

East Bristol Funnel

Impacts of large
developments by
Arnos Vale



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Introduction

Several large residential developments are being planned along the Bath Road in the Arnos Vale area. Local residents believe the cumulative effect of these developments will be highly detrimental to the area and we want the sites to be considered collectively rather than piecemeal development.

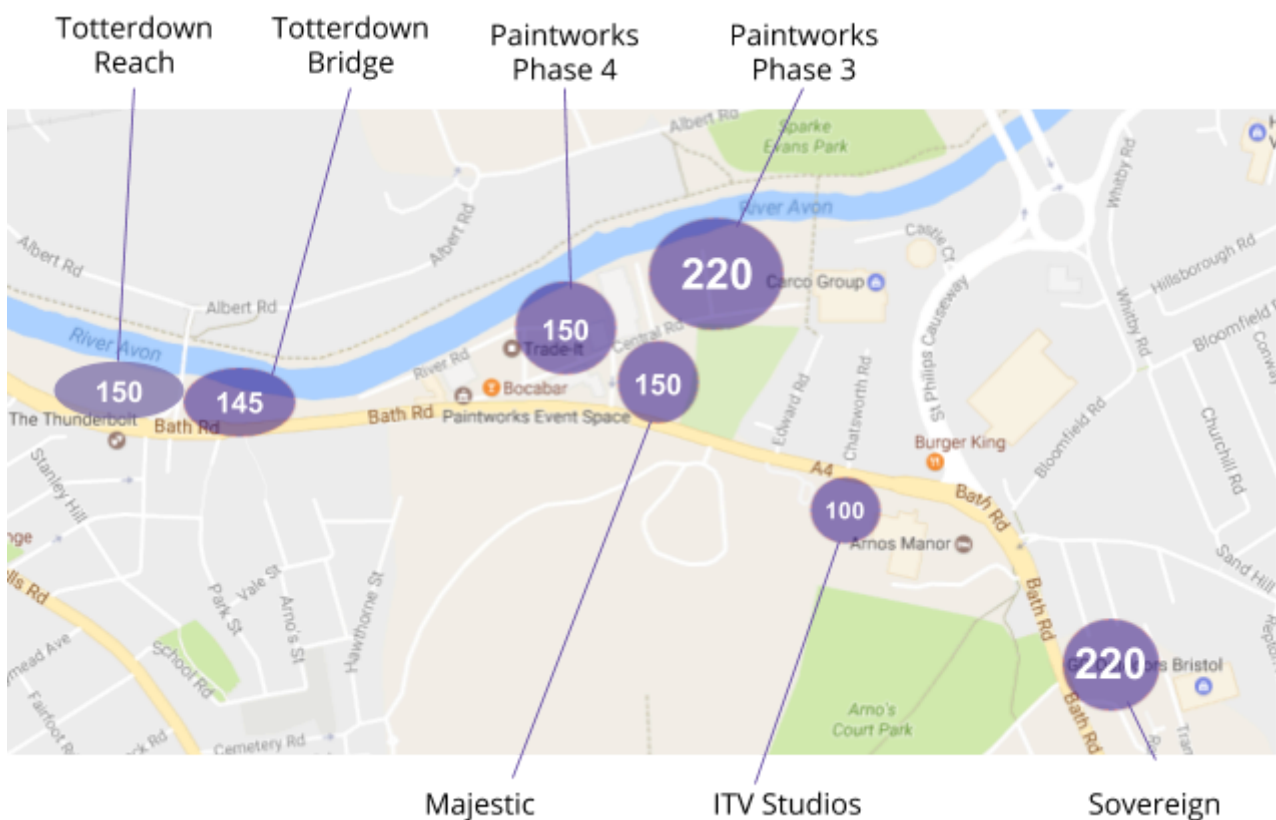
This document will present the following:

- A. Scale of development plans
- B. Our concerns
- C. Opportunities presented by these developments
- D. Data on infrastructure in the affected area

A - Development Plans

Several large residential developments are planned along the Bath Road, within the area of Arnos Vale. Each of these developments is large and will put extra pressure on local services. Collectively they will make a significant change to the character of the area and place large demand on existing local services.

Site locations and approximate number of residential units for each.



Other large developments just outside this area, but likely to have significant impact, include the Arena, University of Bristol campus, and Temple Gate developments such as the Grosvenor Hotel site.

From the number of units we can make both conservative and more pessimistic estimates about the volumes of people and traffic.

Site	Units	Low Estimate		High Estimate	
		x 2 people	x 0.25 cars pp	x 2.5 people	x 0.5 cars pp
Totterdown Reach	150	300	75	375	187
Totterdown Bridge	145	290	72	362	181
Paintworks Phase 3	220	440	110	550	275
Paintwork Phase 4	150	300	75	375	187
Majestic Site	150	300	75	375	187
HTV studios	100	200	50	250	125
Sovereign	220	440	110	550	275
Total	1135	2270	567	2837	1418
					

This is a conservative estimate of number of units. Planning applications may well be for higher number of units.

B - Concerns

Local residents have various concerns about the impacts of so many large scale developments occurring in their area. Various residents groups have come together to share their concerns. These include: Totterdown Residents Environmental Social Action (TRESA), Arnos Vale Residents Association (AVRA), Sandy Park Road Improvement Neighbourhood Group (SPRING), and the Ding's residents association. Our concerns cover the wider area as well as elements common to each development site.

