

RESPONSE TO A4018 'IMPROVEMENTS' PROPOSALS

By Councillors Mark Weston, Chris Windows, Geoff Gollop, Liz Radford & Steve Smith on behalf of the Conservative Councillors on Bristol City Council.

We are writing this as our formal submission in response to the Council's proposals.

General Points

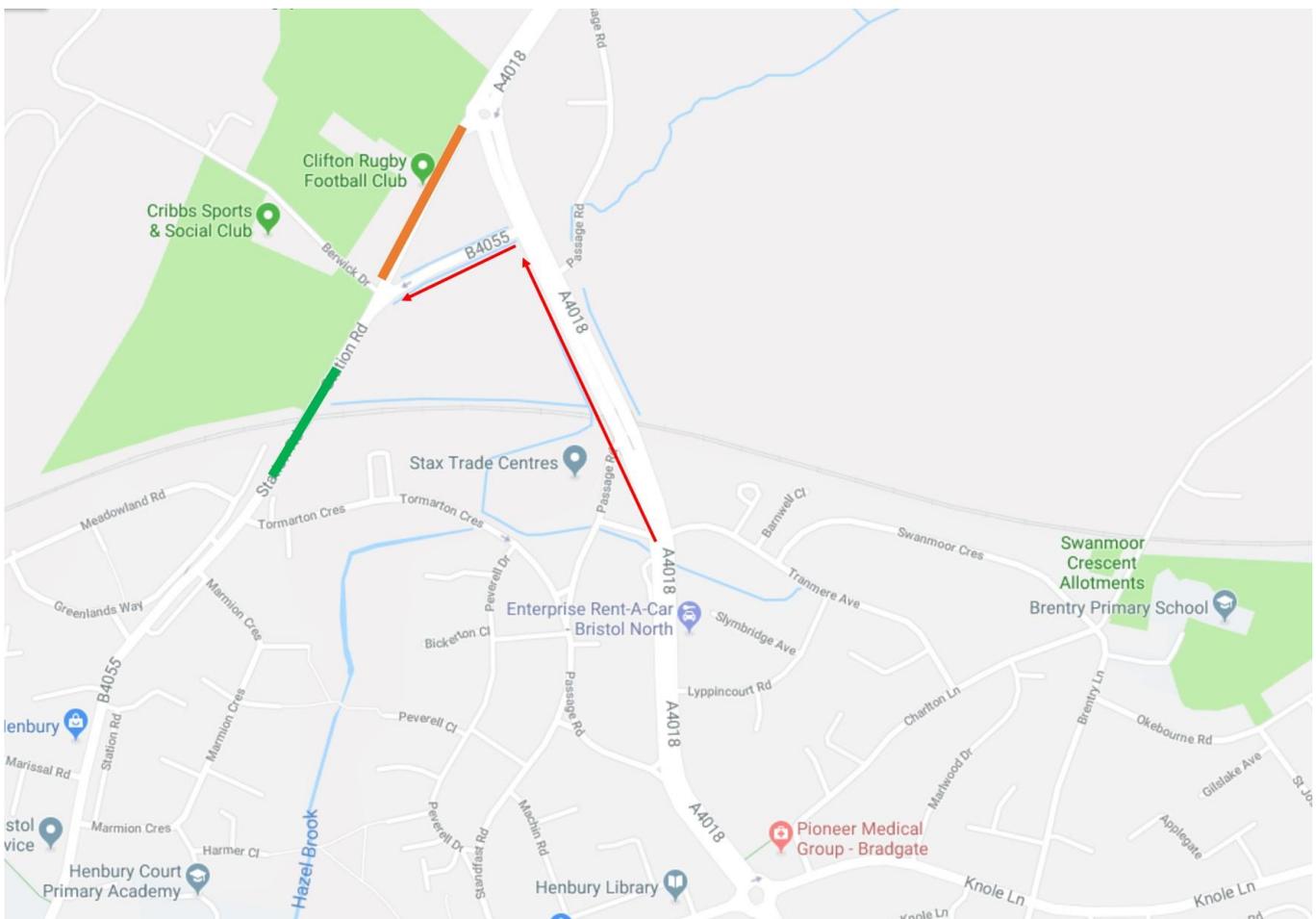
Overall we are not supportive of these proposals. There are a few positives that should be maintained but the proposals as a whole seem to prioritise commuters from houses that are yet to be built over the needs of the existing communities of North Bristol.

