

Bus Service Improvement Plan Scheme at Backwell. Cllr Hannah Young, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport - written response to CATE Scrutiny Committee

The Decision that has been called-in is to allow the Backwell Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) scheme to progress to detailed design and delivery phases.

I attended the CATE Committee on the 27th May to listen to the concerns raised by members and also the public speakers from Backwell Parish Council and Backwell Residents Association and have considered the recommendation of the Committee.

Many specific and detailed points and assumptions were made, and questions raised, regarding the scheme both within the written statement by Cllrs Smith and Burden and the wider Committee and detailed responses to each of these are provided below.

I stated at the Committee that I think it is important to understand that the schemes is not yet at a stage of detailed design and a number of the very specific questions raised about individual elements will be further considered and addressed at that detailed stage. This current Decision is a gateway that allows officers to continue to proceed to detailed design, and to release the ongoing funds from the DfT to do so. It does not mean that every aspect of the scheme is now set in stone, and we are keen to continue to talk to the community particularly on the options around the pedestrian crossing, safety railings and bus stops.

I am approving the progression of the scheme as I am confident that the issues raised in the CATE Scrutiny Committee on 27 May 2025 can be addressed in line with all Government Guidance and Safety Regulations to deliver a scheme that benefits North Somerset's residents and visitors who use the A370 - by enabling bus services to become more efficient and financially sustainable, and reducing congestion for motorists as bus travel increases. The final design and scheme must be assessed as safe.

There has been consultation and engagement on proposals for a scheme at Backwell and a number of changes have been made to the original proposals as a result of the feedback received. I am committed to continuing to engage and inform local residents after this gateway decision has been made and have discussed this recently with the Parish Council. Plans are likely to include ongoing dialogue with ward members and the Parish Council, a residents information session (which could be in person or online), public display boards and online information, and specific communications to residents – with opportunities to influence details of the scheme that have not yet been decided but I am open to further suggestions as to how we take this forward.

The original decision notice explains why the Council is progressing these plans, which is because we want to preserve an efficient and effective bus network for residents across North Somerset. To put the Backwell scheme into context, currently the timetable for the X1 service from Weston-super-Mare Interchange to Bristol shows a journey time is just about an hour. By the morning peak (leaving Weston-super-Mare at 7.15am) the bus journey time has extended to 1 hour and 40 mins. With the combination of schemes along the A370 we are aiming to take an average of 22 minutes out of the round-trip journey time at peak times to make the bus a more attractive option for people, and to make services more reliable and efficient. Currently, to run service on a 15-minute frequency takes 14 buses, drivers, and the other overhead costs that go with putting those in place. Reducing the journey time reduces the number of buses and drivers required which would reduce running costs of the service by over half a million pounds each year.

The scheme being developed at Backwell is designed to save at this junction a total of 2 minutes and 20 seconds for the X1 bus on a circulating route between Weston-super-Mare and Bristol. An average journey time saving of just 5 minutes at peak times along this route would enable an efficiency saving of c. £300k pa 20 minute saving would mean the service could be run with two fewer buses at a saving of c. £600k pa.

The X1 service which runs along the A370 is currently run commercially by First Bus but with a subsidy from the Council. In the future, I would rather see popular services like this one covering their costs so that we can use the Bus Grant money that we receive from government to provide buses in areas where people don't currently have any access to them. With the new Bus Services Bill going through Parliament, the Council will also have additional options in the future as to whether we take more control of local bus services ourselves and we are working with the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WEMCA) to explore these options. Either way, quicker, efficient bus services give people more choice about how and when they want to travel and that particularly benefits people who either can't afford or don't have the option of a car, including children and younger people. Whether or not buses come under the franchise or council control in the future, we cannot afford to let them get stuck in traffic and delayed to a point when they become the last choice for everyone - if that happens we know we enter a vicious cycle in which people stop using the service, it becomes more expensive to run, fares have to increase and it gets even less attractive. When that happens, many people will use a car instead and that puts additional traffic and queues on our roads.

