



A432 Stapleton–Fishponds Road: informal consultation results

Greater Bristol Bus Network (GBBN)
A432 Stapleton–Fishponds Road:
results of the informal consultation

Purpose of this report

This report provides a summary of the comments received during the informal, non-statutory consultation carried out during the spring of 2010 into the GBBN proposals for the A432 Stapleton Road–Fishponds Road corridor, and how/whether they have been used to improve the final scheme design.

As there was an unprecedented level of engagement with the public and stakeholder groups during this consultation, this report focuses on a number of locations about which a significant level of comments was received. For each of these key areas, this report records how the comments have led to the proposals being amended, or the rationale behind proposals remaining the same. Even if not explicitly referred to here, every comment received during the consultation period has been examined and fed into the re-design process of which this is the culmination.

Introduction

Consultation on the GBBN proposals for Stapleton Road–Fishponds Road was carried out from Saturday 27 February to Friday 9 April 2010. During this time, a dedicated e-mail account was available and received more than 125 messages. Twenty-five letters and two petitions were received, and members of the Team also took several phone calls.

Probably the main focus of the consultation period was the Project Information Centre at 513 Fishponds Road, which was open three days a week from Tuesday 2 March to Tuesday 30 March. During this time, 629 visitors came to the centre (more than 200 of whom left written comments) to speak to GBBN Project Team staff and view detailed plans. This facility allowed many people to gain a better understanding of proposals that may not have been possible based just on the indicative plans, possibly reducing the number of negative comments received.

Summary of comments received

In total, comments from 382 people or organisations have been analysed (this figure includes each correspondence from the small number of people who were in touch more than once). Most consultees commented on more than one of the many parts of the GBBN proposals, giving a total of 974 individual comments.

The table below summarises only the comments that offered an *overall* feeling of support or opposition to what was proposed (please note that many of those generally in favour raised concerns or queries about specific locations). Around 18% of people who got in touch were broadly supportive, compared with 10% against.

| | For | Against | Neutral/ unclear |
|----------|-----|---------|------------------|
| Comments | 68 | 37 | 2 |

Due to the way that some consultees got in touch over many issues at once, in favour of some and opposed to others, and also the way the responses were compiled for analysis, it has not proved possible to provide a for/against/neutral figure for each individual element discussed below. Where figures can be produced, they are given in the relevant section.

There are three main results that can come out of the analysis of the comments received on each of the proposed scheme elements; these are:

- Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials
- Proposal changed: current situation to be retained
- Some further localised consultation required for potential changes

Each section below has the relevant result shown in red by the section title, or within the text if there is more than one element considered there.

Bus stops on Downend Road by the Baptist Church

Outbound – Proposal changed: current situation to be retained.

It was proposed that this bus stop be replaced by a new one near the upper exit of Straits Parade, as part of an attempt to improve the inconsistent pairing of bus stops on the whole corridor. A number of people expressed their concern over this move, as the church provides a number of community facilities including a nursery. In light of these concerns, the existing bus stop will be retained in addition to the new one by Straits Parade.

Inbound – Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

The inbound bus stop opposite will be constructed in the location proposed in the consultation materials. It will be installed with the minimum 6m raised kerb, so as not to preclude the possibility of properties behind applying for driveways, and will not have a shelter.

Banning the right turn into Straits Parade

Proposal changed: current situation to be retained.

One of the main reasons behind installing traffic signals at the Fishponds Road–Manor Road junction is to improve the very heavy flow of traffic that turns right from Fishponds Road to Manor Road, especially in the morning, and prevent it from blocking buses travelling ahead. To this end, it was proposed to ban the right turn into Oldbury Court Road (for Straits Parade) to provide a suitable stacking lane for Manor Road.

This proposal proved unpopular with around 50 consultees, especially those who own businesses on the section of Straits Parade between Oldbury Court Road and Vassall Road. Changes to the phasing of the proposed signals at the Manor Road junction now mean that the right turn into Oldbury Court Road and Straits Parade can be safely retained without reducing capacity at Manor Road.

