Environmental Impact Assessment [version 1.0]

Proposal title: A4 Portway Strategic Corridor	
Project stage and type: ☐ Initial Idea Mandate ☐ Outline Business Case ☐ Full Business Case	
☐ Policy ☐ Strategy ☐ Function ☐ Service ☒ Other [please state]	☒ New ☐ Changing ☐ Already exists / review
Directorate: Growth and Regeneration	**Lead Officer name: Toby Clayton**
Service Area: City Transport	**Lead Officer role: Senior Public Transport Officer and Project Manager for the A4 Portway Strategic Corridor**

Step 1: What do we want to do?

The purpose of this Environmental Impact Assessment is to help you develop your proposal in a way that is compliant with the council's policies and supports the council's strategic objectives under the One City Climate Strategy, the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy and the latest Corporate Strategy.

This assessment should be started at the beginning of the project proposal process by someone with a good knowledge of the project, the service area that will deliver it, and sufficient influence over the proposal to make changes as needed.

It is good practice to take a team approach to completing the Environmental Impact Assessment. See further guidance on completing this document. Please email environmental.performance@bristol.gov.uk early for advice and feedback.

1.1 What are the aims and objectives/purpose of this proposal?

Briefly explain the purpose of the proposal and why it is needed. Please use plain English, avoiding jargon and acronyms.

The aim of the project is *"To deliver infrastructure changes to the A4 Portway that make public transport, cycling, and walking people's natural choice in mode of travel to enhance social, wellbeing, economic and environmental outcomes"*

The Portway is the northwest section of the A4, a route linking Bristol to London. It connects Bristol City centre to Avonmouth, Portbury, Severnside, the M5, and communities in North Somerset, South Wales, South Gloucestershire, and beyond.

The A4 Portway has been identified as a high priority corridor with the ability to move a large amount of people from areas in northwest Bristol to the city centre in a short space of time. It is recognised as a high priority corridor in both WECA's Bus Infrastructure Programme and Phase 1 of the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS). The A4 Portway has been identified under Initiative B1 of WECA's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) as having significant potential to facilitate infrastructure that prioritises public transport over general traffic, as well as improving opportunities for other modes of sustainable transport.

Furthermore, the A4 Portway is one of the corridors within Bristol City Council's Strategic Corridor programme. The programme looks to make improvements to the key transport routes across the city to help Bristol achieve its ambition to be carbon neutral and climate resilient by 2030, as set out in Bristol's One City Climate Strategy. The strategy highlights Transport as a key area for action to achieve this target by enabling the modal shift to walking, cycling, and public transport.

To achieve the aim, the project has set out on meeting the following objectives

- Improving the journey time, punctuality, and reliability of bus services along the corridor by delivering total segregation and other bus priority measures
- Increase the proportion of trips made by bus, cycling and walking

- Reduce the levels of air pollution and CO2 emissions
- Enhance streetscape, public spaces, and urban environment where possible

1.2 Will the proposal have an environmental impact?

Could the proposal have either a positive or negative effects for the environment now or in the future? If 'No' explain why you are sure there will be no environmental impact, then skip steps 2-3 and request review by sending this form to environmental.performance@bristol.gov.uk

If 'Yes' complete the rest of this assessment.

☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** [please select]

1.3 If the proposal is part of an options appraisal, has the environmental impact of each option been assessed and included in the recommendation-making process?

If 'Yes' please ensure that the details of the environmental impacts of each option are made clear in the pros and cons section of the project management options appraisal document.

☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Not applicable** [please select]

If 'No' explain why environmental impacts have not been considered as part of the options appraisal process.

The project is set to deliver measures that improve highway infrastructure. The preferred measures will be subjected to an optioneering assessment having been selected from a longer list of potential design options. The selection process will involve the use of a multi criteria toolkit where environmental impacts will form some of the criteria.

In order to access funding to carry out the works the preparation of a business case is required. During the appraisal of the scheme within the business case process, an Environmental Appraisal will be undertaken to understand the impacts (benefits and adverse) of the scheme on the built and natural environments, and people with reference to relevant legislation and in accordance with the DfT's Transport Appraisal Guidance.

Step 2: What kinds of environmental impacts might the project have?

Analysis of impacts must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts of the proposal in this section, referring to evidence you have gathered. See detailed guidance documents for advice on identifying potential impacts.

Does the proposal create any benefits for the environment, or have any adverse impacts?

Outline any potential benefits of the proposal and how they can be maximised. Identify how the proposal will support our corporate environmental objectives and the wider One City Climate and Ecological Emergency strategies.