We know there are thousands of additional homes planned to be built in Weston-super-Mare which will create additional demand for travel on the A370 to and from Bristol and we can anticipate that if we were to do nothing to improve bus journey times and reliability along this corridor, roads will get more congested for everyone. I have heard people's concerns that bus services are not sufficiently frequent to justify the investment in these schemes. The Council is acting in accordance with the latest government guidance regarding the frequency of service that justifies a bus priority scheme. The X1 service is now used for 150,000 passenger journeys a month and at the northern end buses are just 1% of overall traffic but carry 20-25% of the journeys that are being made.

North Somerset communities consistently tell us they want more reliable, frequent and affordable bus services – and that’s what we’re working together with bus operators to deliver through our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). Some of that can be achieved by putting more public money into additional bus services and new routes, but to improve the reliability and affordability of buses we need to also make infrastructure changes so that they can run more efficiently. There is more information about the wide range of action the Council is taking to improve our bus network and passenger experience in our vision for buses [North Somerset Bus Service Improvement Plan \(BSIP\) vision statement and document - May 2025](#).

North Somerset's BSIP infrastructure programme aims to deliver:

- capacity improvements for all road users through a public-transport-first approach to address congestion and sustainability focused on a more efficient use of the road network.
- modernising improvements for passengers’ stops, shelters, information and walking facilities

The A370 corridor is part of an Integrated Place-Based Programme and forms one of 3 bus route packages and 2 town packages that include passenger and bus infrastructure improvements, fares packages, bus services enhancements and support, signals upgrades, first-and-last mile access improvements and a new Passengers Charter.

All our actions aim at a virtuous cycle of improvements.

In relation to this scheme:

- Design processes are on-going.
- Road Safety Audit process will continue (ultimately subject to officer sign-off) – Stages 2, 3 & 4.
- It be subject to a further statutory consultation for Traffic Regulation Orders.
- The final decision to proceed will also be based on cost.

Since Committee met I have received written representations from Bus Passenger Groups and bus operators in support of the scheme. It is vital that we look at this improvement as part of an overall corridor package that benefits all the communities between Weston-super-Mare and Bristol, as well as the 150,000 current bus passengers on the A370 monthly.

In light of all of these considerations I will be approving the Backwell scheme decision notice. We are committed to continuing to work with local community representatives in Backwell through the detailed design process, particular in relation to the safety railings, pedestrian crossing location and re-location of the bus stop.

I would like to thank the committee for its consideration of this matter and the time taken by community representatives and Councillors to ensure that all aspects were fully discussed.

Call in of Backwell bus lane

27 May 2025

“The bus lane should be rejected for the following reasons – flawed data, safety grounds, waste of public funds and environmental and economic concerns”

Proposer: Cllr Pryke

The following slides were also shared during the committee meeting addressing the key themes in the call in reason provided by Cllr Luke Smith:



Backwell - call-in
slides - 27 May 2025 |

Cllr Pryke’s Motion to Committee	Response
Survey data	
<p>The data used is completely flawed and cannot be used. Surveys were taken on Thursday 16th November 2023 when the recycling centre was closed. This doesn’t show the countless lorries and traffic going to and from the recycling centre from earlier in the morning. Friday 17th November 2023 which was a school inset day.</p>	<p>Surveys relate to an element of the scheme that is not being progressed. Measures were taken of movements to the Waste Recycling Centre in peak hours.</p> <p>Data was collected on other dates that were not INSET days, but again the proposals do not include the elements of the scheme relating to these traffic surveys.</p>