Piecemeal development

The overall crux of our concerns is that development in the area will be considered on a piecemeal basis with little awareness of the cumulative impact. If this was one single site it would be expected to address a wider range of issues than simply building residential apartments. Is there any provision to treat this whole area together and have consistent planning officers, along with a coherent plan to ensure all development is sustainable?

Demographics and Community

A stable, healthy community requires a mix of demographic groups. Families with children, older residents, and a range of socio economic groups. Some of the development sites seem to focus on large blocks of residential apartments aimed at young professionals. This often leads to "dormitory" areas of people with shallow links to the area. It does not lead to active, involved communities.

Traffic and Air Quality

The Bath Road is a major trunk road across the east of the city. It is heavily congested, has long tailbacks and acts like a funnel from East Bristol into the city centre. The congestion is well known and various solutions have been proposed over the past 20 years including plans for a tram route.

Phase 3 of the Paintworks has added large numbers of extra vehicles turning right onto the Bath Road heading towards Bristol. This causes large tailbacks into the Paintworks site.

What is proposed to mitigate the extra traffic levels? How will traffic merge into the roads. We know people will have cars and will try to park wherever they can locally. What will be done to help mitigate this?

Half of the area lies within the Bristol Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Is it possible to model the air quality based on an extra 1000 vehicles using the roads at rush hour?

Doctors & Dentists

If 2000+ people move into the area, this will add pressure onto existing health and social services. Our research shows that surgeries within a 2km radius are still accepting new patients, yet patient feedback shows very long delays for appointments.

Is there any provision for new medical facilities? Is there any zoning of the development area to allow for this in the future?

Schools

Much the same as medical services, what is the provision for additional school places in the local area? The majority of primary schools in a 2km radius are oversubscribed and their catchment areas do not extend to the area being developed. (See section D which details data for local school places).

There are some schools currently undersubscribed - yet these are over 2km away and with no direct public transport links. Ultimately, this would encourage further car journeys ferrying children across the city.

Is there any zoning to cater for additional primary and secondary schools?

Parking

Where will people park their vehicles? None of the developments will have allocated parking space for each apartment so will require some people to have no vehicle or, as expected, people will retain their vehicle but park in the surrounding area. The residential streets of Chatsworth Road and Edward Road are already congested with commuter parking. So much so that local residents have implemented their own parking permit scheme.

We realise that the planning system does not require parking for each unit, and we recognise the rationale behind this decision. Yet we also know that people do have more cars than expected and this creates pressure on local people and makes daily life harder.

What can be done to prevent all new residents parking in these side roads and exacerbating parking issues?

Shops & Amenities

As well as diverse groups of people, communities also require a diverse range of shops and facilities. The Bath Road currently has few shops for everyday usage (how often do you buy a motorbike, blow some glass, or have a “massage”?). There is no newsagent, bakers, or convenience store. The area is reasonably close to Sainsbury’s yet this is not a safe or pleasant walk so will simply push more people into cars for the purpose of shopping. There are also no community facilities for groups to conduct social events.

There is a play park at Arnos Court, but this also requires crossing and walking along the very busy Bath Road.

Are there any plans to provide retail outlets or community facilities within these development areas rather than push people into cars and travelling away from the sites?

Public Realm

Part of the BTQEZ Spatial Plan

Each development is large in scale and each one will presumably try to have pretty patches, but will any of this be joined up or coherent to create a positive public space.

As an example, there is talk of developing a “riverside path” from the Hadley site into Paintworks. However this would only direct people into the Paintworks car parks.

Currently the Bath Road is the dominant feature of the area yet is unpleasant to walk along with narrow pavements (or even none at all in some parts).

What is the area wide plan for pedestrian access routes? How do we ensure the whole site remains accessible and pleasant? Are their plans to beautify the street scene?

Architecture

Many developments seem to enjoy creating “outstanding” pieces or “re-imagining the vernacular”. We are concerned that the separate developers will come up with several different designs that do not reflect the local character.

We would like to see respectful reference to the local materials, scale, and formats so that the developments help to create a sense of commonality rather than jarringly different places.

Environment

Some of the areas being developed (especially either side of Totterdown Bridge) have been vacant for some time and act as safe habitat for a variety of species. The river itself is a habitat and feeding location for many bats and birds. We have even had otters recently.

A large green corridor is being lost so what is being done to mitigate the negative impacts on biodiversity?



C - Opportunities

Local groups have concerns about the volume of development in our neighbourhood and that the negative impacts could be significant. We are not against development, and strongly believe that urban design can create great spaces that are pleasant to occupy.

We believe that the large number of developments offers opportunities to improve the area.

Affordable Housing

This is a great opportunity to ensure a fair amount of affordable housing, rather than developers pleading poverty and aiming for the bare minimum. Affordable housing would make the properties accessible to local people and also help to ensure a diverse community reflecting the character of the local areas. We appreciate that there are “targets” for affordable housing yet experience suggests that developers push to deliver less than expected.

How will we ensure the required proportion of affordable housing is met?

Bus stop for P&R

If new residents are to be car-less, then they need public transport alternatives. The Bath P&R route travels along the Bath Road. We believe it could be useful to add a stop outside Paintworks so that the large number of residents can have direct access to the city centre.

Bath Road Cycle Lane

Part of the BTQEZ Spatial Plan

Large developments often state that new residents will cycle rather than take a car due to being in a central location. The Bath Road is a major route for cyclists as well as cars, but the cycling and walking routes are poor quality and hazardous with the cycle path being a poorly painted section on the side of the carriageway.

We believe this could be simply changed by widening the pavement to include the cycle lane. Effectively creating a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists, and reducing the carriage width.

