



# CYCLE FORUM

## MINUTE

Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> July 2004, Committee Room 5, Town House.

### Present:

Derek Williams, CTC (Chair)  
 Dave Lindsey, CTC, Right to Ride Officer  
 Gavin Clark  
 Gerard Vlaar, CTC  
 Maureen Young, CTC  
 Kris Howard, CTC  
 Sarah Wingrove, Shell  
 Ian Inglis  
 Louise Napier, Aberdeen City Council  
 Warren Murphy, Aberdeen City Council  
 Sonia Element, BP  
 Dave Tulett, Marine Lab  
 Mark O'Connor, BP

### Apologies:

Jackie Wilkins, CTC  
 Jeremy Rushton, Friends of the Earth  
 Saville Gunn, Aberdeen Wheelers  
 Andrew Harrington, CTC

Item	Action By
<p><b>1. Welcome</b></p> <p>DW welcomed everybody to the meeting. Members introduced themselves. Apologies from JW, JR, SG and AH.</p>	
<p><b>2. Minute of Last Meeting (29/06/04) and Matters Arising</b></p> <p><i>Distribution of map</i></p> <p>The map was sent out to all Councillors. DW had two responses – one from Cllr Stephen in Newhills, and one from Cllr Shirron, Springhill. DW had also received three emails on the map, all generally supportive. There was also a request to extend the boundary so that the map includes Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>The new bike shop on Market Street, 20 Twenty had not been given any maps. Maps also to go to Summerhill Education Centre. 100 to go to BP and Shell. 40 to the Marine Lab and 20 to Communities Scotland. MY to take maps to Great Stonehaven Bike Ride.</p> <p><i>Cycle Parking</i></p> <p>WM mentioned cycle parking. He explained that the new Local Plan was due to be published on 19<sup>th</sup> August. This document will contain policies relating to development. There is also a section on transport with supplementary guidance which includes information on cycle parking. The requirements for cycle parking are based on Cycling By Design. It was thought that ACF should do an audit of cycle parking facilities. DT to lead. LN to send copy of current facilities to DT. It was thought that the design of stands could also be looked at. DW commented that the City Centre Partnership were keen on putting money towards cycle parking but would need guidance as where it should go.</p> <p><i>Guild Street</i></p> <p>LN advised that planning permission had already been granted 3 years ago and if cycling facilities were not adequate then the Council could no longer influence the developers. The</p>	<p>LN MY</p> <p>DT LN</p>

<p>Cycle Forum would have to contact the developers and ask for concessions and they might then adopt different facilities. GV to organise a meeting with Harry Campbell from the City Council. DT, DW and II to have a look at the plans as well.</p>	GV
<p><b>3. Response to Union Street Project</b></p> <p>DT, DW and MY to meet to draft a response which will be forwarded to the rest of the Forum for comment. It will question the policy regarding extra road capacity as well as why the proposals are inherently unfriendly towards cyclists (e.g. four lane gyratory's). DW also thought that there were real issues for communities south of the river such as Kincorth and Torry if these measures went ahead. See Apendix A.</p>	
<p><b>4. NESTRANS money</b></p> <p>LN explained that approximately £50,000 was available. The response to the Scottish Executive had been delayed due to summer holidays. But it was still quickly implemented schemes that needed to be forwarded to LN. It was suggested that the previous list was put forward with the addition of lanes alongside pedestrian refuge islands at Bedford and Holburn / Union Street junction. Any individual suggestions for advanced stop lines and cycle racks to go to LN. DW thought that the suggestions would need to be put forward as a project. 'Cycle Security and Safety Project' suggested and agreed.</p>	All
<p><b>5. Existing Cycling Facilities: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly</b></p> <p>DW feared that the Cycle Forum was becoming a consultation body and that it could become only reactive and not proactive. It was though that ACF would need a benchmark for future developments and we should be building up a bank of measures. The Cycle Map should be annotated showing problem areas. Any suggestions to go to JR. See Cycle Parking.</p>	All
<p><b>6. Access from the North Proposals</b></p> <p>JR and SE to report back at next ACF meeting.</p>	
<p><b>7. Any Other Business</b></p> <p>GV commented on a problem with getting a pothole filled. It was thought that if there were areas where the Council was ignoring specific comments then ACF could take it up with the Council - but cases should be dealt with by the individual that had noticed them. Traffic Management Schemes – Strachans Lane. MoC to draft response and circulate (see Appendix B)</p>	MoC
<p><b>8. Next meeting</b></p> <p>Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> August, Committee Room 5, Town House 7.30pm.</p>	

**Appendix A:**



**ABERDEEN CYCLE FORUM**  
**RESPONSE TO UNION STREET PROJECT CONSULTATION**

**1. General comments**

The Aberdeen Cycle Forum believes that a better cycling environment in the centre of the city will result from a combination of traffic restraint and improved cycling facilities. Increased levels of cycling, in turn, will make a positive contribution to improved air quality and tackling congestion, as well as helping with wider public policy targets on public health. Cycling as a mode of transport should be integral to any transport planning, most especially within the city.

It is extremely disappointing, therefore, that cycling does not merit a single mention in the consultation proposals. Indeed, there is no evidence that the impact on cycling has been considered at any stage in the thinking behind the proposals.

The pedestrianisation of a section of Union Street is a golden opportunity to plan for reduced traffic levels in the city centre. With a lead-in of several years, planning to enhance the cycling and walking environment, to improve public transport, and to change the expectations of car drivers regarding access to the core of the city centre could all be undertaken. Instead, the proposals centre on a significant increase in road capacity, much of which is inherently cycle-unfriendly and which, in turn, will only serve to generate more traffic. The Forum's overall view is that this is out of date transport planning that does not meet the modern concern to promote more active and sustainable modes of travel.