<p>Neither of these are a typical day and give a false reality of the true traffic figures and issues.</p>	
<p>The third set of data was on a Saturday when the road usage is greatly reduced.</p>	<p>Survey data is collected across multiple days to reflect the varying use patterns on our highways across weekdays and weekend days.</p>
<p>The BSIP team have accepted that this is the case. How can you justify going ahead with a project based on this non typical information?</p>	<p>The BSIP team have accepted that the surveys were taken on the dates given but not that this was flawed. Surveys relate to an element of the scheme that is not being progressed. We are not proposing to progress the originally proposed partial closure of Dark Lane. We consulted ward members and the community on this, we looked in detail at the traffic flows and have decided not to go ahead with this aspect. The rationale for that decision is that the BSIP grant funding this scheme is to increase bus efficiency, and so the scheme proposal has been stripped back to the elements which are critical to that - the priority lane, the smart lights, and the proposed bus stop changes.</p> <p>The partial closure of Dark Lane would have had made it easier and quicker for general traffic travelling east-west through Backwell, or to/from Station Road.</p>
<p>Safety</p>	
<p>The road system will become unsafe</p>	
<p>A 260-metre Weston-super-Mare bound bus lane on Farleigh Road, reverting to two normal lanes of traffic, 25 meters before the crossroads with the right turn into Station Road will remain. The bus lane effect will cause traffic waiting to turn right to create a long tail back, cars won't be able to get back into the left lane to go straight ahead. This will create congestion issues for cars and buses, making it more dangerous, higher levels of pollution, a reduction in productivity and annoying the hundreds of drivers that this will affect. The timings of the lights stated is not correct. Even if they were, it would not stop the chaos.</p>	<p>The design proposed mirrors the current lane availability, but uses the space for central hatching and adds width to enable the provision of a bus lane in addition, as well as to widen the footways. The exact distance of the bus lane setback will be optimised and concluded as part of the detailed design process in the next phase of the scheme. On Farleigh Road, the situation for cars will be no different to what it is currently, we are simply including an additional bus lane.</p> <p>We will seek to address the community misunderstandings about what this scheme is actually proposing and we will issue further information to clarify this.</p>
<p>The A370 carriageways will be narrowed to accommodate three lanes (two towards Weston and one towards Bristol), with lane widths at the minimum</p>	<p>The lane widths proposed are compliant with national guidance LTN 1/20, which in fact notes that the current lane widths are the most problematic for cyclists as this leads to close passes by motorists, prejudicing cyclist safety. In this location the alternative route on the Festival</p>

<p>allowed limit of 3 meters. They are currently wide and safe, they will reduce from 3.5m+ to 3m. 3m is the narrowest legal limit of a carriageway HGVs are 2.6-2.8m WIDE this makes those carriageways potentially more dangerous for collisions with cyclists and other vehicles - the margin for error is being removed.</p>	<p>Way exists which already carries 200 cyclists per day, against the c.30 cyclists using the A370 daily.</p> <p>The Highway Code states that motor vehicles should give cyclists at least as much room as they would when overtaking a car (see Rules 211-215). As a guide motor-vehicles should leave at least 1.5 metres when overtaking cyclists at speeds of up to 30mph.</p>
<p>The RSA1 raises this as a significant issue, so the answer is to reduce the speed limit to 20mph Whilst 20mph sounds ok we know that speed limits are not adhered to, Dark Lane for example is 29mph with the last police report. The RSA raises the concerns about cyclist safety which will be in the narrow bus lane west bound but unprotected on the Bristol bound carriageway. Even at 20mph people will not sit behind a cyclist for 320 m. Cars and buses will cross the carriage way to overtake causing countless accident potentials to vehicles and cyclists.</p>	<p>All the usual processes and surveys to assess the extents of the 20mph will be undertaken. The RSA1 will inform the detailed design of the scheme – this is standard process and practice in highway scheme design – and further stages of Road Safety Assessment will be undertaken as required.</p>
<p>The RSA assumes that cyclists in the bus lanes will ride at 20mph which obviously they will not - this slow moving aspect has not been factored into the delays to the buses - this will adversely affect the seconds predicted saved and as stated, cause greater risk of accidents. This goes against NSC's active travel policy.</p>	<p>Cyclist speed is typically 10-12mph accounting for demographics of cyclists and geography. This is a downhill section where speeds will be higher than average. In addition, the demographic of cyclist using the A370 rather than the parallel segregated Festival Way are likely to be higher speed confident road cyclists. There are currently 30 cyclists on this section of the A370 per day (averaging 2.5 cyclists/hour across 12 hours). The bus lane affords southbound cyclists protection from general traffic (which constitutes 99% of traffic).</p>
<p>You are still withholding raw data from Backwell Parish Council. Why? NSC informed Backwell Parish Council that this data, 'we would charge for – a total of £818 plus VAT for the turning count and traffic counts used to inform the modelling.' Why are you hiding data and charging a local parish council for information? This doesn't seem fair or open. It makes people think you are hiding</p>	<p>Data has been provided to Backwell PC including the Linsig files which contain the base data inputs. Further information on data provided is contained in the slides.</p>

