

Save the Railway Path!



<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/savetherailwaypath/>

The Problem: Traffic



- Bristol is congested
- Commuter traffic in and out City Centre+North Fringe
- School run traffic in term time

More to Come!

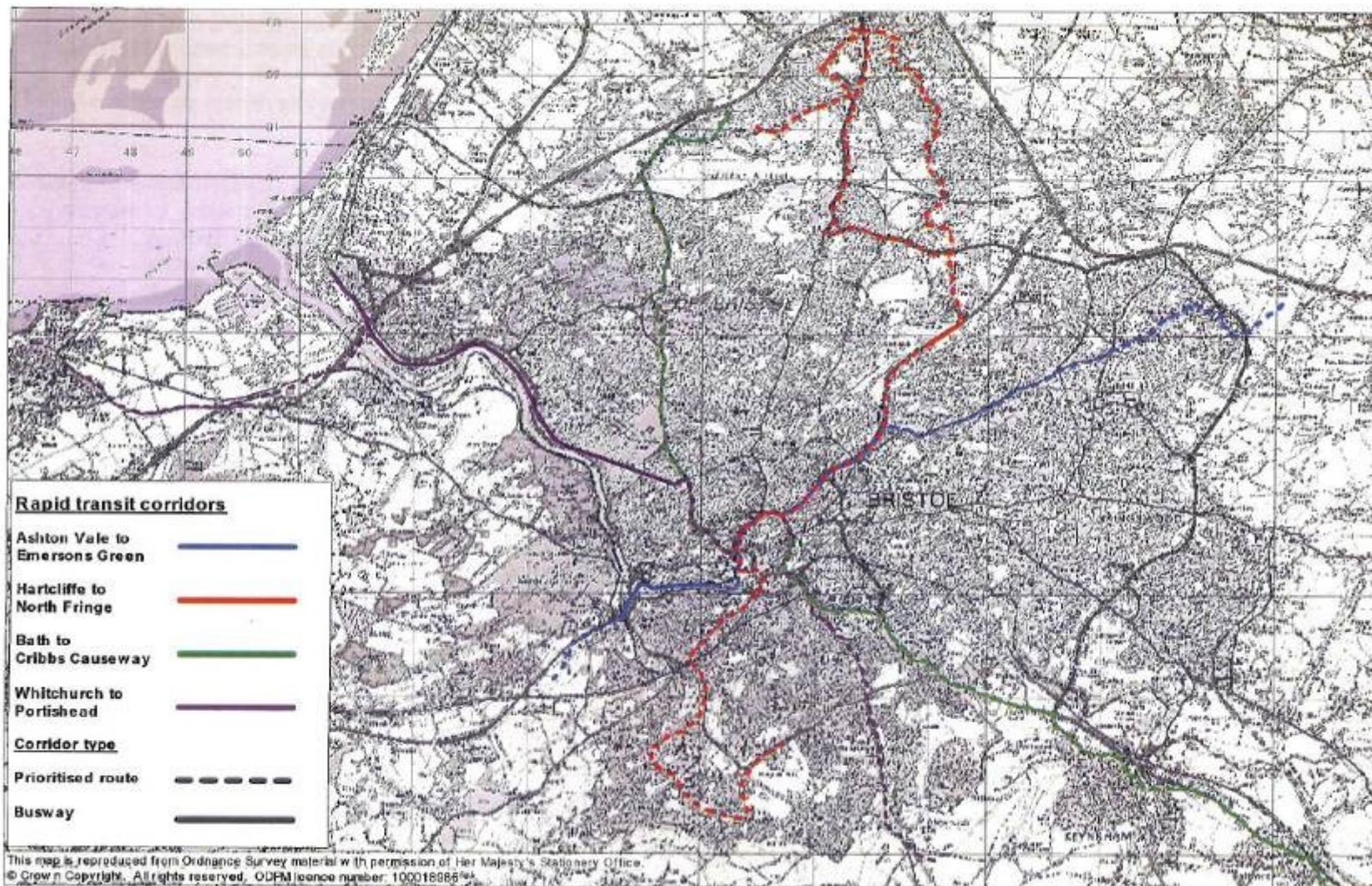


30-40,000 of houses planned for South Gloucester & Ashton Vale

-these are government quotas, not council wishes

The Solution: Joint Local Transport Plan 2006

Figure 2.1: GBSTS Identified Potential Bus Rapid Transit Corridors



Emerson's Green Options

J: Emerson's Green to Bristol City Centre

- The Emerson's Green to Bristol City Centre corridor links new development at Emerson's Green and existing areas such as Mangotsfield, Fishponds and Easton to Bristol City Centre. Services that could benefit from the busway in this corridor include services to Yate and Chipping Sodbury as well as urban services to Mangotsfield, Kingswood, Fishponds and Stapleton.

J1: Emerson's Green via A432

- A partially segregated two-lane busway running along existing roads from the new Broadmead site along the M32 and A432 to Emerson's Green. To achieve the necessary level of segregation, major road widening would be required along much of the route which would require significant land and property impacts. This option replicates the proposed GBBN, Corridor 5 and is the route proposed by the GBSTS.

J2: Emerson's Green via the Bristol to Bath Railway Path

- A fully segregated two-lane busway from Temple Meads Railway Station along the Bristol to Bath Railway Path to Emerson's Green South and then continuing along the A4174 Avon Ring Road to the proposed Emerson's Green development, retaining the existing pedestrian and cyclist facilities. The section between the Kingsland Road Bridge and the Lawrence Road Bridge would require some land take to industrial properties in the Kingsland Trading Estate as well as realignment of the railway sidings. This option could build on the proposed GBBN, Corridor 5.

J2a: Fishponds via the Bristol to Bath Railway Path

- As for Option J2, a fully segregated two-lane busway from Temple Meads Railway Station along the Bristol to Bath Railway Path but terminating at a new bus interchange at Fishponds. Existing pedestrian and cyclist facilities would be retained.

Between Jan-Mar 2007, the A432 route vanished

January 2007

H – North Fringe to Bristol City Centre. Concerns re perception of public, confusing – how do they tell the difference – can technically be done.

J – Emersons Green. Uses disused rail corridor. New development at end of alignment – maintain cycle routes but pinch points.

Conclusions:

Page 67 – Conclusions:- **no clear winner** overall. Individual corridors perform differently according to different criteria. However, Emerson's Green to city centre route best option in terms of impact and ease of delivery.

March 2007

The Emerson's Green to Bristol City Centre route with an extension to Long Ashton Park and Ride, including the on-street works in Bristol City Centre, is pursued at this stage as the next RFA BRT route.

Deliverability

Public Acceptability

It is often difficult to determine exactly what reaction the general public will have to transport schemes and what the key issues will be. This is potentially the case with BRT in Greater Bristol as to some extent it is an unknown quantity and there may be limited information or understanding of its potential benefits. The options were assessed against this criterion by considering what some of the main public concern issues might be. These included any property or land acquisition, removal or interference with a currently available public facility (such as an existing cycleway) and the likelihood of local interest groups not supporting the scheme.

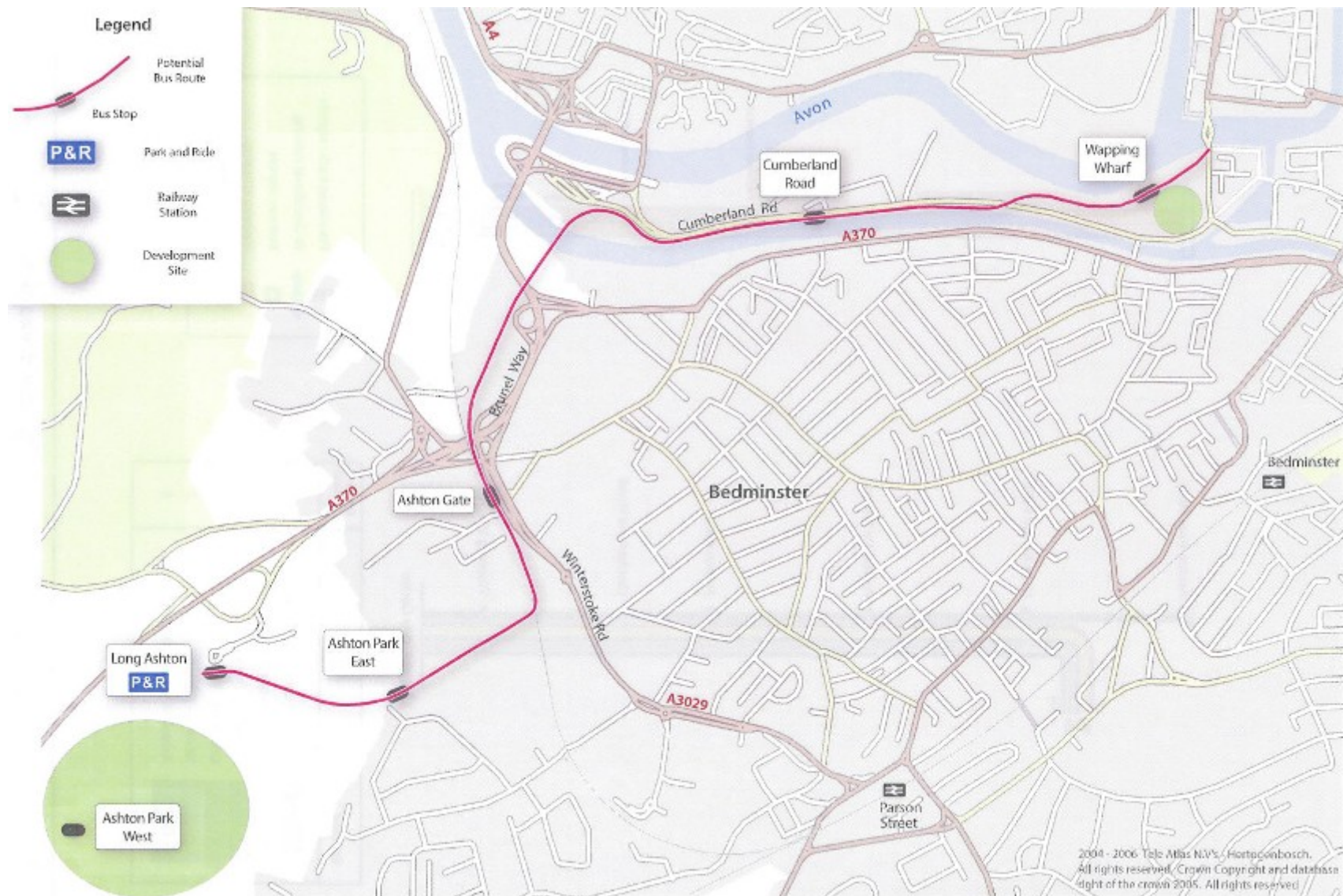
The assessment showed that, in terms of risk to delivery, the relatively simpler schemes to deliver would be the H1 and H2 alignments using the M32 to the North Fringe. These alignments are relatively self-contained. In addition to these, there should be relatively few deliverability risks associated with D1, the Ashton Vale alignment apart from the need to ensure it includes a solution to crossing the freight line that would be acceptable to Network Rail. The J2 alignment to Emerson's Green also has few deliverability issues.

The other alignments all have specific delivery issues that would need to be managed. In terms of their relative risk to each other, it is a matter of trading off one type of risk with another. H8 to Cribbs Causeway is relatively self contained where it follows H1 or H4 but a more detailed assessment of land ownership issues and the extent of works to cross the operational mainline railway is required. The J2 and J2a options involve slight realignment of non-operational railway tracks on the route as it leaves Temple Meads. Use of the Bristol to Bath railway path, even though it is considered that the cycle path can be retained, could become contentious. Alignments using the Callington Road Link would require property acquisition although this is designated as a planned transport corridor in the Joint Local Transport Plan.

