



Living Heart for Bristol

Vicky Welchman
Bristol City Council
City Design Group

February 2015

Dear Vicky,

Consultation on Nelson Street Public Realm Changes

The Living Heart for Bristol* aims to improve the central areas of Bristol and create new public space by removing through traffic, whilst retaining access for all. Our responses to the consultation, below, are all made with those aims in mind.

Questions 7 and 8 – Overall Approach

We agree that Nelson Street is urgent need of improvement to its public realm and whilst the design approach has some positive features we would like to see the Council be bolder in removing motor traffic, which causes so much harm to the experience of pedestrians and cyclists in the area.

Question 9 – Cycle Route

We agree with the proposal for the separate cycle route providing it becomes part of a joined-up network, which the current plans do not show. We would make the following specific changes:

- A 2-way path should be a minimum of 4 metres in width.
- In order to promote proper separation between cyclists and pedestrians, a cycle path must look like a cycle path. The design of the path on Baldwin Street provides a more appropriate model, which should also be less expensive.
- The path should be continued across the junctions with Fairfax Street and All Saints Street with priority, following the design precedent set on Welsh Back

In addition, for the medium-term:

- There is a pressing need for provide contraflow cycle routes along Union Street and Horsefair/Penn Street.
- A new route should also be created along the northern side of Fairfax Street as far as Newgate Street. This should join up with the Concord Way with a new ‘fit for purpose’ crossing over Bond Street, to replace the existing 3-stage crossing, which is not fit for purpose.

We strongly support the “aspiration to pedestrianise Corn Street” and understand the need this creates for two-way traffic along Quay Street, but if it is not possible to continue the cycle route along Quay Street, stronger efforts need to be made to remove through traffic from Quay Street as described below.

Questions 10 – Bridewell Street

We support the proposed changes.

Question 11 – Proposed one-way system

We support the proposed one-way system and would add that traffic **from Bridewell Street should be obliged to turn left only** – crossing into All Saints Street should not be allowed.

Question 12 – Two Traffic Options

We strongly support Option 2. The Mayor has made public commitments to “pedestrianise the Old City”. So far very little has happened on this. Fairfax Street offers one small opportunity to advance that agenda. If a high volume of pedestrian use is expected, then a separate cycle route should be created through the shared area. We understand that the highway engineers are raising objections about the additional volume of traffic turning into All Saints Street. Our proposals under Questions 9 and 11 above would resolve that objection.

Question 13 – Pithay

We support the suggestion to extend the one-way system.

Access from Quay Street to The Centre

The Eastern side of The Centre should be pedestrianised, with a clearly marked cycle route. The diagrams and text do not explain how access from Quay Street towards The Centre will be controlled. There is a parallel unanswered question about how traffic would access and egress from St Stephens Street if Corn Street is pedestrianised. Whatever arrangements are put in place must ensure that those streets cannot be used for rat-running. **Signs saying “Access Only” or explaining complicated conditions will be ignored** – we know this from the experience of St. Nicholas Street and Horsefair. A revised plan must show how that area will be maintained for pedestrians, cyclists, and necessary deliveries only.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Steve Melia
For the Committee of Living Heart for Bristol

- * The Living Heart for Bristol was created by the following organisations: Bristol Cycling Campaign, Bristol Green Capital, Bristol Living Streets, Friends of the Earth, the Open Spaces Society, Bristol Ramblers Group and Streets Alive. Several other organisations have endorsed its declaration as shown on www.livingheart.org.uk.