

# Your questions answered

## Thornbury to North Bristol Sustainable Transport Corridor improvements

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## Background to the scheme

### What are the proposed improvements and who will be responsible for delivering them?

Our aim is to transform the Thornbury to North Bristol Sustainable Corridor (the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way) to give residents and visitors better options for using buses, walking, cycling and wheeling. The proposals include improvements to bus stops, creation of new bus lanes, shared use paths and segregated cycling and walking facilities along the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way.

The Thornbury to North Bristol Sustainable Transport Corridor scheme is being developed by South Gloucestershire Council as part of a wider programme of works aimed at improving public transport and active travel throughout the region.

It is funded by the West of England Combined Authority through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements Fund, administered by the West of England Combined Authority. In April 2022, the Department for Transport awarded the West of England Combined Authority £540m as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement.

For further information regarding the scope of proposals, please refer to the scheme drawings, scheme images and further information document.

### How has this project been identified?

This scheme is part of a wider transport package of improvements set out in the [Joint Local Transport Plan 4 \(2020-2036\)](#) for the West of England which after consultation in 2019, was adopted as policy by the West of England local authorities. This document sets out the priorities for investment in the area including improvements along the A38 for walking and cycling between Thornbury and the Bristol boundary and further improvements to public and active travel options within the north fringe of Bristol.

The scheme also supports the objectives of the [West of England Bus Strategy](#) published in June 2020 which aims to see bus passenger numbers double by 2036 and the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way is identified in the [West of England Bus Service Improvement Plan](#)

(published in October 2021) as one of the priority corridors for investment between 2021 and 2025.

### **Why is the project being delivered in two phases?**

In early 2022, we sought your views on proposals for the entire Thornbury to North Bristol Sustainable Transport Corridor. Since then, we have decided to progress the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way improvements in two phases (Phase 1 and Phase 2) due to areas in Phase 2 requiring further design work. However, the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way improvements remain as one overall scheme – providing an overall package of walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport improvements.

We are currently seeking your views on the proposed Phase 1 improvements. We will be seeking your views on Phase 2 improvements in summer 2023.

You can see which sections of the scheme are in Phase 1 and Phase 2 on the [consultation webpage](#).

## **Benefits to you**

### **How will the scheme benefit me?**

The scheme will provide improved facilities for bus travel and bus priority measures will result in more reliable bus journey times between Thornbury, Bradley Stoke and Bristol. We are aiming to bring bus stops along the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way up to a consistent standard.

New segregated walking and cycling tracks will make it safer and more attractive to walk, cycle or wheel between communities along the route. These facilities will be designed to be suitable for use by people of all abilities. In some locations, reduced speed limits are proposed to enhance safety and support increased walking, cycling and wheeling.

New or improved crossing facilities will be provided to improve access to bus stops and the new walking and cycling tracks.

### **How will bus journeys be improved?**

The scheme will provide improved facilities for bus travel and bus priority measures along the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way. This will result in more reliable customer experience between Thornbury, Bradley Stoke and Bristol.

### **How will bus stops be improved?**

The proposals are to improve bus stops along the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way. The proposals include:

- Introducing better sheltering to protect bus passengers from the weather,
- Installing real-time information displays to advise passengers about bus timings,
- Measures to improve disabled access to buses.

### **How will facilities for walking, cycling and wheeling be improved?**

New segregated walking and cycling tracks are proposed along the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way. They will make it safer and more attractive to walk, wheel or cycle between communities along the corridor. These facilities will be designed to be suitable for use by people of all abilities. In some locations, reduced speed limits are proposed to enhance safety and support increased walking, cycling and wheeling.

Along the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way, new or improved crossing facilities will be provided to improve access to bus stops and the new walking and cycling tracks.

The new walking and cycling facilities will be designed in accordance with the Department for Transport's [Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance \(Local Transport Note 1/20\)](#).

### **How will safety be improved?**

Providing segregated facilities for cyclists will reduce the risk of collisions between cyclists and vehicles. Where possible the cycle tracks will also be separated from the footway and bus stops to reduce the risk of collisions between cyclists and pedestrians including waiting bus passengers.

Crossing facilities will be designed in accordance with the [Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance](#) with the aim of ensuring safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

The proposed speed limit reductions will also help to generally improve safety.