Consider how the proposal creates environmental impacts in the following categories, both now and in the future. **Reasonable efforts should be made to quantify stated benefit or adverse impacts wherever possible.**

Where the proposal is likely to have a beneficial impact, consider what actions would enhance those impacts. Where the proposal is likely to have a harmful impact, consider whether actions would mitigate these impacts.

Enhancements or mitigation actions are only required when there is a likely impact identified. Remember that where enhancements or mitigation actions are listed, they should be assigned to staff and appropriately resourced.

GENERAL COMMENTS (highlight any potential issues that might impact all or many categories)

The project has developed key proposals including:

- New 24hr inbound bus lanes
- New 24hr outbound bus lanes
- Widening of the footpath to achieve a minimum width of at least 3.5m for the length of the route (from the Portway Roundabout to Hotwells)
- Speed reduction measures by reducing the speed limit in places
- Junction improvements including raised tables, narrowing of the junction mouth, and crossing improvements at numerous points along the route

The outcomes of this project should encourage a shift in the use of transport modes along the A4 Portway whereby the number of trips being made on public transport, walking, and cycling increase, and the number of trips made in private vehicles reduce, consequently reducing the levels of emissions along the route. Reduction in levels of emissions will have knock on benefits to habitats and wildlife in the environmentally sensitive areas along the corridor.

ENV1 Carbon neutral: Emissions of climate changing gases BCC has committed to achieving net zero emissions for its direct activities by 2025, and to support the city in achieving net zero by 2030. Will the proposal involve transport, or the use of energy in buildings? Will the proposal involve the purchase of goods or services? If the answer is yes to either of these questions, there will be a carbon impact. Consider the scale and timeframe of the impact, particularly if the proposal will lead to ongoing emissions beyond the 2025 and 2030 target dates. Further guidance ☐ **No impact**	**Benefits**	Once the scheme has been delivered it should lead to a reduction in vehicle emissions along the Portway, as more people are encouraged to make use of public transport, walking, and cycling.
	Enhancing actions	The outcomes of this project should be enhanced by the Bristol Clean Air Zone, which has a geographical overlap with the city centre section of the A4 route. The Clean Air Zone aims to discourage private vehicles that produce the most emissions from entering the city centre, it is anticipated that the owners of these vehicles may switch to public transport, walking, or cycling for trips into the Clean Air Zone.
	Persistence of effects:	☐ **1 year or less** ☐ **1 – 5 years** ☒ **5+ years**
	Adverse impacts	During the construction phase the contractors commissioned to complete the works may need to use vehicles that are reliant on traditional fuels, such as petrol and diesel. The use of these vehicles could increase levels of emissions around the construction areas. Given the nature of the improvements the levels of embodied carbon in construction phase will be relatively low.
	Mitigating actions	Construction Management Plan to be produced prior to construction phase that will outline the environmental controls for noise & vibration, and air quality & dust control. If available to the contractor, we may request that they use electric vehicles for some of the construction work.
	Persistence of effects:	☐ **1 year or less** ☒ **1 – 5 years** ☐ **5+ years**
ENV2 Ecological recovery: Wildlife and habitats BCC has committed to 30% of its land being managed for nature and to halve its use of pesticides by 2030.	**Benefits**	Reduced levels of emissions to be beneficial to the environmentally sensitive areas / wildlife rich areas adjacent to the Portway. One of the project objectives is to enhance the public realm where possible. Planting of trees / creation of green spaces may be delivered to meet this objective, consequently increasing the space available for nature.

Consider how your proposal can support increased space for nature, reduced use of pesticides, reduce pollution to waterways, and reduce consumption of products that undermine ecosystems around the world. If your proposal will directly lead to a reduction in habitat within Bristol, then consider how your proposed mitigation can lead to a biodiversity net gain. Be sure to refer to quantifiable changes wherever possible. Further guidance ☐ **No impact**	**Enhancing actions**	
	Persistence of effects:	☐ 1 year or less ☐ 1 – 5 years ☒ 5+ years
	Adverse impacts	Light, noise, dust pollution could cause adverse impacts during the construction stage. There are proposals to remove seven trees and hedges at the Portway P&R site to facilitate construction of a new bus access / egress.
	Mitigating actions	Construction Management Plan to be produced prior to construction phase that will outline the environmental controls for noise & vibration, and air quality & dust control, and light. The removal of the seven trees will be mitigated by planting replacement trees on site, in line with the Bristol Tree Replacement Standards.
	Persistence of effects:	☐ 1 year or less ☒ 1 – 5 years ☐ 5+ years
ENV3 A cleaner, low-waste city: Consumption of resources and generation of waste Consider what resources will be used as a result of the proposal, how they can be minimised or swapped for less impactful ones, where they will be sourced from, and what will happen to any waste generated Further guidance ☒ **No impact**	**Benefits**	
	Enhancing actions	
	Persistence of effects:	☐ 1 year or less ☐ 1 – 5 years ☐ 5+ years
	Adverse impacts	
	Mitigating actions	
	Persistence of effects:	☐ 1 year or less ☐ 1 – 5 years ☐ 5+ years
ENV4 Climate resilience: Bristol's resilience to the effects of climate change Bristol's climate is already changing, and increasingly	**Benefits**	The A4 Portway / A4 Hotwell Road is located adjacent to the River Avon. The proposals that emerge as part of the project will not contradict the proposals of the emerging Avon Flood Strategy / Flood Defence proposals by BCC, and where possible the A4 Portway project will look to deliver some of these flood defence measures, as well as other Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