We request that these plans be withdrawn and then re-drawn.

We believe that there has been a failure to consult properly. In the end only 4500 leaflets were dispatched along the A4018 corridor. However the plans themselves would massively alter the movement patterns of the entirety of North Bristol; for example the effective isolation of Brentry will force a huge amount of additional traffic down roads in Southmead, and yet no leaflets were dispatched into Southmead at all.

This when combined with the narrow focus of the proposals only exacerbates a problem – they are too narrow in scope. The plans fail to understand or model what happens when traffic is prevented on moving off of or onto the A4018 via current turnings. The knock on effects at secondary junctions, such as by the ford at the Henbury Road / Crow Lane junction, will be profound (if not catastrophic) but no thought has been put into this at all.

There is also no clear link to South Gloucestershire proposals north of the local government boundary line nor did officers grasp what was happening either. For example the changes around 'no name road' and corresponding bus lane will further restrict access into Henbury. See below:



At the moment traffic looking to access Henbury finds it easier to avoid the Crow Lane / Henbury Road Junction by the ford by travelling north and cutting back to join Station Road before turning south onto Station Road (follow the red arrows).

However the existing bus lane (orange line) outside Clifton Rugby Club prevents them cutting back at the roundabout. South Glos are proposing to move the bus lane south to where the green line is situated on the map and also to close 'no name road'. This means all traffic to Henbury will have to use the Crow Lane / Henbury Road junction. The plans then make this worse this by preventing any traffic from turning from the A4018 up Henbury Hill and down Henbury Road.

This pushes MORE traffic to that same junction. A failure to understand what is happening in South Glos is then compounded by a failure to analyse traffic patterns further out from the A4018.

Proposal 1: Bristol City Council immediately engages with South Gloucestershire to better understand their plans.

Proposal 2: BCC works with South Glos to keep the existing roads and bus lanes and allow the 'no-name road' turn back and explores converting the existing bus lane (orange) or new bus lane (green) into a peak time only lane. This would allow bleed off of local traffic from the A4018 during off peak hours and encourage people to move around outside of peak times.

Proposal 3: When these plans are changed, and changed they must be, there should be a proper consultation and leaflet drop to ALL of North Bristol including the wards of Henbury & Brentry, Southmead, Stoke Bishop and Westbury & Henleaze.

Crow Lane Roundabout

We can understand the desire to remove the roundabout and then ban turnings from the northbound section of Passage Road down Knole Lane. This would increase the flow of traffic into the City. However this will actually have a series of negative impacts on the local communities:

1. It will lead to the immediate closure of the Stax facility off of Passage Road. At the moment the lorries turn around the roundabout to access the facility. That will not be possible. Nor is there another turning option short of the White Tree Roundabout.
2. The banned right hand turn into Knole Lane will limit access into Brentry. This is further exacerbated by the further closure of the Charlton Road turning. This will force all northbound traffic seeking to get to Brentry to turn down Greystoke Avenue, turn left onto Pen Park Road and then turn onto Knole Lane. An absurd dog leg.
3. As mentioned above to prevent Henbury residents to turn back on themselves and use 'no-name road' will force more and more traffic down Crow Lane towards the ford. This already backs up at peak times and yet no work has been done to upgrade this junction.

Proposal 4: Re-instate all turning at the Crow Lane / Passage Road Junction and remodel the movements based on this assumption. If that shows no obvious benefit for removing the roundabout then re-instate it.

