existing issues. However, as part of other work in the Enterprise Zone (EZ),

officers are proposing to do a feasibility study to look at Three Lamps junction and Bath Bridges in the context of other strategic traffic movements in connection with the planned employment growth, to see if there are current issues that need to be addressed or that, with the level of development proposed in the EZ, are likely to emerge. Councillors will be kept informed of the progress of this work and any proposals which may arise from it.

Arena Island transport proposals to reduce car travel

- 25) For events above 10,000 visitors, additional and bespoke Park & Ride services will reduce the number of vehicles on the network by approximately 735. The proposed public transport improvements are specifically intended to target the reduction of City Centre bound vehicle traffic expected with the large evening events on both on a weekday and a Saturday. Details of how these services might operate will be included in the TA. First Group is very supportive of providing services to meet the needs of Arena users on a commercial basis and sees the prospect of enhanced bus services to the Arena as an important opportunity. Talks with bus operators are ongoing.
- 26) A nine bay coach drop-off/pick up zone is proposed in the Albert Road/Victoria Road area. Highway works, including footway widening works along the east side of Victoria Road, as well as permanent TROs would be necessary to make Victoria Road one-way, southbound only. Improvements to the Albert Road/Feeder Road junction to add a controlled pedestrian crossing facility is also proposed. Additional waiting areas for taxi pick-up and drop-off would also be provided in the Feeder Road / Albert Road area.
- 27) Great Western Railway is supportive of running trains to Bristol Parkway, and to Portway Park & Ride once a station is built there. Discussions are on-going with the operator to understand what these services might look like. Discussions have also taken place with Network Rail to gather information about their likely needs for possession of the track in the future, once the track to Filton has been quadrupled and electrification is in place. Again, Network Rail is supportive of running trains to meet special event requirements but the need for possessions for maintenance need to be considered, particularly for Saturday evenings when the rail network tends to shut down earlier. There could be opportunities to re-time some services to enable them to run later within the current constraints; we will continue to explore this with Great Western Railway. Councillors will also be aware that electrification will create an opportunity for additional and later train services.
- 28) If later rail services to Bristol Parkway can be guaranteed, the modelling indicates that there is potential to reduce vehicles on the network by around a further 500. However, because no definite solution is yet in place, the modelling takes a cautionary approach and does not assume that this will happen. The TA will include a sensitivity test to show the effect that rail-based Park & Ride will have on the network once it is achieved.
- 29) First Group has also identified a potential opportunity to run bus services from Bristol Parkway; this will be explored further going forward. This would be an option if, for some reason, rail cannot be achieved. Agreement would need to be

reached with Network Rail about the use of the car park and discussions with Great Western Railway and Network Rail in this respect are being pursued.

- 30) Longer term, the preferred option would be additional rail services from Portway P&R once a station is built. Portway is closer to the strategic highway network and so can intercept car trips at an earlier point, offering an attractive alternative to parking in central Bristol. There would also be a bus service available should Network Rail require track possession or some other incident prevents the use of rail for a large Arena event.
- 31) The Arena Island plans include a pedestrian access to the A4 Bath Road. The width of highway available is constrained by bridges and the space requirements of all modes that need to use this important corridor. The likely additional pedestrians and cyclists attracted to and through Arena Island is currently being assessed and this will inform the most appropriate measures to put in place to ensure a safe environment for all users of the highway. Appropriate event management will also be needed. As with the other aspects of the proposals, the response to addressing movement for pedestrians and cyclists along Bath Road will be proportionate to the scale of the impact of the Arena Island development. In addition, a Spatial Framework for the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone is currently being developed, which will help to guide the development of the zone. The Framework has identified the existing constraints and further studies will help to inform an appropriate response.

