

SPOKES *The Lothian Cycle Campaign*

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Spokes Response to the *Spaces for People* Consultation – Orchard Brae Roundabout July 2020

Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign, is pleased to welcome the proposed improvements to the Orchard Brae roundabout. These are a logical complement to the recent improvements in Crewe Road South.

This is a key junction for active travel:

- to the Western General Hospital,
- it is immediately adjacent to the Flora Stevenson Primary School and sits exactly in the middle of its [catchment area](#),
- being close to Broughton High School and again central to the [catchment area](#).
- it is a gateway to the neighbourhood shopping in Comely Bank and Stockbridge.
- it lies on a number of longer distance cross-town cycling routes.

Therefore, a valid test of the effectiveness of these proposals is whether they make it safer for;

- children to walk and cycle to both schools
- staff and patients to walk and cycle to the Western General Hospital
- residents to walk and cycle to local shopping and generally

We have the following comments and recommendations.

1. It is very good that the design aims to reduce traffic speeds by tightening the corner radii and narrowing the lanes. Hopefully, this being done with physical measures, rather than painting alone will have some success.

However, we would like to see the Council move towards replacing roundabouts such as this with much more pedestrian and cycle friendly junction designs, such as the *Cyclops* design being introduced in Manchester.



2 . The proposals should be integrated with the interventions already existing on Crewe Road South, with continuous cycling protection all the way to, or past, the roundabout; perhaps using part of very wide pavement spaces at the Crewe Road South junction

3. We recommend the closure of the Orchard Road exit to simplify the roundabout to being 4-way. One of the reasons why this roundabout is problematic for pedestrians and cyclists is because of the uncertainty of driver route intention caused by there being 5 legs. With the common lack of *Highway Code* standard use of indicators, it is hard to determine drivers route intentions. This would also make pedestrian access to the Orchard Brae Pelican Crossing safer from the west.

Orchard Road is entirely residential and would remain accessible via multiple other routes. A secondary benefit is to close a rat-run, as this street is used as a short-cut to the Queensferry Road. If it was also closed at its junction with Queensferry Road, an entire residential complex would be freed of through traffic, thereby encouraging more walking and cycling to school and to the local shops in Comely Bank and Blackhall.

4. A ban on parking and loading on the actual roundabout is required. Car parking is currently permitted on the roundabout at newsagents on the western side, but is a serious hazard to cycling. With the new alignment, and the narrowness of the hatching outside the shops, there will no longer be sufficient space for parking, so a full ban on parking and unloading will be required. Loading bays could be created very close-by in Craighleith Road.

5. Interventions are also required at the north end of Crewe Road South to make the Crewe Toll roundabout much safer for cycling. We appreciate how busy you are, but hope that these are in the pipeline.

6. Every opportunity should be taken to introduce additional cycle parking facilities.

7. While we agree with Council's policy to remove guardrail, it's important to be aware that some guardrail is used as cycle parking where facilities don't exist or are at capacity. Please ensure that alternative cycle parking is considered for locations where guardrail is removed. This not only supports access for cyclists, but also improves conditions for pedestrians, by avoiding bikes being left in awkward positions on the footway.

Ewan Jeffrey, for Spokes Planning Group
12 July 2020