Passage Road to Greystoke Avenue Junction

We are concerned that the imposition of 24/7 bus lanes on the dual carriageway would be a mistake. It would needlessly constrict the available road space and worsen congestion, not ease it. It would lead to a dramatic degrading of local air quality as idling traffic queues try and pass through the area.

At the moment traffic is busy inbound on the A4018 but before the Crow Lane Roundabout, not after it. To have the bus lane start so close to the roundabout would seek to replicate the mistakes made at the White Tree Roundabout when an ill thought through bus lane caused huge and unnecessary tail backs.

Traffic outbound is currently contained on the dual carriageway and disperses at the Crow Lane junction well. An outbound bus lane is simply not needed at all. **Certainly neither should be 24/7.**

The banned right hand turn from Passage Road down Charlton Road is a real strategic error and as mentioned above will force more and more traffic through Southmead. In addition little thought has been given as to what happens on Falcondale Walk which can easily be used as a cut through to avoid traffic on the A4018.

Sadly this lack of thought as to what happens on neighbouring roads is not confined to Falcondale Walk. If traffic cannot turn left up Henbury Hill then in order to access Henbury local residents will be forced to use Northover Road or Dragonswell Road. Neither of these is designed as a primary road for the area and yet no plans have been prepared as to what happens to these roads.

Proposal 5: Scrap the bus lane length outbound entirely and reduce the length of the inbound bus lane to the siting of the bus stop.

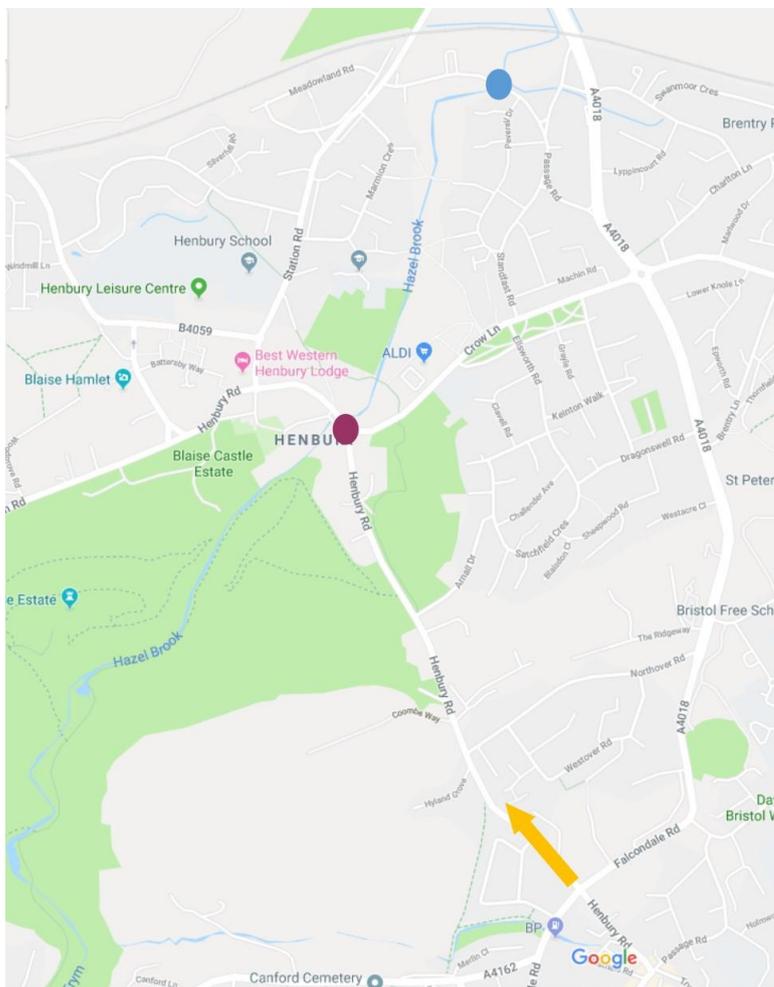
Proposal 6: Re-instate the banned turning down Charlton Road.

