

Covid 19 – Walking and Cycling Emergency Response Measures: Proposed Measures at Corstorphine Primary Schools

Response from Spokes – the Lothian Cycle Campaign, August 2020

General comments

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Council's proposals for creating safe spaces as pupils arrive and leave the school. We see these as an initial step of a broader suite of measures needed to make the journey from home to school feel a much safer one for pupils and parents.

The School has an existing Travel Action Group and they have organised a bike bus helping about 20 to 30 pupils travel to school by bike regularly.

Response to Specific Proposals

Close Featherhall Road at the junction with Featherhall Terrace – We agree that such a measure will help the safety of pupils travelling to or from school. Whilst we do not think the route attracts much cycling traffic we assume that cyclists, whether pupils or those travelling through, would be exempt from the road closure restriction.

Close Manse Street at the junction of Manse Road allowing access for residents and emergency services – Again, we have no objection but are of the view that cyclists, both pupils and through cyclists, should be exempted from the proposed restrictions. The proposed road closures will directly enhance the perceived safety of the roads to the north of the school and will help encourage active travel.

Removal of guard rail at the entrance to school on Manse Street – we assume the guardrail is present to prevent the possibility of distracted pupils running out the school gate into the road and being struck by a vehicle. Although the chance of traffic being present will be lower with the proposals implemented, we do not think this risk of conflict will be eliminated. If the barrier is too close to the gate to allow social distancing as a rush of pupils leave the school at the same time, we wonder if the barrier needs to be moved a couple of metres back from the school gate making a wider pavement at that point and reducing the road width to a single running lane with priority being determined for one direction or another.

Widening of pavement and narrowing of roadway outside the School on High Street -

We can understand the desirability of widening the pavement to enable social distancing there at busy picking up and dropping off times. However, we are concerned that not enough thought has gone into dealing with the narrowed carriageway. As proposed, the westbound lane will be unchanged whereas the eastbound one will become too narrow for all traffic other than bicycles and motorcycles. The remaining roadwidth would probably be enough for two carefully and slowly driven cars to pass but a bus or other HGV travelling in either direction would likely mean other traffic would need to wait for the large vehicle to clear the narrowed section.

More specifically relating to cycling, we see a danger that motorists may mistake the coned-off part of the road, as a segregated cycle lane rather than an extension of the pavement. The consequence would be that such motorists would not expect cyclists, to move out into the road as it narrows outside the school

We think consideration should be given to

1. reducing the speed limit to 10 MPH at this section;
2. moving the central road line through the narrowed section and using markings at the side of the road to show a gradual narrowing as you approach from the west to emphasise that all traffic needs to move out;

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