The Railway Path is Easier

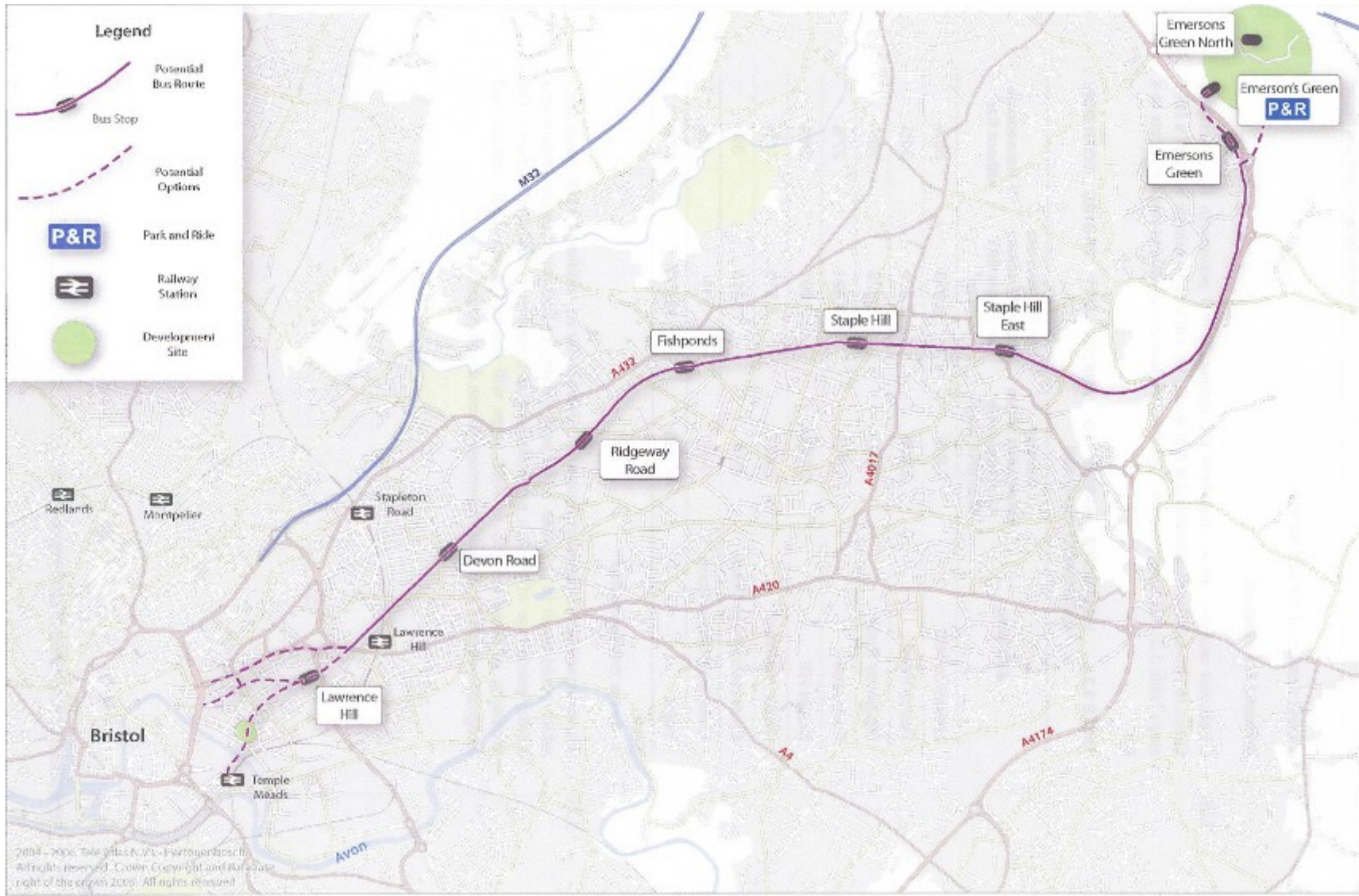
- "In terms of risk to delivery, the relatively simpler schemes to deliver would be The H1 and H2 alignments using the M32 to the North Fringe."
- "The J2 alignment to Emerson's Green also has few deliverability issues"
- "Use of the Bristol to Bath railway path...could become contentious"

Ashton Vale to City - £23M



Crossing by Create Centre; parallel to chocolate path (sustrans #41)

City to Emerson's Green - £49M



This is our railway path!

...weak economic case

Economic case

Good balance of benefits from BRT-only services and existing bus services

Case better with development and P&R

Deliverability

park and ride provision

maintaining cycle route

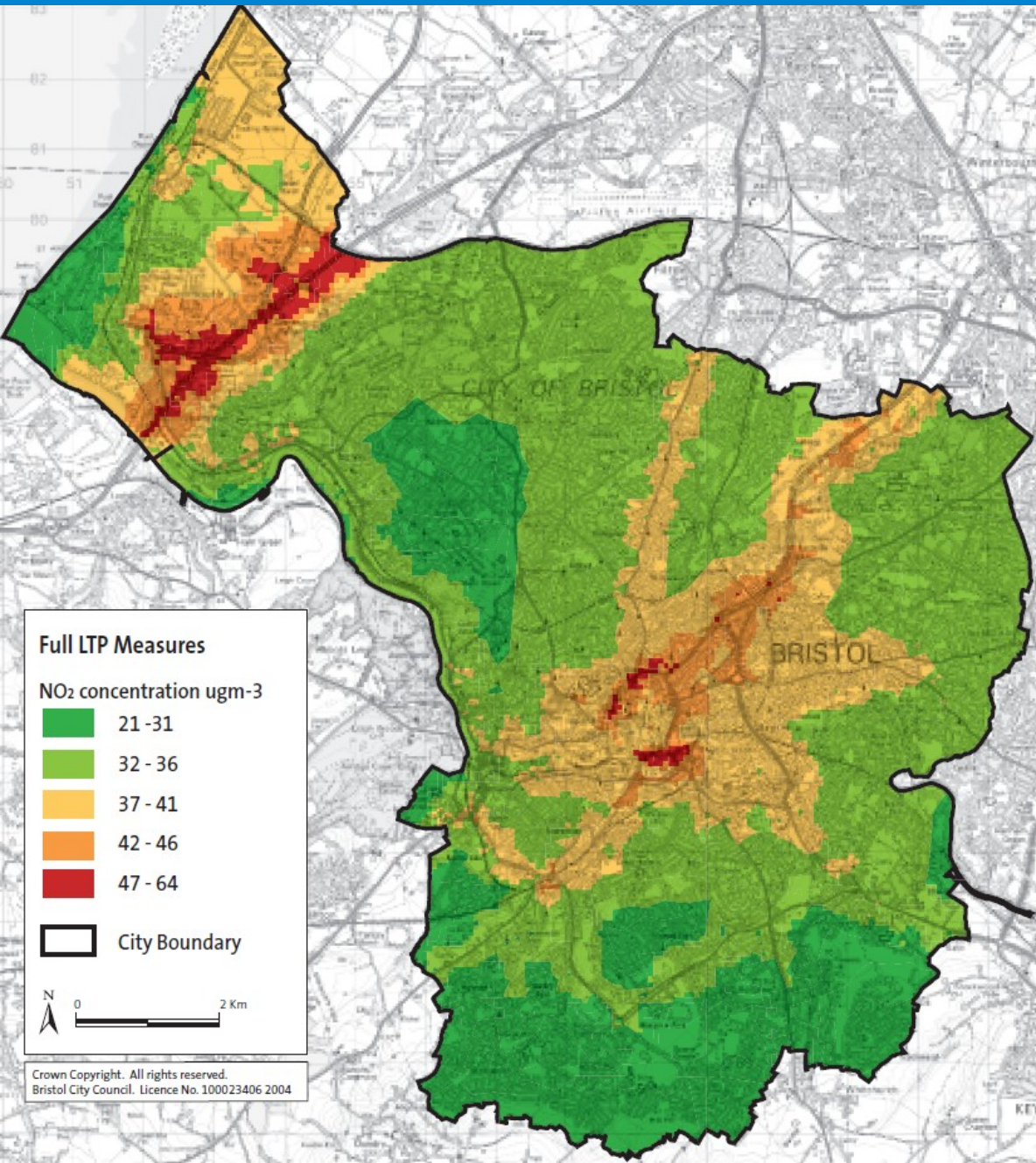
Some potential biodiversity and property impacts

Relatively high capital cost ~ £49 million

Complementary with the GBBN proposals

Different to GBSTS alignment

Limited Pollution Benefits



- Prices to match buses
- 6 buses/hour
=300 passengers
- One-way commuter traffic only
- Will only offset damage from new houses at Emerson's Green
- Not current Air Quality Management Area

Government + Council funding

Transport Innovation Fund

| | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2014-15 |
| £290M | £930M | £600M | £1300M | £1680M | £2100 |

"schemes that have the potential to develop more sophisticated road pricing systems"

"improve the experience of cycling and walking"

"schemes which impose unacceptable environmental, social or other costs will not be funded."

-WEP targeting Sept 2008 bid, focus on railway path

This will kill the Railway Path!

- It's too narrow for bus+path+greenery
- entry points will be "rationalised" to a few "safe" crossings
- Anything that lives there is doomed
- We would get 3m of track; no way to get off it.
- Split the community like the M32?

It may be possible to preserve it as a commuter route —but its recreational and social value will be zero.

Too Narrow



Two lanes of buses; 3m for bikes & pedestrians

It's East Bristol's Greenway

- Easton-Staple Hill Disused Railway SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation & Geological Interest)
- The Lido SNCI -route runs alongside
- Rodway Common SNCI -route cuts through site
- Royate Hill local nature reserve
- Protected species: badgers, glow worms, bats? slow worms? water voles? dormice? newts?

More than just a commute route!

How many cyclists are seen enjoying the A4174 bike path at weekends?

How many pedestrians are seen on the A4 Portway pavement/bike path?

Who walks their dog along the ring road?

What wildlife survives in these places?

Where is there as lovely a walk to school in the city?

We have to stop this!