Proposal 7: Look again at Falcondale Walk and explore the options, with community involvement, for preventing it becoming a major cut through.

There are however a series of positive elements in this stretch that we write to support and would wish them retained.

Proposal 8: Keep the following elements:

- The pedestrian crossing between Brentry Lane and Dragonswell Road should be kept. This is a constant desire line for the community who currently 'chance it'.
- The road widening at the top of Brentry Hill down towards Greystoke Avenue would increase capacity and allow the introduction of a bus lane.
- The enhancement of the Greystoke / Falcondale Junction is a positive. This is a tricky junction at present and the introduction of both pedestrian crossings and light controls is welcome.
- On a side note it is a pity St Monica's was not approached about the acquisition of land as a matter of courtesy before the papers were published.



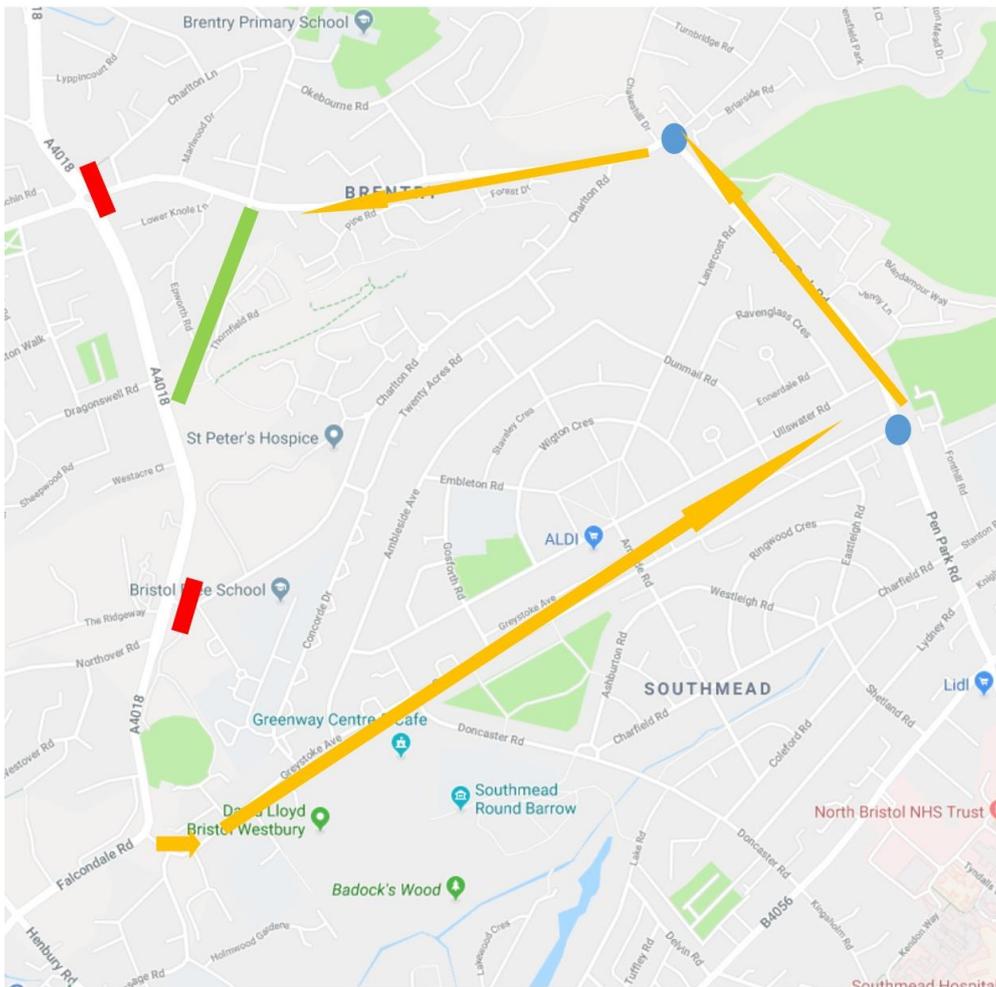
Wider Henbury Issues

With the proposed changes to entry points at Henbury Hill and Station Road the community of Henbury finds itself with several movement constraints and entry restrictions.

