



[Response to AECOM consultation for Nestrans - 11 June 2021]

Dear Jamie,

I had hoped to save some time and just complete the survey in place of sending this email, but the survey isn't really suitable for making an organisation return, despite offering that option as the very first question (i.e. none of the subsequent questions are adapted to suit a return from an organisation: all the questions relating to age, gender, frequency of use, purpose of use etc are all pointless and irrelevant for a return being submitted by an organisation on behalf of multiple individuals, so it is disappointing that the survey wasn't better designed).

The view of ACF is that only the on-line option is likely to be practical or has a realistic chance of being developed, due to the probable high cost of new bridges over the AWPR which the other 2 options would require.

It is a pretty damning indictment of travel policy and planning when new bridges are having to be considered over a road that hasn't yet been open for 3 years. Had active travel been properly considered when the AWPR was being designed and built, we would not be in this position. As one of the promoters of the AWPR, Nestrans must shoulder some of the responsibility for that historic failure.

An on-line route has advantages and disadvantages. It is more direct, and so more likely to be faster and therefore better used by commuter cyclists. Due to the threat - or perceived threat - from vehicular traffic, an on-line route would not be the preference of all cyclists. Recreational cyclists may prefer a route away from the road, but to a degree this could be mitigated by good design, adequate set-back distances and some form of physical protection from traffic.

A route following the existing corridor is also likely to better serve more destinations and purposes.

We don't know at this stage the design details such as surfacing and street-lighting, but such details are very important in making whatever route is selected as attractive and well-used as it can be. We trust that whatever is proposed will meet best practice and the latest design standards, including 'Cycling by Design' a new version of which is imminent. Any new active travel route should also meet the usual Sustrans test of being fit for use by an unaccompanied 12 year old.

The A944 is an important corridor for active travel and we have campaigned for some time for improvements, particularly that section past the Prime 4 development which is sub-standard and in our view dangerous. It is now eight years since ACF submitted a petition to Aberdeen City Council calling for improvement, and it is disappointing that the Council's labyrinthian procedures and committees

managed to dismiss the petition by a process of attrition and obfuscation, rather than taking any action to resolve the problem.

We hope that the improvements to the route can be developed and implemented at a pace which reflects the eight year lapse, as well as the climate crisis and the need to give active travel in Aberdeen more serious consideration as a genuine alternative to the dominance of the private car as the default mode of transport.

Kind regards,

Gavin Clark (Chair)
Aberdeen Cycle Forum