### **How will accessibility be improved?**

Accessibility of bus stops is to be improved by ensuring a consistent standard for raised kerb heights to reduce the step from the kerb to the bus and that all bus stops have a paved area which is easily accessible from the footway. Crossing facilities required to access bus stops will include dropped kerbs and tactile paving.

Where footways are being upgraded, we will aim to provide a consistent standard, segregated where possible from cycle tracks. Where segregation is not possible and cyclists need to share the same space with pedestrians, clear signage will be provided to remind cyclists to give way to pedestrians.

Crossing facilities will be designed to meet accessibility standards including clear road markings, signage and tactile paving.

### **How will the proposals affect air quality?**

The scheme will contribute to improved air quality in the corridor by increasing the proportion of journeys made by bus, walking and cycling. Junction improvements will also help to improve air quality by reducing queuing traffic at peak times.

## **Listening to you**

### **How have you considered my views from last time?**

Yes. In early 2022, we sought your views on proposals for the Thornbury to North Bristol Sustainable Transport Corridor. We have analysed all responses received, which have helped to inform further design work. A summary of the key findings can be found on our

[consultation homepage](#), along with an explanation which details how this information has supported the updated designs.

## The proposals

### **Why is a 2-way cycle track proposed along most of the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way (rather than having cycle tracks on each side of the road)?**

In most cases, a 2-way cycle track constructed to one side of the road takes up less space than if separate cycle tracks were to be provided on each side of the road whilst also providing a more attractive facility for cyclists. The minimum desirable width set out in the [Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance](#) is 3 metres for a two-way track and 2 metres for a 1-way track. Providing 1-way tracks on both sides of the road would therefore require a total of 4 metres to be allocated for cycle tracks.

Providing a 2-way track on one side of the road is also expected to be more cost-effective and result in less disruption during the construction works than if works were required to both sides of the road.

We are proposing to place the A38 cycle track on the western side of the road as this enables direct access to be provided into Alveston. This cycle track will also be able to connect with the two controlled crossings over the M5 slip roads at Junction 16; we will consult on this section of the scheme as part of the Phase 2 improvements.

Along Bradley Stoke Way, the 2-way cycle track (with separate footway) can be achieved by widening the existing shared use paths.

### **Are equestrians considered in the scheme?**

The busy nature of the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way means they are not generally suitable for horse riding and footways and cycle tracks should not be used by horse riders.

### **Why are you proposing to reduce speed limits?**

As part of Phase 1 improvements, speed limits are proposed to be reduced in the following locations to improve safety and support increased walking and cycling:

- A38 between Almondsbury (Oaklands Drive) and Woodhouse Down (BP garage) – from 40mph to 30mph.
- A38 through pedestrian crossing south of Aztec West Roundabout – from 40mph to 30mph.

These proposals reflect the extent to which horizontal separation between cyclists and road traffic is possible plus reductions in traffic lane widths and our aim to provide a safer and more attractive environment for walkers and cyclists, particularly around residential areas.

The [Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance](#) identifies the minimum horizontal separation to be provided between cycle tracks and the carriageway and is a key factor in considering changes to speed limits. Table 6-1 from the guidance is copied below for reference:

**Table 6-1: Minimum recommended horizontal separation between carriageway and cycle tracks\***

Speed limit (mph)	Desirable minimum horizontal separation (m)	Absolute minimum horizontal separation (m)
30	0.5	0
40	1.0	0.5
50	2.0	1.5
60	2.5	2.0
70	3.5	3.0

\*Separation strip should be at least 0.5m alongside kerbside parking and 1.5m where wheelchair access is required.

### **How will the proposed improvements affect journeys by other vehicles (including motorcycles, cars, vans, lorries)?**

The new cycle track along the A38 will be created mostly through reallocating road space that is not currently used. This includes areas that are currently hatched (area of stripes painted to keep drivers apart) or where traffic lanes are wider than needed. Existing right-turn filter lanes located in the central reservation will be retained as they are important to maintain traffic flow and safety.

The new bus lanes will generally be created through widening into the verge, with the exception of the last 60m of the southbound bus lane proposed approaching the Hortham Lane junction. It will be necessary here to convert the current southbound left-turn lane into the bus lane. Left turns would still be permitted but with a single southbound lane for all non-bus traffic. Traffic counts indicate that there is a relatively small number of vehicles using this lane and that converting it to bus lane will not have a material impact on journey times through the junction.