On the southside of the Bath Road, some of the cycle lane is between the carriage way and parked cars. This side should also be changed to widen the pavement and then push the parking bay next to the carriage way (as is common convention).



Example of shared surface at pavement level

Remove pinch point on Bath Road

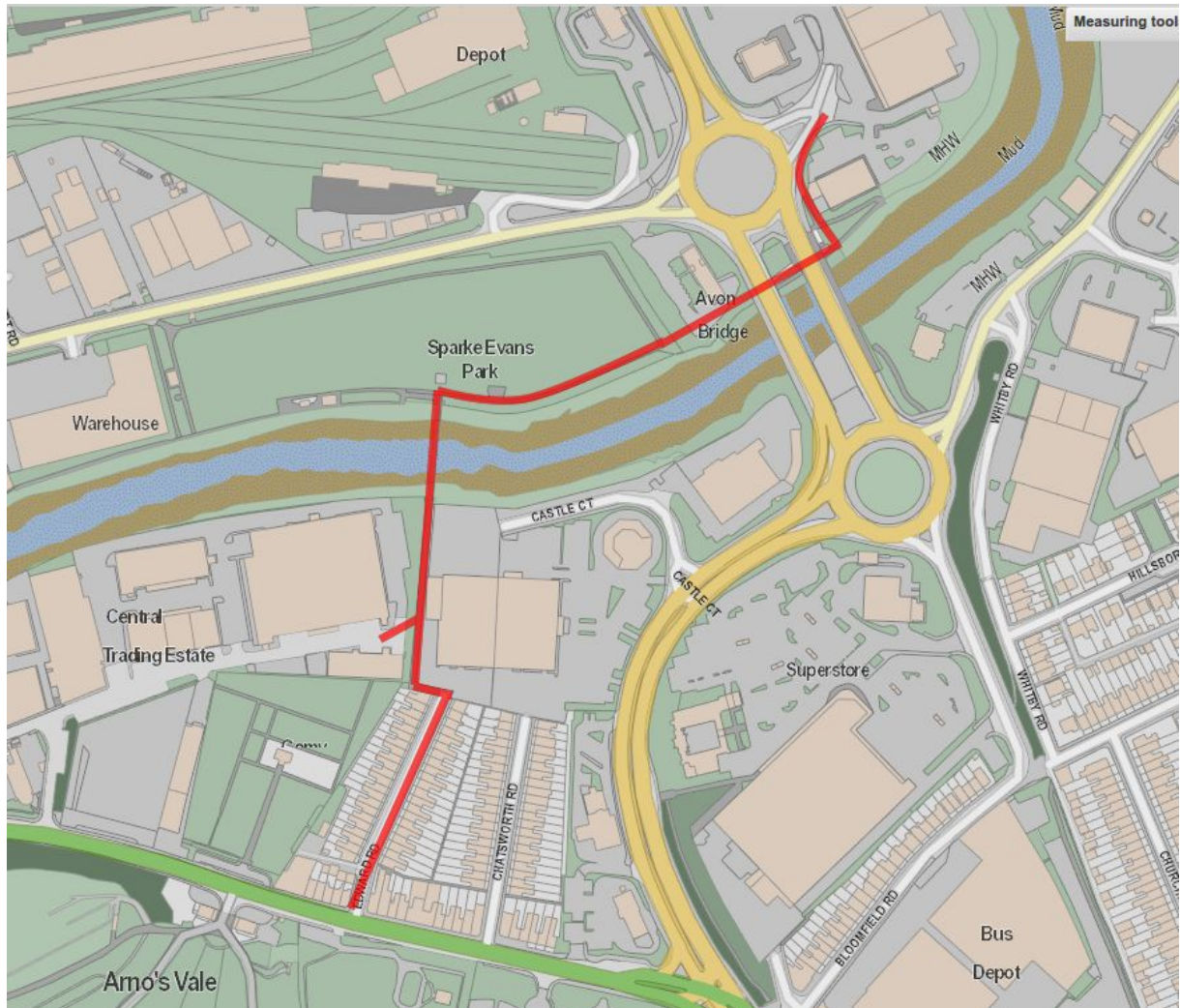
The Bath Road currently has a severe pinch point on the road outside the Majestic site. The road narrows at this point, has a bus stop and includes an entrance into the Paintworks site. This currently causes congestions whenever a bus stops or people are wishing to turn into Paintworks.

We suggest that the road could be widened slightly to allow for effective passing which would improve traffic flow for all users.

Improved route to Avon Meads

Part of the BTQEZ Spatial Plan

The Avon Meads retail estate is close to the development area and we believe that the route from Paintworks through to Avon Meads could be improved to encourage walking and cycling. This could include better lighting to the bridge across the Avon and through Sparke Evans park. This would also require access to the footpath from the back of Paintworks (currently this is fenced off and access is along Edward Road).



Car Club spaces

Car Clubs provide access to cars and car usage without car ownership. We would like to see all new sites allocating several parking bays for Car Club usage.

We have spoken with business managers from Enterprise Car Club who would welcome the opportunity to provide additional vehicles for these developments as they do in Paintworks. (Other Car Clubs are available).



*Enterprise Car Club bay
adjacent to Bocabar*

Electric car charging

Car emissions are the biggest source of air pollution. Electric cars are part of the solution yet depend on charging infrastructure being in place. This is an opportunity to ensure that several electric car charging points are installed throughout the area.



Loading bays

Online shopping deliveries reduce the need for individual car journeys. We believe that all developments sites should allocate a dedicated space for loading bays that can be used for any delivery service.