<p>information, and it goes against NSC's claim to be open and fair.</p>	
<p>BSIP team should circulate the report on the Church Lane/Dark Lane scheme by Aecom and Road safety Audit 1 which raises issues - they ought to be appendices with the draft decision and are not.</p>	<p>The Church Lane and Dark Lane elements of the scheme are not being proposed as part of the decision note. These documents have been shared with ward members and with Backwell PC.</p>
<p><u>Compromising safety of residents living near the scheme and local school –</u></p>	
<p>If the bus lane is constructed more traffic will be displaced via Church Lane during the build stage and afterwards to avoid the queues. Thankfully, NSC have removed the closure and partial closure of Dark Lane from this scheme. This removal of Dark Lane removes the road safety mitigation outside of Backwell Junior School – if the construction of the bus lane goes ahead, this safety mitigation needs to be reinstated for safety issues as there will be huge increase in traffic past the school.</p>	<p>Displaced traffic (permanent scheme):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bus lane will not cause additional congestion on Farleigh Road or at the crossroads. • If there is no additional congestion on A370, there will be no additional traffic displaced to Church Lane etc, meaning that there will be no road safety impact to those roads. <p>Displaced traffic (during works):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works will be managed to minimise disruption • Off-peak working on A370 wherever possible • Nighttime closures for resurfacing etc • Therefore, displacement of traffic during works will be minimal. <p>With regard to the mitigations on Church Lane - we are not changing the situation for cars on the A370, so do not believe there will be additional displacement of traffic on to Church Lane, meaning that these mitigations are not required as part of this scheme. We will ensure that the scheme is added to the scheme pipeline process and considered for implementation in future.</p>
<p>The 260m bus lane installation westbound on station road with 25m of lane adjustment in the run up to the traffic lights will lose grass verges and 20 houses either side of the road (40 homes in total) will have months of disruption.</p>	<p>We regret any disruption caused during construction works and aim to minimise impacts as far as is possible.</p>

<p>These 20 houses on the Weston bound carriage way will need to cross a bus lane to access properties. Buses will be unfettered so may not be aware of traffic moving across the carriageway either entering or exiting houses, as they comes around the corner. Currently those residents coming out of obscured driveways have a safe area to wait before entering the lane, that is being removed and not being properly considered.</p> <p>Unlike Woodhill, Brockley, LA by pass and Barrow Gurney this site is constrained by space and surrounded by residential homes</p> <p>Getting in and out of the Leisure Centre will be dangerous and unacceptable.</p>	<p>Bus lanes in residential areas are a standard feature of UK roads and the detailed design will consider all aspects of the operation and function of the highway. Residents turning across bus lanes is not unusual on key corridors, urban environments or residential areas.</p> <p>Leisure Centre access. It remains unclear why it is considered that <i>“Getting in and out of the Leisure Centre will be dangerous and unacceptable”</i> however the design meets all necessary standards and will be subject to an independent Road Safety Audit.</p>
<p>The safety railings at the crossroads will be removed. Many children walk to and from school around this area. The railings are bent and damaged due impacts from motor vehicles. This is putting children’s lives at risk.</p>	<p>Government Guidance states that <i>“the use of guardrails should generally be avoided but may be an appropriate response to address a safety risk. Poorly located guardrails can increase the risk and severity of collisions. They can also limit the ability of pedestrians to cross on the desire line. While railings are often put in with the justification of safety for pedestrians by guiding them to a dedicated crossing facility and attempting to prevent them from crossing elsewhere, this can have unintended consequences.”</i></p> <p>The report makes a presumption against provision of guardrailing in line with national guidance. We have committed to working with the community to develop the design and siting of any guard-railing at the junction as part of the detailed design process. A technical process will be followed to assess whether guardrail is appropriate in this location.</p>
<p>The contractors have made a compound in the Leisure Centre carpark, this has involved trucks and personal vehicles as well as a container. This is unacceptable to take valued spaces away from a community resource and a non profit organisation. It might be NSC land, but this amenity should not be compromised. Contractors need to bring employees by bus and not take up the precious</p>	<p>The extent of the site compound for the survey works was agreed with the operators of the Leisure Centre. It is likely that the Leisure Centre car park will be used as a compound during the main works, however this will be negotiated with the operator and the affected area will be minimised.</p> <p>The completed projects at Long Ashton, Barrow Gurney and Beggar Bush Lane were completed on programme. However, the schemes at Brockley Combe and Wood Hill over-ran</p>

