



BRISTOL PARKS FORUM

Forum meeting on 2 July 2022

Report on 2nd consultation on the Direction of the Forum's Information Pack on Cycling and Walking Infrastructure



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1 INTRODUCTION

The Bristol Parks Forum represents groups and individuals involved in the publicly accessible parks and green spaces in Bristol City Council's boundary (known from here on as "Parks").

Following the publication of the new Forum Vision in 2019 ([Vision – Bristol Parks Forum](#)) it was agreed that the Forum would produce six position statements relating to issues which may need further work to ensure that the Vision is delivered in a way that the Forum intended.

Cycling and Walking infrastructure was one of those position statements. During a series of discussions, a change has been proposed to move from a Position Statement to providing an Information Pack.

While aimed at Parks groups, it is hoped that other organisations and individuals will also find the final Information Pack useful.

2 CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS AND DISTRIBUTION

The 2nd Consultation document was designed to encourage organisations and individuals to respond to the way the proposed Information Pack was going to be developed and the potential contents of the Pack.

The Consultation ran from 20th March to 26th April 2022.

Links to the document on the Bristol Parks Forum website were circulated widely to Bristol Parks Forum members, plus 12 other groups/organisations covering walking, cycling, youth, older people, equality and ability issues, with a request to circulate widely. Additionally, copies were sent to the City Council Cabinet leads for Parks and Transport, and the Parks and Transport Departments.

A Microsoft Word document was also provided of the 13 formal questions posed so that people could use Word text to reply. However, the whole consultation document was open for comment.

People were encouraged to ask questions via the Forum email address if they wished before replying. An offer was made, pending our own resources, to talk to groups about the document and what it was trying to achieve.

Finally, if anyone else wished to be involved in writing the final document they were invited to contact the Forum.

3 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION AND INITIAL CONSIDERATION

In simple terms the response to the consultation consisted of two responses from Parks Groups.

There were no requests for someone to visit groups to explain things. No questions were received about the consultation material, and no one offered to help with the preparation of the final documentation.

The table below summarises the responses from the two Parks Groups:

Group	Points raised
Park Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no differentiation between parks and nature reserves • The use of bikes and e-scooters could be detrimental to wildlife and the peaceful seclusion of the valley • Bikes and e-scooters could provide a hazard to pedestrians on uneven, often muddy and flooded paths • Users wish to maintain its peaceful quiet status which allows its diverse wildlife to exist • Surrounding existing roads would be better as routes for cyclist and e-scooter users
Park Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no differentiation between parks and nature reserves • The use of bikes and e-scooters could be detrimental to wildlife • Will the status of specific parks and green spaces, such as nature reserves, be taken into account and not subject to a blanket proposal/approach? • Additional cyclists and e-scooters may prove a hazard to pedestrians on narrow paths • There are existing cycle paths that could be used instead of using the park/nature reserve.

Initial considerations, pending Forum meeting on 2nd July 2022:

Points raised	Initial consideration
<p>There is no differentiation between parks and nature reserves</p>	<p>Where the differences between parks and nature reserves are likely to be highlighted is in the way that the park is characterised, how the effects on the park of the infrastructure are described; and on the type of mitigation, compensation or even offsetting required for those effects. In the information pack the approach is to consider wildlife at all stages see graphic in the Annex below. See also options for consideration on page 6.</p>
<p>The use of bikes and e-scooters could be detrimental to wildlife and the peaceful seclusion of the park; and hazardous to pedestrians.</p>	<p>The use of bikes and e-scooters in parks is going to be influenced by both national traffic laws and local byelaws. Current design standards for cyclist, for instance, are based on ensuring cyclists are safe and able to move along highways and cycling infrastructure. There are no similar standards currently covering e-scooters. Designs can be changed to try and avoid negative impacts of use. The Pack is not going to be able to change the standards.</p>
<p>Bikes and e-scooters could provide a hazard to pedestrians on uneven, often muddy and flooded paths</p>	<p>The Pack would not apply to existing paths, unless they were being upgraded. There may be other mechanisms for dealing with these issues.</p>
<p>Will the status of specific parks and green spaces, such as nature reserves, be taken into account and not subject to a blanket proposal/approach?</p>	<p>See the answer to the first point above. Major infrastructure projects may be subject to planning permission. The status of a park in the planning process will very much depend on the designations of their area in the Local Plan (eg: Local Green Space, Important Open Space; Site of Nature Conservation Interest; Wildlife Corridor, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Regionally important geological site etc.).</p>

There are existing roads and cycle paths that could be used instead of using the park/nature reserve.	The Pack will ask that alternatives are considered early on in the process of taking forward the infrastructure proposal working with the Park Group. Stage 3 in the Council's process chart in the Annex.
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The reasons for the lack of response from those consulted is not clear. There could be a variety of reasons from waiting to see the final document, to having other priorities; and having a view that in the wider sense of what is happening, that the Pack is of limited interest. Additionally, some Parks Groups had already responded to the first consultation.

4 OPTIONS OF WHAT HAPPENS NEXT FOR FORUM DECISION ON 2ND JULY 2022

It is assumed that the Forum is happy to continue with the preparation of a document.