Parking and effect on residential areas

- 32) As referred to above, the ambition is to provide a venue which encourages a choice of sustainable modes of travel. This cannot be realised if significant amounts of car parking on or close to the site are provided, as this will encourage people to drive. The City already has a good supply of managed public on- and off-street car parking. The venue is within a 20 minute walk of a number of car parks and discussions have taken place with the operators to gain support for the use of these spaces. Software is being developed which will allow Arena visitors and others to have up-to-date information about parking capacity in the City's car parks. Variable Message Signs will also carry up-to-date information to direct people appropriately. Improved signing and way-finding from these car parks and the city centre would be provided.
- 33) It is recognised that persuading visitors to travel by non-car modes will not happen automatically. Considerable ongoing effort will be needed to promote and incentivise visitors not to drive into the centre and to use public transport for longer journeys, where those options are available. Travel information and advice about how to get to the Arena will need to be a key element of managing events. Some examples of the sorts of management and incentives that can be achieved are attached as Appendix 1. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but to give councillors some indication of the types of intervention and incentives that can be pursued. It is expected that a Travel Plan Co-ordinator will ensure measures / incentives are implemented.
- 34) An Event Management Plan is being developed and will be submitted with the planning application. Specific Event Management Plans for large events which coincide with other significant events taking place in the City and key Christmas

shopping days, are also likely to be required on an ongoing basis. This is also a consideration that has been discussed with Highways England. Even with good event management and travel planning initiatives in place, some visitors will try to park as close as they can to the Arena. The assessment work shows that residential areas within a 20 minute walk of the site will be most vulnerable to visitor parking. The assessment, along with feedback from the consultation so far, is strongly suggesting that parking restraint and management will be needed in some areas.

- 35) Funding will be set aside to enable parking controls to be put in place in vulnerable residential areas. Proposals need to be worked up in consultation with communities to understand what will work best for their local area. The TA should not pre-empt the outcome of that discussion but rather recognise the need for controls. A clear process and timeframe will be established to develop appropriate measures with the local community so that these can be put in place in time for the opening of the Arena.

Consultation and scrutiny input

- 36) A considerable amount of briefing and widespread public pre-planning consultation is being undertaken on the proposals. The consultation period runs from 16th September to 13th October. This includes:
- External:
 - Plans available for viewing and feedback on the Bristol Temple Quarter website;
 - An exhibition of the plans at the Citizen Service Point, 100 Temple Street, from 17th September - 13th October, and at the Central Library from 28th September until 13th October;
 - Two drop-in sessions at the Citizen Service Point, 100 Temple Street, on 23rd September and 1st October;
 - A drop-in session at The Galleries in Broadmead on 26th September and at south Bristol on 2 October;
 - A representative is visiting 8 Neighbourhood Partnership meetings and forums during the consultation period;
 - Two key stakeholders briefings on 17th September;
 - Specific Neighbourhood Partnership briefings;
 - Briefing of Business West meeting.
 - Internal:
 - briefing at Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinators meeting on 9th September
 - Key internal stakeholders (Health, Equalities, Sustainability, etc.) invited to meeting on 17th September
 - Pre-consultation briefings with Chair of OSM, Party Group Leaders, councillors in wards adjoining the Arena site and Cabinet

Access to information (background papers):

None

Examples of measures / incentives to encourage the use of sustainable travel modes:

Travel Information

- Clear information on travel options promoted on Arena and other relevant web sites
- All sustainable travel options to be included in literature distributed with tickets, including links to journey planners. Advise ticket holders not to drive.
- Sustainable travel options to be marketed on arena web site and other modes of effective communication as appropriate to audience
- Travel information available on screens after the event, eg bus times

Signage and Legibility

- Appropriate signage for pedestrians within the vicinity of the site and from coach/bus/train drop off points/station, and public car parks
- Meet and greet; people (volunteers/security/stewards) on hand to explain the best possible way to get to the arena from the railway station, coach/bus station

Communication

- Ensure local businesses / residents are aware of event days/times, especially for large events

Incentives

- Promotions to encourage take up of sustainable travel, e.g. win prizes when purchasing bus/train tickets to event, incentives/discounts/prizes for people that travel by sustainable modes
- Packages for event ticket and travel by coach, bus or train
- Packages for event ticket, hotel accommodation and travel by coach, bus or train
- Park and Ride incentives could include discounted rates for Arena users/early bird (and their families), advance purchase booking
- Promote hotels and what hotel offers are available
- Promotion of car share web site

Promotion

- Promote the Arena in the context of wider visitor attractions to highlight Bristol as a destination
- Work with other visitor attractions to maximise benefits of new visitors to Bristol
- Work with hotels to promote / incentivise overnight stays for Arena visitors