

Consultation Report

North Road Cycle Route Upgrade Phase 2

A consultation was held on the above scheme proposals from 5th August 2019 to 30th August 2019. The purpose of the consultation was to obtain information from the local community in order to improve the scheme and if possible address any local concerns.

Notification of the consultation was sent to properties within the vicinity of the route, statutory consultees and cycling stakeholders. Site notices were displayed on site and information about the consultation was publicised on the Council's social media accounts.

18 individual responses were received to the consultation.

Following the completion of this consultation, the following amendment to the scheme design has been made:

- The intersection of the North Road Cycle Route and the Taff Trail has been amended to create a square area in order to reduce speeds on approach to the intersection

The concerns and comments received are summarised as below, along with the Council's response in *Italic*.

Comments in support

"I'd just like to add some comments of support for the North Road Cycle Route Upgrade Phase 2. The cycle way looks like a perfect design and it's brilliant to see the city finally putting some serious investment & development into sustainable transport."

"Having looked at the [online plans](#) for the new cycleway, I wanted to register my **strong support** for the scheme, which looks excellent and much-needed"

"I use this route to cycle to work most days and would definitely welcome the improvements outlined in the consultation docs. I also like that you are keeping/rebuilding the old wall, it's nice to cycle along."

"I am a daily user of this stretch of the path at the moment, and I'm really pleased to see these plans for its upgrade. Overall the plans look excellent, and I just have a handful of comments"

"I am supportive of your proposals and increased cycle use."

"I am delighted to see this project come forward for this key piece of Cardiff's cycle network infrastructure."

"The active travel proposals for the North Road Cycle route phase 2 are on the whole great."

"I am fully in support of the plans to improve the route in question."

"The extending of the North Road Cycleway is very much welcomed and installing the separate footpath alongside is a good solution."

“The plans in general are very good- and these will make a huge, positive change for cycling in this location, and starting to link up cycle routes between the very broken infrastructure in Cardiff.”

“The plans in general are very good, and will make a huge, positive change for cycling in this location. It's great that the new proposed cycleways in Cardiff will link up several cycle routes, making the cycling infrastructure less disjointed. Diolch yn fawr!”

Ponding / Flooding

“There is a problem with flooding on the existing path, in the area alongside Talybont Court where a huge puddle appears after even the slightest shower, blocking the entire path (see attached). Whilst I'm sure your engineers are aware of the problem, the plans make no specific mention of it. It'd be a shame if the upgraded cycle path were to be rendered impassable by this problem not being addressed!”

“I note from the cross-section drawing that the cycleway will have a small gradient down towards the wall. Presumably this is for drainage? I'm not sure what drainage is available through the wall itself, but this path currently often gets flooded, which suggests that it doesn't drain very well by the wall. Please could we have regular drainage channels incorporated somehow into the wall, or some other arrangement put in place to minimise flooding? Or could we maybe have the gradient in the other direction and have the cycle way raised, so that water drains over the footway and into the woodland? Or if the footway needs to be raised, how about having that against the wall and the cycle way on the woodland side so that it can drain that way? At the moment, when the bike side of the path is flooded, it's sometimes possible to cycle around the big puddles by moving into the pedestrian side of the path. If the footway will be raised, this won't be possible, so proper drainage will be essential.”

“Really good drainage is required because the path has a tendency to flood at present (as the newly constructed north road cycle path floods near the ambulance station does too). The junction between the two halves of this path and the Taff Trail at the end of Llys Talybont Road has a significant stream flowing across it in very wet weather.”

“The southern section is also prone to flooding in parts_ lessons should be large Ed for the upgrade.”

“DRAINAGE ... there are drainage difficulties in the section between lamp-post numbers 9 and 10 where water collects and floods the full width of the pathway. There is no drainage gully at this location and because of the fall of the pathway, the water won't drain to the next gully.”

“The current new North road cycle path (from the college of music/drama to the start of this new path) have very poor drainage. Whilst this current path has a slight incline to encourage water to move away from the car park- there is not enough drainage for this to leave the cycle path. Therefore- this currently floods. Can we please ensure this does not happen on this new path?”

“The current new North road cycle path (from the college of music/drama to the start of this new path) has very poor drainage. Whilst this current path has a slight incline to encourage water to move away from the car park, there is not enough drainage for this to leave the cycle path. Therefore this currently floods. Can this be rectified on this new path?”

Council Response

The cycle track will be constructed with a crossfall, which will address the existing areas of ponding on the route.

