

Statement: PS10.04

Cabinet – 5 MARCH 2024

Re: Agenda item 10 – A4 Portway Strategic Corridor Outline Business Case (OBC)

Statement submitted by: Bristol Walking Alliance, Alan Morris

A4 Portway Strategic Corridor OBC

Bristol Walking Alliance is disappointed by the A4 Portway outline business case (OBC) scheme that is presented to Cabinet for approval.

We are not convinced that the need for an outbound bus lane outweighs the value of a segregated cycleway. A segregated cycleway would benefit both cyclists and pedestrians. For pedestrians, it would move most of the traffic away from the pedestrian route beside the river, and significantly improve the pedestrian experience. It would give more separation between the pedestrians and the noise and pollution of the motor traffic, giving back a greater sense of the beauty of the gorge as a place.

In addition, we believe the opportunity should have been taken to consider the Portway not only as a transport route but also as a recreational area within easy reach of the city which deserves to be made more accessible.

The OBC justifies the decision on the basis of setting the gold standard of provision for buses to achieve improved journey times, better reliability and frequency through continuous bus priority, thus encouraging the modal shift. We recognise that difficult choices have to be made, but aside from the Hotwell Road section, we believe the impact on outbound bus times and reliability, and modal shift, is marginal. And, as frequently happens, a bus lane is prioritised at the expense of setting the gold standard for other transport modes.

The OBC (section 2.1) claims bus delays outbound, but the data aggregates Hotwell Road and Portway, and Hotwell Road is worse for congestion. Supporting data from First Bus is redacted due to commercial sensitivity.

The OBC and consultation report record that consultation responses contained substantial questioning of the outbound bus lane.

We raised a number of other issues in [our response](#) to the consultation including the need for improved and additional pedestrian crossings, improved signage, and addressing barriers for those who use wheeled mobility aids. These issues do not seem to have been addressed in the proposed scheme.