New one-way directional movement and environmental enhancements at Straits Parade

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

The proposed change of the bottom section of Oldbury Court Road to one-way operation northbound and Straits Parade as far as Vassall Road to one-way operation eastbound forms part of wider environmental enhancements including improving the environment for pedestrians, consolidating bus stops, and the provision of parking perpendicular to the road. Several respondents

A432 Stapleton–Fishponds Road: informal consultation results

were concerned that this could reduce the ease of access to the shops on the one-way section of the road, but it is thought that this issue will be mitigated by the removal of the proposed right turn ban from Fishponds Road.

It has also been seen that vehicles turning right from Oldbury Court Road towards the city centre regularly have to perform quite difficult or dangerous manoeuvres due to the levels of traffic and movements into and out of Manor Road. Introducing the one-way will lead to all these movements being performed from the top end of Straits Parade, which is likely to make them easier and safer due to the improved visibility.

The issue of general environmental enhancements, which does not include a proposal to remove any existing trees, is complicated by the complex land ownership of the island area. All the landowners on Straits Parade will be invited to a meeting with council officers to discuss the exact nature of the improvements and how the ownership issue is dealt with; improvement of the island is still part of our proposals, but the detailed design remains to be agreed. Dealing with the mobile food outlets is beyond the scope of this project, but the council licensing team have been appraised of the concerns raised about them.

Introduction of AM and PM peak hours bus lane through Fishponds

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

Bus lanes provide significant priority for public transport during their hours of operation, greatly improving reliability. Although the inbound direction is busier in the morning peak than in the evening, traffic flows are still high enough later in the day to cause hold ups to buses; and the buses need to get back into the city centre to pick up people travelling outbound. For these reasons, and to improve consistency across the city, it is proposed that the new bus lane through Fishponds is introduced in both peaks (7–10am and 4.30–6.30pm). Any impact this may have on parking is discussed below.

Changes to parking through Fishponds shopping area

Some further localised consultation required for potential changes.

Many traders, residents, and the local ward member were concerned that the bus lane would reduce the amount of parking available in the main retail centre of Fishponds. Using 6m as the length of a parking bay, there are currently approximately 150 parking spaces on Fishponds Road between Straits Parade and Lodge Causeway. The current proposals result in approximately 130

A432 Stapleton–Fishponds Road: informal consultation results

spaces. However, changes that are currently being considered near Hinton Road and alongside Fishponds Park look likely to regain approximately 17 spaces to leave the number of spaces approaching the existing provision. The exact details of this will be subject to additional local consultation.

In addition, some of the parking spaces available today are unrestricted, which can lead to commuters parking in them all day long. Many of the post-implementation parking spaces are proposed to be limited waiting of one or two hours, leading to a turnover of spaces for shoppers.

Closure of New Station Road where it meets Fishponds Road

Some further localised consultation required for potential changes.

The closure of this road was proposed mainly for safety reasons in relation to the heavily used zebra crossing that can lead to cars blocking back onto Fishponds Road. New Station Road is mainly residential, and unsuitable for large volumes of traffic accessing the supermarket car parks or rat-running. The closure would also provide a new site for the bus stop currently outside the Van Dyke Forum pub that the Police have asked the council to relocate.

Almost 50 consultees made comments on this proposal, many pointing out that the closure would make access to a number of residential care homes more difficult for families and emergency services. In response to this a change has been made to the plans. It is still proposed to close New Station Road, but access will be retained through the re-opening of Station Road, which does not have the same number of residential properties. The exact details of this will be subject to additional local consultation.

Banning the right turn into Hockey's Lane

Some further localised consultation required for potential changes.

The design of this proposal was for junction improvement, increasing the capacity to improve traffic flow, while providing improved pedestrian crossing facilities. It was assumed that access to Hockey's Lane would be achieved via Channon's Hill and Station Avenue South rather than the road being completely inaccessible if travelling north on Fishponds Road.

This issue raised the largest single number of comments of any proposal – almost 120, almost all expressing concern in one way or another. To take this strength of feeling into account, particularly regarding the unsuitability of the proposed alternative means of access, the scheme has been considerably

A432 Stapleton–Fishponds Road: informal consultation results

redesigned. The right turn from Fishponds Road outbound to Hockey's Lane has been reinstated. In order to introduce the new pedestrian facilities, and improve junction capacity, it is now proposed that the left turn from Fishponds Road inbound to Hockey's Lane be banned; good alternative access will be available via the newly re-opened Station Road (see above). The exact details of this will be subject to additional local consultation.

