

Sheriffhall Junction Upgrade – Spokes response

<http://www.transport.gov.scot/project/a720-sheriffhall-roundabout>

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subject: Sheriffhall Junction upgrade

These are Spokes' comments on the options to upgrade the Sheriffhall roundabout, shown in the recent exhibition.

General points

The Edinburgh City Bypass is a barrier to cycling between Edinburgh and Dalkeith, with no way of crossing it except at the busy Gilmerton and Sheriffhall junctions. When the Shawfair development is built, there are likely to be commuters travelling there from Dalkeith or Eskbank, an ideal distance for travel by bicycle. For both reasons, good cycle facilities are essential at the crossing of the bypass.

We are disappointed to see that not much has been included to make travel easy for cyclists wanting to cross the bypass.

The options

Option B sends cyclists on a long deviation through an underpass and crossing the slip roads where they enter the roundabouts, the worst possible place for crossings. Option A has too many level road crossings; some journeys will require a cyclist to cross five roads. Neither option will be pleasant to cycle through at busy times.

Option C is better. This keeps cyclists well away from the main roads and junctions while still keeping direct routes. The one level road crossing, over the Millerhill road, is well placed. However, the plan shows a very narrow foot and cycle bridge over the bypass with sharp 180-degree bends on the approach, totally unacceptable in a project of this scale; the bridge should be of a safe and comfortable width and with more direct and less convoluted approaches. The plans also do not show how cyclists are expected to join or leave the main roads (some of which have cycle lanes) at the ends of the new cycle paths, especially where they have to cross the road to do so; a safe transition will be required between road and path.

Gilmerton Junction

The original plans for Option C included the removal of the slip roads at the Gilmerton junction. The latest plans keep the slip roads as they are. We would like to see its slip roads removed so that Gilmerton Road crosses the bypass by a simple bridge rather than a major road junction. This is particularly important if Option A or B is chosen, but it would complement Option C as well.

Even if the slips at Gilmerton junction are removed, good cycle facilities are still needed at Sheriffhall to cater for cyclists going between Dalkeith and Shawfair, for whom Gilmerton Road is not an option.

Conclusion

We would support Option C, but including the removal of the slip roads at Gilmerton Junction, a wider and more easily-approached cycle bridge over the bypass, and good links where the cycle paths join the main roads.