Parcel drop offs

Similar to loading bays, parcel drop offs provide the opportunity for local residents to have items delivered locally rather than needing to drive to parcel depots across the city.

An example of "InPost" parcel drop off site in Totterdown.



Sustainability

Rather than have many developments all meeting satisfactory targets for energy efficiency, imagine the impact of having all these developments attaining world class accreditations for sustainability and energy efficiency.

How can we ensure that all developments exceed targets?

Parking Zones

Totterdown and Arnos Vale are already heavily affected by tidal parking and are likely to be further impacted by the Arena traffic as well as these extra developments. With the increase in vehicles in the area, is it a suitable time to consult on a Residents Parking Zone?

D - Current Data

This section outlines factual information about the area currently (June 2017). This is prior to any further development. This is presented as a baseline and that any further development will impact these current figures.

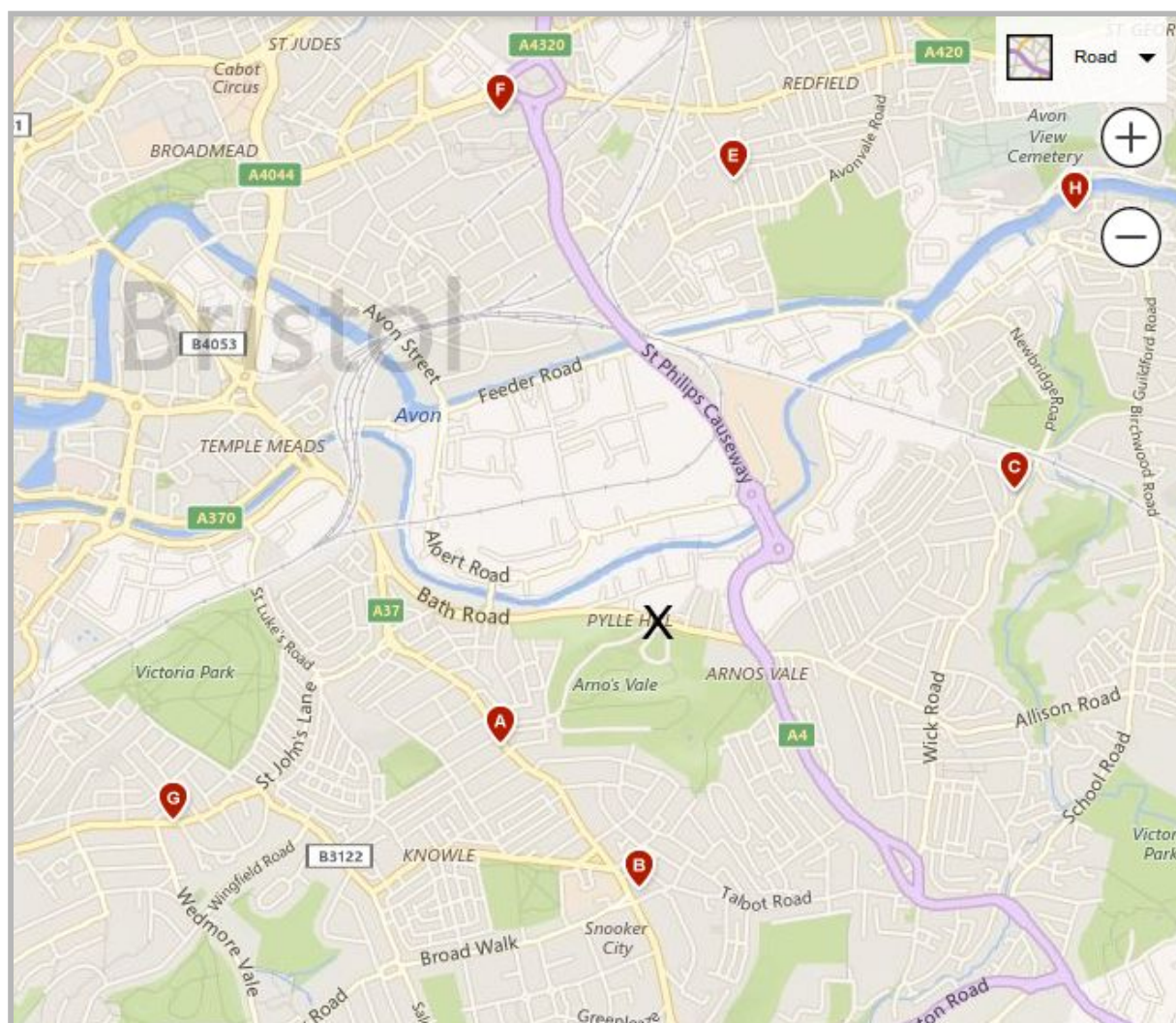
This will present details on:

- Doctors
- Dentists
- Schools
- Air Quality
- Traffic
- Bus Frequency
- Demographics

All data was accurate as of July 2017.

Doctors

There are eight NHS doctors within a 2km radius of the area.

