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The Society's response to the draft Trenchard Street Public Realm Strategy (the Strategy)

November 2016

## 1 Introduction

The Society has participated with others, particularly the Christmas Steps Arts Quarter, in the public discussion in 2014 that initiated the work that results in the City Design Group's publication of the Strategy. The Society supports the Strategy's conclusions, proposals and delivery, the approach of trialling solutions and the order of development:

1. Hatchet Square – with new north Hatchet frontage
2. Frogmore Street – existing south Hatchet Frontage
3. Denmark Avenue
4. Trenchard Street Multi Storey Car Park
5. Colston Hall crossing and footway improvements.

The Society recognises that there is only £235k of the allocated s106 money to fund street improvements within the study area, which will not provide funding for anything other than Hatchet Square.

The Society and the CSAQ are disappointed that the financial situation prevents the extension of the Strategy to take in wider opportunities or to review the current traffic management.

## 2 Initial improvements

### **Hatchet Square – with new north Hatchet frontage**

The Society supports the priority to focus on the 'Hatchet Square' proposal to improve the public realm around the Hatchet, including the trialled closure of Denmark Avenue. A short-term policy to use temporary traffic orders and semi-permanent installations to trial different alignments of the highway between the Queen's Shilling and the O2 Academy makes best use of the available project money and avoids prejudice to future development. Different road surface materials in 'Hatchet Square' would act as a speed mitigation

measure. The Strategy should cross-reference the emerging City Centre Movement Strategy, which will consider what traffic movement control is possible in the context of the wider road network.

#### **Frogmore Street – existing south Hatchet Frontage**

It is important that the southern arm of Frogmore Street should not become a ‘rat run’ to avoid ‘Hatchet Square’ If Frogmore Street must remain open to traffic to service the buildings on the east side of the Hatchet, the Society suggests that the Council obtains a Traffic Order to restrict traffic to local service vehicles and residents, to improve the area for people on foot. The society supports the preservation of the existing mature plane trees and suggests that there should be a programme to prevent them becoming over large.

#### **Denmark Avenue**

The Society supports the trial closure of the street to traffic at the junction of Denmark Avenue / Frogmore Street to improve safety and enhance the setting to the Hatchet. Because of the closure of the entry to Colston Street from the Centre Promenade, should Orchard Avenue become two-way, to ensure access from the Centre?

#### **Trenchard Street Multi Storey Car Park**

The Society supports the renovation of the ground floor of Trenchard Street car park to provide an active ground floor frontage. The removal of Parking Services to another site could provide an opportunity and finance to redevelop this dull frontage.

**Colston Hall crossing and footway improvements** The Society supports the Council’s request for section 106 money from the Colston Hall redevelopment to improve the pedestrian link between Colston Hall and Lodge Street and the Trenchard Street Car Park to make the street less intimidating for the heavy flow of pedestrians. The Society notes that detailed proposals will follow the completion of the Hall’s redevelopment and information about changed local traffic flows after completion of the Metrobus work.

Whilst leaving a service bay to permit large vehicles to service the Hall, the ‘link work’ should narrow the upper part of Trenchard Street as a further speed mitigation measure. Semi-permanent installations could provide a deliverable solution. The additional pavement space created gives an opportunity to green and soften the street’s appearance. There is a possibility of a build-out on Trenchard Street at the car park, forcing traffic round into Pipe Lane and barring traffic from Frogmore Street, which needs to be explored.

### **3 Streetscape management**

#### **Waste**

Wheelie bins would be a significant negative feature in the enhanced street. The short-term delivery actions should include work with local businesses to improve and rationalise on-

street wheelie bin storage. The Strategy could cross-reference the Bristol City Centre BID, which could pick up the area management of waste bins.

### **Parking**

The small-scale parking is a negative feature in the area that could be consolidated and improved. This would require consultation to ensure that the parking bays meet local needs and there are adequate service bays to accommodate the large vehicles that service the local entertainment centres. Current funds are inadequate to support this project.

## **4 Traffic management**

### **Traffic data**

We understand some movement data is available, but it is not referenced in the Strategy. Can the Strategy make some comment on whether an acceptable balance between movement and place can be achieved?.

### **The closure of Frogmore Street to traffic**

To achieve the aim described in the consultation draft (part 3) at page 28, a future project should consider a temporary Traffic Order to close Frogmore Street and 'Hatchet Square' to motor traffic either entirely or during the peak night hours.

### **Provision for cyclists**

The design should follow from Council-adopted design principles and not be decided ad-hoc. The Council is about to adopt TfL design standards, which the Strategy should cross-reference. If the motor traffic is sufficiently calmed, the cycle route need not be delineated or segregated.

## **5 Wider opportunities**

### **The wider local character area**

A future project should consider the whole of the local character area, which extends from Brunel House in the west to the top of Colston Street in the east, and includes Denmark Street / Unity Street, Orchard Street and Avenue, Gaunts Lane and Hobbs Lane. The Strategy could reference this as a future ambition.

The Strategy document limits consideration to the upper part of Colston Street. The Strategy includes the top half of a map taken from a Sustrans proposal that the CSAQ sponsored. Without prejudice to future opportunities, the Strategy should contain the whole of the Sustrans map to contribute to the future project.

### **The Park Street viaduct**

The pedestrian experience in Frogmore Street under the Park Street viaduct is dire. The Society suggests that the Council should approach the Neighbourhood Partnership for funds to achieve relatively low cost improvements.

- (i) The removal of the cycle route island would permit a wider pavement.
- (ii) Currently there is a solitary standard street lamp. New lighting could highlight the attractive recessed arches.
- (iii) Different surface materials could highlight the steps to Park Street from the west side of Frogmore Street.