We believe that greater work will be needed to improve traffic resilience of the area. This is actually a running theme – by only looking at the main road communities find themselves in a very vulnerable position.

Proposal 9: Look at removing the one way restriction on Tormarton Crescent. If traffic is forced down Crow Lane then this would at least allow another means for local residents to move around the area.

Proposal 10: The junction of Crow Lane and Henbury Road will need upgrading (including improving the ford itself) with a mini-roundabout. In addition the Crow Lane part of the junction needs widening to allow two columns of traffic to exit on Henbury Road.



Wider Brentry Issues

There is no doubting that Henbury is badly impacted by the Council's proposals but if anything Brentry is even worse.

The banned right hand turns (marked with red rectangles) onto Knole Lane and Charlton Road will profoundly alter the way traffic enters Brentry from the south forcing traffic along a lengthy dog leg as discussed above (marked with yellow arrows). In addition the no right turn into Charlton Rd from Falcondale Road severely restricts access to Westbury Fields older peoples home, the St Peters Hospice as well as many residents. This pushes other traffic visiting these sites via Greystoke Avenue and Concorde Drive, adding significant volumes of traffic

past the Bristol Free School gates, increasing safety issues on an already busy road.

Again no preparation has been made as to how the secondary junctions (marked with blue circles) can be made to cope with this increase.

The only positive we can see is that traffic calming is being considered along the top stretch of Brentry Lane (marked in green).

Proposal 11: We would re-instate the turnings into both Knole Lane and Charlton Road.

Proposal 12: Upgrade the junctions at both Greystoke / Pen Park and Pen Park / Knole Lane. At the moment they would be unable to cope with the influx of traffic.

Proposal 13: The upper stretch of Brentry Lane is currently used as a means to avoid the Crow Lane junction and has problems with speeding traffic. We would suggest that traffic calming measures be installed. Probably chicanes on the left hand side approaching Passage Road although other options should also be considered.

Greystoke Avenue to Canford Lane Junction

At this stage Falcondale Road more closely resembles 'The land that turnings forgot'. The first problem however is the 24 hour bus lanes. On the inbound side of road it makes little sense to constrict the road width from two to one lanes. The buses will already have a jump in that queue as they will be at the front of previous bus lanes. All that will happen with this proposal is to pile up the traffic further up the A4018 itself. The Council would be artificially creating congestion and the subsequent poor air quality.

The bus lane between Canford Lane and Henbury Hill on the outbound lane causes a similar issue. The lanes are actually too short to be of value, in fact one stretch is little bigger than a bus stop itself.

Proposal 14: Remove the bus lanes entirely or at the very least make them peak time only.

The Henbury Road / Falcondale Road junction is a nightmare. To prevent left hand turns and make it forward only prevents far too many regularly used movements in North Bristol. Of particular note is the banned left hand turn from Falcondale Road up Henbury Hill. This allows a bleed off of local traffic that otherwise will be concentrated down Crow Lane, with all of the previously mentioned traffic problems, or they will be forced down other secondary (and inadequate) roads at Northover and Dragonswell.

It makes no sense. To try and justify it for the sake of a pedestrian crossing is a failure to understand how little that exact pedestrian route is used.

Proposal 15: Reinstate the all turns at all points of this junction.

Proposal 16: Withdraw the proposal to stop turning out of Hillsdon into Henbury Road, and instead consult and work with long suffering residents of Hillsdon and Southdown on a proposal that will work for them

Proposal 17: Consult in detail on the proposals for traffic lights at the Canford Road / Canford Lane Junction. Whilst providing a crossing is welcomed by many residents, this becomes a 'serious' junction with increased congestion and pollution. There is no clarity on how residents from Merlin Close would even access their houses.