<p>little parking which the local and local businesses need to function. Every scheme so far has gone over by several months. With all the disruption to the A370 in the past two years, valued local businesses cannot cope with more disruption.</p>	<p>due to issues with drainage and utility services that requires more work to repair or move than had been anticipated. We have learned from this, with more survey work now being undertaken during the design phase of the remaining projects to minimise the risk of any delays during construction.</p>
<p><u>Moving the Bristol bound bus shelter will create congestion and increase safety risks - ●</u></p>	
<p>The proposed bus lane necessitates moving the busy Bristol-bound bus stop to the west of the crossroads. While the exact location is yet to be agreed, the most recent suggestion is outside the Post Office. This relocation creates many safety concerns, anticipating significant pedestrian and traffic difficulties near the doctors' and dental surgeries. The bus lane cannot be installed unless they re-site this bus stop A370 and is rightly described as the busiest and most popular bus stop. The current location is ideally placed for school children. This will result in increased risk or the creation of new hazards for pedestrians, cyclists, or other road users.</p>	<p>The detailed design stage will resolve the exact location of the bus stop with regard to all Government Guidance and safety regulations. There are alternative existing stops that would be closer to and more suitable for school use. We commit to working with the community on the location of the bus stop.</p>
<p>This is a timed bus stop and often the buses have to wait for several minutes. Given this, queues will back up to Rodney road, displacing more traffic down this rat run, also traffic in the queue will try to undercut the queue by entering on to private lane of the precinct, impacting safety. Both sides of the proposed bus stop is a keep clear area</p>	<p>It is not best practice to have timing stops in busy locations, and we aim to address historic siting of timing stops when considering our infrastructure schemes. We are proposing, in consultation with Firstbus, to move the timing stop to the west of the village.</p>
<p>In response to the undercutting - BSIP suggested closing the vehicular entrance to the Post OFFICE on that side - that would be impractical and unsafe and not right as its private property. This is a very ill-conceived idea.</p>	<p>This is a misunderstanding. The point made was that when a bus is stopped at this location it will cover the accessway meaning there would be no possibility of traffic undercutting the bus via the car park. There are no plans to close the entrance as this is private land and a valuable asset to the community.</p>

<p>Also nearby there is parking for the doctors and dentists so west bound traffic will be hindered if they cannot come out in the road to pass.</p>	<p>This was discussed with the Parish Council who sought to ensure that this parking was retained. It is set back from the bus stop so we do not envisage an issue with traffic passing parked cars as currently happens in this location. The detailed design stage would resolve matters such as these with regards to all Government Guidance and safety regulations.</p>
<p>If the Cadogan Grove stop was to be transferred to the Post Office site it would be imperative for the above stop to be re-instated especially for use by Farleigh Fields east. After all availability of public transport was supposed to be a requisite for such a building site. This would mean that in the space of a few hundred yards Bristol bound traffic would be held up twice without the possibility of overtaking a stationary bus. (This also links to the waste of public funds on a scheme that will cause worse traffic conditions).</p>	<p>The Leisure Centre stops are the closest to the Farleigh Fields development. These are not affected by the BSIP proposals.</p>
<p>BSIP say they might move the timed stop to outside the village, this is a backward step. A timed stop at the busiest bus stop in the village makes sense for passengers and First Bus! (This also links to the waste of public funds on a scheme that will cause worse traffic conditions).</p>	<p>It is not best practice to have timing stops in busy locations. We are proposing, in consultation with Firstbus, to move the timing stop to the west of the village.</p>
<p>The precinct has 4 valued businesses and the parking for 8-9 cars with frequent coming and going works well. Will this become parking for the bus which would be unacceptable, there is not room there for a large shelter for lots of people. BSIP said the children/passengers could wait on the forecourt a) it is private land b) not safe for a pedestrian area.</p>	<p>Moving a bus stop does not generate a change in practice such as is noted here, and there is no such issue at the current stop location.</p>
<p>Waste of public funds</p>	
<p>Not cost effective</p>	

