

Experimental Traffic Order for Bus Lanes and associated measures in the Old City and Central Area

Statement of Reasons

Experimental Traffic Order for Bus Lanes

- 1) Anchor Road/Canons Road
- 2) St Augustines Parade
- 3) Baldwin Street (west end)
- 4) High Street/Baldwin Street (east end)
- 5) Baldwin Street (east end) /Bristol Bridge Victoria Street
- 6) Union Street

Related measures

- 1) Suspension of prohibition of driving on The Horsefair/Penn Street
- 2) Suspension of Bus Lanes on Newgate
- 3) Suspension of Prohibition of Entry eastbound on Newgate

Bristol Street Space - Bristol Bridge project

Bristol City Council is promoting the Bristol Street Space - Bristol Bridge project which aims to reduce car dependency and congestion; reduce carbon emissions and air pollution; support sustainable economic growth; promote accessibility; contribute to better safety, security and health; improve quality of life and create a healthy natural environment. The following transport strategies, which are adopted by Bristol City Council, directly or indirectly support the aims of The Bristol Street Space – Bristol Bridge project: One City Plan, Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan, Bus Strategy, Joint Local Transport Plan 4 and the Bristol Transport Strategy.

The aims are to be achieved by prioritising Public Transport (Buses and Taxis) and Active travel (Cycling and Walking) at key points on the transport network centred on Bristol Bridge and associated traffic corridors. The interventions are contained within the Central and Hotwells and Harbourside administrative wards of Bristol City Council. A range of highway modifications and improvements are required to enable Public Transport and Active Travel to fulfil their potential on Bristol Bridge and associated traffic corridors.

New bus priority measures are particularly important for the efficiency and reliability of the Bristol Bus network. In order to minimise delays and improve reliability on the Bus Network it is necessary to prioritise bus travel via reallocation of road space that might otherwise be used by all traffic. All destinations within the area of impact will still be accessible to all traffic, however, the route that traffic may take to reach a particular destination may change as a result of the interventions contained in the experimental order.

In addition to direct benefits provided to those vehicle classes permitted to use the Bus Lanes further benefits are expected through the reduction in volume of traffic travelling through The Old City and The Broadmead and Cabot Circus shopping areas. These areas are subject to high pedestrian footfall and cycle use and the forecasted reduction in vehicular traffic should not only increase bus journey time reliability and punctuality but should improve safety for both pedestrians and cyclists. In addition and as a consequence a reduction in air pollution is expected within the area of impact.

The experimental traffic order enables new bus lanes to be introduced at the locations listed at 2) to 6) above and a short extension of the existing bus lane at 1) above. In addition, the existing eastbound bus lanes at Newgate and the Prohibition of Driving on The Horsefair/Penn Street would be suspended. These suspensions are complementary and intended to provide safe access to routes and locations otherwise affected by the new bus lanes being introduced.

All the bus lanes would operate at any time (24 hours a day, seven days a week). All the bus lanes would be available for use by buses, pedal cycles, public service vehicles, solo motor cycles and taxis, in common with the majority of bus lanes currently operating in Bristol.

In addition, authorisation for vehicles over 7.5 Tonnes Max Gross Weight is given for use in Bus Lane 5) Baldwin Street/Bristol Bridge/Victoria Street to maintain access for loading and servicing requirements in the vicinity of this bus lane (note: loading/unloading will not be permitted within the bus lane itself)

Vehicles being used by the ambulance, fire brigade and police services in the exercise of their official duties would be permitted to use all of the bus lanes.

Although the effect of the experimental measures on the directly affected streets are relatively predictable, the Council considers the use of an experimental order to be appropriate because the implications for the surrounding road network are uncertain. Highway conditions on the directly affected streets and surrounding streets will be monitored during the course of the experiment including the assessment of shorter term impacts resulting from roadworks or other unforeseeable events on the highway; the experimental order will allow the Council to react more quickly if circumstances require the measures to be modified or removed.

The experimental order will last for a maximum of 18 months. During the first six months of the experiment, there will be an opportunity for anyone who is opposed to its provisions remaining in force on a permanent basis to submit an objection. Objections will be considered carefully – they may lead to the modification of the measures in order to achieve improved results (in which case, there will be a further six months period for anyone wishing to submit an objection to the modified provisions remaining in force on a permanent basis) – and will help to determine whether a permanent order should be made in like terms to the experimental order.

It appears to the Council that it is expedient to make the order:

- for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising, or
- for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), or
- for preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property, or
- for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs.
- For assessment and management of the quality of air pursuant to paragraphs (a) to (c) of sub section (1) of Section 87 of the Environmental Act 1995 (air quality)