Canford Lane to the top of Falcondale Road

The banning of turning on or off of Falcondale Road is understandable but misguided. It is disappointing that those developing the plans have no understanding of:

- Abbey Road being popular for families visiting Canford Park and were unaware of the pedestrian access. The traffic on Stoke Lane will be increased as a result
- That many residents use the Doctor's surgery in Westbury Village. There appears to have been no equalities impact assessment in general and no consideration of the fact that the ward with the highest number of elderly residents will require an ability for those residents to access the surgery.
- The popularity of both the local Scouting Association, who have a large venue in Downs Road and the Methodist Church in Great Bockeridge, both of which have high volumes of traffic, travelling from all over the area. No right turn from Falcondale Road will mean extra traffic turning right into Stoke Lane and then travelling up Great Bockeridge, however more concerning is the banned right turn from Westbury Road leaving the village, which will mean traffic will use Grange Court Road and Brecon Road as a cut through to turn right onto Falcondale Road and then left into Downs Road.

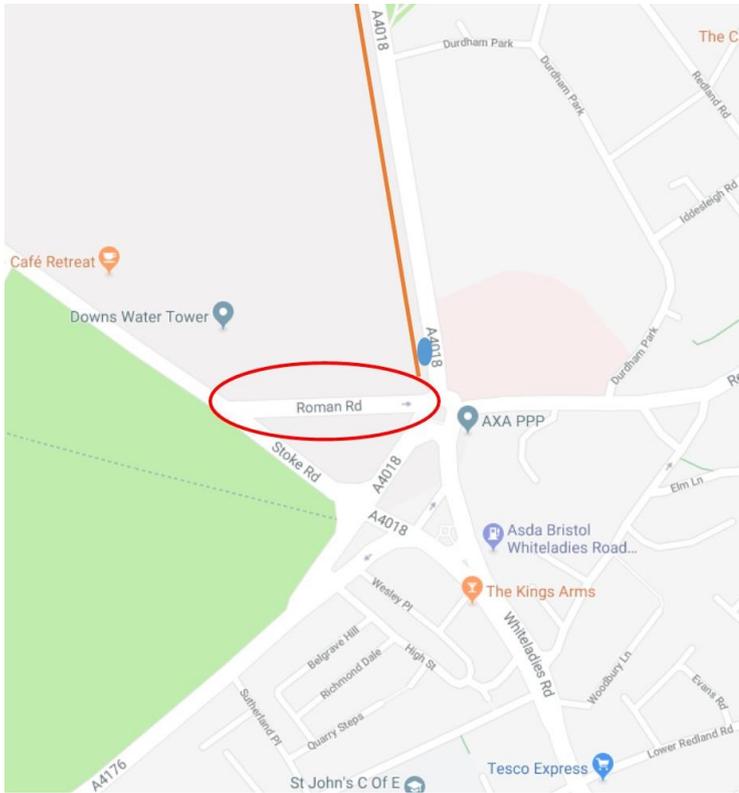
Proposal 18: That a detailed consultation take place with the Doctor's surgery & patients, the local Scouting Association and local churches to ensure that vital parts of our community are considered in these proposals

The traffic light proposals at the junction of Westbury Road and Falcondale-Majestic Wine- are generally welcomed although there are questions about the practicality of a major traffic light at the brow of a hill. In addition the cycling lanes heading up the hill are similarly welcomed as they will help clearly mark where road users should be on this uphill stretch of road.

Westbury Road to Blackboy Hill

Suddenly the turning restrictions stop and all roads are open.

If the proposals work perfectly, all the traffic from South Glos will flow quickly, until it reaches the queue at the top of Blackboy Hill. Traffic has been flowing much better in the last month because of the closure of Roman Road for drainage work. However there are no plans to make that closure permanent, so the traffic queues in rush hour will reach back to Falcondale Road. The traffic modelling was done before St Ursula's was the thriving school it is now, and before Westbury Road was taken over for parking and drop off for that school.