The proposed GPS sensors which Backwell has always liked will save buses each way even without a bus lane 40 seconds. Residents and councillors have questioned the value for money of the project, a cost exceeding £2 million to save a reported extra 18 seconds on top of the 40 seconds of journey time for the X1 bus during rush hour.

Analysis shows that the typical benefits to bus journey times during peak and off-peak periods will be significant. The 58 second typical benefit shown is *in addition to* the 40 second benefit expected from the bus priority signals. The conservatively calculated total round trip journey time saving is 158 seconds for the X1 and 118 seconds for the X7.

X1	Journey time change (seconds, mean)	
	Off-peak	Peak
Benefit from 260m bus lane passing queuing traffic @ 20mph	0	-58
Benefit from bus priority signals	-25	-40
TOTAL (Westbound direction):	-25	-98
Benefit from bus priority signals	-25	-40
TOTAL (Eastbound direction):	-25	-40
TOTAL (round-trip):	-50	-138

X7/X7a	Journey time change (seconds, mean)	
	Off-peak	Peak
Benefit from 260m bus lane passing queuing traffic @ 20mph	0	-38
Benefit from bus priority signals	-25	-40
TOTAL (Westbound direction on A370):	-25	-78
Benefit from bus priority signals	-25	-40
TOTAL (Southbound direction on Station Road):	-25	-40
TOTAL (round-trip):	-50	-118

We were told this project was going to be paid for by government grants. It appears it will cost NSC over £500,000 and countless officer hours. So far it has cost NSC £272,762.

The funding for the development and design of this project is entirely funded from the BSIP Government Grant – we are not spending North Somerset Council base funding, or any funding that can be used for other purposes. The BSIP grant is ringfenced for the specific programme approved by the Government and this money cannot be spent on other highway-related matters.

The 10% savings on time travel on buses in the draft decision are based on so many assumptions.

The proposed design for the Backwell Crossroads junction includes a bus lane of 260 metres length approaching the junction from the east. At an assumed speed of 20mph, buses will take approximately 29 seconds to travel along the bus lane. In a traffic queue, the same distance would take 116 seconds at 5mph. The 87 second calculated maximum benefit has been reduced to account for variability in traffic – the assumption is therefore that buses will experience a typical (mean) 58 second time saving at busy times.

The traffic signal upgrade to allow the detection of approaching buses by GPS, and either skip or truncate stages to prioritise buses, is expected to yield a 25 second benefit off-peak and a 40 second benefit during peak periods. This assessment is based on the difference between minimum and mean off-peak journey times, which shows that there is a typical 35 second delay. It is considered that a typical journey time saving of 25 seconds is therefore likely off-peak, with a greater time saving (40s) when traffic is busier.

These assumptions have been reviewed following the call-in meeting on 27th May. For this analysis, Analyse Bus Open Data (ABOD) from November 2024 was used to understand bus journey times between the Farleigh School and Crossroads stops in a south-westerly direction.

Minimum off-peak journey times are around 1m15s, more commonly 1m30s in the middle of the day. It is assumed that these minimums occur when a bus flows freely along Farleigh Road and has a green signal upon arrival at the crossroad signals. The overall mean journey time is 3m10s, but is typically around 3m0s. Lowest atypical off-peak mean is around 2:40s.

