

*If replying by email, please use...* [davedufeu@gmail.com](mailto:davedufeu@gmail.com)

*Emailed to:* [scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:scottish.ministers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)  
*Attention:* Derek Mackay, Minister for Transport and the Islands  
*cc:* [Karen.Furey@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.Furey@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk)

22 April 2015

Dear Mr Mackay

## **Small standalone cycling schemes involving trunk roads**

You will remember that immediately after the Cycling Interest group on March 25 in Glasgow I raised the above with you, and you asked me to write with further details which you could look into.

Transport Scotland is happy to consider cycling provision in new and upgrade trunk road schemes – we may not always agree with the implementation, but the principle is clearly there and is welcome.

However, there are cases where no trunk road upgrade is planned but where a **local cycling scheme** involving the trunk road could be very valuable to **improve local connectivity** (for example, to cross the trunk road and link other routes/destinations) and/or to enable cyclists to **avoid the trunk road** (clearly hugely valuable given that a significant proportion of Scottish cycling fatalities are on rural A roads).

It is our understanding that Transport Scotland is currently unwilling to support such schemes (except, as above, where they are tied in to a planned trunk road upgrade). Yet these are the sort of schemes which the local authority itself might well undertake to improve local cycle use and safety if it were not that the roads are controlled by a Government agency rather than the Council. Furthermore, it seems odd that the government's priority ordering of 'pedestrian/cyclist/public-transport/car' appears not to apply in this case.

Funding for such schemes would be a mere pinprick in the government's trunk roads budget, and in any case should form part of Transport Scotland's longstanding Trunk Roads Cycling Initiative.

Second, you asked for some specific examples of such schemes, including where they had been refused by Transport Scotland.

We had become aware of the problem as a result of our annual financial survey of local authority cycling investment, where feedback from Dumfries and Galloway in particular had suggested that standalone cycling projects involving trunk roads were being turned down by Transport Scotland.

The Council has now sent me several examples, as overleaf and attached, illustrating both the possibilities of improving local connectivity and of enabling cyclists to avoid sections of the A701 and A75 trunk roads – often relatively cheap projects entailing minor improvements and signage. We do of course appreciate that NCN7 and NCN73 already offer alternatives to the A75 for much of its length, but they are hillier and considerably less direct, and so will not attract all existing or potential cyclists, particularly for some local trips. Indeed (in discussion with Sustrans) there could potentially be some rerouting were projects overleaf to go ahead.

Please note that Spokes is not familiar with the local circumstances, which are outside our own area, but doubtless schemes would be consulted locally if they were to go ahead. We do trust, however, that they illustrate our general point - the difference that could be made to local cycling usage, convenience and safety if Transport Scotland were to support such local pedestrian/cycle schemes involving trunk roads.

The first two proposals below had been submitted by the Council to Transport Scotland but rejected, and I suspect the Council then lost the incentive to spend time detailing and submitting further requests.

#### **1. A701(T) at Dumfries – A75(T) to Tinwald Downs Road** [Drawing TM/D/03/547]

Relatively minor works (e.g. signage, small areas of widening and some side-road crossings) on the A701 trunk road within Dumfries 30mph limit to enable cyclists to use the existing wide footway on the east side – to join the cycleway on A701 on south side of A75 roundabout to the cycle facilities at Tinwald Downs Road roundabout. *This scheme would improve local connectivity, linking existing facilities, and would also enable cyclists to keep off the trunk road.*

#### **2. A75(T) between Creetown and Carsluith** [Drawing TM/W/03/276]

A jug handle (or other appropriate facility) at the east end of Carsluith to allow westbound cyclists to cross the A75 and join the former A75 through Carsluith. That then connects to a continuous cycletrack to Creetown and to NCN7 beyond Creetown. Signage would also be needed (costing perhaps just a few £1000s) at several points to advise cyclists of the existence of this alternative to the A75. *This scheme would primarily enable cyclists to keep off the trunk road, but would also provide some connectivity.*

#### **3. A75(T) The Glen – west of Dumfries** [Drawing TM/D/03/546]

Signage to direct cyclists eastbound off A75 at Lochfoot roundabout (west end of Glen scheme) and use local roads to get to Garroch Loaning (avoiding over 4km of trunk road) and vice versa. [A re-routing of NCN7 away from the Old Military Road and to the above route, also passing the new hospital, could be considered along with Sustrans at the same time]. *The scheme would primarily enable cyclists to keep off the trunk road, but would also connect to the new hospital and to existing cyclist routes at Dumfries end.*

#### **4. Costlier schemes**

The Council would also like to consider various costlier schemes, but again these involve trunk roads and so are not worth putting effort into unless Transport Scotland is willing to consider trunk road projects which are solely for pedestrian/cycle benefit, and not just a side-effect of enhanced motoring provision. Such projects include linking Stranraer to the communities of Castle Kennedy, Dunragit and Glenluce, as well as to Cairnryan ferry port.

We look forward to hearing from you, and we stress that we would appreciate a full response to the general issue overleaf as well as some comment on the specifics above.

Additionally we would appreciate an update on the current status, purpose and funding of the Trunk Roads Cycling Initiative, given that it is many years since this was last clarified.

Yours Sincerely

Dave du Feu  
Spokes

*Attached:* three drawings as specified in 1-3 above.