Alternatives

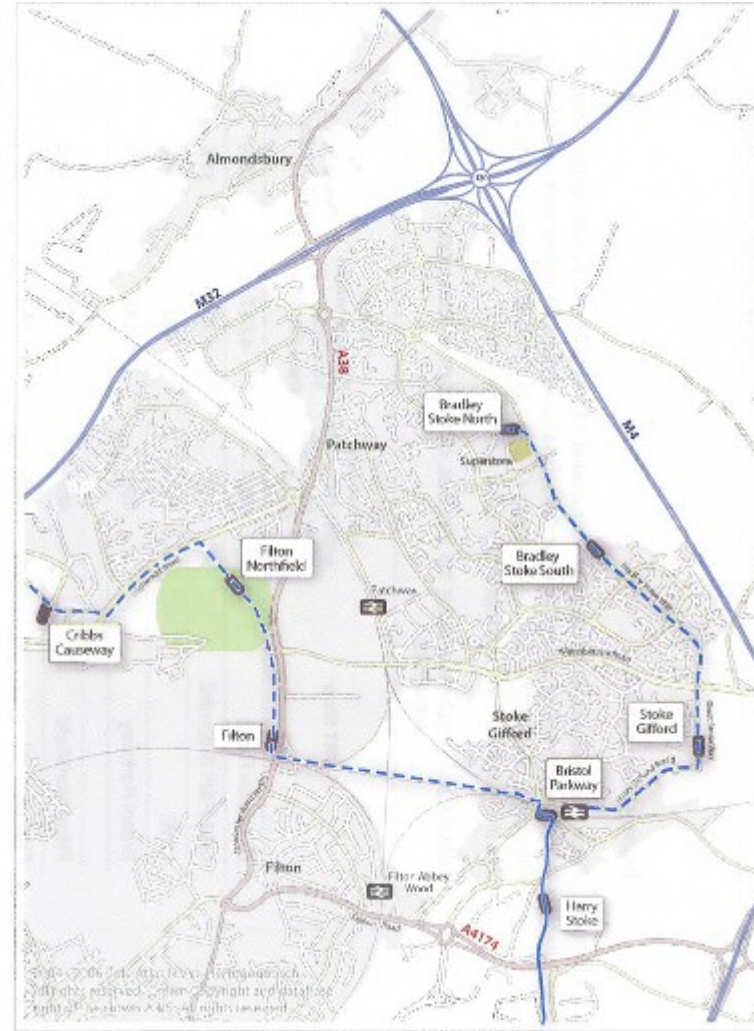
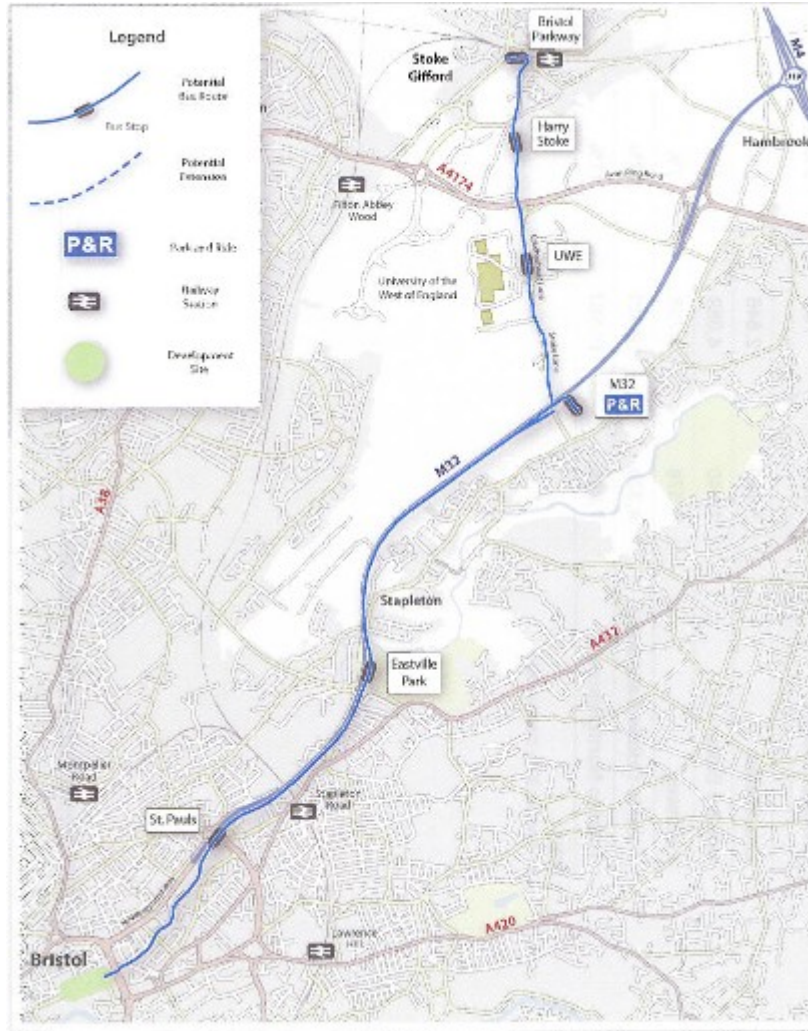
**from the
Transport for Greater Bristol
Alliance**

M32 hard shoulder BRT to North Fringe



Bus-only exit for UWE; Park & Ride by M4?

Cost £57M, with two-way use



"High demand to and from City Centre, strong benefits"

Fix the Showcase Bus Routes



Without
enforcement

they are

worse than useless

Support the Suburban Railways

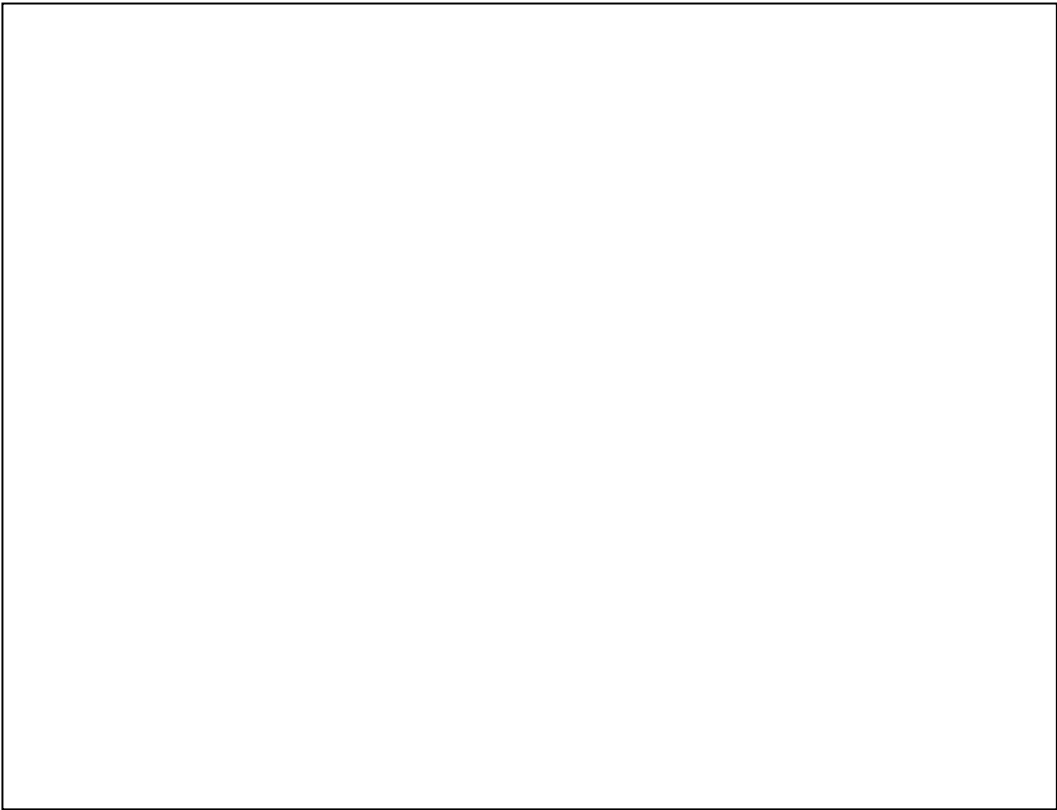


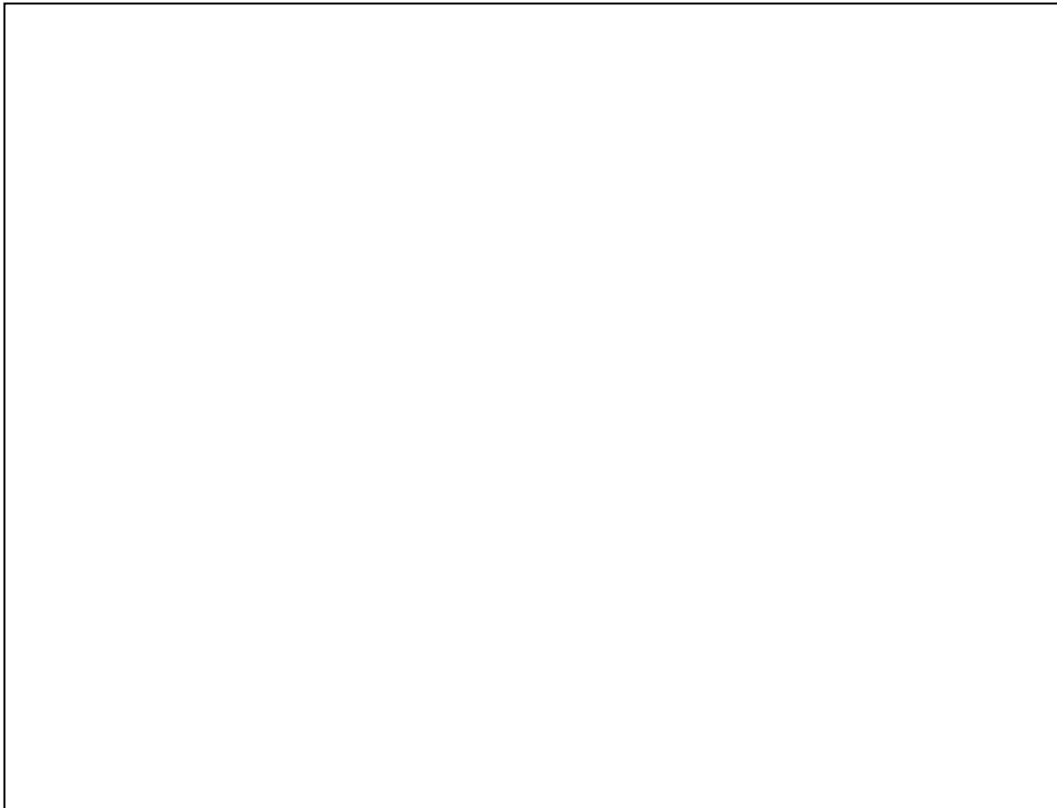
Make the Path even Better





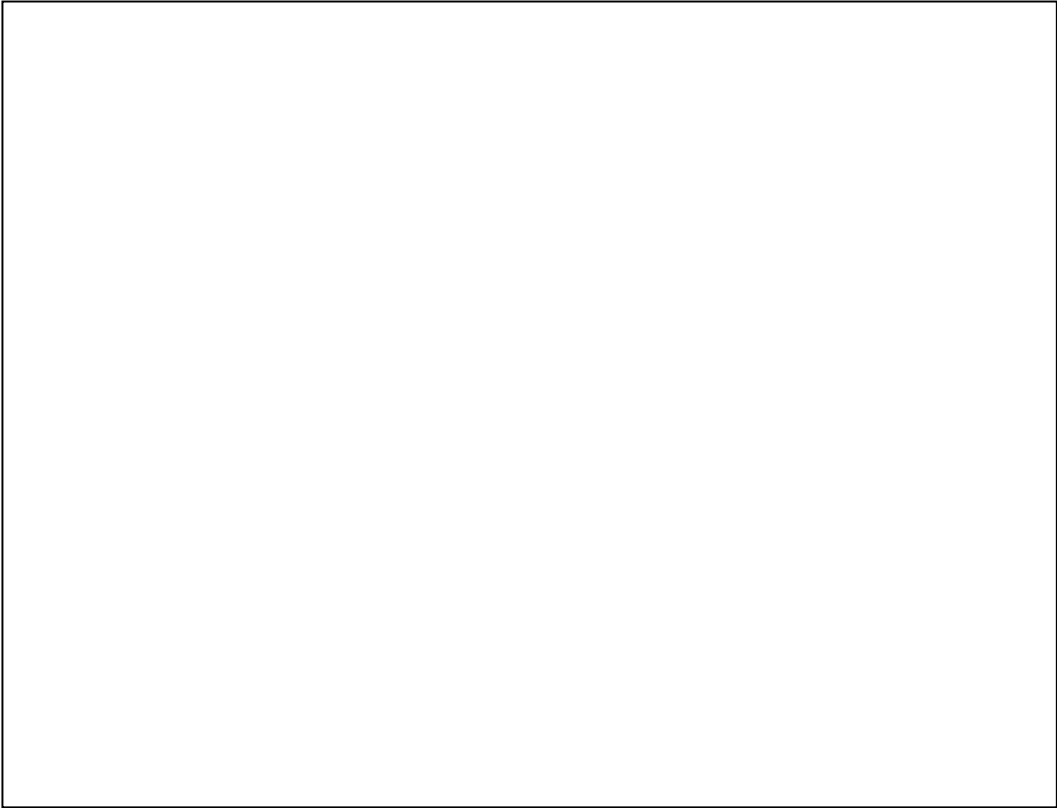
How will *you* save the Railway Path?