As those queues grow, traffic will be tempted to rat run down Brecon and Cavendish Roads, as well as Henleaze Gardens and Avenue and there is no protection

Proposal 19: Re-consult on the original proposals to close Roman Road (circled in red), including looking at making this bus, taxi or cyclist only (and then enforcing it).

Proposal 20: Consult with residents about entrance restrictions during rush hour for all roads between Westbury Road and Henleaze Road.

Proposal 21: In order for cyclists to access the new pathways and even the existing shared space they need a means of access from the road. A drop kerb will need adding near the Blackboy Hill roundabout on the A4018 heading towards the White Tree Roundabout. (New Path highlighted in orange – access point marked with blue circle)

On a positive note the proposed improvements to the mixed use path is welcome. This is a very well used route by walkers, joggers, disabled buggies and bikes, so some thought needs to be made to the width and segregation of any path.

Westbury Village

Westbury Village was established as a community before the City of Bristol. It has grown and developed over the centuries without a proper plan for access or bypass, and these proposals far from helping to solve a problem only help to compound it

It would be helpful to understand the makeup of the community. Apart from having the highest number of elderly residents of any ward, Westbury also has many families with several generations resident within the greater Westbury area. It has churches, community groups and shops within and outside the village - all of which interact with each other.

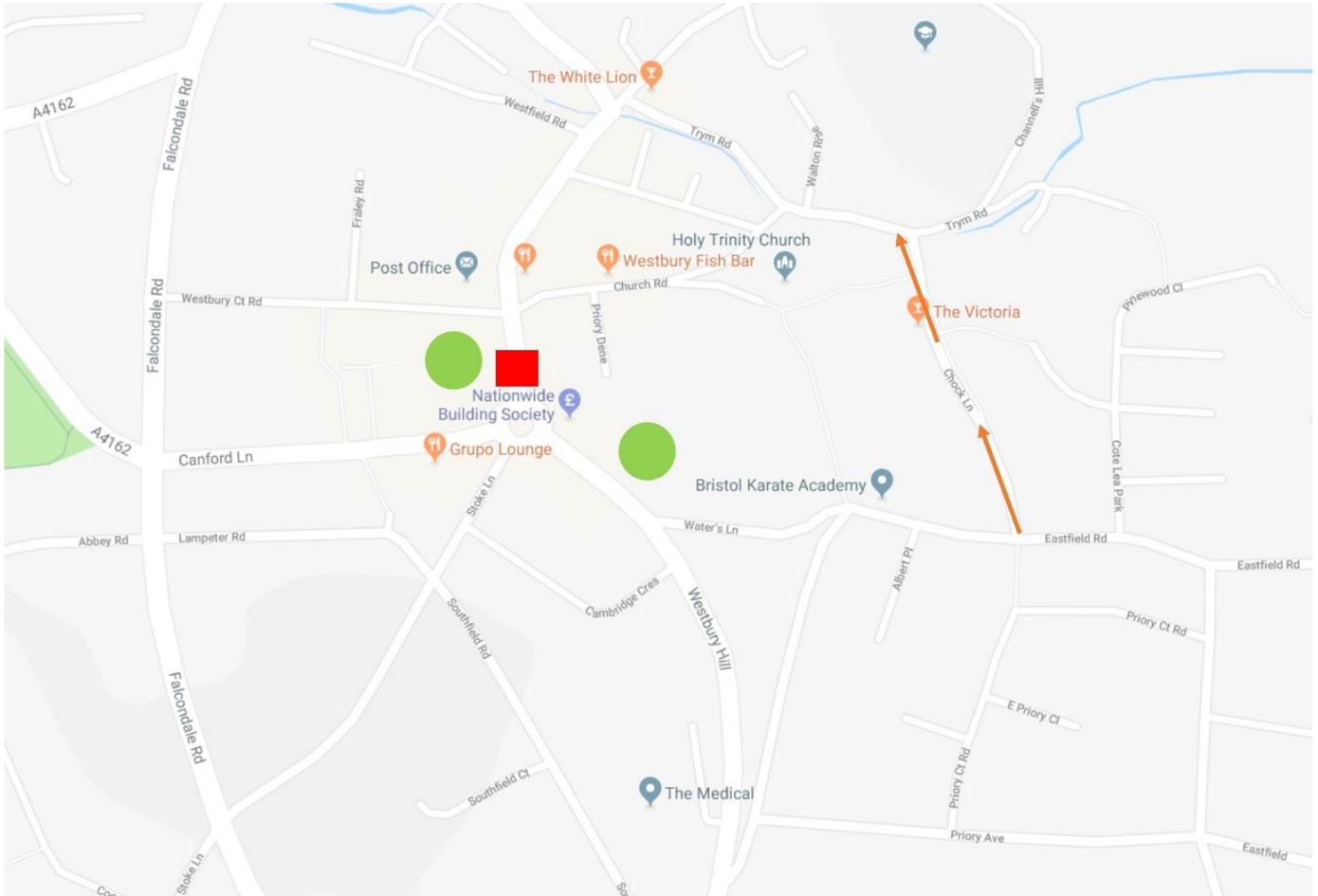
The Doctors surgery is a major focal point in the centre of the village. The parish church and Methodist church in the village, the Baptist church and other churches have strong congregations, but also have regular community use of their space, all used by people currently crossing Falcondale road in either direction.