The existing surface will be replaced with a porous asphalt surface, increasing the permeable area through the corridor and reducing the likelihood of ponding.

Sweeping / Maintenance

“In a similar vein, at the moment, debris such as fallen leaves, soil and litter accumulates alongside the wall, and this encourages plant growth. In many places, about a quarter to a third of the cycle path is obstructed by such debris. Presumably sweeping vehicles are not able to get too close to the wall, so this debris is left to continue accumulating. Again, if we could have the cycle way gradient slope the other way, and have the path drain over towards the woodland, this should help clear such debris, as it would be washed away from the wall by the rain. Alternatively, please could we have a commitment for regular manual sweeping, to ensure this edge is kept clear.”

“Although it may not be part of the physical design it would be really useful to release information about how this sort of facility will be cleaned and maintained. Part of the issue with the existing route from the ambulance station is that because the route goes through woodland there is a lot of leaf litter that gathers against the wall creating a wet and muddy strip. This effectively narrows the space for everyone to use and causes conflict between all user types, people shouldn't be expected to commute by bike or foot through mud. This problem becomes even more acute in the autumn and winter when wetter weather and higher leaf fall narrow the path to a single file track.

This could be helped by removing the wall entirely allowing for animals to commute through the area and leaf litter to move around more freely and perhaps not gather at the bottom of the wall. The wall could be replaced with a fence that has gaps below. Drainage could be considered along the route to at least help in drying out part of the path and therefore reducing how mulchy it can get. Most importantly a regimented sweeping regime should be deployed to keep the path clear. If someone dumped a load of mud on the road causing a blockage to one part of it, the council would respond extremely quickly to clear it because people understand how important it is to keep transport infrastructure clear. This is also transport infrastructure and should be a high priority for the council when deciding where should be swept, cleaned and gritted. If this is already planned then great, please tell us about it.

Leaving out details about lighting and maintenance doesn't help me decide if I should cycle along this route for only the summer months during daylight hours or if it will feel safe and passable during a wet and dark winter. For some that would be the difference between cycling/walking or driving to work.”

“I use the route on a daily basis to commute to/ from work and for leisure and the current southern section suffers from a few problems. It is often clogged with leaves, branches twigs etc so future success requires a better regime of sweeping. You only have to look at the current condition after the bad weather. The upgrade route has lots of mature trees neighbouring so this should be planned.”

“The drainage gulleys along the length of the proposed upgraded route by the old wall constantly block up with leaf mould and other tree detritus. In upgrading this well used and

crucial off-road section of the cycle and walking network could Council please ensure that REGULAR sweeping of leaf and tree detritus and maintenance of weeds growing by the base of the wall is carried out to ensure the full width of the trail remains usable?"

Council Response

A regular sweeping schedule has been implemented for routes, including the North Road Phase 1.

Cardiff Council has invested in equipment to grit off road routes which is being trialled through 2019/20.

We would recommend path users be aware of our advice to all residents regarding gullies blocked by leaves here: <https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/resident/Parking-roads-and-travel/Highway-Drainage/Pages/default.aspx>

Lighting / Security

"Likewise, the plans don't make any specific reference to upgrading the lighting on this stretch. Whilst there is some lighting, it is rather dim and it would be a pity if a shiny new cycle path was constructed but some cyclists (particularly lone females) felt uneasy about using it. I hope this can also be considered."

"Are there any plans to modify the lighting at all?"

"The route requires better lighting for this route to be seriously used as a commuter cycle route. Can you please advise if the lighting will be upgraded along the entire route so that it conforms to the standards outlined in BS5489-1:2013 + A2:2008, Code of Practice for the design of road lighting part 1: Lighting of roads and public amenity areas?"

"There is no mention of lighting in the consultation document. The current route is mostly unlit making travelling in the night time feel particularly unsafe. People who walk and cycle around Cardiff should not have to make a choice between feeling unsafe on the city roads that are all lit but have potentially speeding and dangerously driven motor vehicles on them and feeling unsafe and at risk of mugging/assault along dark dingy routes with limited artificial and natural surveillance because the council won't light them.

Please can lighting be installed so that the route is well lit and feels safe to use at all hours of the day, not just during daylight hours? There are plenty of good Dutch examples of lighting at off road cycleways that work in harmony with sensitive ecological habitats they go through/near. Examples include low height lighting that does not interfere with bat commutes which would be happening in the tree canopy and motion sensor lighting that turns on only when someone is travelling along a particular section of a route. Just because I've mentioned dutch examples doesn't mean it can't be done in the UK."