The width of traffic lanes on the A38 will generally be reduced to industry standards to allow large vehicles including buses and lorries to pass safely. Existing on-road cycle lanes will be removed.

The proposed reductions in speed limits will result in some small increases to journey times, mostly at off-peak times but these are expected to be offset at peak times by the reduced delays provided by the junction improvements listed above.

### **How do the proposed improvements take account of the A38 being used by traffic diverting off the M5 between Junctions 14 and 16?**

We are aware that the A38 is affected by traffic diverting off the M5 southbound during summer weekends due to congestion on the M5 between Junctions 14 and 16. The capacity of the A38 to handle peak traffic flows is not being reduced. Furthermore, the proposed junction improvements at Alveston Hill and Church Road, which will be consulted on as part of Phase 2 improvements, will help to provide improved resilience for local traffic during these events. Proposed capacity improvements at the A38 Grovesend Road junction, which are being developed separately and subject to a separate public consultation, will also help improve resilience for local traffic during these events. The new southbound bus lanes will also ensure more reliable bus journeys when traffic is diverting off the M5.

## **How will the proposed improvements accommodate additional traffic generated by new housing developments in the Thornbury area?**

The improvements will make it easier for residents of new housing developments in Thornbury to travel to Bristol and the North Fringe by bus or cycle. Improvements proposed at the Alveston Hill and Church Road junctions (including additional lanes), which will be consulted on as part of Phase 2, will provide more capacity to cope with traffic generated by new housing development, as will improvements to the Grovesend Road junction. The Grovesend Road junction improvements are being funded by developer contributions and developed separately to this scheme; these improvements will therefore be subject to a separate public consultation.

## **Will there be any impact on private access, such as access to my own driveway?**

The only change to private accesses on the A38 will be the need for vehicles to cross the cycle track in addition to the existing footway. There will be the need for drivers to consider cyclists using this and to exercise caution and be aware.

Having reviewed the responses received when we spoke to you in early 2022, we recognise your desire to better understand how the proposals would affect entry and exit into your property. As such, as part of this consultation, we have provided artist's impressions on [our consultation webpage](#) to demonstrate a typical scenario where a driveway meets the scheme. Examples of other, similar schemes that have been built are also provided so that you can understand how the scheme will affect entry and exit into your property.

The images provided are not the final design. The scheme may look different when implemented.

## **What is a Dutch kerb and will it impact on private access, such as access to my own driveway?**

Dutch kerbs allow for safe vehicular crossing over footways and cycle lanes. Drivers will need to consider pedestrians and cyclists using the footways/cycle lanes and to exercise caution and be aware. An example of a Dutch kerb is shown as a scheme image. More detail on Dutch kerbs can be found in the examples of other schemes document on our [consultation webpage](#).

The images provided are not the final design. The scheme may look different when implemented.

## **Are lighting columns and other signage to be moved/relocated as part of the scheme?**

It is likely that lighting columns, signage and street furniture will be relocated at certain locations. This will be confirmed with further design work. The locations of lighting columns, signage and street furniture on the scheme images are illustrative; their exact locations are to be confirmed as part of the detailed design process. A suitable clearance between these and the walking/cycling infrastructure will be ensured, and the impact of their relocation on residential and other properties will be duly considered.

## **Are any changes proposed at M5 Junction 16 as part of this project?**

We will consult on any proposals at M5 Junction 16 as part of Phase 2 of the scheme.

## Construction

### How much would these changes cost?

Cost estimates were developed as part of the design process during 2022. These costs will be refined as part of the development of the Full Business Case. Given the scale of changes proposed throughout the corridor, we anticipate that costs will be significant.

### Where would the money come from to pay for these improvements?

Funding for the improvements will be provided by the West of England Combined Authority's funding from Central Government and will not impact on funds available in South Gloucestershire for other council services. Funding is subject to business case approval by the Combined Authority. An Outline Business Case was submitted and approved in summer 2022. A Full Business Case will be submitted to the Combined Authority later in 2023 following the completion of detailed design, which will be informed by the responses received during this public consultation.

### When could construction take place and how long will it last?

Construction on Phase 1 improvements could commence in 2024, should approval of a Full Business Case be granted by the Combined Authority. We anticipate that construction works may take between 18 months and two years to complete. Given the length of the route, it is likely that works as part of Phase 1 will be phased so only certain sections will be worked on at any one time.

### How will roadworks during construction affect journeys on the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way?

