



Andy Waddell, Head of Infrastructure Services,
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Ref: GCC/SPT/BL/TF

17 April 2018

Dear Mr Waddell,

Fastlink Core Routes – Cycle Upgrades

Thank you for your e-mail reply of 20 November to our letter of 25 October concerning the works around the Festival Park section of Fastlink. After the Christmas and New Year break, and a change of Convenor within GoBike, we e-mailed Steve Gray to accept the invitation to meet on site to look at the works in question.

The meeting took place on Tuesday 21 March, when Tricia Fort and Brenda Lillicrap joined 2 GCC representatives to tour from the Clyde Arc Bridge to the exit from the southbound Clyde Cycle Tunnel. The major points of our discussion were:

Clyde Arc Bridge

We are concerned that conditions for non-motorised traffic are very poor over this bridge; people cycle across the bridge on the narrow footway, thus mingling with pedestrians, or on the main roadway, which is not wide enough for both cars/vans and cycles and some cycle on the bus/cycle lanes even though the traffic lights do not recognise cycles. There was no acknowledgement from GCC that traffic arrangements over this bridge are less than satisfactory or that improvements could be made.

Govan Road, to the east of Festival Park

There was no acceptance from GCC that providing a grade-separated cycleway on a section of road where cars/vans are prohibited and there is currently no bus service is a good use of public money, particularly when there are other priorities for cycleways in the city.

Lorne Street, leading to Paisley Road West

We are surprised to see that a cycle lane has been painted on Lorne Street, leading to Paisley Road West. We, from GoBike, were disappointed to see, even in our short visit, that motor vehicles use the cycle lane when turning left into Paisley Road West. The view from GCC was somewhat non-committal, but perhaps this cycle lane will come into its own as and when good cycle infrastructure is constructed on the very busy Paisley Road West?

Southbound exit from Clyde Cycle Tunnel

There is no robust cycle route from this exit to the west, eg to the QEU Hospital; we know from our observation on site and from our members who use this route that there at least 4 ways that people commuting through the tunnel to the hospital cross over the road:

1. Lifting/bumping their bike over the central reservation and then continuing westwards.
2. Travelling a short way east on the road and then cutting through to travel west.
3. Going the long, convoluted route over the signalised road crossing.
4. Cycling right round the roundabout.

Given that it is clear from public statistics that roundabouts are hazardous for vulnerable road users and option 3 is very time-consuming and mixes cyclists with pedestrians, it is understandable that many use a more direct route. However, it is this variance that demonstrates clearly the extent to which cyclists are abandoned here!

Once on Govan Road, all these people are then forced out into the path of motor traffic by the existence of 2 parking/loading bays immediately to the west of the bridge.

The GCC reaction to this was again somewhat non-committal, with no solution offered.

We reiterate our concern that there has been little or no consultation over these works, whether required by statute or not.

Overall we were very concerned at the GCC response to our view that public money has been spent where it is least warranted, eg the cycleway and shared footway to the east and south of Festival Park and has not been used where most needed, very obviously to provide a safe, usable exit from the southbound cycle tunnel across the Fastlink route to the hospital and beyond.

Specific comments make us less than confident about the ongoing provision of cycle facilities in the city, eg:

- Shared footways provide good cycle infrastructure, even where its provision is not supported by your design guide, Cycling by Design.
- Rejection of our well-grounded view that neither cyclists nor pedestrians like shared use.
- Shared use by bikes and buses of the complete Fastlink route is a battle that's been lost and is thus now closed.
- A lack of recognition to review the use and performance of infrastructure once installed.

Since our letter of last October we have been disappointed to see that the footway on the south side of the Fastlink lanes outside the new Village Hotel and opposite the BBC etc has been redetermined for dual use by bikes and people on foot. This adds weight to our view of the reluctance to allow the almost empty Fastlink lanes to be opened throughout to bikes and of the willingness to redetermine footways, even when below the standard required, rather than provide good cycling infrastructure. The positive support for active travel that we hear in some quarters of Glasgow City Council appears to have been missing when these works have been developed.

We remain of the view that there are lessons to be learnt from Fastlink and we trust that the Land and Environmental Services department of our City Council will take note of users' experiences of the city's infrastructure and ensure that shortcomings are not repeated and strengths are built on.

Yours sincerely



Tricia Fort
for Consultations, GoBike

and for Co-Convenors, GoBike, Strathclyde Cycle Campaign