The most conservative of the figures above shows that there's at least a 1m10s typical off-peak delay in light traffic conditions which must be attributed to buses waiting for the traffic signals to cycle (this is a mean delay when some buses experience no delay, so some buses caught by the signals are delayed for over two minutes). It is assumed that a significant proportion of the mean delay could be removed with effective Automatic Vehicle Location (GPS) technology. The analysis presented in the decision paper was deliberately conservative, using data for daytime off-peak periods. It is therefore considered likely that more than the stated 25 secs improvement would be realised. However, the saving for some buses will be much greater.

An officer site visit in April 2025 was undertaken to monitor evening peak queue lengths on Farleigh Road. Queues during normal traffic conditions were observed to extend beyond the Farleigh Fields access road. Therefore, it seems clear that the bus lane will be beneficial for buses during busier periods, and the maximum benefit of the bus lane (87s vs. 58s) will be realised frequently. The reduced expectation (58s) seems a reasonable assumption for a

	<p>typical benefit at peak period because the queue length does vary through the peak periods.</p> <p><u>Combined benefits of bus lane and automatic vehicle location</u></p> <p>The analysis above shows that the assumptions presented in the decision paper for time savings from both the bus lane and AVL are conservative.</p> <p>We have also been challenged regarding whether the benefits can be summated. We believe that they can.</p> <p>In normal (off-peak) traffic conditions, the bus lane will provide little benefit as its purpose is to bypass queuing traffic which usually only occurs in peak periods. However, the AVL system will ensure that the signals pre-empt the arrival of a bus and either skip or truncate stages of the traffic signals to allow the bus to continue with minimal delay.</p> <p>In heavier traffic, the bus lane will allow a bus to bypass the majority of the typical queue on Farleigh Road, before rejoining general traffic approximately 50 metres before the junction (the distance will be subject to the detailed design). Without changes to the signals, at that point the bus would be subject to the usual delays (discussed above) associated with the traffic signals following their pre-determined cycle. The bus's arrival at that point could coincide with the signals changing naturally, but at other times a bus could still have a significant delay. With an AVL system, the signals can be configured to give the Weston-bound traffic a green signal to closely coincide with a bus's arrival at the end of the bus lane, meaning it then gets the additional benefit of not having to wait for the signals to change naturally.</p> <p>It is considered that a combination of both measures provides the best overall benefit, and that the benefits of each measure can be assumed to be in addition to each other.</p>
<p>How can we justify 2.2 million pounds on a further 18 seconds Westbound? This 58 seconds is only if there are no other delays, no backing up at the crossroads which</p>	<p>Funding for this scheme is from a ringfenced national grant for Bus Improvement schemes. It cannot be spent on other projects or priorities. The bid and BSIP strategy were both</p>

happens frequently, no cyclists etc. The RSA assumes that cyclists in the bus lanes will ride at 20mph which obviously they will not - this slow moving aspect has not been factored into the delays to the buses - this will adversely affect the seconds predicted saved. Again, making this projected not only pointless, but counterproductive and wasting public money. This is for a maximum of six buses an hour.

approved by North Somerset Council. Both are grounded in the West of England Bus strategy which was widely consulted on in its development.

North Somerset communities tell us they want more reliable, frequent and affordable bus services – and that’s what we’re working together with bus operators to deliver through our BSIP. We want to create a commercially sustainable bus service which connects communities and can adapt to our growing population.

Growing traffic congestion and a historic lack of bus priority infrastructure in North Somerset means our bus services are slower, less reliable, and less attractive for residents. By bringing in new bus priority infrastructure schemes, alongside a package of other changes, we can make better, more effective use of our road network, tackle congestion and deliver faster, more reliable, sustainable bus journeys

If fewer people use public transport, there will be even more pressure on our roads, leading to worse congestion, impacting our environment and air quality. It could also mean once again losing bus services that are lifelines for communities, people on lower incomes, and people who don’t, don’t want to, or no longer drive

Buses on this corridor carry 150,000 trips each month. Buses represent 1% of traffic but carry 20-25% of trips made. This efficient use of our road capacity is good news for everyone using the A370, including motorists.