"I would think that upgrades in lighting along the route will be required. This would obviously make the route more attractive for nervous cyclists and help personal security. It may be that lighting could be incorporated into the surface design."

"There is no mention of lighting or other safety features along the path. It is important to make the path feel as safe as possible to single pedestrians/cyclists, given that it lacks defensible space, it is not viewable from the road and the existing levels of crime/perception of danger along this stretch. Without them, people will continue to use North Road. What improvements to personal safety are planned along the path?"

“The idea of this cycle lane is a very good idea, though I do hope for the following key factors to be taken into consideration:

1. very well illuminated route
2. cctv coverage along the entire route linked to the police, to add to security and safety of Cardiff residents and visitors”

Council Response

Lighting will be upgraded along the route as part of this scheme, and will meet the standards required for lighting the adopted highway.

The widening of the path and the improvement to street lighting should help to make the route feel safer for all users.

Japanese Knotweed

“I note that there is Japanese Knotweed present in places along the proposed cycleway particularly near the Tesco / Excelsior Way Roundabout and also close to the Llys Talybont Sports Hall, and that proper treatment will be required to prevent damage to the new cyclepath.”

Council Response

Cardiff Council is aware that Japanese knotweed is present in certain locations along the route and a treatment plan is in place. Furthermore, the path will be constructed with a knotweed barrier below the surface in areas of known infestation, to prevent future maintenance issues.

Concern about impact on park

“The cycle path is my daily commuting route and I love it. Its calming because it's leafy and green. I am very concerned at the idea of pushing a 6 m wide bright blue path through the woods, whilst demolishing walls and trees. I think this would be ruinous. I realise there are a few pinch points which could be improved and also some consistency about "is this shared or is it divided ?" would make it more comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists. Otherwise, leave it the path alone. It is nice to cycle on a smoother path way without puddles but I do not like the garish blue of the new cycle path.”

Council Response

Blue surfacing on Cycleway routes are normally only used in locations of potential conflict with motor vehicles. Due to the nature of the route through park land, where interactions with motor vehicles are minimal, blue surfacing will not be used.

The scheme has been designed to ensure that no trees will need to be removed to accommodate the scheme.

No part of the existing historic park wall will be removed as part of the scheme, however one missing section of wall will be reconstructed, allowing the removal of a section of metal railings which would otherwise inhibit visibility on the route.

Concern about method of segregation

"I am concerned about the kerb that is planned to segregate the two sections. My father has a problem with his eyes which makes it hard to differentiate between similar colours and shades. He finds small steps and kerbs difficult to see, particularly if he is above them. I notice that the pedestrians would be above in the cross-section. Have you consulted with a significant number of partially sighted people to ensure that you are not creating a serious hazard for them? Would a railing be a better solution for them?"

"The typical cross section suggests separation of the cycle path and pedestrian path with a sloped curb. This is a potential hazard for cyclists if cyclists are forced to use the footpath due to an obstruction. It may also encourage pedestrians to use the cycle path. The separation used in phase 1 may be more appropriate."

Council Response

The method of segregation will be the same as that used in Phase 1 of the route through North Road car park.

The use of a kerb to segregate a footway and a cycle track is a standard treatment which provides a similar level of service as a kerb segregating a footway from a carriageway.

Education campaign on shared use needed

"Pedestrians (and at time vehicles) use the cycle path with no regard for cyclists so an information/education programme to pedestrians on how to use shared space (ie not walking 5 abreast down a shared path with their head phones in; not to abuse passing cyclists) would encourage more cyclists to use cycle paths/ shared space."

Council Response

A Code of Conduct for all users of shared paths through Parks and other off road cycle routes is in place to encourage everybody to be respectful of other users.

Other schemes should be prioritised

"I would suggest that Cardiff Council make cycle safety on roads a priority. Inconsiderate and even aggressive driving is the biggest deterrent to cyclists."

"Why are you planning to spend so much money on physically segregating the pedestrians and cyclists here when further up the cycle route (around Gabalfa Clinic) the path is narrow and there is not even a white line to separate the two? Further down the route I use (in St Mary's Street) the cyclists are expected to cycle the wrong way down a one way section used by taxi drivers! Around the RCMD, on my way out of town, I always lose the cycle path and end up cycling over the speed bumps! Perhaps the town planners could cycle the whole length of the cycle path and focus on those areas where the path is least safe? I had hoped that the plans were for the whole cycle path and tackled some of the serious issues of signage and segregation and quality of surface. I am very disappointed that the plans are for such a limited section and may make it less safe for some users. Please, scrap these plans and concentrate on sorting out the potholes in our roads (particularly those 1-2' from the kerb) which make normal cycling around our city streets so dangerous"

Council Response

This scheme will provide a much needed upgrade to a useful section of the existing cycle network, which is very popular with cycle and pedestrian commuters. Segregation will improve facilities for all users of the route, improving capacity and conditions for a key north south route.

