



*Campaigning for better services
over a bigger rail network*

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For the attention of Strategic City Planning Team

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Dear Sir or Madam

Bristol Local Plan Consultation

I am pleased to include Railfuture's response to this Consultation.

If anything requires clarification, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Bray

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Railfuture
Secretary, Severnside Branch

www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk
www.railwatch.org.uk

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4.1 Draft Policy DS1 Bristol City Centre

Railfuture welcomes the recognition of Temple Meads station as a transport hub but would ask for MetroWest to be specified among the “existing and proposed public transport services” in para. 4.1.1. MetroWest Phases 1 and 2 will almost certainly have been delivered before any future rapid transport systems.

We agree that the reference (para. 4.1.5) to the proximity of the Temple Quarter to Temple Meads station is highly relevant. We would add that it has influenced the increase in usage of the local rail network in recent years and will encourage further growth of rail patronage.

There are many reasons why Bristol has a thriving evening economy and nightlife (para. 4.1.6) but this is encouraged by its relatively good public transport, which reduces both social isolation among people without cars and the temptation to drink driving for people who have cars.

4.2 Draft Policy DS2 Bristol Temple Quarter

We welcome in principle station redevelopment plans to make Temple Meads an integrated transport hub, with easier access from the Temple Quarter and St. Philip’s Marsh.

Draft Policy DS6 Lawrence Hill

We support the policy (page 31) for improvements to Lawrence Hill and Stapleton Road stations.

4.3 Draft Policy DS8 Central Bedminster

We welcome the intention on page 37 to improve facilities at Bedminster station, which is long overdue. Although about 40 trains each weekday call there, it presents a poor impression of rail travel because of the limited weather protection on the platforms. Fly tipping and graffiti near the approaches to the station give an impression of longstanding neglect, which is likely to discourage people, particularly women, from using the station at night. Better CCTV and a more welcoming ambience are essential.

A more welcoming station is likely to generate a virtuous circle of increased usage, giving users the feeling of greater safety in numbers and reducing the opportunity for vandalism. A minimalist approach to the upkeep of unstaffed stations in urban areas may well be a false economy.

We understand that WECA is considering a programme of improvements to local stations, possibly using money from the Transforming Cities Fund it has received from the Department for Transport.

Draft Policy DS11 South West Bristol

Despite proposing 500 homes at Ashton Gate, there is no mention of reopening Ashton Gate station or even improving the existing one at Parson Street, which has experienced phenomenal growth in usage, ie from 1,888 recorded journeys in 1997/98 to 138,996 in 2017/18 according to the Office of Rail and Road.

The 12 stations in the city have recorded a dramatic increase in passenger numbers, from a total of 4.1 million to 13 million over the same period. There is every reason to believe a station at Ashton Gate would be very successful, particularly as the intended site is very close to Imperial Tobacco International head office, Babcock Engineering, UWE Art faculty and the 27,000 seat Bristol Sport stadium.

Draft Policy E2 Employment land strategy

We are concerned at the absence of any reference to transport in the text of Section E. It goes without saying that the location of employment influences transport choices. Whilst Section T lists the Council's transport policies, some of which favour public transport, we fear that policies for employment sites may be developed in isolation from those for transport. Policy E2 needs to be amended to encourage travel to work by sustainable modes.

Temple Meads station is well placed for commuting to offices in the Temple Quarter. If a Henbury loop passenger service were to be introduced, this would link the major employment zones of Avonmouth, Filton and Temple Quarter.

Draft Policy T2 Transport schemes

We particularly welcome the stated aim to safeguard railway sites and associated land required for rail infrastructure improvements. We hope this would include not only committed new stations in MetroWest Phases 1 and 2 but others in areas of significant population and/or employment on existing rail routes, notably Ashton Gate, Constable Road and St. Anne's Park.

We trust that the reference to safeguarding existing transport facilities applies to freight sidings. In recent years Bristol East Depot has seen intermittent commercial freight and Kingsland Road sidings have been used by engineering trains. Both need to be protected for the possibility of more regular use in the future.