Improving journey times directly impacts the continued high frequency of services currently enjoyed on the corridor. A drop in journey times across the entire journey round trip means less buses are needed to keep the same frequency. To remove one bus (Peak Vehicle Requirement) needs a 5minute round trip journey time saving, and to remove two buses needs an 20minute saving. To operate a bus costs c.£300,000 per year to cover all costs. Either we deliver more efficient bus journeys or we will see buses removed and services decline as North Somerset Council does not have the money to continue to fund current enhanced service levels.

<p>Puffin Crossing - originally this was going to be nearer the new Farleigh Fields site, this scheme will move this nearer the Leisure Centre on a bend - the RSA thinks by cutting back site lines, the visual splay will be removed. This crossing being closer to the crossroads will cause delays to traffic including buses just out of the crossroads. This will take away and time saved adding to the complete waste of public money.</p>	<p>A signalised crossing across Farleigh Road was proposed as part of the Farleigh Fields highway mitigations. To minimise disruption to road users and to ensure the designs work together, it was considered most effective if these works are delivered with the BSIP project A contribution from the developer has been secured to cover the costs of these works.</p> <p>The proposed location is that originally proposed by the developer. This achieves good connectivity between Farleigh Fields and village amenities, provides a link to the school and leisure centre from the bus stop on the south side of Farleigh Road, links PROWs, and is where there is ample space. However, it is only 250m from the crossroads where there is already a pedestrian facility. An alternative location has been suggested further east, near Church Lane. This is more constrained but would serve different purposes.</p> <p>Safety concern: The issue identified in the RSA1 can easily be remedied by trimming vegetation and providing an additional signal. RSA1 are used routinely used to inform the detailed design process.</p> <p>Conflict with crossroads junction: The concern that a queue from the crossing will affect the crossroads is considered unlikely. This would be tested during design.</p> <p>We commit to working with the Ward and Parish Councillors in Backwell on the location of the crossing during the detailed design process.</p>
<p>The data seems out of date and lacking. It assert that 54 car journeys saved per bus - this is an assumption, it assumes that everyone on that bus would have access to a car and would make that journey by car if a bus was not available. toddlers, children, non drivers?? apparently it is data that First BUS use but there is no data to support this figure, BSIP of course quote this.</p>	<p>It is important that we apply industry standard data and assessments to our scheme development. Capacity on buses serving this corridor and location vary between 60-101. This relates to the X1 vehicle capacity being between 80-101 passengers per vehicle (80 for electric buses and 101 diesel) and the X7 route uses 60 person capacity vehicles. An average of 54 journeys per bus accounts for the factors highlighted.</p>
<p>Environmental and economic concerns.</p>	

<p>All of the above will lead to more cars idling, which will increase pollution and slow down journeys for most motor vehicles adding to journey times for business and for peoples general lives.</p>	<p>It is a common misconception that driving at 20mph lowers fuel economy. Research shows that for many cars a steady 20mph is the most efficient speed. Indeed, at 20mph many cars will achieve fuel consumption better than 90mpg. The main impact on fuel efficiency comes from slowing down and speeding up for obstacles, lights, junction and congestion.</p> <p>Changes in speed change the kinetic energy in the vehicle due to the velocity gained. This is what determines urban fuel consumption the most. Getting a vehicle to 30mph takes 2.25 times that to get to 20mph. The 20mph limit cycle will require less than half the energy than a 30mph limit cycle for acceleration. Smoother driving to a lower limit will always require less energy, less fuel and produce fewer emissions than repeatedly accelerating to a higher limit.</p>
<p>This scheme which is Based on flawed data, clearly is prepared to sacrifice safety, will cost the tax-payers an unacceptable amount of money on a project that will only cause more traffic issues and slow everything down; having the opposite effect on what was intended, needs to be withdrawn immediately.</p>	<p>All points have been addressed above.</p>