And that it will be an Information Pack whose purpose is to:

“To provide information for Parks Groups and others which enables proposals for new or improved cycling and walking infrastructure to be considered carefully in the context of the park involved”.

Park in this instance was used as shorthand for parks and green spaces.

It should be noted that an Information Pack does not instruct those involved in cycling and walking infrastructure projects how to interact with the proposals, but provides tools/information for groups to use.

It is proposed that the pack is divided into four sections:

- Introduction
- Principles – based on the principles set out in the consultation document
- Design issues – based on the issues set out in the consultation document
- Ways of working – based on the issues set out in the consultation document

In the drafting of the Pack a decision will be taken on how best to present the information in an understandable way (eg: could the detail of the pack be based around the stages in the City Council's process described in the Annex below).

Bearing in mind the lack of responses to the proposed Pack the Parks Forum is asked to consider the following questions:

1) **Should the information pack propose that those areas with formal Local Nature Reserve or informal nature reserve status should be treated differently from other areas – bearing in mind the consideration of the consultation’s responses above.** This would mean having separate sections within the document specifically for Nature Reserves/nature reserves.

2) **Options for the document itself:**

a. **Original – one stop shop.**

The document would be a substantial document which would provide a high level of detail for users, including annexes reviewing the relevant legislation/policies and design advice and providing short synopsis.

b. **Reduced – checklists with supporting information and pointers to other sources.**

The document would be a much shorter document without any detail of the legislation/policies or design advice. Pointers would be provided for those wishing to look at more detail.

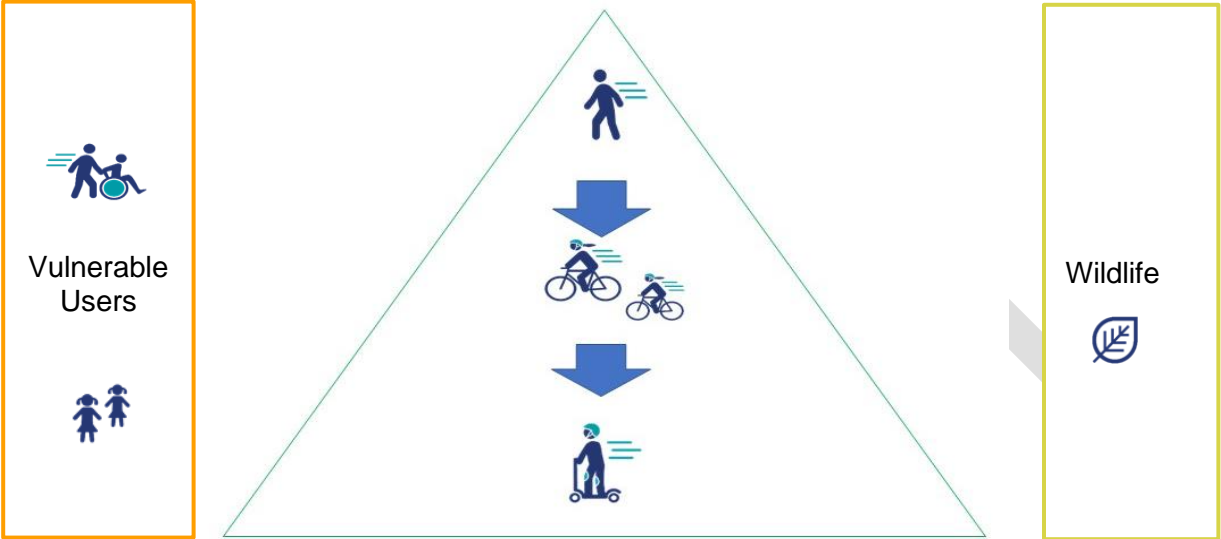
NOTE: 2b) While all the documentation lined up for the preparation of 2a would be reviewed, the preparation of the document could be quicker as the text would be less detailed.

5 NEXT STEPS

Following on from the Forum meeting on 2nd July, if agreed a draft information pack using the feedback from the two consultations which have been held, would be prepared. The draft pack would be sent to the same distribution as the 2nd Consultation document for comment over a 12 week period.

Annex – visuals from the consultation document used to help consideration of responses:

Hierarchy of Users



DRAFT

Typical process for taking forward infrastructure projects. Copyright Bristol CC.

1. Schemes and projects identified in Bristol Transport Strategy (or for schemes affecting the West of England as a whole, the Joint Local Transport Plan, as informed by the Joint Transport Study)
2. Plan is adopted by senior management, Members and Mayor
3. Work with community, residents and stakeholders to shape initial plans, gaining valuable insight on existing local transport situation
4. Further detailed work is carried out in the form of feasibility studies or detailed strategies to identify the deliverability of projects
5. Funding required for options and concept preliminary design work to develop a robust business case
6. Relevant funding sources identified to bid for funding
7. Gain approval to bid for funding through internal decision making process
8. Win funding- draft up detail of the project
9. Consult on the detail of the project
10. Make any changes as a result of consultation
11. Deliver project
12. Monitor outcomes of the project, refining schemes and learning lessons for the future

Step 3 could be amended to cover an “insight into individual parks situations” as well as local transport situation