



Graeme McKenzie  
Environment and Infrastructure  
Aberdeen City Council  
St Nicholas House  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen AB10 1EZ

29 June 2005

Dear Mr McKenzie

### **Dual Carriageway on College Street/South College Street**

Thank you for your letter of 3 June inviting comments on the above scheme.

We have had a subsequent meeting with Tom Rogers and further communication with Joanna Beveridge.

#### Overall Comments

The Forum is disappointed that interested parties were not consulted before the recommendation to approve the scheme was put to councillors. We have heard differing views as to why this was the case, but we regard it as a serious slip in the decision making process.

The Forum is also extremely concerned that no cycle safety audit/risk assessment has been done on the scheme. It is entirely unsatisfactory that road schemes are brought to councillors for approval before any assessment of the impact on different groups of road users. We consider this to be a serious omission and calls into question the recommendation to approve that was put before councillors.

The urban dual carriageway, as it stands, will be unattractive to cyclists and perceived to be dangerous. Implementing such a scheme, especially one so close to the city centre, is entirely at odds with the Council's aim (as stated in its Local Transport Plan) of increasing cycling levels and encouraging a shift to more sustainable modes of travel. It is counter to the work the Forum is trying to do, often in cooperation with the Council, to encourage increased levels of cycling in the city.

On the wider front, an urban dual carriageway will add another barrier to the already poor cycling (and walking) links between Torry and the city centre. We regard the current poor links as demanding improvement; not being made even worse.

We reiterate our view that the pedestrianisation of part of Union Street should be the opportunity to develop a package of measures to reduce traffic levels, thereby reducing the need for large scale road building in the city centre.

#### Comments on the scheme.

The dual carriageway will have 3m lanes, and will carry a higher volume of traffic than at present. These lanes are narrow, and will not allow for safe overtaking of cyclists when both lanes are busy. This presents an intimidating road environment for cyclists.

We acknowledge that, currently, the top end of College Street, northward, has two 3m lanes but this a relatively short section. The proposed extension of the dual carriageway will represent a step change in the cycling environment along that route.

The cycle measures included in the design are unsatisfactory. The proposed shared cycle path only covers half the length and it is difficult to see how cyclists can join it safely. Cyclists would then have to rejoin the traffic at the car park junction. Such an arrangement only serves to present additional risks to cyclists.

Whilst we appreciate that the path is an attempt to provide a better cycle link to the rail station, we do not think it will achieve this. With earlier consultation, this scheme could have provided the opportunity to review and improve these links which are currently extremely poor. The Forum believes cycle-rail trips in Aberdeen can be significantly increased.

In conclusion, the Forum believes that the dual carriageway will present a barrier to cycling in an area where direct and attractive cycling options are already extremely limited. We believe this is not acceptable in a city centre location and runs counter to stated council policy. We hope to have further discussions with officers on the design.

However, the Forum is very concerned that the recommendation was taken to committee without a safety audit being undertaken. This shows a disregard for cycling safety which we find frustrating and extremely disappointing. Indeed, we consider the decision making process as flawed and believe this calls into question the recommendation to approve that was put before councillors.

Yours  
Derek Williams

On behalf of Aberdeen Cycle Forum

