

**WECA outline business case (OBC) for the Bristol -Bath Strategic corridor proposals: (BBSC).**

*WECA Vision – “The Programme focuses on improving access, reducing journey times and improving reliability for bus users, cyclists and pedestrians through the provision of: Y A high-quality, high frequency bus service between Bath and Bristol Y A continuous segregated cycling corridor between Bath and Bristol Y Cycling and walking connections between local communities along the A4 between Bath and Bristol and the new bus service, and strategic cycling corridor.”*

This is a WECA project that has NOT been handed over to B&NES. However, I want to share some facts with you. Few would disagree with the OBC narrative about congestion, the need to reduced carbon emissions, and to seek a modal shift from car to bus and active travel. Few would disagree with the noble aims of addressing climate change. However, does this scheme match these ambitions? Does the proposed scheme represent value for money?

There is a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) stated of 1.5 i.e for every £1 there is 50p of benefit. Most of the benefits are not economic but monetised environmental and health benefits. Most of the claimed benefits are based on physical activity (I guess the walking/cycling). Despite that the cycle path alongside the Keynsham by-pass has, according to WECA press releases, been taken out of the proposed scheme contrary to the stated WECA vision of a continuous cycle corridor between Bristol and Bath. Who in WECA made that decision? What cyclist would take a detour into hilly Keynsham?

There is some benefit claimed for noise reduction. The OBC refers at one point, curiously, to reduction in night-time noise for a scheme that is about active travel and daytime bus time efficiency, and the OBC also claims greenhouse gas reductions.

This BCR has been subject to sensitivity tests. It rises to 1.8 in the most optimistic of outcomes but reduces to 1.2 based on comparative case studies and 1 if there is only a 25% active travel share.

The BCR is described as giving medium value for money.

To give a sense of perspective, a re-opening of Saltford Station had a BCR of 2 some years ago and that was before environmental factors considered

The A4 corridor BCR calculation gives a **NEGATIVE** effect for economic efficiency for business users and providers and consumer users (other). It is only positive for commuters.

The Phase 1 proposals are planned to be completed by March 2027.

The cost is about £26 million pounds of which £21 million is planned to be spent in one financial year 2026/2027.

Predicted average bus journey time savings in the two sections from Hicks Gate to The Globe: **Eastwards** 57 secs + 47 secs = 104 secs or **1 min 44 secs**. **Westbound** the figure is 41 secs + zero = **41 secs**. This is less time than I have been speaking.

Aspects of the A4 corridor proposals are unpopular, particularly those relating to the Keynsham by-pass. Concern for many is about the practicality of the proposals not the aims. Concern is also about value for money.

END