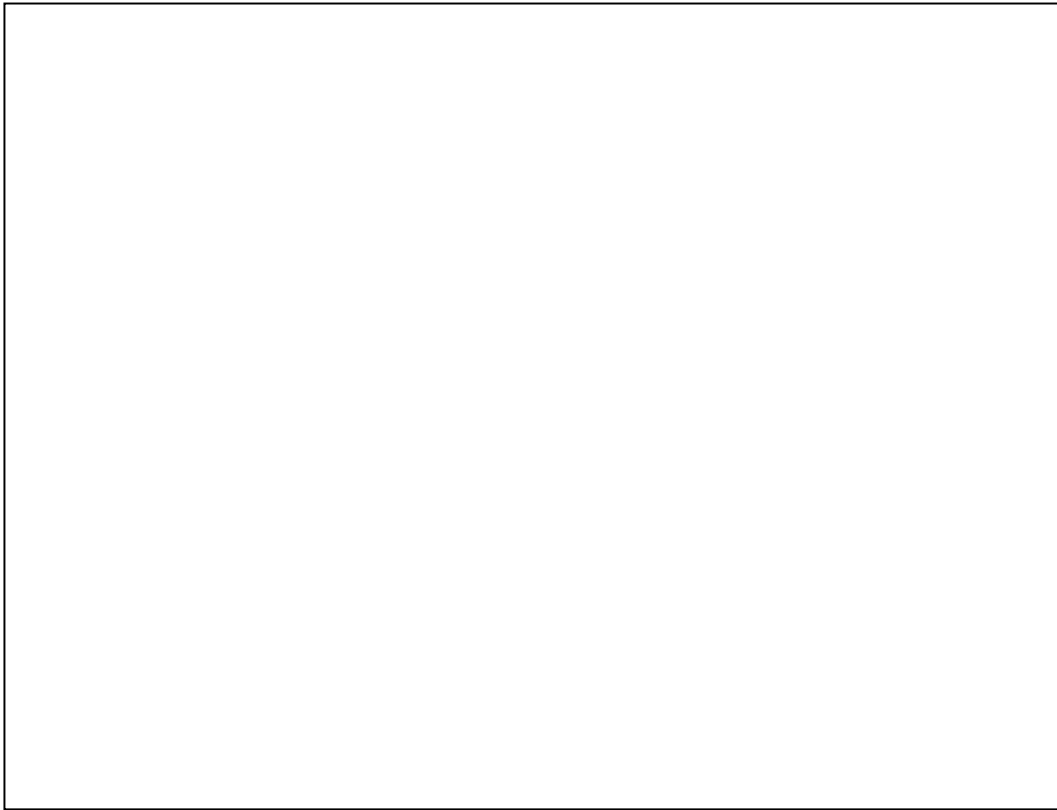


This shouldn't be news to anyone. Bristol is very prosperous for a UK city, and has a worst-in-class public transport system. There are some fundamental historical reasons for this (no single central focal point, privatised buses since the early twentieth century, hilly and narrow roads. FirstBus just amplifies the problem with dirty and unreliable buses. The UWE buses U1, U2, U3 show things can be different

Since the mid eighties, development around the northern ring road in Filton, Stoke Gifford and the A38 up to the M5 have created a new congestion zone, the North Fringe. This has commuter traffic from out of Bristol coming in , and Bristol residents heading out, plus students Back in about 1994 you could drive in and out quite easily, as you were going against the traffic. But the MOD and other big arrivals have changed that. Now you need to be on the road before 4:30 (this pic was taken at 4:45) or after 6:15pm.



Regional Spatial Strategy. including 10,500 to the south west, 8500 North and East, 6000 to the south east. Thousands in Hengrove.



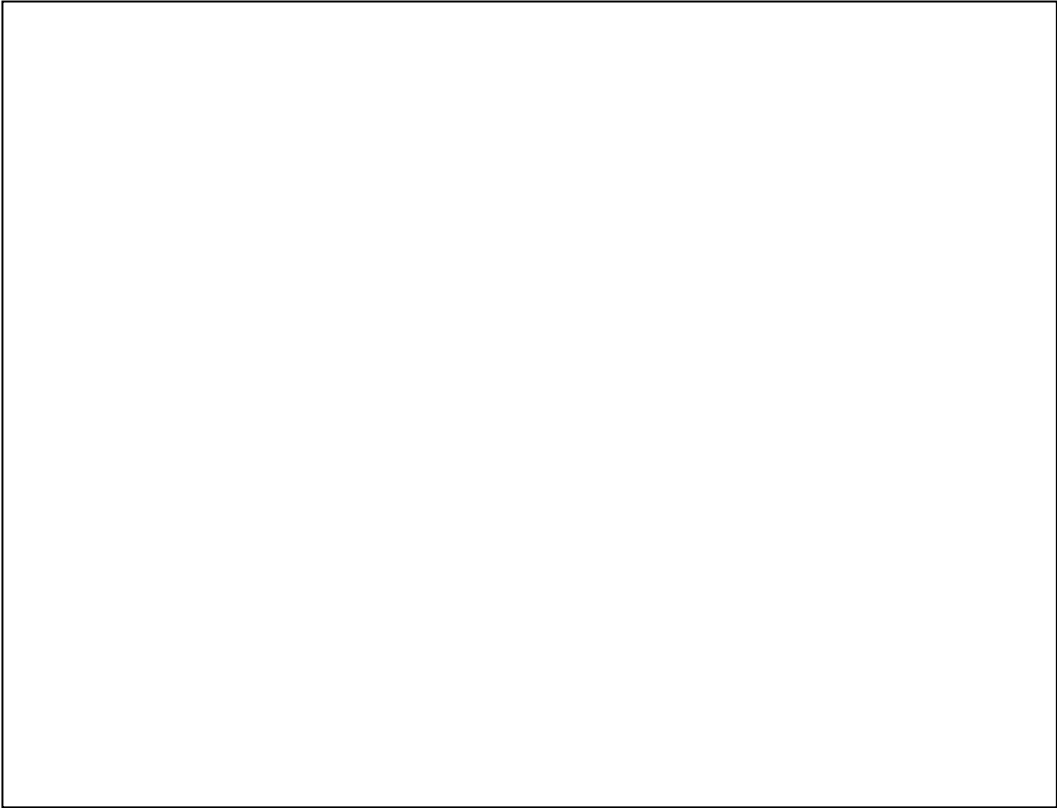
Greater Bristol Transport Study (2005)

<http://www.gos.gov.uk/gosw/transport/regtransstrat/gbsts/>

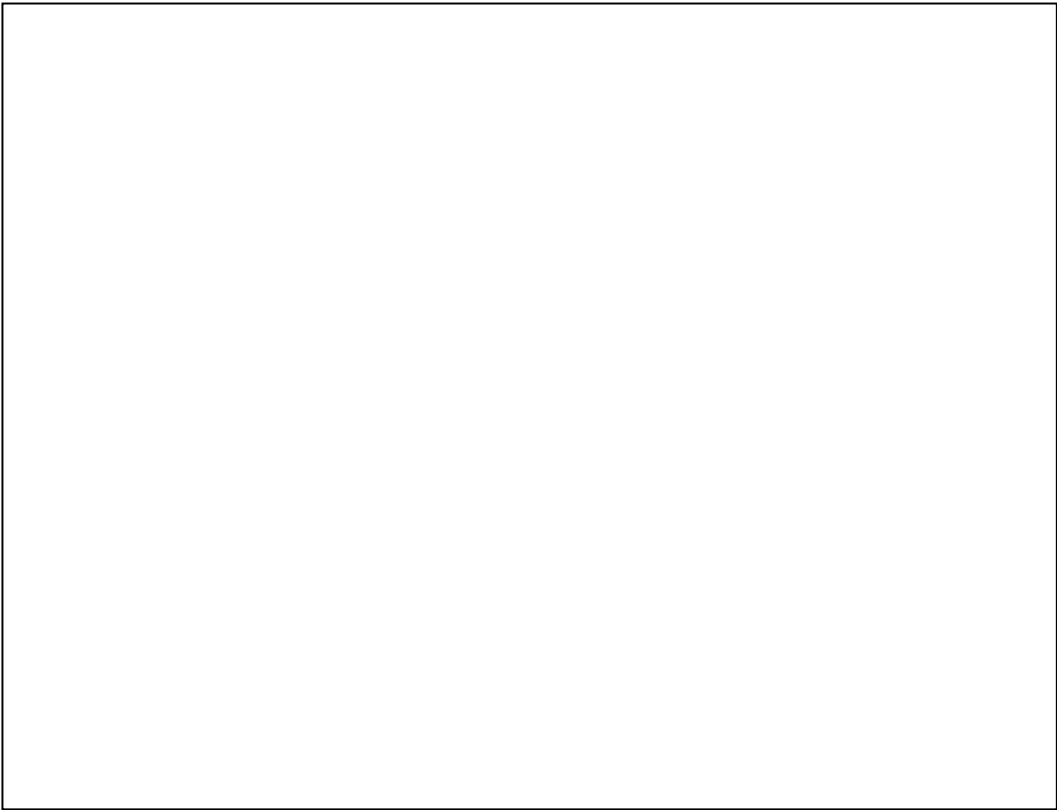
Transport plan:

http://www.westofengland.org/site/JointLocalTransportPlan_2867.asp

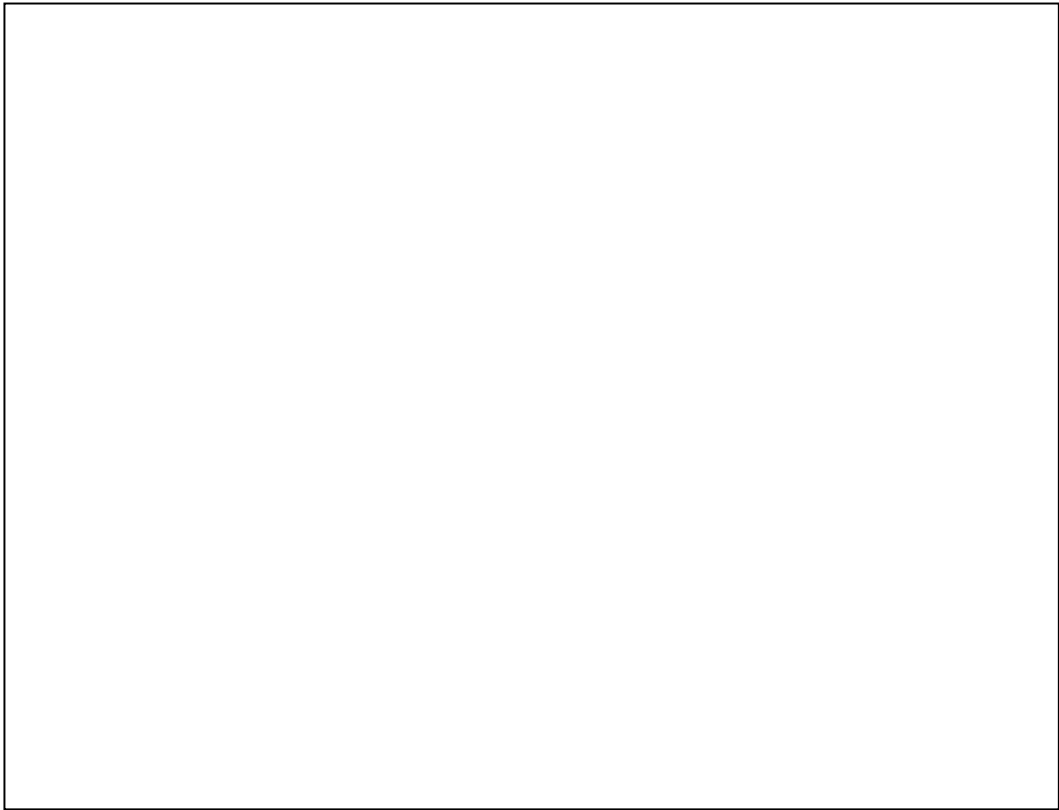
These proposed various things, including some Bus Rapid Transit routes which followed the routes shown here.



