



Aberdeen Cycle Forum response to the proposed Local Development Plan 2015

The members of the Aberdeen Cycle Forum are not solely concerned with cycling measures in the city of Aberdeen, but with the vitality and sustainability of the city in general. However, cycling and cycle infrastructure, particularly in the city centre, are the main areas of interest.

In general, the Forum is encouraged by the Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP represents, in many areas, best practice for the city. We hope to see this plan followed as the city expands and diversifies. Yet, we are only cautiously optimistic as previous plans/masterplans for various areas and for the city as a whole had language that was to foster best practice, but failed to deliver. This failure to deliver has led to the implementation of sub-par, useless, or actively dangerous infrastructure for cycling.

We are pleased to see that the LDP has taken into consideration the aspirations and designs of the plans/masterplans that came before it, but hope that those involved with turning the Plan into action will also be keenly cognisant of the problems involved as well. It is particularly confusing and disheartening to see plans made with great ambitions for sustainable transport that are almost immediately sacrificed in order to continue to allow a high percentage of single occupancy car transport.

Particular points in regard to the LDP 2015:

1. Section 3.42 – transport infrastructure for new developments will be facilitated 'including new and improved walking and cycling facilities'. This must be done as equal priority to car transport if a modal shift is desired. The new/improved facilities for walking and cycling must not be designed in such a way as to make trips piecemeal or indirect. Planners/transport engineers should consult with national and local groups to ensure that the planned infrastructure is suitable for those who will actually be using the facilities.
2. Policy T2 – 'new developments must...maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel'. Particularly if third parties to the council are being used to design such opportunities, groups experienced in using and designing facilities should be consulted before the process is taken forward to ground-breaking.
3. Policy T3 – 'new developments must be accessible...with an emphasis on active and sustainable transport'. We are not unaware that car travel must happen. But, we would like to see the emphasis mentioned in T3 in all developments going forward.
4. Policy T4 and Policy T5 – Both air quality and noise are unaffected by increased cycle modal share and would go towards lowering the air and noise pollution, particularly in the city centre.

Finally, we are aware that a thriving city cannot go without motorised transport, particularly one that is involved with so many multi-national companies and organisations. However, there are opportunities for active travel that past plans have neglected to capitalise on. We hope that the proposed LDP will deliver on its promises.