The scheme is expected to be delivered by an internal South Gloucestershire Council team who will work to minimise disruption to traffic and maintain access to properties along the corridor. This needs to be balanced with ensuring safety for the public and workforce around work sites but we will continue to work with residents and businesses throughout the construction phase.

For most of the A38 route, the proposals to create a 2-way cycle track on just one side of the road will result in less disruption than if segregated cycle tracks were to be provided on both sides of the road. Where safe to do so, two-way traffic flow will be maintained through sections of roadworks but with reduced speed limits and lane widths. However, this will not be possible all the time and temporary traffic lights will be used where necessary for safety reasons to restrict traffic to shuttle working.

The works required along Bradley Stoke Way as part of the Phase 1 improvements will only affect the existing footway / shared use paths and will not impact on road users. The exceptions to this will be at Patchway Brook and Savages Wood roundabouts, where improvements will be consulted on as part of Phase 2 of the improvements.

## Other similar initiatives

### How do the proposals fit in with other schemes in the area?



These proposals are separate to those being developed in relation to [Thornbury High Street](#), but will complement them by improving walking, cycling and wheeling connections between Thornbury and Aztec West, via the A38.

The proposed capacity improvements at the A38 Grovesend Road junction are required as a result of new housing developments in Thornbury and are being funded by developer contributions. Improvements for walking, cycling and wheeling along Grovesend Road towards Thornbury town centre will be developed separately and subject to separate public consultation. The section of this scheme that meets the A38 Grovesend Road junction will be consulted on as part of Phase 2.

Improvements for walking, cycling and wheeling along the A38 Gloucester Road between the new Cribbs Patchway New Neighbourhood (CPNN) access and Filton are being developed separately.

The Alveston Hill Cycleway scheme seeks to provide an improved pedestrian and cycle route linking the A38 at Alveston and Thornbury town centre. Though this scheme was initially included in the proposals for the A38 and Bradley Stoke Way improvements, it is now being progressed separately as a separately funded project. It is now being funded through the Combined Authority's Investment Fund budget rather than the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. This is because the Alveston Hill project requires land ownership and planning consent rather than just highway changes, so it was felt appropriate to develop the two schemes separately. The Council are aiming to submit the Full Business Case for this separate project in October 2023, and, subject to land agreements, would be aiming to commence construction in spring 2024.

No changes to bus services are proposed as part of the scheme. The Combined Authority and North Somerset Council are in the final stages of working with operators to establish an Enhanced Partnership to improve bus services across the West of England which will cover both commercially operated services and those operated with financial support from the Combined Authority. A list of supported services is provided at Appendix 2 of the [West of England Bus Service Improvement Plan](#). Any future changes to bus services will be consulted upon separately by the relevant operators and the Combined Authority.

### **How does the scheme align with the council's declared climate emergency and carbon targets?**

In July 2019, South Gloucestershire Council declared a Climate Emergency. The council has taken urgent steps to address this situation and prepare for the local impact of climate change and reducing carbon emissions. Transport is a key generator of carbon emissions and represents the largest source of in district emissions.

An important part of our transport response is to provide improvements for walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport. To do this we will be looking to reallocate road space from cars to people in particular to make alternatives to the car more reliable, safe and convenient. This scheme supports that sustainable transport investment. The production of the Full Business Case will include an appropriate assessment of carbon and air quality impacts.

## **Other**

**Will any bus routes or timetables be changed as a result?**

No changes to bus services are proposed as part of this particular scheme. However, the Combined Authority and North Somerset Council are in the final stages of working with operators to establish an Enhanced Partnership to improve bus services across the West of England which will cover both commercially operated services and those operated with financial support from the Combined Authority. A list of supported services is provided at Appendix 2 of the [West of England Bus Service Improvement Plan](#). Any future changes to bus services will be consulted upon separately by the relevant operators and the Combined Authority.

### **What are the next steps for the scheme?**

Following the end of this public engagement period, further design work will take place to ensure that the proposals meet the needs of users and the local community. At this point, a Full Business Case will be submitted to the Combined Authority to secure funding to begin to deliver the scheme. Construction on Phase 1 components is expected to commence in 2024.

We will be seeking your views on Phase 2 improvements in summer 2023.

### **How do I make comments or find out more about the scheme?**

We welcome all comments and feedback - please [complete the survey here](#). If you have a question or would like to register to stay in touch please email [Transport.services@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Transport.services@southglos.gov.uk)