01 November 2026

Aberdeen City Council

By email:

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Dear Sandy, Alan

Union St Cycle Lane and Bus Stop Integration

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the site meeting on 28 October along with other ACTUP members, notably DEP but also bus representatives. We hope our comments made at the time will have been noted but we have also taken the opportunity to capture some main points below, and including reference back to the mitigation measures which were agreed prior to construction.

Site Visit Observations and Review of Agreed Mitigation Measures

1. Purpose of the Site Visit

The site visit was undertaken to review the implemented street layout around the bus stop and assess how effectively it addresses the concerns previously raised by the Disability Equity Partnership (DEP), particularly regarding the ability of people with protected characteristics, including disabled and visually impaired people, to safely cross an active cycle lane when accessing bus stops.

We refer to the published summary of the mitigation measures[1] agreed in 2023. The observations below review the implementation of these measures, identify outstanding matters and highlight opportunities for further improvement.

2. Review of Agreed Mitigation Measures

i. Extra-wide crossings to bus stops

Status: Implemented / considered addressed.

ii. Narrowing the cycle lane at critical points

Status: Not implemented.

The proposal to narrow the cycle lane at key locations was intended to encourage cyclists to reduce their speed when approaching bus stops and crossing points.

While this measure has not been implemented, we do not consider it essential at this stage, provided the existing design features and other speed-management measures are effective in encouraging appropriate cycling speeds. On-site, we suggested a centre-line be added to the cycle track through the chicane as a minimum, to deter cyclists from straight-lining through the bend.

iii. Rumble strips on the cycle lane

Status: Implemented in part

The intention of the rumble strips is twofold: firstly to generate an audible warning when a bicycle or other vehicle approaches, helping visually impaired pedestrians identify approaching traffic. Secondly, the rumble-strip would convey a physical signal to the bike rider to alert them to an upcoming hazard and so encourage a reduction in speed. The hinged louvres which have been used certainly satisfy the first of these purposes, but probably not the second. Some additional considerations were raised during the visit:

- The noise generated by the strips may cause disturbance/ nuisance to nearby residents or office-workers, particularly with frequent use.
- The effectiveness of the audible warning may be reduced by surrounding traffic noise, particularly from diesel buses, which may remain in operation for some time.
- The audible signal is the same at both sides of the bus stop and therefore requires someone to be able to distinguish the direction of the noise, which may be difficult for someone with impaired hearing

The performance of this measure should therefore be monitored in practice.

[1] https://www.scottishconstructionnow.com/articles/segregated-cycle-lane-design-for-aberdeens-union-street-agreed

iv. Contrasting colours and surface treatments

Status: Not implemented. Further action recommended.

Contrasting colours and surface treatments were identified as an important measure to improve the legibility of the street environment for both pedestrians and cyclists.

The intention is twofold:

- **For the general public:** To make the cycle lane clearly identifiable, helping pedestrians understand where the cycling route runs and recognise when they are approaching or crossing an active cycle lane.
- **For cyclists:** To distinguish dedicated cycling space from shared-surface areas, allowing them to anticipate changes in the environment and adjust their behaviour accordingly.

Although the surface treatment changes from asphalt to block paving around the crossing points, we strongly recommend introducing more clearly contrasting surface treatments and appropriate markings to delineate the cycle lane and crossing points. Coloured asphalt or other suitable contrasting materials should be used.

v. Chicanes on the cycle lane approaching bus stops

Status: Implemented.

vi. Kerb and pavement detailing to guide pedestrians

Status: Implemented.

vii. Bus island dimensions and waiting areas

Status: Implemented.

viii. Clear and explicit signage

Status: Further provision to be considered if required.

It was previously agreed that additional signage could be introduced if needed, including countdown-style warnings for cyclists approaching bus stops (for example, 3, 2, 1).

During the visit, Aberdeen City Council noted that additional lane markings, such as 'SLOW' and 'BUS STOP', could be a useful and relatively inexpensive way of communicating the changing environment to cyclists. We support exploring this option as a practical, low-cost intervention to be implemented before project handover.

ix. Behaviour change and public information campaign

Status: Awaiting delivery of communication material.

The agreed measures included a commitment to behaviour-change activities and public information in advance of the completed works.

We look forward to receiving the proposed video and supporting communication material for wider dissemination. However, we believe the video should form part of a broader public awareness campaign rather than being treated as a standalone activity.

x. Monitoring, public feedback and future implementation

Status: Monitoring to be undertaken.

An important part of the original agreement was the commitment to observe how the design performs in practice, gather public feedback and make adjustments where necessary before replicating similar design details at other locations.

Aberdeen Cycle Forum will undertake observations of the crossing during peak bus times, focusing on interactions between cyclists and passengers accessing and leaving buses. The findings will help identify any operational or accessibility issues and inform whether adjustments are required.

3. Conclusion and Next Steps

The site visit confirmed that several of the previously agreed mitigation measures have been implemented. However, some opportunities remain to improve the legibility, accessibility and overall operation of the scheme.

In particular, we would highlight three priorities:

1. **Streetscape legibility:** Introduce contrasting colours and surface markings to clearly distinguish the cycle lane from pedestrian and shared-surface areas.
2. **Communication and awareness:** Develop a wider public information campaign, incorporating the proposed video and additional cycle lane markings.
3. **Monitoring and evaluation:** Undertake observations during peak bus times, led by Aberdeen Cycling Forum, and use the findings to inform any necessary adjustments.

I hope you find these comments useful. We are of course willing to engage further and provide whatever help we can in ensuring that this new cycle track is a success.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Clark

Chair, Aberdeen Cycle Forum