



18 December 2025

Aberdeen City Council

Per Ross Stevenson

Cc Faris Zakieh

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Dear Sirs,

Wellington Road Junction Improvements – DMRB 2 – December 2025

About us

ACF is an established cycle campaign and advocacy group formed in 2003. Although we cannot claim to represent all Aberdeen cyclists, we have in excess of 300 members. Our aims, as set out in our constitution, are noted at the foot of this page.¹

Context

This is the 6th time that we have commented on proposals for Wellington Road since 2014. During that 11 year period, no actual improvements which would benefit active travel on the Wellington Road corridor have been carried out, which we find incredibly disappointing.

The current consultation relates to a section of Wellington Road only: from the junction with Charleston Road North and Wellington Circle, at the south end, and Craigshaw Drive at the

¹ A) To encourage cycling and to promote the benefits of cycling to the individual and the wider community B) To advocate for a safer cycling environment and improved cycle facilities in Aberdeen. C) To campaign for cycling to be an integral part of planning and transport strategies and practice, in order to provide the widest possible access to cycling as a healthy and efficient means of travel for work and leisure.

north end. All of this section is dual carriageway currently, it includes two major roundabouts, and most of it (south of Hareness roundabout) has some active travel provision in the form of a shared-use path, albeit this is interrupted by the roundabouts and is on alternate sides of the carriageway.

We would describe the on-road cycling experience on Wellington Road as extremely poor – in fact dangerous, primarily due to the nature of the road and the type, volume and speed (40mph posted limit) of vehicular traffic, including significant HGV traffic.

The *extremely poor* cycling environment continues north for the remainder of Wellington Road as far as (and including) the roundabouts at the Queen Elizabeth bridge, and the bridge itself. On this northern section, there is no cycle track or even shared-use path option and therefore the appeal for cycling here currently is even less than on the southern section which is the subject of the current proposals. Were active travel being properly prioritised, then proposals for this northern part of Wellington Road (including the bridge and junctions either end of it) would be considered first.

If accident statistics don't support our judgement of this as a dangerous place to cycle, we expect that is because most cyclists currently avoid cycling on Wellington Road and use whatever alternative they can find.

The current proposal

The stated purposes of the current proposals are:

- Prioritise sustainable transport along Wellington Road;
- Support freight movement;
- Improve access to education along the corridor;
- Ensure road safety; and
- Enhance air quality and public health.

Prioritise sustainable transport. At least so far as active travel is concerned, we cannot agree that these proposals do give priority to sustainable transport. The decision to retain both major junctions as roundabouts clearly does not give priority to those walking and cycling, and signalised junctions would be preferable.

Improve access to education. Whilst the proposals may be of some benefit to pupils accessing Lochside Academy, for those coming from Torry and Balnagask, the scheme covers part of the route only, and as we have noted above would leave them stranded on the northern section of

Wellington Road, which we describe above as an *extremely poor and dangerous place to cycle*. As cycle infrastructure therefore, this scheme has the same failing as many other schemes in Aberdeen, in that they are disconnected and do not serve the whole journey. The prospect of some meaningful improvement for cyclists on the northern section of Wellington Rd still feels a very long way off, despite the 11 year history we mentioned above.

The consultation documents also say:

Following careful consideration, Option K was selected as the preferred public transport and freight movement option

This would appear to confirm that active travel was not prioritised in the process. As you will know the sustainable transport hierarchy which is explicit in transport planning guidance at a local and national level, requires that walking and cycling are considered before public transport and other vehicular traffic.

The new scheme will of course connect to Craigshaw Drive where a segregated cycle track has been provided, and to Harenness Road, where one is proposed. This is welcome although we continue to have reservations about the usefulness of those routes.

Comments on the preliminary designs

Pavement & cycle track layout. We note that the proposed layout resembles that used in Craigshaw Drive and proposed for Harenness Road. Experience of this design in Craigshaw Drive so far is that it is widely abused for parking and/or loading including by HGVs. We understand that a 3m wide cycle track is proposed and is wider than the usual provision because the buffer from the carriageway has been included in the cycle track width. We are not in favour of this approach.

Side-road crossings. We understand that detailed design has yet to be carried out, so we are only commenting on the general principle that the cycle track should maintain priority over traffic entering or leaving side roads. The priority should be clear and obvious to all road users, especially drivers, which we fear the 'coloured chip' approach used in Craigshaw Drive does not achieve. See Cycling by Design 2021, p170, 171. Crossings should also have minimal set-back to allow cyclist priority to be achievable in reality rather than just in principle.

Crossings. Where the proposed cycle track crosses Wellington Rd from east to west, crossings should be one phase, rather than two, and not staggered. Two-part crossings significantly increase journey time unnecessarily, given that a mounted rider should easily be able to cross both carriageways in a short time. Staggered crossings are unsuitable for cyclists. Parallel crossings are preferable to shared-use.

It is unfortunate that the cycle track crosses from the west to east side for a relatively short section just north of Harenness junction. This has the effect of making the cycle route less direct, slower and therefore less appealing. We note there are particular space constraints here which probably make this unavoidable, and that some of the additional connections suggested will go part-way to mitigating this unfortunate de-tour.

Gradients. The section from Harenness junction to the Craigshaw Drive section is also relatively steep. Due to the potential speed of riders travelling downhill, also speed differential to riders travelling uphill, and the proximity to the carriageway, we don't think a two-way cycle lane is a safe option unless it is significantly set back from the carriageway and/or a physical barrier (such as a railing) is provided. Again it should be borne in mind that if the route is ever to be used by school pupils, then the design should consider that less experienced / skilled riders will be using it, hence our particular concern about gradient-induced speed.

Additional connections. We note the additional connections identified and agree that these would be sensible to provide alternatives to the main corridor, on both east and west sides. However a 'bypass' using Altens Farm Road only avoids part of the steep section so does not fully address our safety concerns in relation to this section.

We hope you find these comments useful.

Yours faithfully,

Gavin Clark

Chair, Aberdeen Cycle Forum