

## **Transport and Works Act 1992**

### **The Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedure) (England and Wales) Rules 2006**

#### **Rule 10(2)(c)**

#### **Ashton Vale to Temple Meads and Bristol City Rapid Transit Order**

### **CONCISE STATEMENT OF THE AIMS OF THE PROPOSALS**

The Ashton Vale to Temple Meads and Bristol City Rapid Transit Scheme (“The Rapid Transit Scheme”) is a key element of the West of England’s Joint Local Transport Plan (“JLTP”) which is aimed at addressing the current issues of congestion and its associated environmental dis-benefits and providing the capacity needed for delivering sustainable growth. The key aims of the Rapid Transit Scheme are as follows:

#### **1. Extend the choice of transport modes for all, in particular car drivers, to encourage a shift to public transport**

As with other successful city regions, the West of England suffers from severe traffic congestion, particularly at peak periods on main routes into the city. The Rapid Transit Scheme would expand the capacity of the public transport network to the south west of the sub-region and, by providing a new choice for travel, aims to encourage a shift away from private car use to public transport.

The Long Ashton Park & Ride service has achieved steady year on year patronage growth, however, the existing journey times do not provide sufficient time savings to attract larger numbers of car drivers. The Rapid Transit Scheme aims to reduce journey times from Long Ashton Park and Ride to Bristol Temple Meads Station and Bristol city centre by half compared with forecasts for existing bus services.

#### **2. To promote sustainable development by providing high quality public transport links**

The West of England is already undergoing an unprecedented level of development in terms of major regeneration schemes, in particular, the rejuvenation of Broadmead shopping centre in central Bristol (Cabot Circus) and other city centre schemes at Harbourside, Temple Quay North and Courage Brewery. Forecasts show that by 2026 the economy will support an additional 138,000 jobs and the area’s population could grow by over 200,000 people. The draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) consequently proposes large-scale housing development in the sub-region, with construction of 138,500 new dwellings.

A substantial increase in public transport capacity is essential if these ambitious plans for employment, commercial and housing provision within the sub-region are to be accommodated in a sustainable manner. The Rapid Transit Scheme would form part of that increase in capacity and aims to allow staff and customers to travel efficiently

to employment and retail sites, improve the efficiency of supply chains, improve access to markets and thus support business competitiveness.

### **3. To improve access to public transport for areas that currently have poor provision**

Up to 30% of residents in Ashton Vale do not have access to a car. The area is poorly linked to the public transport network and is without a railway station, direct bus service to the city centre or the local railway stations or Bristol Temple Meads. There is poor accessibility for car trips into Bristol from the urban settlements in North Somerset including Clevedon, Nailsea and Weston-super-Mare due to traffic congestion resulting in extended and variable journey times. Similarly bus journey times are relatively poor and unreliable.

The Rapid Transit Scheme would improve accessibility by both bus and car through improved journey times and journey time reliability into the city centre and improve access to job and other opportunities.

Level platforms, multiple doors and low floor vehicles would be provided to help make access easier for a wider range of people, improving travel opportunities for disabled people and the mobility impaired including the elderly and parents with young children.

### **4. To improve integration of the public transport network**

The Rapid Transit Scheme would provide improved linkages to Bristol Temple Meads Railway Station and thus connectivity to the national rail network and easy interchange between rapid transit, rail, bus and taxis. The link with public transport hubs in the city centre, including the bus station, would allow easy interchange with bus services.

The flexible nature of bus rapid transit would allow services from the urban settlements in North Somerset remove the need for interchange at the Park and Ride thereby encouraging users to start their journey in their local town.

The introduction of the Rapid Transit Scheme would therefore contribute, together with improvements made through the other JLTP major transport investment schemes, to a high quality integrated public transport network for the sub-region.

### **5. To promote social inclusion by improving access to employment, retail, community, leisure and educational facilities**

The Rapid Transit Scheme would increase connectivity of communities in the south west of the sub-region to employment, health and leisure facilities and retail opportunities.

The investment in rapid transit infrastructure is also intended to act as a catalyst for improvements in the public realm and other environmental improvements. Rather than concentrating solely on improvements to the vehicles and stops, the Rapid Transit Scheme is based on integrated design including significant improvements to the streetscape and walking environment.

## **6. To improve safety along the corridors by reducing use of private cars**

Around 400 people are killed or seriously injured on the West of England's roads every year. Accidents involving cars accounted for around 60% of casualties (killed, seriously or slightly injured) in 2007. Public transport was significantly lower at 12%.

The Rapid Transit Scheme aims to move journeys made by private car to a safer public transport mode. Additional benefits would also be experienced by pedestrians and cyclists as a result of priority measures and improved crossing facilities and through the permissive use of the maintenance track as a car-free walking and cycling route along the rapid transit alignment.