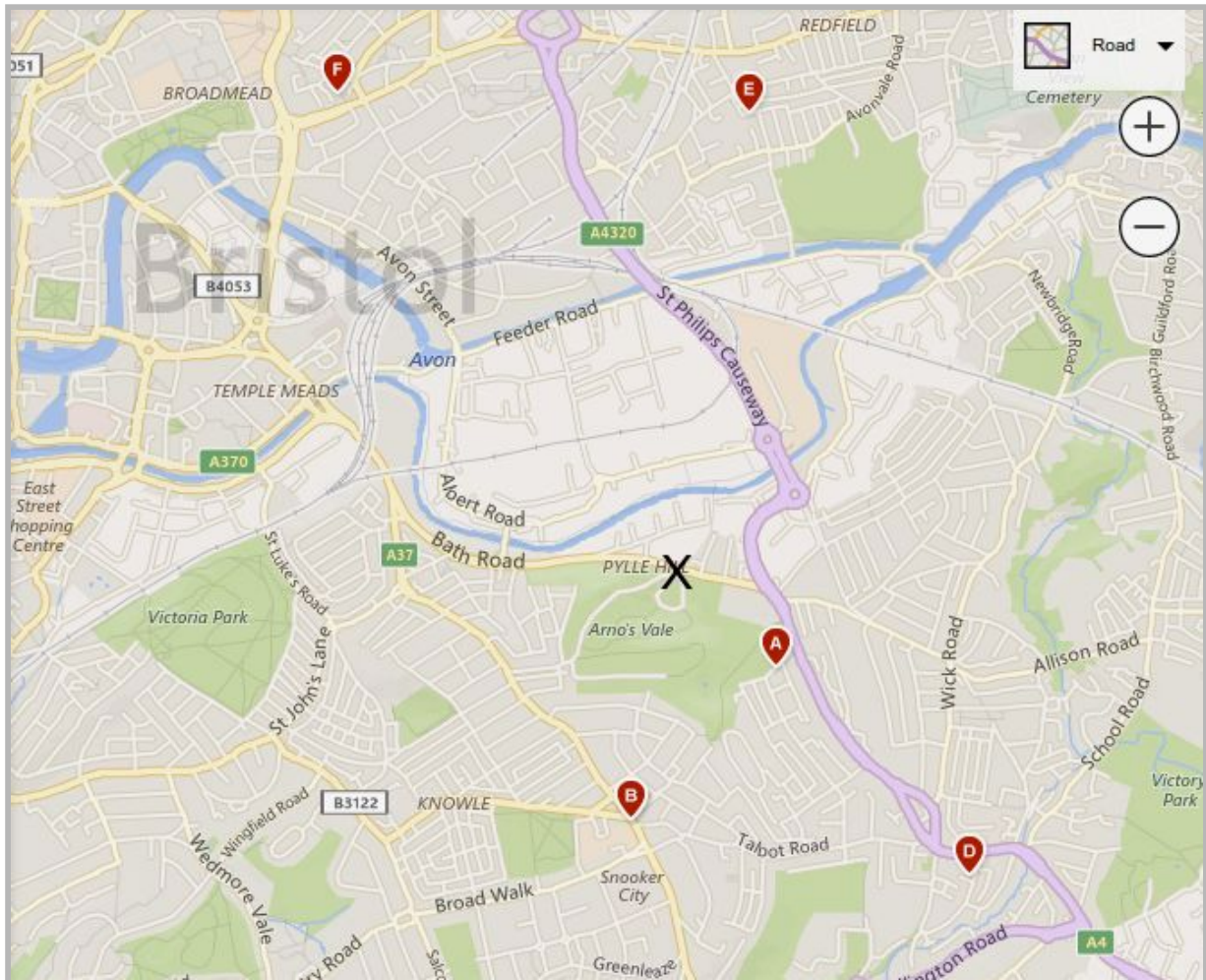


Name	Registered patients	Accepting new
A. Wells Road surgery	8,136	Y
B. Priory Surgery	10,617	Y
C. Birchwood Medical Practice	7,028	Y
D. Nightingale Valley Practice	15,264	Y
E. The Wellspring Surgery	8,634	Y
F. Lawrence Hill Health Centre	9,640	Y
G. The Wedmore Practice	7,680	Y
H. Riverside Surgery	15,624	Y

Source: www.nhs.uk

Dentists

There are six NHS dentists within a 2km radius of the area.