Concern about cycle access / diversions during construction

“While I welcome the proposed phase 2 improvements to the North Road I would like to clarify what the diversion route would be and how long the proposed works will take.

I regularly use this route and the Taff trail to access Tesco. While I do access Tesco from the Taff trail via the steps and the A48 I find it impossible to return this way. With my panniers filled with shopping from Tesco the slope from the A48 to the Taff trail is far too steep to use safely. Trying to come down the slope with shopping on the back of the bike and only able reach the front brake the back wheel runs away, the bike end up vertical and I try not to fall down the steps.

At least I can get up the slope for anyone with a cargo bike, pushchair or wheelchair this routes inaccessible.”

Council Response

There will be some disruption during the scheme construction, however we expect the contractors to maintain a path through the site during construction to ensure that a long route diversion will not be necessary.

Existing barriers on route

“There is currently a plethora of existing barriers along this route with external barriers designed to prevent motor vehicles getting onto the off-road route and internal barriers that are also designed to do this but end up inconveniencing people walking and people cycling for no real reason. Motor vehicle access prevention should be focussed at the access points from roads i.e. external barriers and the internal ones should be removed completely as they just cause conflict between people cycling and people walking when it could be avoided. ”

“The plans indicate the removal of the gate along the cycle path, near the junction with the taff trail (p.5). Please also consider removing the nearby gates on the Taff Trail too. The plans make no mention of the gate at the Tesco end of the cycle path. Will this be removed too?”

“The new cycle path has removed the gate/bollard at the ambulance station car park- this is great if so, as this restricts cycling. Please keep to these plans and ensure that pedestrians are not forced to walk onto the cycle path to get around the gate that used to be here. [...] The 2 current barriers on the taff trail seem to have been missed from this consultation- even though they are really part of this section of the taff trail. These should also be replaced with removable bollards as per the gate which is being consulted on.”

“The 2 current barriers on the Taff Trail seem to have been missed from this consultation- even though they are part of this section of the Taff Trail. These should be replaced with removable bollards.”

“There has been much discussion about physical barriers across the routes being upgraded and it is good to see some of these marked for removal on the proposals. If any sort of barrier must remain then demountable bollards in the area adjacent to the existing nextbike station would work well and prevent people driving cars down here as currently happens. All barriers must be designed so that none standard cycles such as trikes, cargo bikes, wheelchairs and prams can pass through the space without having to stop and negotiate a tight space. If barriers must be installed they must not funnel pedestrians and people riding bikes into head on collisions with each other as currently happens on this stretch.”

Council Response

All existing gates on the route will be removed and replaced with bollards to prevent unauthorised vehicle access.

Signage should be improved

“Will re-signing of the route be included in the upgrade? That is to say, replacing the NCN8 Taff Trail signs particularly at the junction by the lodge, and take opportunity to direct people to Llandaff Cathedral, The Tesco/Aldi/Gabalfa shopping outlets, and travelling South/East to Pontcanna and NCN8 Taff Trail to The Bay?”

Council Response

A review of existing signage will be undertaken.

Footway should be wider

“Suggest that a 2m wide footpath is not really wide enough- this route is extensively used by students that tend to walk in large groups- if at all possible, this should be made wider- the environment at this location should allow for a wider footpath without narrowing the cyclepath.”

“Is a 2m wide footpath really wide enough? This route is extensively used by students that tend to walk in large groups. If at all possible, this should be made wider. the environment at this location should allow for a wider footpath without narrowing the cycle path.”

Council Response

A 2m wide footpath meets the requirements of Welsh Government Active Travel Design Guidance. Pedestrian survey data suggests that this standard is sufficient for pedestrian comfort levels given current pedestrian flows.

Priority at Ambulance Station

“Route should be designed so that priority is given to people walking and cycling rather than the current proposals which have cycles to give way instead. There is no scenario where such signage arrangements are made for motorised traffic on roads to officially give way at a junction or driveway to emergency vehicle stations and it should not be applied here either.