frequent instances of extreme weather will become more likely over time. Consider how the proposal will perform during periods of extreme weather (particularly heat and flooding). Consider if the proposal will reduce or increase risk to people and assets during extreme weather events. Further guidance ☐ **No impact**	**Enhancing actions**	
	Persistence of effects: ☐ **1 year or less** ☐ **1 – 5 years** ☒ **5+ years**	
	Adverse impacts	
	Mitigating actions	
	Persistence of effects: ☐ **1 year or less** ☐ **1 – 5 years** ☐ **5+ years**	
Statutory duty: Prevention of Pollution to air, water, or land Consider how the proposal will change the likelihood of pollution occurring to air, water, or land and what steps will be taken to prevent pollution occurring. Further guidance ☐ **No impact**	**Benefits**	The outcomes of the project should reduce the occurrence of air pollution by encouraging people to make use of sustainable transport modes as opposed to their private vehicles.
	Enhancing actions	
	Persistence of effects: ☐ **1 year or less** ☐ **1 – 5 years** ☒ **5+ years**	
	Adverse impacts	
	Mitigating actions	
	Persistence of effects: ☐ **1 year or less** ☐ **1 – 5 years** ☐ **5+ years**	

Step 3: Action Plan

Use this section summarise and assign responsibility for any actions you have identified to improve data, enhance beneficial, or mitigate negative impacts. Actions identified in section two can be grouped together if named responsibility is under the same person.

This action plan should be updated at each stage of the project. Please be aware that the Sustainable City and Climate Change Service may use this action plan as an audit checklist during the project's implementation or operation.

Enhancing / mitigating action required	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Construction Management Plan to be produced before the construction period commences	Civils' contractor	Post OBC sign off

Enhancing / mitigating action required	Responsible Officer	Timescale
Engagement with the BCC Flood Team to ensure designs do not compromise the Avon Flood Strategy and where possible support its implementation	BCC PM / BCC Flood Team	Summer 2022 – Spring 2023
Monitoring and Evaluating the outcomes of the scheme against the project aims and objectives	BCC PM	Post-construction

Step 4: Review

The Sustainable City and Climate Change Service need at least five working days to comment and feedback on your impact assessment. Assessments should only be marked as reviewed when they provide sufficient information for decision-makers on the environmental impact of the proposal.

Please seek feedback and review by emailing environmental.performance@bristol.gov.uk before final submission of your decision pathway documentation[1].

Where impacts identified in this assessment are deemed significant, they will be summarised here by the Sustainable City and Climate Change Service and must be included in the 'evidence base' section of the decision pathway cover sheet.

Summary of significant beneficial impacts and opportunities to support the Climate, Ecological and Corporate Strategies (ENV1,2,3,4):
BCC's Environmental Impact Assessment has determined significant beneficial impacts from the proposal: The outcomes of this project should encourage a shift in the use of transport modes along the A4 Portway whereby the number of trips being made on public transport, walking, and cycling increase, and the number of trips made in private vehicles reduce, consequently reducing the levels of carbon emissions and air pollution along the route. Reduction in levels of emissions will have knock on benefits to habitats and wildlife in the environmentally sensitive areas along the corridor.
Summary of significant adverse impacts and how they can be mitigated:

Environmental Performance Team Reviewer:	**Submitting author:**
Daniel Shelton	Toby Clayton
Date: 15.12.2023	**Date:** 15.12.2023

[1] Review by the Sustainable City and Climate Change Service confirms there is sufficient analysis for decision makers to consider the likely environmental impacts at this stage. This is not an endorsement or approval of the proposal.