Since parking zones have been introduced in Clifton, Redland and Cotham, more commuters are taking parking spaces, leading to reduced footfall in our shops and increased pressure on parking in our residential roads. This is particularly so in all roads adjacent to the 1 and 2 bus routes.

At present it appears we are being told our community must forego these community activities so that those who live outside our City can join a queue to get in.

The proposals suggest making Church Road the only exit from Chock Lane (marked with orange arrows). This will not stop traffic as it will be the only route available to traffic wanting to get to Southmead, but it is a narrow and difficult route, making the parish church almost inaccessible

Proposal WV1: Withdraw the proposal to make Church Road the exit route. Consult with residents with a view to making either College Road or Trym road the preferred exit.



The proposal suggests making High Street bus only. This forces all traffic heading for Southmead down Chock Lane, increasing the traffic flow on one of the oldest roads in the village, and forcing it up High Street and Passage Road to the Greystoke Junction. We see no benefit in increasing the volume of traffic and the level of pollution around Westbury CofE Academy. If high street customers are unable to move freely between the two village carparks (green circles on the map) then they will vote with their feet and go elsewhere. As an example of this no consideration appears to have been given to the three funeral directors on the proposed pedestrianised area of the High Street, with no discussion on how they will have access for hearses and funeral car processions.

Proposal WV2: Withdraw the bus gates proposals (marked with a red square on the map).

We welcome the zebra crossing on Passage Road but urge adequate consultation with school and residents

The proposal to close off Stoke lane is difficult to interpret. We understand it is a difficult crossing point, but its closure does not stop cars trying to use that route. It simply forces them to use Cambridge Crescent, a narrow road with cars parked on both sides, or Southfield Road, both of which already have serious access issues.

Proposal WV3: These proposals have failed to ask local residents for their requirements and did not even distribute proposals to businesses at all. We suggest the proposals are withdrawn and a widespread consultation takes place with all interested groups to develop a solution that results in a village that is accessible to all who live and shop there and who attend for health, banking or community reasons.

Proposal WV4: That there is a recognition that the flow of traffic between the 2 car parks is essential to retain customers for local businesses.

Proposal WV5: That certain roads are not accessible to emergency vehicles and that consideration should be given to access restrictions at peak hours for:

- Cambridge Crescent
- Southfield Road
- Westbury Court Road
- Chock Lane
- Priory Avenue
- Stoke Lane (village side)
- Lampeter road