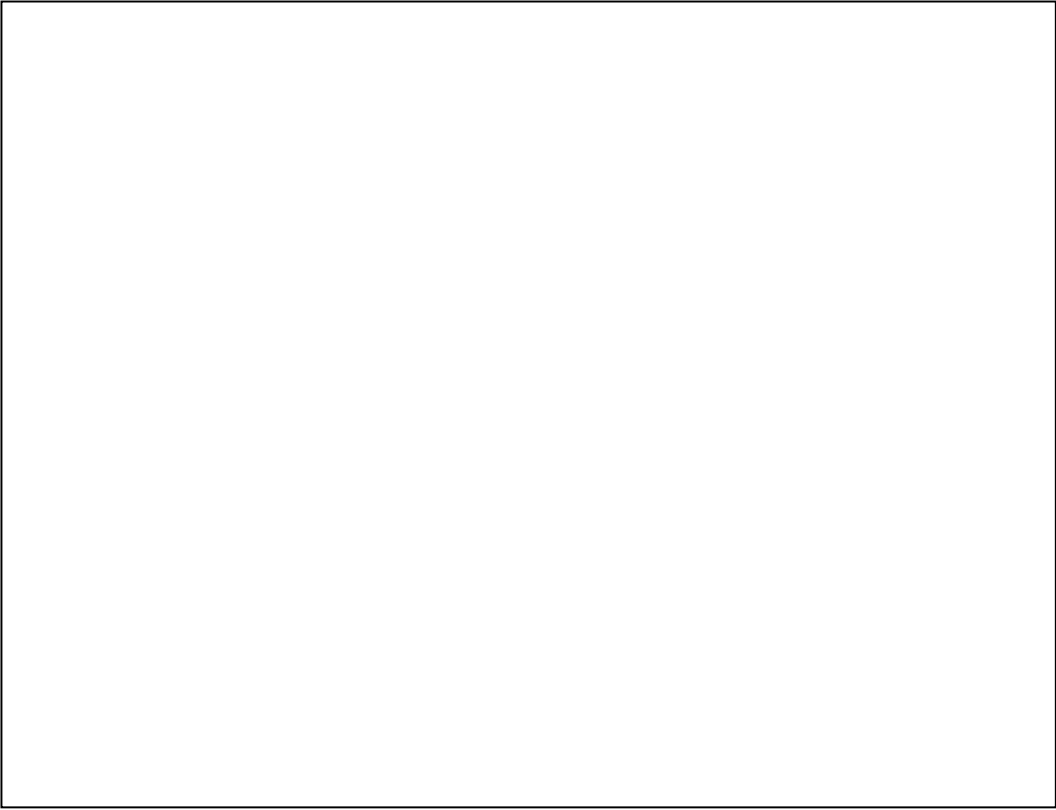
The route options investigated included the original A432 proposal, but someone found a 'disused' railway nearby....

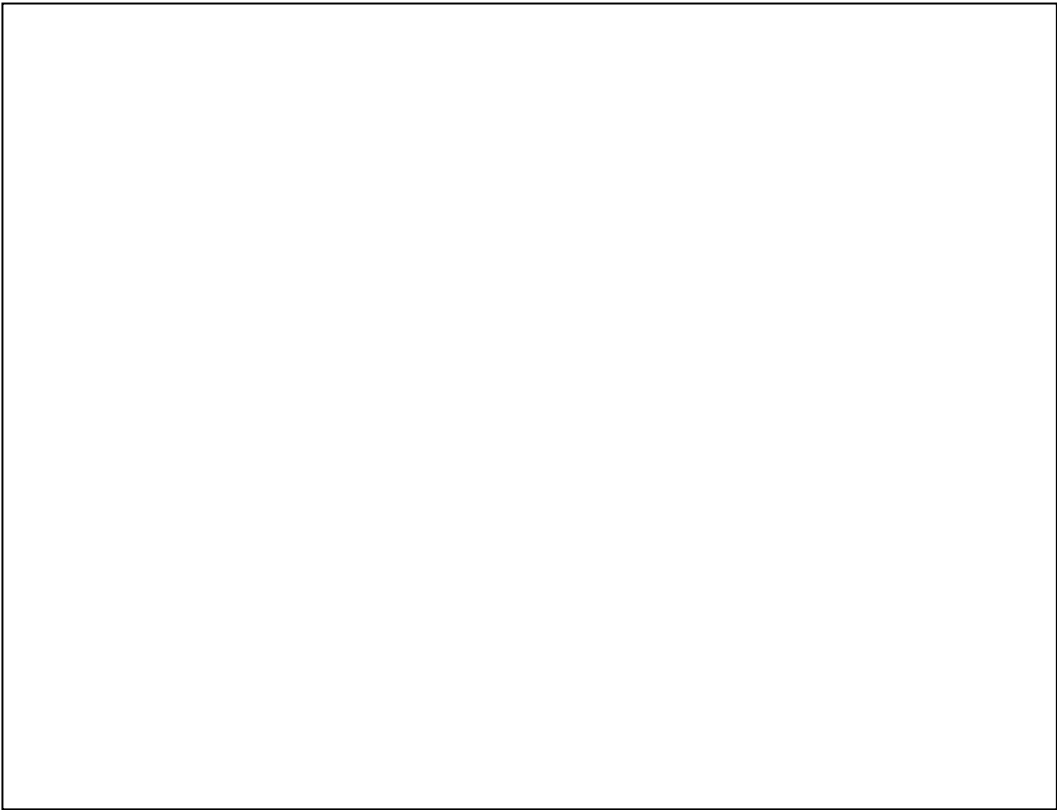


The key thing here is that since march, the railway path has been targeted for a BRT. By the time consultation begins, 12+ months time will have been invested in turning it into a bus lane. When consultation comes the questions will be "what color do you want the buses" rather than "do you want the buses?"



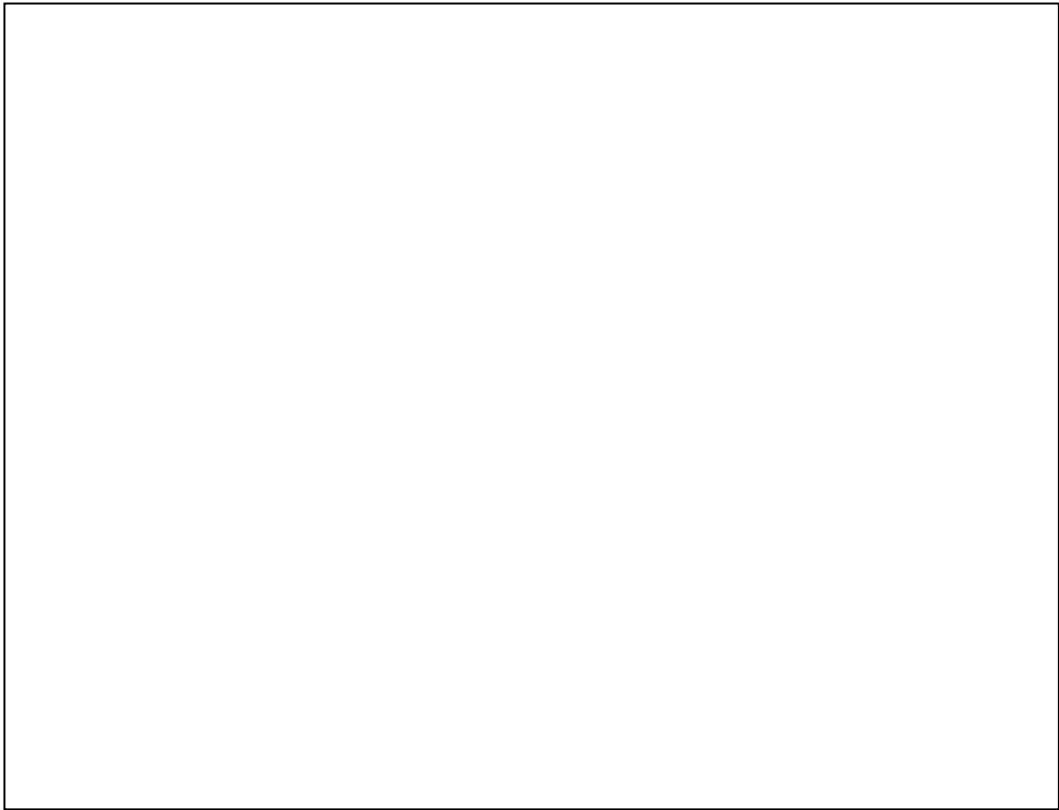
the "contentious" reference is p54 of 2007-01-17-public-transport-corridor-options.pdf





From: 2007-05-corridor-options-short-list-report-part-2-of-3.pdf

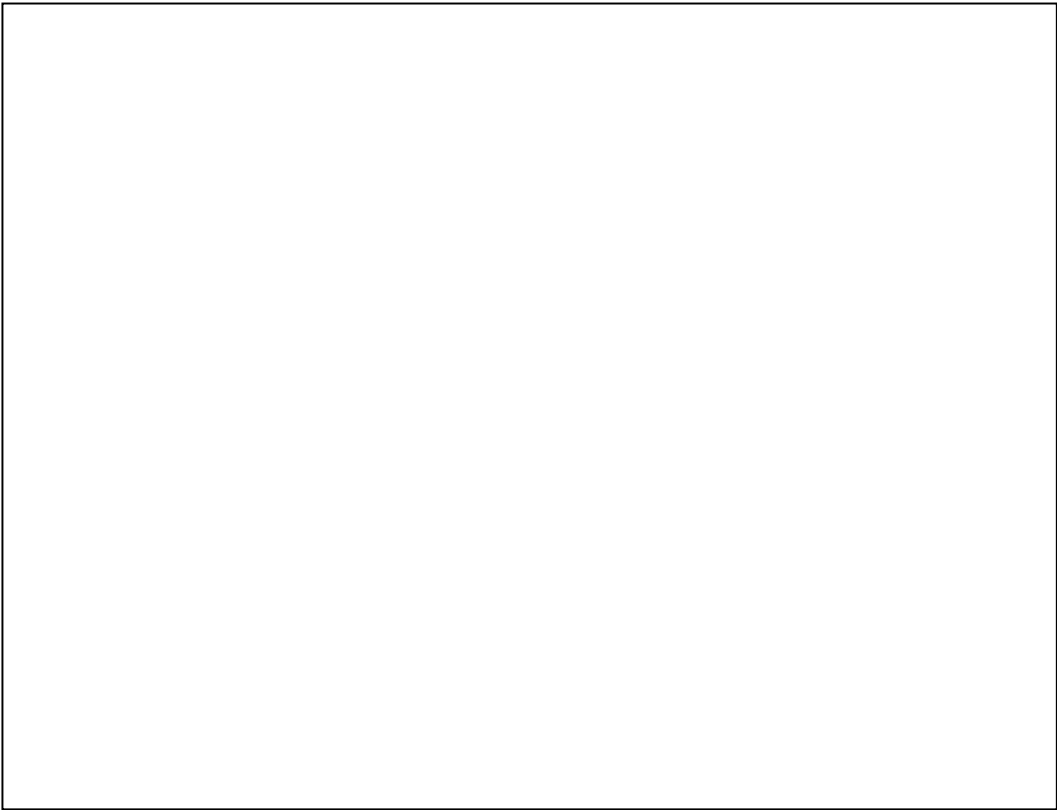
- Within the air quality management area
- Flood risk
- Part of the route is green belt+wildlife network
- Depends on Ashton Gate development to be viable