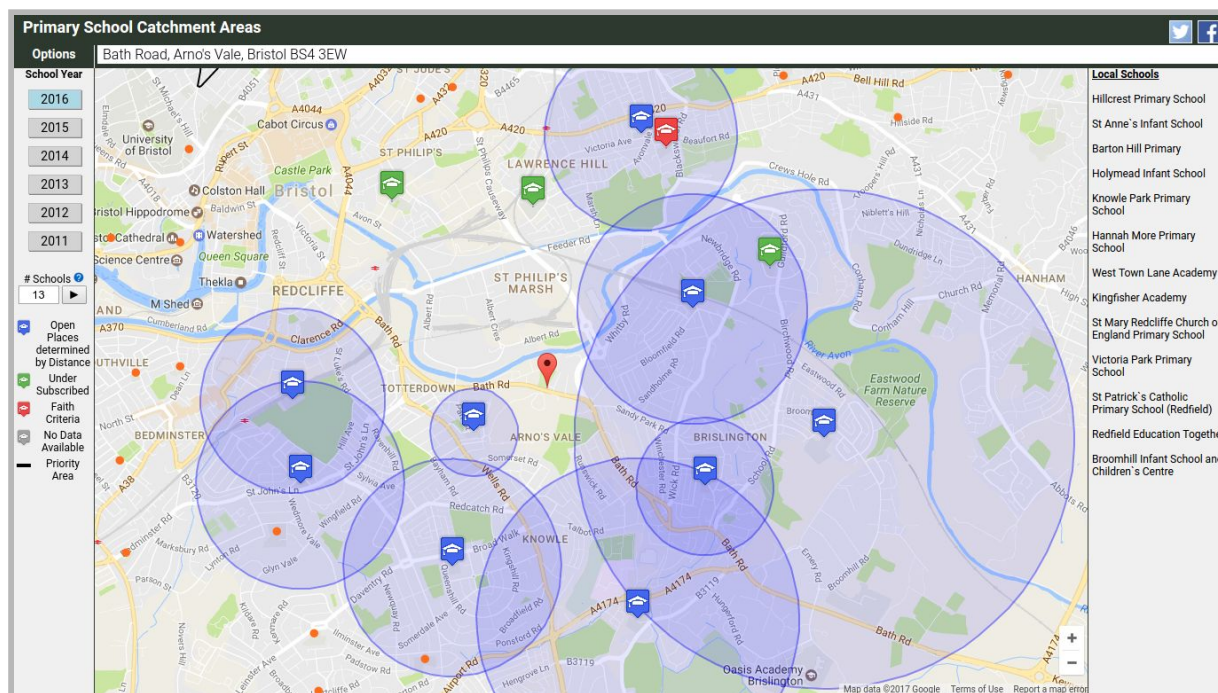


Name	Accepting new patients
A. Kings Road Dental Practice	?
B. myDentist - Wells Road	Y
C. Whitecross Dental Care Ltd	?
D. Warrington House Practice	?
E. Wellspring Dental Centre	N
F. myDentist - Old Market	Y

Source: www.nhs.uk

Schools

There are 12 public schools within a 2km radius of the area. Most of these have catchment areas which do not cover this area of development.



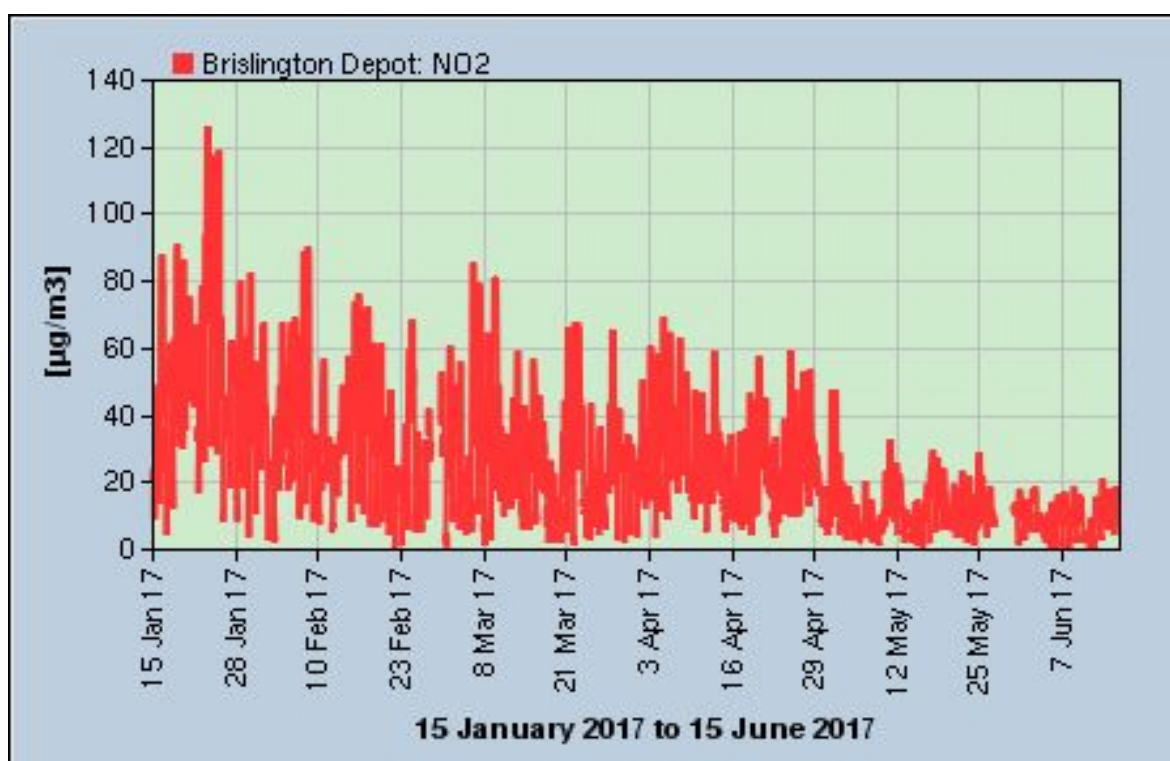
Name	Site in catchment area
1. Hillcrest Primary School	N
2. St Anne's Infant School	N
3. Barton Hill Primary	Spaces available
4. Holymead Infant School	N
5. Knowle Park Primary School	N
6. Hannah More Primary School	Spaces available
7. West Town Lane Academy	N
8. Kingfisher Academy	Spaces available
9. St Mary Redcliffe C of E Primary School	N
10. Victoria Park Primary School	N
11. Redfield Education Together	N
12. Broomhill Infant School and Children's Centre	Sovereign site is in catchment

Source: schoolcatchment.co.uk - 2016 data

Air Quality

There is an Air Quality monitoring station located at Brislington Depot very close to the development areas. This suggests that air quality in the area is reasonable (usually around level 3 of the 10 point scale promoted by DEFRA).

This chart shows the amount of NO_x between January 2017 - 15th June 2017.