Bus stops outside the Morrisons superstore

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

The new location for the inbound bus stop near Morrisons will stay as proposed, outside the store to improve access rather than the other side of Hockey's Lane. The number 5 bus service will serve this new bus stop. The outbound stop will also stay as proposed, providing good public transport access to the school.

Banning the right turn into Grove Road

Some further localised consultation required for potential changes.

Safety concerns at this complex junction were the key factors behind the proposal to ban the right turn from Fishponds Road into Grove Road, and the lack of complete pedestrian crossings at a location where demand for them is high. Grove Road has had problems with rat-running in the past, which is why the current one-way is in place, and any further discouragement of this was seen as a positive step for residents.

More than 30 people commented on this element of the proposals, around one-third in favour. However, an amended design is now proposed: the junction of Grove Road with Fishponds Road will be stopped up completely, with the one-way revoked. This will provide space for improved pedestrian crossings, some urban realm enhancements such as street furniture or a tree, and loading facilities.

It is understood that access to Grove Road from Thingwall Park via Brentry Road and other parallel roads can be a problem. For this reason, a traffic count on all these side roads will be carried out before the proposed measures are introduced, and again afterwards; if increased traffic volumes and blocking issues are identified, a solution (possibly making some of these roads one-way towards Fishponds Road and some one-way away) will be sought. The exact details of this will be subject to additional local consultation.

Removal of the pelican crossing near Ernestville Road

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

This crossing was installed many years ago when the traffic signal technology did not exist to integrate it within the Fishponds Road–Lodge Causeway junction where much of the demand is generated. The close proximity of the crossing to the junction, and the age of the facilities meaning that they are not linked together, can cause significant delays to buses and frustration to all drivers. The design for the junction as proposed through GBBN includes full pedestrian facilities, rendering this stand-alone pelican crossing redundant.

Conversion of AM peak hours bus lane to AM and PM peak, inbound, from Lodge Causeway

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

As detailed above with regard to the bus lane proposed through Fishponds, the conversion of the existing morning peak bus lane to evening operation as well will provide good bus priority to allow improvements to journey time reliability, one of the main focuses of this project.

Bus stops between Oakdene Avenue and Alexandra Park

Bus stops near Alexandra Park – Proposal changed: current situation to be retained.

Following a number of comments regarding the unsuitability of the proposed bus stop outside the Golden Lion pub near Alexandra Park, this has been amended. Rather than the single new location proposed, the outbound bus stops are now planned to remain where they are currently: one outside the bingo hall, to be served by all commercial services, and one opposite Drummond Road, relocated so as not to be directly in front of Autoquip.

Bus stop at Hawkesbury Road – Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

The proposed new outbound bus stop location between Knowsley Road and Hawkesbury Road will remain as planned due to the camber of the road and the proximity of trees making the current location potentially unsafe.

Outbound bus stops, Oakdene Road to Huyton Road – Some further localised consultation required for potential changes.

It is proposed for the outbound bus stop between Oakdene Road and Huyton Road will now remain approximately in its current location, and not move to

A432 Stapleton–Fishponds Road: informal consultation results

north of Huyton Road. This is subject to survey, and local consultation with businesses and residents.

Inbound bus stops, Oakdene Road to Huyton Road – Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

All the inbound bus stop locations in this section will remain as proposed.

Conversion of AM peak hours bus lane to 24-hours, inbound, from Ridgeway Parade

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

Following on from the extension of the operating hours of the existing bus lane from Lodge Causeway to include the evening peak, the final stretch from Ridgeway Parade to Royate Hill is proposed to be operational 24 hours a day. The reason for this is that traffic in the outside lane, heading for Muller Road and the M32, regularly blocks back this far; allied to off-peak parking in the inside lane, buses face hold-ups here throughout the day.

Installing a 24-hour bus lane outside residential properties is not a decision taken lightly; it is understood that almost all of the properties in this section of road have off-street parking and/or rear access.

Banning the right turn out of Muller Road

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials (with improvements).

There were two main reasons behind the proposed amendment of the Fishponds Road–Muller Road mini-roundabout to a traffic signal junction – to improve the safety of crossing the road there, compared to the zebra crossings that have led to many complaints from the public, and to increase capacity for the varied and complex traffic movements.