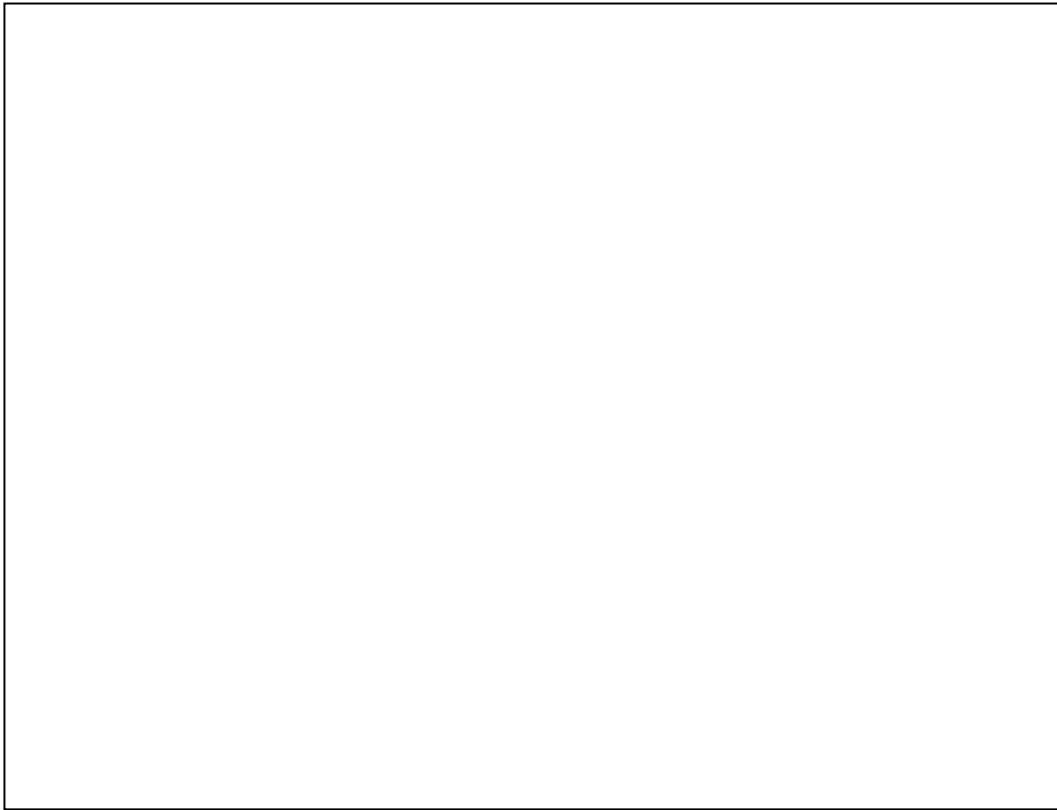
From: 2007-05-corridor-options-short-list-report-part-2-of-3.pdf

Look familiar? The green bit at the end is houses that don't exist.

Note that the stations are designed to be 15 minutes walk away, on a par with the distribution of stations along the shirehampton line and the London underground inner suburbs. There is perceived to be no need for feeder buses (as per LU or the Bogota BRT system). Presumably if you are not going to the centre of town, you have a 15 minute walk at the far end. So the BRT routes do give you up to 30 minutes of walk.



Note how being complementary to the showcase bus routes is a feature. So, the council funds a lot of work to help the popular bus routes (which don't work that well), then they pick on this route precisely because it is complementary, because there is no bus running down this route.



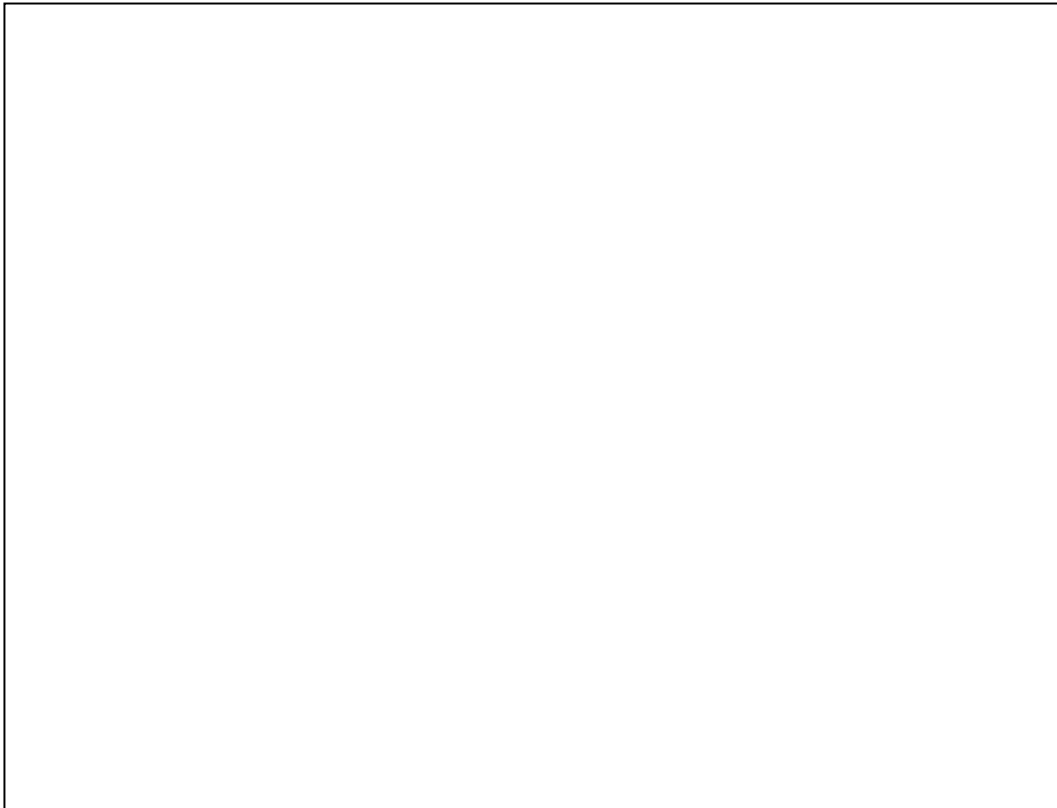
The route will be priced to be the same as whatever classic buses are charging, but only 6/hour are planned in peak hours; 2/hour at weekends. Assume 50 people per bus, 300/hour inbound. Maybe at 100/bus you'd get 600/hour, but as there is no outbound traffic to Emerson's green, buses would still be effectively at 50% capacity. The NO₂ and CO₂ pollution would be double that of buses that were full both directions.

Also, 300 passengers an hour? 50 million pounds?

Pricing: *'comparable with other bus fares'*

Some of the FOI docs talk about reduced pollution of hybrid/biodiesel vehicles. Adding such vehicles over existing routes would help. Diesels are very polluting in stop/go traffic so if they can go for longer without stopping things are better. That can be achieved on the M32 hard shoulder; the railway path would need stop signs for the crossing and for the one way system. Also they want to run existing buses down here which will be classic legacy diesel.

Pollution Map from the 2003 Air Quality Management Study.



One interesting question is where does the money come from? 10M from the council, the rest from central govt under a Transport Innovation Fund (TIF)

-You get 'priming' money to prepare for a bid. This is what is probably funding the current work

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/tif/tifpumpprimingcosts>

They got £800K for this <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/bristol/7191188.stm>

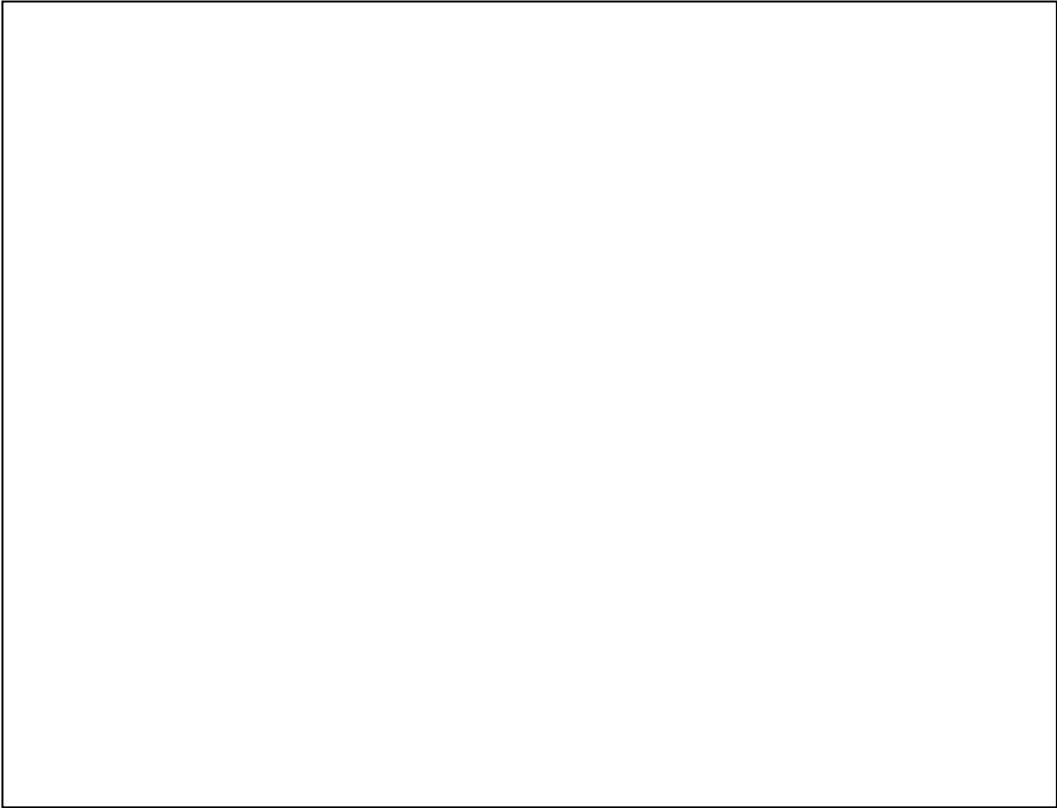
-there are hard deadlines for money, looks like year end:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/tif/transportinnovationfund>

See the PDF :

