

MESSAGE SENT ON BEHALF OF CHRISTINE FRANCIS (via email)
HEAD OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
NEIGHBOURHOODS, REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Dear Go Bike,

Initially, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the submission of your email and for the support of the reallocation of road space for active travel on the above project. I note the points raised in your correspondence as detailed in the extract of your submission below and would like to take the opportunity to respond to each of these in turn.

“The cycle lane design as it is currently presented on Pitt Street is a step backwards from the original Holland Street proposal, and GoBike strongly objects to it on the following grounds:

1. Prohibitively steep gradient (especially at the stretch from Bothwell Street to West George Lane), which would be difficult to cycle up without assistance, and dangerous to cycle down, especially when braking at junctions
2. The cycle lane is too narrow to accommodate the steep gradient
3. Signalling at junctions for joining the wider network, especially turning on to St. Vincent Street and Sauchiehall Street
4. No bollards as originally illustrated, which could lead to parking in the lanes
5. Bi-directional lanes, which are not future-proof for future network
6. Pitt Street-Waterloo Street junction seems over complex compared to other examples in the city”

Firstly I would like to take the opportunity to confirm the reason for the relocation of the cycle lane from Holland Street to Pitt Street and then to respond to each of the detailed bullet points.

The original proposal on Holland Street comprised an isolated length of southbound contraflow cycle lane from south of the junction of West Regent Street to St Vincent Street. Additional funding was sourced during the design process which gave the opportunity to complete a much better North-South cycle connection to existing cycling infrastructure in Sauchiehall St and Waterloo St. A direct North South route would not have been possible via Holland St and therefore Pitt was considered. The development of the cycle lane was subject to significant discussions/consultations between Glasgow City Council and the external Consultant designing the works. From these discussions, a decision was taken to move away from the original contraflow proposal on Holland Street to a two-way segregated cycle track on Pitt Street as shown on the plans issued as part of this consultation. By making this design change, we are increasing the cycling infrastructure within the city and providing improved connection to the wider cycle network at Sauchiehall Street and Waterloo Street, both of which were not part of the original proposals. Due to Pitt Street having multiple sections of one way traffic in different directions, with-flow lanes cycles were considered impractical and therefore a two-way segregated cycle track was selected as the optimum solution for this location.

1. “Prohibitively steep gradient (especially at the stretch from Bothwell Street to West George Lane), which would be difficult to cycle up without assistance, and dangerous to cycle down, especially when braking at junctions.”

It is accepted that due to the constraints of the existing topography, the existing gradient of Pitt Street is steeper than would have been preferred for the construction of the cycle lane. Alternative routes were considered however, assessment showed that the gradients of adjacent streets, including Holland St, are similar to that found in Pitt Street between Bothwell Street to West George Lane. The existing topography cannot be changed and in such circumstances Cycling by Design allows for additional width to be provided to mitigate this. An objective of the proposal was to provide connectivity between two existing lengths of cycling infrastructure, namely Sauchiehall Street cycle lane and Connect 2, and this has been done. The link to Connect 2 enables cyclists to proceed to the City Centre however it should be noted that it is also possible to reach the City Centre via a less steep route by proceeding along Sauchiehall Street and then into Buchanan Street .

2. “The cycle lane is too narrow to accommodate the steep gradient.”

Cycling by Design Table 3.7 sets out lane widths that can be used to mitigate the impact of steep gradients. In accordance with these guidelines the cycle lane width has been maximised as much as possible. Generally a width of 3.5m has been provided from Bothwell Street to West George Lane. This meets the recommendation of Table 3.7 for the Desirable Width of a 2 way cycle lane where cycles are less than 300 per hour. Unfortunately there are some pinch

points where it was not possible to install a width of 3.5m due to existing constraints, and in these instances a 3m wide cycle lane is proposed which provides a width in excess of absolute minimum conditions. This in turn then allows for the provision of sufficient space on the segregation island to locate traffic signals to indicate the separate traffic signal stage for cyclists.

3. "Signalling at junctions for joining the wider network, especially turning on to St. Vincent Street and Sauchiehall Street

In relation to your concerns with the signalling for joining the wider network at St Vincent Street I can confirm that at each of the signal controlled junctions cyclists will be allocated a separate phase within the traffic signal phasing which will provide the safest possible mode of operation for all parties. As part of this scheme, it is the intention to upgrade the traffic signals, allowing for a dedicated cycle phase permitting cyclists to make turns onto St Vincent Street unopposed. With regards to the comment on Sauchiehall Street I confirm that further options are being considered for this junction.

4. "No bollards as originally illustrated, which could lead to parking in the lanes."

The proposals for separation from vehicular traffic under the original proposals comprised a continuous white line and a bollard located on an island at four locations on the carriageway. The amended layout is a segregated cycle lane with a kerbed segregated separation island which will act as a greater deterrent to vehicles accessing the cycle lane than the continuous white line providing a safer environment in which to travel when compared to the original proposal. With regards to the installation of bollards on the kerbed island an assessment will be undertaken to determine if this is possible given the fixed dimensions from wall to wall and the requirements to achieve a balanced solution for all users.

5. "Bi-directional lanes, which are not future-proof for future network

As noted above it is proposed that all signal controlled junctions will allocate a separate stage in the traffic signal phasing therefore providing the means to undertake all manoeuvres from the bi-directional cycle lanes.

6. "Pitt Street-Waterloo Street junction seems over complex compared to other examples in the city."

I note your comments in relation to the junction of Waterloo Street and confirm that the preferred option was the product of significant discussions/consultations with various parties, including the Sustainable Transport team, resulting in a number of options being produced and discounted. The objective of the optioneering was to ensure that all road users were considered, to ensure a safe, fair and well balanced solution will be provided while taking account of the existing physical constraints. The proposed layout was adopted because it was considered that it provided the best solution for all potential users.

I can confirm that a "build out" at the crossing location was considered which would have resulted in a reduction in the number of traffic lanes from two to one the consequence of which would have been a requirement for buses to merge with general traffic in advance of the crossing. Previously the merge occurred after the pedestrian crossing and on the motorway on-ramp where there are no pedestrians or cyclists present. The requirement to complete the merge in advance of the crossing would have introduced risk of injury to pedestrians/cyclists where previously this risk did not exist. In addition to the above safety concern, a review of accident data for this location was undertaken which confirms no known accidents have occurred within the last 5 years.

The option of relocating the bus stop to the east of the Douglas Street junction was also investigated however the width of the footway, remote from the existing traffic signals, was considered insufficient to relocate the shelter while maintaining pedestrian flow. As a consequence of the potential issues resulting from merging traffic and insufficient space to relocate the bus stop the proposals provided as part of the Stage 1 consultation process were considered the optimum solution.

I trust this answers your query, should you require any further information or clarification on any points arising from the proposals, do not hesitate to contact using SustainableTransport@glasgow.gov.uk

Christine Francis
Head of Technical Services