

18.12.15

## **A8 Cycle Route Upgrade - Proposals**

These are Spokes' comments on the proposed improvements<sup>1</sup> to the cycle path beside the A8 between South Gyle and Newbridge.

We welcome the plans to improve the route, as it is an important one linking Edinburgh to the west, for long-distance journeys as well as local ones. It is good that the path beside the A8 is to be re-surfaced, as the surface is quite bad in parts. However, some parts of the proposed design are well below the standard that would be expected in a main cycle route such as this, and it lacks links to some important destinations, particularly the Gyle Centre and Edinburgh Park. Without proper links, the route will be much less attractive and useful than it could be.

Some realistic modifications can make the route much more useful and easy to use.

### **1 Proposed Changes to the Route**

#### **1.1 The Gyle Park**

Instead of taking the route along the south and west sides of The Gyle Park, which is prone to flooding, we propose that it uses an existing path along the east side of the park.

#### **1.2 Gyle Park to Gogar Roundabout**

Instead of using the convoluted route via North Gyle Terrace, we propose that it be taken along the south pavement of the A8 between Gyle Park and the railway bridge, through the underpass now being constructed between South Gyle and the new Gateway Station, and then up a ramp to the path along the north side of the A8. This avoids crossing any main roads, and provides a link with the Gyle Centre, which is at present inaccessible by bicycle from the north and west.

[Good cycle links are also needed through the Gyle Centre car parks to reach the Centre itself, and also from it to South Gyle and to Edinburgh Park and its station.]

#### **1.3 Airport Junction to Ratho Station**

Instead of using the north pavement of the A8, the route would be better on the south pavement, which already has shared-path signs. That would avoid the complicated route through the airport junction (certainly not suitable for a nervous 12-year-old) and several entrances to the Ingliston Showground which will be busy during events there.

The cycle route through the Airport Junction will still be needed for access to Ingliston and the Airport. Better signage will be needed here.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20087/cycling\\_and\\_walking/1391/a8\\_route](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20087/cycling_and_walking/1391/a8_route)

## **2. Other points**

### **2.1 Crossing of A8 at Dechmont Road**

This crossing will still be needed to link with Craigmount and East Craigs. Ideally it should be made so that pedestrians and cyclists can cross the whole road in one light phase; if it has to remain divided, the layout of the guard rails should be changed so that cyclists do not have to dismount to reach the press-buttons.

### **2.2 Side Road Junctions**

The layout of the junctions at Lochend Road, Gogarstone Road and the entrance to the tram depot tempt motor vehicles to turn into and out of the side roads at speed, and also make sight lines poor, particularly at Gogarstone Road. At all these junctions the radii of the kerb should be tightened a lot: that would slow down turning traffic and provide much better sight lines for both motorists and path users.

At other side entrances, cyclists should not have to give way to turning motor traffic. Instead, the pavement should be continued across the junction.

Good sight lines are essential, particularly to the left of emerging traffic which will not expect cyclists to approach from that side (eastbound on the south path or westbound on the north one).

There is a particularly blind entrance to Norton Mains Farm whose sight lines could be cured easily by shortening a fence and moving some signage.

### **2.3 Ratho Station Footbridge**

This provides the link between the path and the village of Ratho Station, It has stepped ramps, no use for anybody, particularly wheelchairs. The short-term solution of wheeling ramps will be better than what is there now, but in the long term the link should be made suitable for all users.

There is a rather narrow pavement outside houses to the east of the footbridge. It ought to be wider to make shared use easier. (The pavement outside some houses on the north side is even narrower.)

### **2.4 Bus Stops**

We welcome the re-location of the bus shelter east of Lochend Road on the north path to make room for a cycle path behind it. This layout should also be applied to other bus stops on the route.

Alec Mann

for Spokes Planning Group