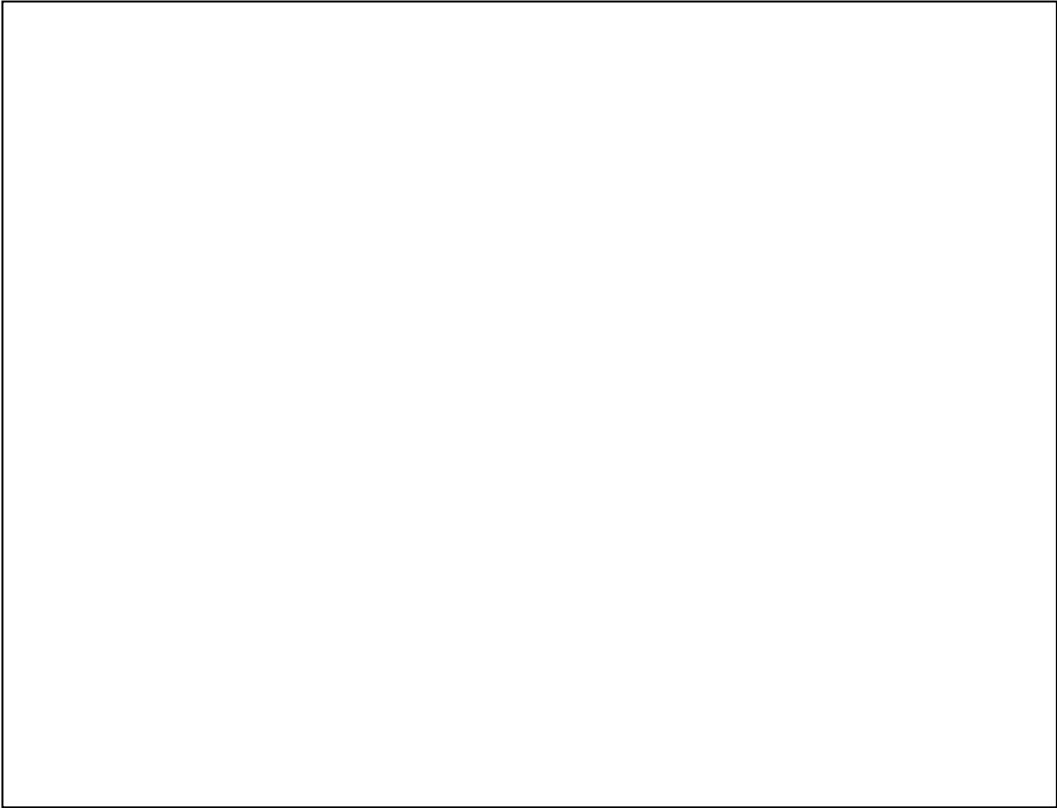
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pdf/pgr/regional/tif/execsummtifguideprogrammeentry>

The current proposal is targeting a Sept 2008 bid on the railway path; they've focused on this exclusively since July 2007. If they switch to a new route they may get in by Dec 2008, otherwise they slip a year. This is why stopping the plan early is good -by keeping the plan a secret until November, they stopped us pointing out early that this route was a non-starter.



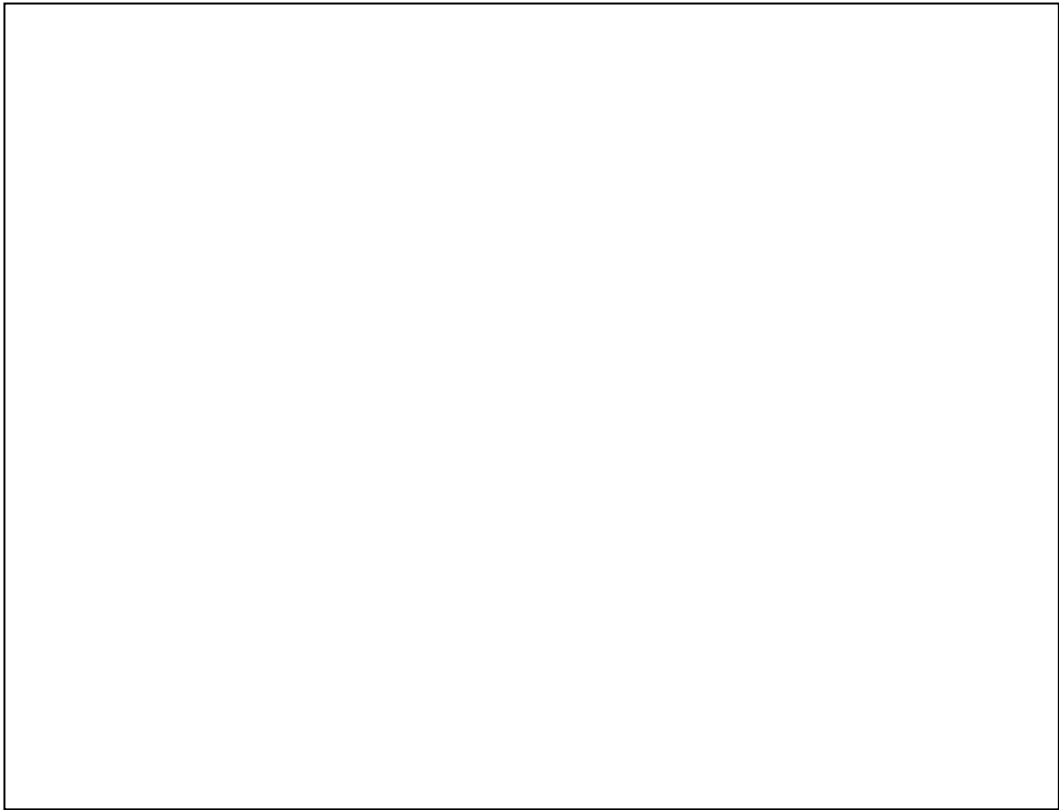
The people planning the bus lane have been trying (albeit reluctantly) to leave a cyclepath in, but they've missed the Railway Path is more than just a fast way to cycle around. It is a path used by everyone near it to get around, for kids to play on, for nature to live and grow.

When you hear someone say 'they can coexist', they mean a narrow track can survive alongside two bus roads, but it would no longer be the railway path as we know it.



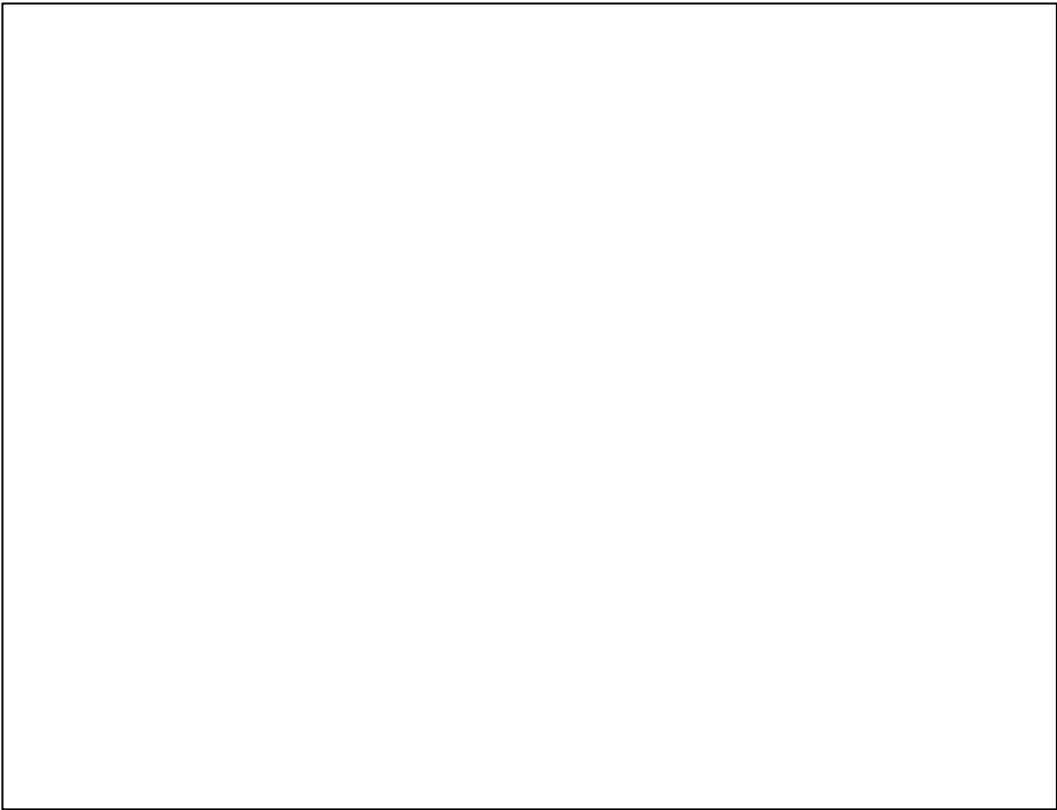
Although it was a two way train track, there's not enough room for two way vehicles and other users. Some bits will be one way for the bus (tunnels) but they are also thinking of side routes for the path at lodge causewayside and other places.

Also, since the railways, its gone green.



The environmental report is pretty dismissive of the issues here, but the fact remain that (a) the core of the path is itself a nature reserve and (b) if there are protected species on it, they don't get to cut things down. Note that the docs also imply that Royate Hill is in trouble, which is odd as it isn't currently part of the route. Perhaps this is in line for a bit of roadway as part of the Clay Bottom engineering.

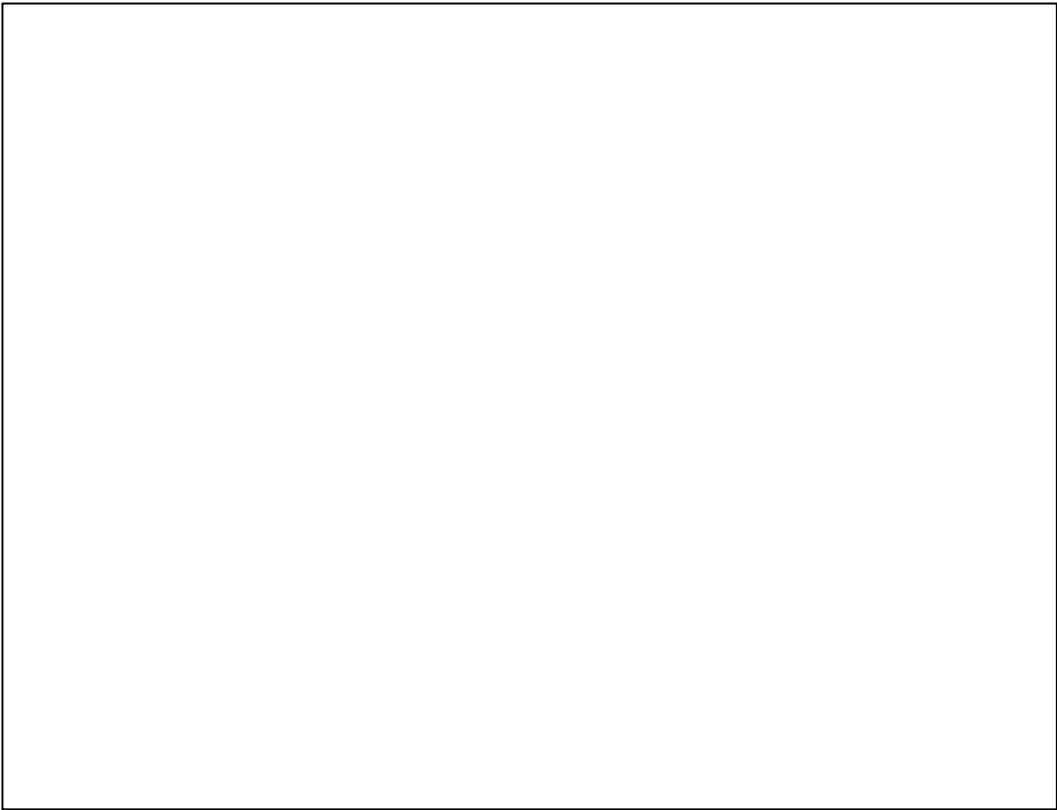
We know there are badgers 100 metres away from the community centre, we know there are glow worms at the far end. We'd like to know what else lives along there, preferably with photographs. This makes deniability hard.