During the very early design discussions for this location, these could not be achieved without taking a slice of Eastville Park to widen Muller Road. It proved possible to avoid this by proposing to ban one of the movements at the junction, and the right turn from Muller Road onto Fishponds Road was the lightest movement. Taking Stapleton Road from the M32 Junction 2 roundabout provides a good alternative route.

This proposal had probably the most mixed response in its 30 comments. Although there was concern over the banned movement, possibly from a lack

A432 Stapleton–Fishponds Road: informal consultation results

of understanding that Stapleton Road could provide a good alternative route, there was a lot of praise regarding the improvements to the pedestrian crossing facilities.

It is understood that there is a slight possibility of some diversion of traffic onto Freemantle Road and the other parallel roads that link Stapleton Road to Fishponds Road. For this reason, a traffic count on all these side roads will be carried out before the proposed measures are introduced, and again afterwards; if increased traffic volumes are identified, a solution (possibly making some of these roads one-way towards Fishponds Road and some one-way away) will be sought. The exact details of this will be subject to additional local consultation.

One final concern at this location was that raised by the residents of 192 to 198 Fishponds Road, who would have been left with no means of moving house or receiving large deliveries due to the location of a new traffic island just one lane's width opposite their houses. A minor adjustment to the island shape, pedestrian crossing location, and bus stop cage size has resulted in a 12m length of road in which loading will be permitted.

Making Gloucester Street one-way where it meets Fishponds Road

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials (with improvements).

This measure is another one proposed to reduce rat-running along unsuitable residential streets, and was possibly the measure with the largest proportion of support amongst the 20+ consultees.

However, a couple of concerns were raised that have been taken on board as improvements to the proposal. Firstly, the start of the one-way section will be the access lane to the garages rather than Herbert Crescent, meaning the no properties are 'caught' on one side of the restriction, and to provide an alternative location to turn around. Secondly, a cycle contraflow will be provided, allowing cyclist to travel in both directions on the section of road that will be one-way to vehicular traffic.

Introduction of AM and PM peak hours bus lane, outbound, from Glen Park to Freemantle Road

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

Although the changes proposed to the junction of Fishponds Road and Muller Road have been designed to improve its capacity, buses still suffer from delays

on the approach to it. In order to reduce these delays, a morning and evening peak hours bus lane is proposed to run outbound from Glen Park to Freemantle Road. At Freemantle Road, a yellow box junction will provide space for the buses that travel straight on to manoeuvre out of the inside lane.

Introduction of 24-hours bus lane, inbound, from Coombe Road to East Park

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

There were a small number of comments relating to whether this length of bus lane was really needed, although observations have shown that buses can be severely delayed between Coombe Road and Robertson Road. The width of the road is not sufficient to provide a bus lane all the way to the Robertson Road signal junction, so the bus lane is proposed to East Park, with a bus gate ensuring that buses are at the front of the queue approaching it. The bus gate, similar to that on Redcliffe Way in which a red signal stops general traffic only when a bus approaches, means that the bus lane has to operate for 24 hours a day.

The presence of the bus gate and an enhanced puffin crossing close to East Park means that the existing inbound bus stop for supported services only needs to be removed. The existing inbound bus stop opposite Glen Park will also be removed, both stops being replaced by one for all services opposite Boswell Street. This new location, which will be accompanied by dropped kerbs to allow level crossing points across each side road down the hill towards East Park, should ensure that access to the proposed health centre is not unnecessarily compromised.

Banning the left turn into Robertson Road

Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

The proposal to ban this turn is to provide a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing across Robertson Road, the only arm of this busy junction that currently does not have such provision.

This proposal will remain in the final proposed design. Banning turns is not a proposal taken lightly, and it is only considered for movements that do not currently have high traffic levels; there is not a huge volume of traffic being diverted. The 585 and 586 bus routes that currently make this turning will be diverted along Stapleton Road and so will travel straight on across the junction into Robertson Road, a possible diversion for other vehicles.

Traffic islands close to Warwick Road

Proposal changed: current situation to be retained (with improvements).

There was only one comment regarding the proposal to remove the traffic island in the centre of Stapleton Road north of Warwick Road, and it was critical of the idea; the same consultee requested a crossing across Warwick Road. The island removal plan was for an improved facility for cyclists turning right into Warwick Road.

