

Item 6: SOUTH BRISTOL LINK BID

The Green Party in Bristol has been among the many objectors to this major road building project at every stage of its evolution - in the Joint Local Transport Plan, the Regional Spatial Strategy, in the West of England's consultations, in scrutiny, and in the joint transport executive meetings. This is a last gasp effort to persuade you to drop this outdated and destructive scheme.

- New roads, such as this one, will generate new traffic and new pollution. **This is still a ring road**, despite the rebranding exercise that was carried out after Business West urged it upon you.
- Peak Oil will undermine the past assumption that new roads bring local regeneration; business models are going to have to adapt.
- You don't know (or have never asked) about the likely traffic and journey time impacts of the road.
- Heavy traffic and the 'severance' effect will damage community cohesion and quality of life in the neighbourhoods through which this road will pass.
- As for the bendy-bus route from Hengrove to the Long Ashton Park and Ride, the economics and projected passenger figures simply don't justify it as a public transport investment while there are so many other pressing needs.
- Finally, we have the ugly prospect of the South Bristol Link cutting through the Green Belt of Ashton Vale and opening it up to development.

None of these facts seem to have cut any ice with the decision makers.

So this time we want to point out how, as a Liberal Democrat controlled council, you will be flying in the face of your own party's policy on road building.

Your national policy is, quite properly, critical of Labour and Tory road-building projects that will *'mean more traffic and more pollution'*. It goes on to say that you *'will not proceed with new major road-building schemes unless the benefits are clear, including environmental and safety factors, and based on a full assessment of alternative public transport schemes'*.

Please, ask yourselves where the promised environmental appraisal of the South Bristol Link is to be found. Ask yourselves when the promised 'full assessment of alternative public transport schemes' was carried out. You already know the answers. They don't exist. You've not even attempted to produce them.

So much for the election promises of the Liberal Democrats.

If you go ahead with this bid, as we imagine you will, you won't just be demonstrating that your Liberal Democrat policies are expendable at will. You'll be lumbering Bristol with a road that is an anachronism, an exercise in social and environmental vandalism, and committing the city to great public expense when, at the same time, you're desperately cutting back on essential public services in an effort to balance the books.

Don't do it. Surely you didn't come into politics to do this sort of thing?