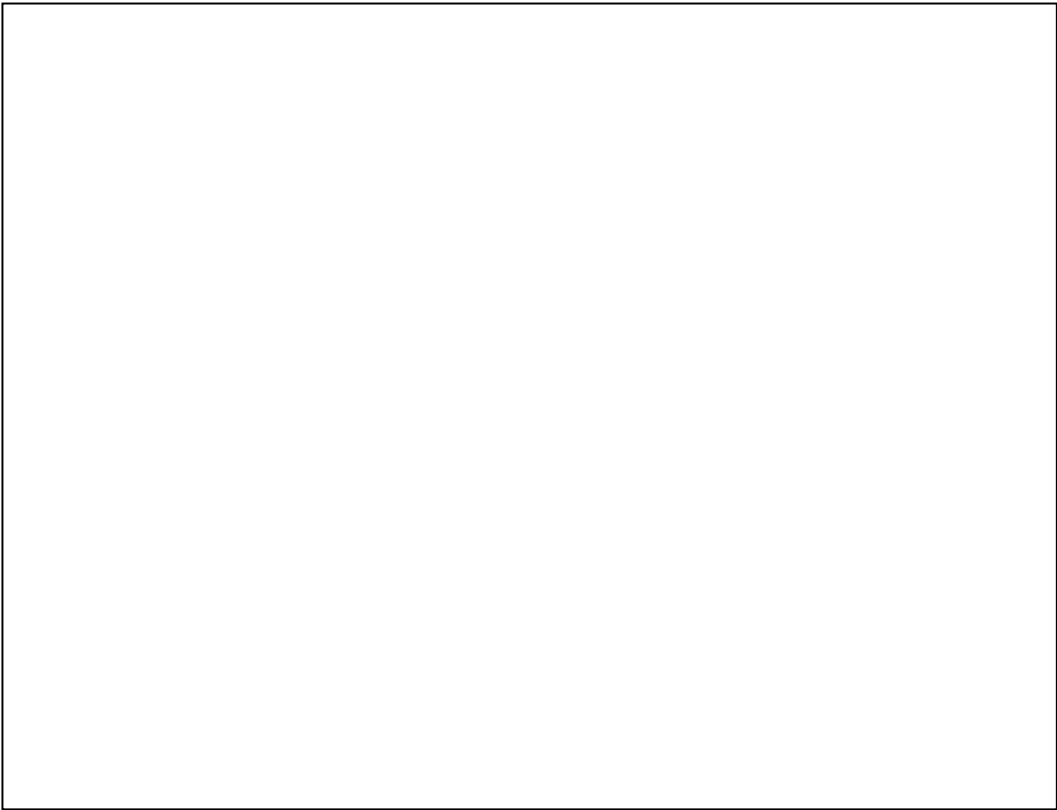
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Alternatives

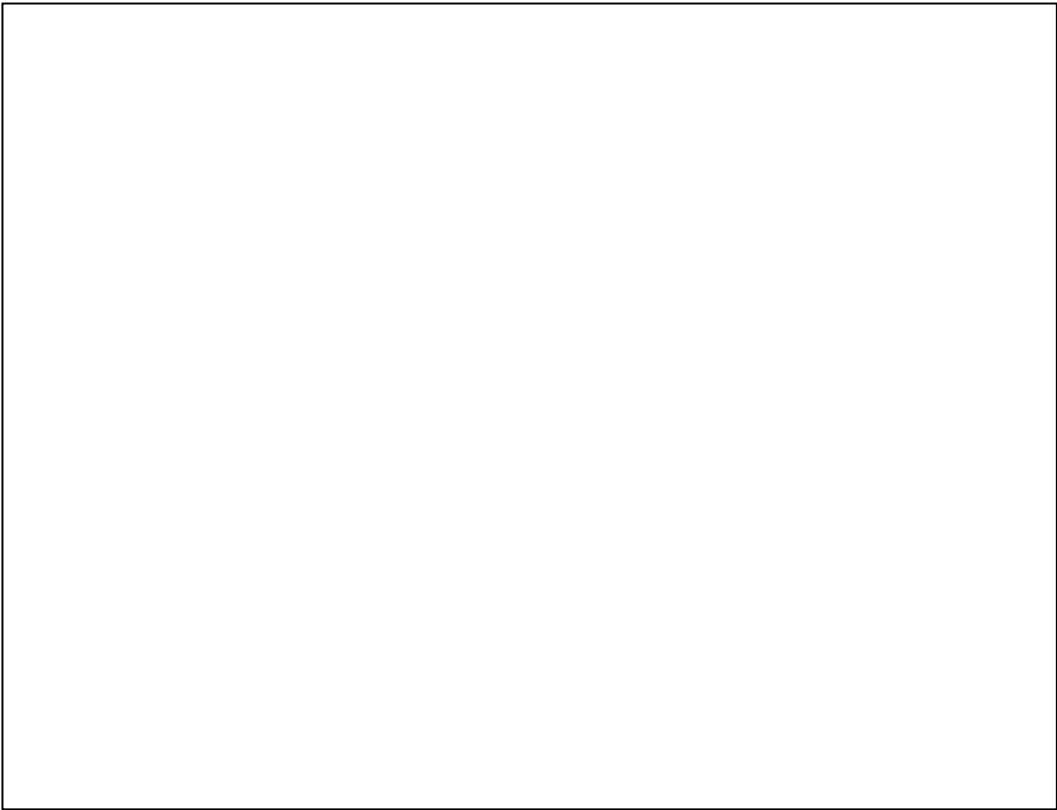
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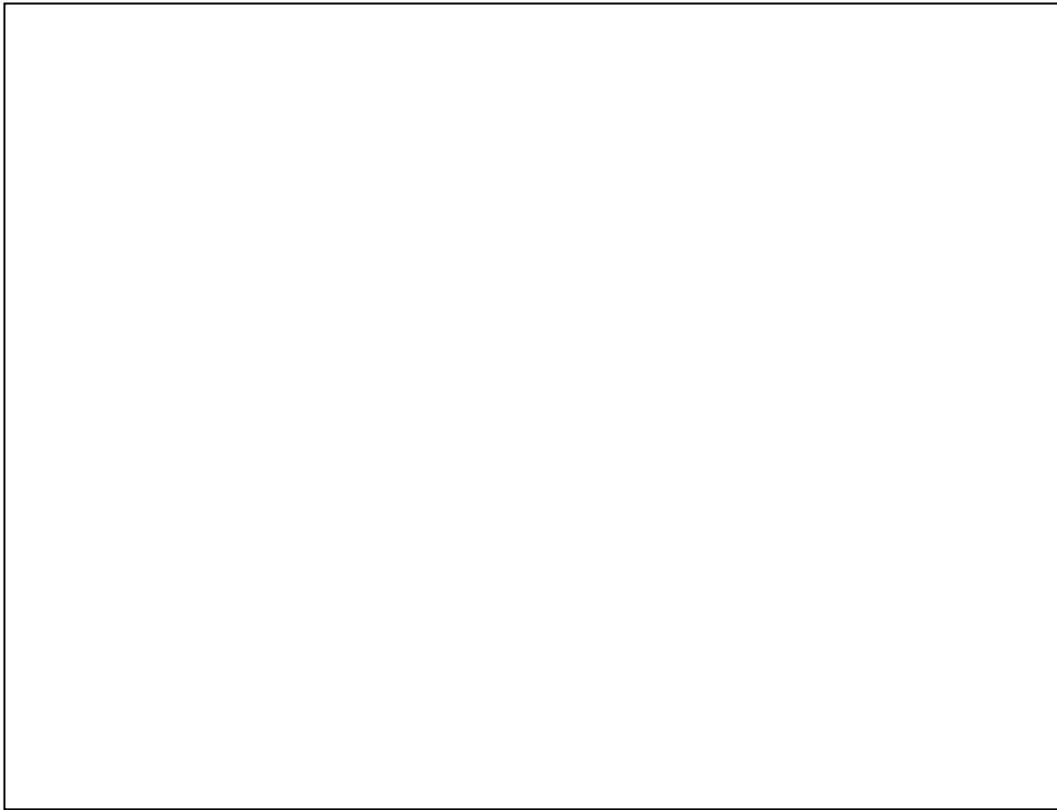


This is another proposal the WEP was looking at. For some reason they decided to leave it alone, apparently because it would be more disruptive to the city centre, and so upset people (search the minutes for this)



Estimated Cost including Park & Ride on a par with converting the railway path. Buses would take P&R commuters into the city, but also north fringe commuters outbound. If capacity both ways is high, pollution cost of each passenger is double.



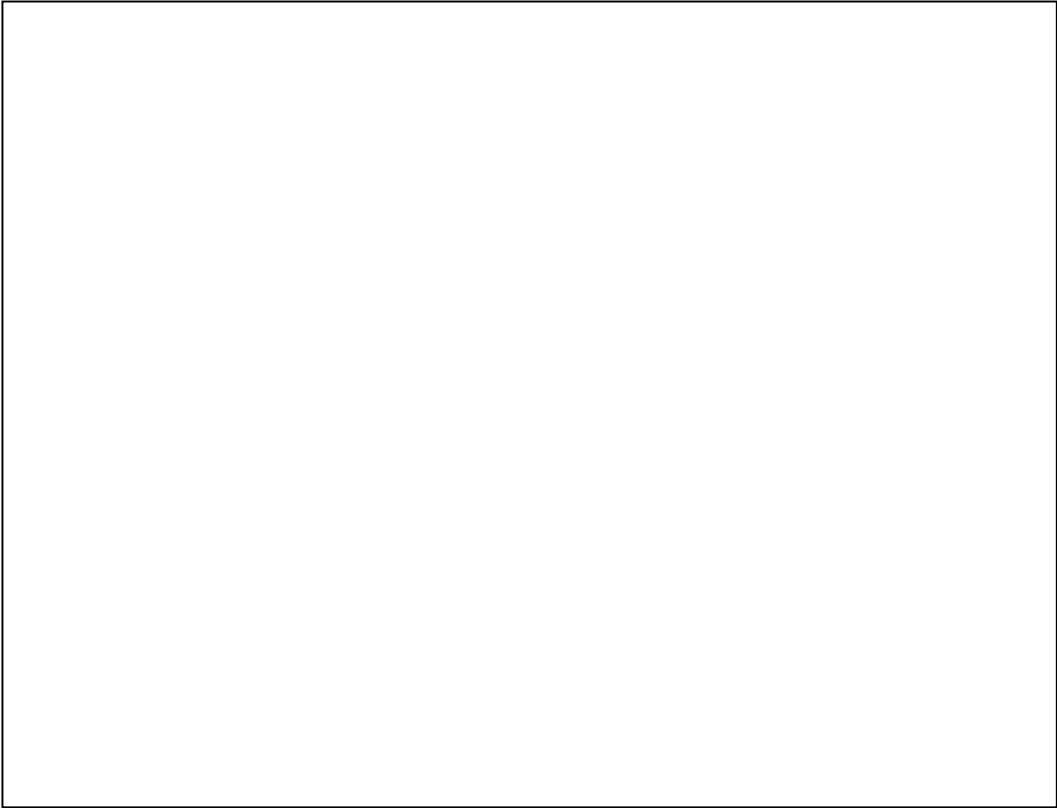


Its clear from the evening post that a lot of people are still upset about the loss of the mangotsfield railway, and think running buses along here will roll back time. It wont.

If the railway path had stayed a railway it would have exactly the same funding and frequence problems as the Shirehampton line, and what few passengers there were would be staging fare strikes. At 2.5M+ users/year, the number of users of the path as it currently stands far outnumbers those a railway line or bus lane could achieve.

The BRT investigation actually looked at turning the Shirehampton lane in to a BRT route, but network rail told them to stop it. It's a frei

- run trains frequently enough that you can use them, even at weekends.
- bring back the Portishead passenger line. It would be cheaper than adding a new bridge over the river, which is another proposal of the Joint Local Transport Plan, and not just help people commuting in to Bristol Centre (as a P+R would do), it would terminate at Temple Meads and so help with connections to the North Fringe and London.



Here's a French path that runs down from Annecy all the way to the town centre, here's a road bike and a rollerblader enjoying it.

-separate pedestrian area that is gravelled enough to discourage road bikes and rollerbladers from using it. Rights of way at most junctions, and those that do have stops, they have barriers you can skirt round.



How will *you* save the Railway Path?