

## Key Transport Consultants Information Sheet

**No:** 1

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Those who are interested in how we are going to get around Bristol in the next 25 years should take a look at [www.gbsts.com](http://www.gbsts.com). There you will find the proposals published recently by consultant, Atkins, on behalf of the Government Office for the South West, on the transport proposals that have emerged from the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study.

The proposals are broken down into two stages: Short and Medium Term Measures, and Long Term Measures, (terms not defined) The highlights of the proposals include:

- Showcase Bus Corridors – from the Joint Local Transport Plan
- new Rapid Transit services – which Atkins say means more buses
- widening of the M4 and M5 around the north west side of Bristol and more improvements at the M32 junction with the Ring Road
- a new junction on the M5 at Weston super Mare
- long awaited completion of the Ring Road to the south side of the city
- the equally long awaited A36 to A46 link east of Bath
- a new link from the M5 at Clevedon to the Long Ashton Bypass
- extra platforms at Parkway Station
- re-signalling of the rail network to enhance capacity for regional rail services
- 3 new park and ride sites serving Bristol and 1 in Bath
- additional Flyer bus services to the airport

- A new crossing of the River Avon between Portishead and Avonmouth.

Now that all looks good but the consultants' projections are that by 2030, when they believe Bristol will be around 25% bigger, **congestion will be even worse than it is today!**

So what's missing?

**Every thriving, modern European city should have a rapid transit system.** Buses undoubtedly play their part in moving people around a city but they frequently get stuck in the same traffic jams as the cars. I am convinced that the only way to achieve a truly *rapid* system is to put it on **rails** – and that's what's missing from the plan. The city was a hair's breadth away from getting line one of a tram network off the ground in 2002 before Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils fell out over the location of the northern terminus. Light rail may be out of fashion with the current government but it should not preclude its inclusion in a strategic plan for the city that looks ahead 25 years. If you agree, I urge you to make your views known in response to the current consultation and to the four local Councils.

And what else is missing?

If **Bristol International Airport's** passenger numbers grow as expected it's hard to see the A38 cop-

ing as a single carriageway in 10 to 15 years time so it will need upgrading to dual carriageway between the new Ring Road and the airport. And can somebody explain how it makes sense to build a new junction on the M5 near to the location of the existing junction at Weston, to split the motorway traffic away from the A370 traffic, but it doesn't make sense to build a new junction on the M4 at Emersons Green to relieve the top end of the M32?

When the GBSTS was announced, the hope amongst transport planning professionals was that the study would provide the foundations for a major boost to transport investment in the sub-region, in the same way that the equivalent study did for the Birmingham conurbation. In my humble opinion the city needs a more ambitious transport strategy that aims to improve travel around the city, rather than allow it to deteriorate. For the sake of the city region's future well being, the GBST Study needs to provide a platform for a dramatic improvement in the sub-region's transport network and conditions on it. If the current proposals are adopted, I believe it will fail to achieve this goal.

**Roger Key**