In the face of the issue raised, and an additional site visit, it has been decided not only to keep the island, but also to increase in size both islands and narrow Warwick Road to improve the provision of informal road crossing locations. Dropped kerbs on the expanded island will provide the cycling access originally planned.

Bus stop locations in the vicinity of Stapleton Road station

The proposed new locations for bus stops between Belmont Street and Robertson Road were part of an effort to improve the spacing and pairing of bus stops, and four out of five people praised the new locations close to the steps to Stapleton Road station. But one concern was raised that has led to a major reconsideration of these proposals.

Bus stops, Belmont Street to Warwick Road – Proposal changed: current situation to be retained.

To ensure that level access to the northbound platform of Stapleton Road station is maintained for passengers with mobility problems, the pair of bus stops between Belmont Street (via which this access is made) and Warwick Road will be retained (subject to confirmation with a site survey).

Bust stop at Berwick Road – Plan to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

The inbound bus stop close to Berwick Road will be retained, but moved back to in front of the shops (subject to confirmation with a site survey), maintaining level access to the southbound station platform. The outbound stop near Robert Street is still proposed to be replaced by a new stop outside the Job Centre Plus near Robertson Road, freeing up more space for parking and/or loading where the regularly abused bus stop is currently located.

Banned movements at the junction of Stapleton Road with Seymour Road and Lansdown Road

Some further localised consultation required for potential changes.

Rat–running from Seymour Road to Lansdown Road, and traffic turning right from Stapleton Road into Lansdown Road, has been observed to cause severe congestion at all times of the day, obstructing buses and all traffic. The proposal of an island in the middle of Stapleton Road to stop these movements triggered a number of comments, and has been reconsidered.

There is no change to the banned movements concerned, but they are proposed to be achieved in a different way. A triangular island will be installed in the mouth of Lansdown Road, making it possible only to turn left in and out. To help avoid pressure on adjacent roads, Villiers Road will be made no entry at its junction with Felix Road. On the other side of Stapleton Road, Seymour Road will have its one–way reversed, and it will be blocked off north of Kensington Park. The exact details of this will be subject to additional local consultation.

Banning the left turn onto Easton Way

Proposal changed: current situation to be retained (with improvements to cycle lane).

This proposal came about principally for reasons of safety, effectively banning through traffic on the route to help combat the high number of accidents experienced on this stretch of road. It was also thought that calming traffic would make the environment less threatening for pedestrians to increase footfall to the local shops.

However, almost 50 consultees made contact to express their concerns regarding the inability to service their businesses, the diversion of traffic onto unsuitable side roads, and the Police’s concern regarding a reduction in the ‘natural surveillance’ provided by passing traffic. In the face of this range of issues, it is no longer proposed to ban this turn. Much of the road safety improvement desired will be attained by this section of road being part of the new 20mph zone.

On the section of Stapleton Road from Trinity Road to Easton Way, one safety issue will be tackled through the GBBN measures. The existing outbound cycle

lane runs immediately adjacent to parking bays that are of a sub-standard width, a situation that has led to a number of accidents with car doors being opened into cyclists. This cycle lane is therefore proposed for removal to reduce this conflict point, leaving a running lane of around 4m for all traffic to share.

Corridor-wide improvements

The choice of zebra or puffin crossings– Plans to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

Zebra crossings can provide quicker crossing facilities for able-bodied pedestrians, but can be abused by drivers. Puffin or toucan crossings use a red traffic signal to make it clearer that drivers have to stop, providing a safer crossing facility, especially for people with reduced mobility. The use of traffic signals also allows crossings to be linked up with signal-controlled junctions to provide a joined up corridor that can be controlled from Bristol's Traffic Control Centre.

Bus stops built-out into traffic lanes – Plans to be kept as proposed in consultation materials.

In many locations, buses find it difficult to pull back out into moving traffic after pulling into a lay-by bus stop. In order to maintain the bus's position in the traffic, some locations are proposed for a build-out. There are further benefits from built-out bus stops, including protecting the stop from inconsiderate and illegal parking or loading and improving the angle of approach to ensure the low-floor bus and raised kerb are perfectly in line. A built-out bus stop also protects parking and loading much closer to the stop than it would be allowed if a bus were to pull in flush to the existing kerb.

Other amendments made

- Two mandatory disabled parking bays will be introduced on Radley Road
- Solo motorcycle parking will be included within the off-peak parking close to Freemantle Road