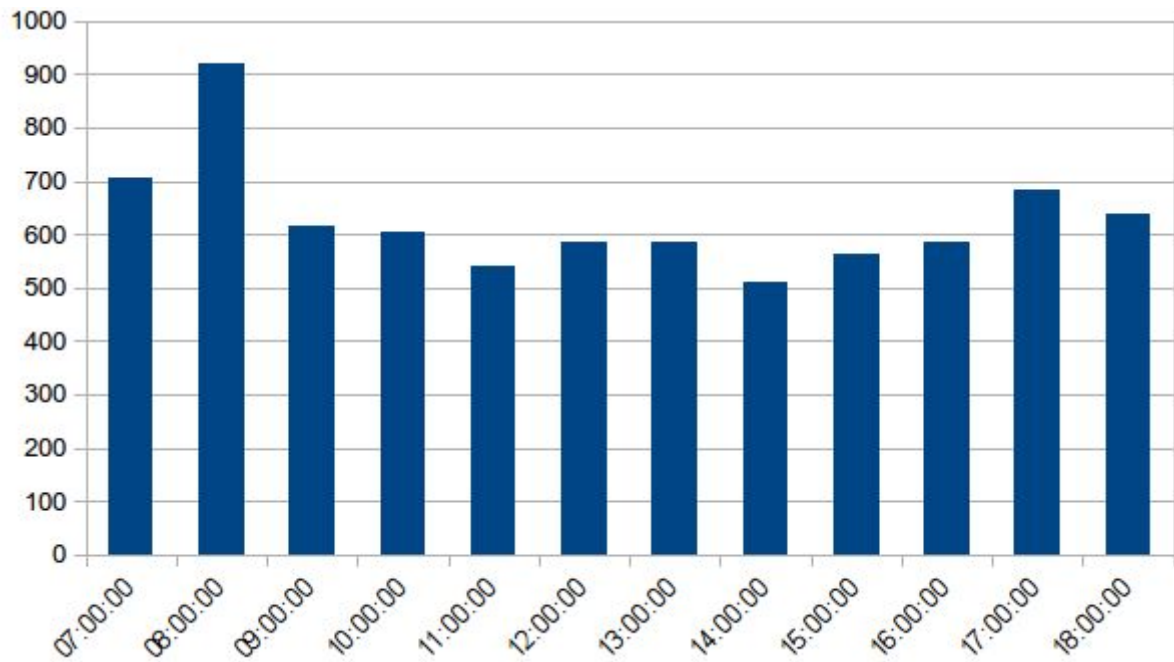
There is some dispute about the accuracy of these readings and that it underestimates the levels of pollution in the area.

Residents have used kits provided by Friends of the Earth and taken measurements of NO₂ around the area and this found that peak levels along the Bath and Wells Roads often exceed European limits (40 µg/m³). Other sample locations on side roads had levels below the 40 µg but still high (e.g. 35 µg).

Source: <https://www.foe.co.uk/clean-air/clean-air-campaign-air-monitoring-kit-results>