Whilst the Forum is generally supportive of the specific proposal to pedestrianise a section of Union Street, and accepts that some traffic management and local road improvement may well be needed in the light of this proposal and the advent of Union Square, we believe the generality of the road building proposals are misconceived. We believe that these proposals threaten a reduction in cycling amenity in the city when the urgent need is to improve the cycling environment.

**2. Specific comments**

*2.1 Pedestrianisation of part of Union Street*

Union Street currently is a popular linear route for cyclists, especially commuting cyclists. Cycling and walking as active modes of transport need to be encouraged if air quality improvement targets are to be achieved and for there to be a less polluted city core. We believe that there is no need for the pedestrianisation proposal to result in a loss of amenity to cyclists and that cycle access through the pedestrianised area should be ensured. There are plenty of models for this elsewhere in the UK and on the continent. Indeed, Union Street is excellently placed to accommodate both, given its greater width than a typical high street. Key to this is good design which will minimise any potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. We would therefore urge the city council to commit itself in principle, and at the earliest stage, to cycle access through the pedestrianised area.

We support any associated bus priority measures on the understanding that these will be 'Bus and Cycle and Taxi Only' sections. We are disappointed that cycles have been omitted from the proposals for such measures, given the long-standing experience of combined bus and cycle lanes in the city. We trust that cycle access to these sections will be confirmed in future documentation.

We believe that the rest of Union Street should not be ignored in the quest for improving the city centre environment. The non-pedestrianised sections of Union Street should be subject to an enforced 20mph speed limit and this should be considered as integral to the proposals. This will benefit both cyclists and pedestrians/shoppers.

*2.2 The road infrastructure and traffic management proposals*

The Cycle Forum is sceptical about the case being made for significant increases in road capacity. There is plenty of evidence that transport modelling overestimates the likely congestion levels (see enclosed paper). Such models have no capacity to take account of behaviour change on the part of drivers who find, as a consequence of the traffic restriction that pedestrianisation represents, that taking the car is marginally less attractive now than it was before. They also do not model outcomes on the basis of active policy choices to restrain traffic demand and promote sustainable transport modes. They offer a seemingly deterministic view of the future when in actuality there are key choices to be made.

In particular, the Cycle Forum is very concerned about the proposed road infrastructure projects - the new urban dual carriageways in the Berryden corridor and in the College Street corridor, and the proposed gyratory at the southern end of South College Street. These road schemes are inherently cycle *unfriendly*. They represent unattractive, and potentially dangerous, cycling environments. As such, the Cycle Forum believes they represent a significant backward step in cycling amenity.

Likewise, we are also concerned at the proposals for a new roundabout, or gyratory, at the Westburn Road/Hutcheon Street junction. Such junction arrangements are acknowledged as posing greater risks to cyclists and we are therefore concerned that such measures are being considered. A roundabout/gyratory at this junction, coupled with an even busier roundabout at Skene Square would pose a significant barrier to safe cycle travel along an east-west axis north of the city centre.

An emerging concern is the impact of these proposals on access between Torry and the city centre. The cycling and walking environment is already poor. The gyratory proposal at the end of South College Street, together with increased traffic volumes on Market Street, will make the active travel options even worse. Given the relative proximity of Torry to the employment and amenities in the city centre, it is our view that developing attractive cycling and walking links should be a key priority. The current proposals should have this as a key aim.

The Cycle Forum accepts that there will need to be junction improvements and traffic management schemes at various points in the road network, as a consequence of the pedestrianisation scheme and the Union Square development. These should offer an opportunity to improve the cycling environment and we hope such opportunities are taken. For example, existing roundabouts could be replaced with traffic light systems and traffic management reviews should include a consideration of cycle lanes and other cycle measures. Indeed, there are many options for creating cycle-friendly junctions that meet the requirements of increased traffic flows and meet the needs of cyclists as well. We would stress that any proposed measures will require full consultation with cyclists, via the Cycle Forum.

August 2004

**Appendix B:**



Mr G McKenzie  
Aberdeen City Council  
Environment & Infrastructure Services  
St Nicholas House  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1EZ

11<sup>th</sup> August 2004

Your Ref: HM/EK/GM/TM/1/59/1-PA/E&I-SEPA04

Dear Mr McKenzie,

### **STRACHANS LANE – Proposed Prohibition of Driving**

Thank you for your letter of 23 July seeking the views of Aberdeen Cycle Forum on the above. The Forum discussed the matter at its meeting on the 27 July. We would like now to respond as follows:

1. We would welcome the resurfacing of the lane, and the introduction of bollards at each end to prohibit vehicle entry.
2. We would like to see that the lane is accessible to cyclists as well. This will require dropped kerbs and signage at the entrance and exit points of the lane.
3. We would recommend that the short section of Hardgate one way system have a contraflow for cyclists on the eastern side, to enable access to Fonthill Road. This will provide an alternative route connecting Fonthill and Holburn avoiding the busy roundabout.
4. As part of the implementation of the contraflow we would recommend that the entrance of the Hardgate be narrowed at both sides to slow traffic entering the Hardgate. This would require a refuge island and bollard at the western side with cycle lane access between the bollard and the pavement. And a refuge island and bollard on the eastern side in line with Cycling By Design guidelines for a contraflow. These facilities will also provide safer pedestrian access across the Hardgate.
5. We do not wish to make comments on the other small scale traffic management schemes detailed in your letter.

Yours faithfully,

On behalf of the Aberdeen Cycle Forum