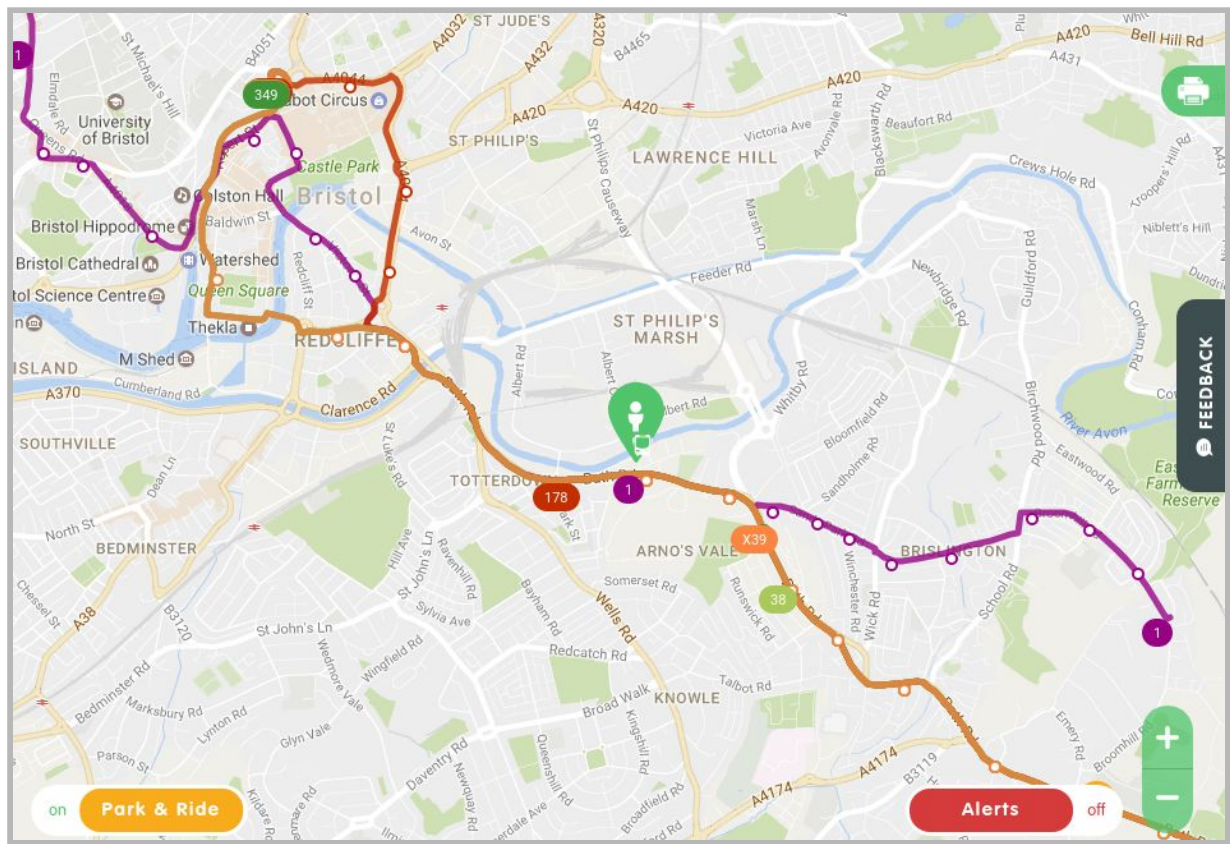
Traffic

Traffic counts are performed on a regular basis throughout the city. The latest data for Bath Road is from 2014 (an updated count is currently being made). This shows that eastbound traffic (from Brislington towards the centre) is busiest between 8 - 9am with approximately 920 vehicles per hour / 230 vehicles per 15 mins.



Bus Frequency

The route along Bath Road towards Bristol is quite well served by six bus routes.



Service	1	38	39	57	178	349
Frequency	12 mins	Hourly	20 mins	Once a day	Hourly	20 mins

Source: First Bus / ABUS

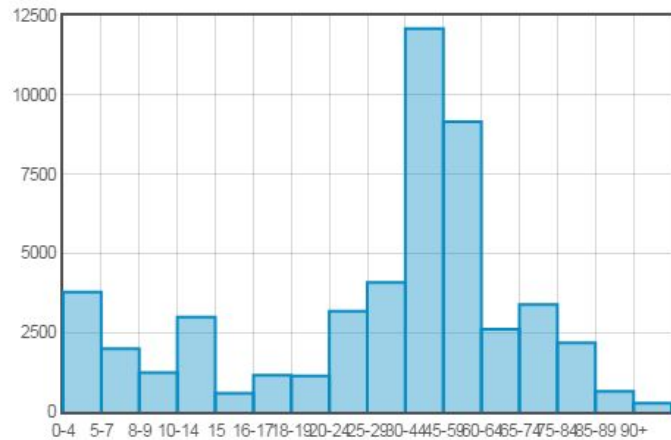
This level of service is good for the area, but the impact of extra traffic could be detrimental to all services. The range of destinations is not great and mainly covers journeys into the city centre (although this is common with most Bristol bus routes).

Demographics

The following sections details demographic data for the BS4 area. Data taken from www.streetcheck.co.uk/postcodedistrict/bs4 which pulls data from government open data sources.

Age Groups

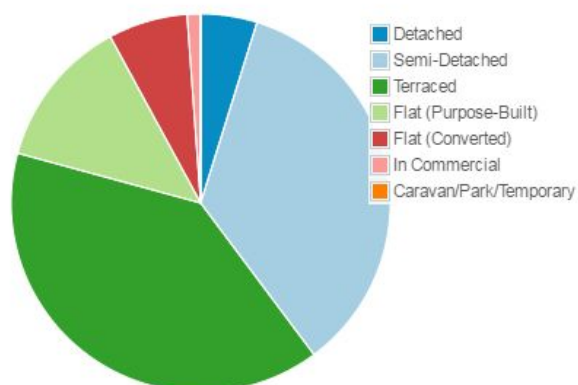
0-4	3781
5-7	1988
8-9	1235
10-14	2987
15	586
16-17	1155
18-19	1122
20-24	3167
25-29	4081
30-44	12096
45-59	9159
60-64	2602
65-74	3385
75-84	2178
85-89	644
90+	270
Total	50436



Housing Types

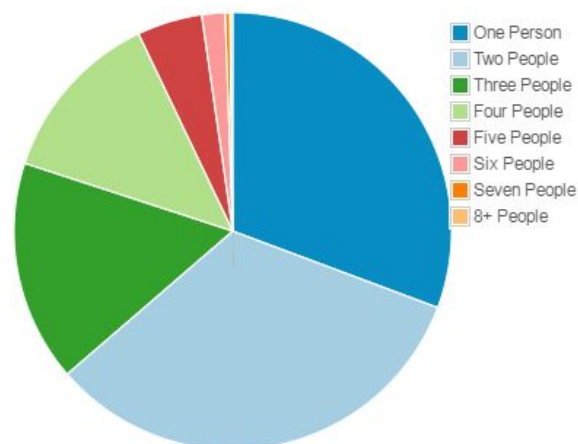
Housing Types

Detached	1052
Semi-Detached	7669
Terraced	8641
Flat (Purpose-Built)	2816
Flat (Converted)	1482
Residence in Commercial Building	250
Caravan/Park/Temporary	1
Total	21911



Housing Occupancy

One Person	6520
Two People	7003
Three People	3477
Four People	2740
Five People	1023
Six People	365
Seven People	74
8+ People	44
Total	21246



Conclusion

The area along the Bath Road around Arnos Vale has several large developments being planned. Local residents groups are concerned that these developments are being treated piecemeal with no regard to the cumulative impact.

We have identified several areas of concern on which we wish to have reassurance. We have also identified opportunities to improve the area - many that match items previously identified in the Spatial Plan for the enterprise zone.

Ultimately, we wish to share our thoughts with Bristol City Council officers and elected members to find a way to work together that ensures we develop the area in a way that benefits all residents - existing and those yet to arrive.

This document produced by:

- Totterdown Residents Environmental Social Action (TRESA)
- Arnos vale Residents Association (AVRA)