A more appropriate arrangement would be give way signs for traffic to cross the cycle lane and if the council feels it is required a yellow hatch box to signal no waiting in the crossing area although in reality there won't be cycles waiting here as there won't be congestion by

bikes blocking access here. The only traffic that needs "priority" like access to the ambulance station are blue lit vehicles. The interaction between these particular vehicles and cycles will be the same as it is on the road i.e. cycles would either stop to let them go or move out of the way if already there. There is no need for formal road signage to control this behaviour, otherwise there would be give way signs perpendicular to the driveways of every ambulance, police and fire station in Wales. On a quick google maps survey there aren't in Cardiff.

The value added of allowing the continuous and uninterrupted travel of people on bikes and people walking is greater than the value added by putting in signage to control a behaviour that already occurs and will continue to occur without having to officially give way at signage. Non-blue lit vehicles approaching/leaving the ambulance station can give way like they would at the crossing of the cycleway into Bute Park south of here. The junction is so similar to the Bute Park junction that it would be confusing to have differing priority arrangements. There is little point in setting a precedent of walking and cycling priority at the Bute Park crossing/junction to then go back on it at the ambulance station. ”

“I note that the plan for the ambulance station shows that the cycleway traffic needs to give way to a minor entrance. This is completely the wrong way round, and i strongly believe this should be changed. The cycleway should be the primary route, and vehicles crossing it to/from the ambulance station should give way to cycles and pedestrians. I am sure if there are blue flashing lights on vehicles exiting then both cyclists and pedestrians would give way. The current traffic management during events at the column road entrance to the park has been a complete nonsense and has made it more dangerous for cycle traffic.”

Council Response

We will endeavour to ensure that cycle tracks on our new routes will have priority over side roads and accesses as far as possible. However, the nature of the use of this access by emergency vehicles is such that people approaching the access on the cycle track will always need to approach with caution. Therefore, the priority at this location will not be changed as part of this scheme.

Concern about shared use link to Colum Road

“The shared use area with access to Colum Road could be improved to have dedicated areas for cycles and pedestrians. Always seems to be at points of conflict shared use areas as chosen as a resolution. They are not - they maintain the conflict and uncertainty.”

Council Response

This is a short link to connect with an existing shared use footway and Toucan crossing. It would not be possible to widen this link to the necessary width to create a segregated route without affecting existing trees. Furthermore, cyclists heading towards Colum Road would still be required to give way to pedestrians crossing this link. It is therefore not considered that segregating this short link would provide enough benefit to justify removal of existing trees.

Poor Visibility through Bute Park boundary wall at intersection with Taff Trail

“With regards the junction of multiple paths near Talybont (on page 3 of the pdf), it is not clear from the drawings if the plan is to keep the existing hump (presumably an old canal

bridge?) where Llys Talybont joins the paths, or if this could be levelled or reduced slightly. This is basically a blind junction, but in order to get up the hump, cyclists need to be going at some speed, and it's quite difficult then to navigate people wandering all over the place without looking. This is currently a very awkward junction, and given these proposed works, it seems like the perfect opportunity to try and improve this. If the hump can't be reduced, could we at least have better lighting, clearer signage, perhaps some mirrors to help see better?"

"The scheme proposals do not show any changes to the access points onto the shared use area discussed above. If travelling from the weir to Llys Tal Y Bont Road and using the shared use area, the tall wall creates a major blindspot that is difficult to negotiate. You cannot merge onto the route and be certain that someone else is not cycling on the route already. Can part of this wall be removed to improve sight lines?"

"The junction with the taff trail (p.3). This suffers from poor visibility due to the high wall, which is a hazard because of the gradient. What plans do you have to reduce this hazard?"

Council Response

Changes to the existing wall are not possible as it is part of the historic park boundary wall.

The design has been amended to provide a square area where the two routes intersect, which will provide some deflection for cyclists crossing between the two routes, reducing approach speeds.

The cycle track transitions to shared use to the south of the path link to Blackweir, with northbound cyclists, who will be travelling closest to the boundary wall, required to give way to the shared use area.

Ramp on approach to Llys Tal y Bont Road should not be shared use

"It would be helpful to level the hill somewhat where the canal bridge used to be at Llys Talybont Road. It is a place where congestion can build up due to rapid deceleration - especially southbound from the Taff Trail up to this path heading towards North Road and bit of an accident black spot due to accelerating traffic in the opposite direction down the hill encountering traffic on the Taff Trail."

"Shared use- existing ramp. This is unacceptable to allow this area to continue as it currently is. 3m is the absolute minimum amount of spare for shared use facilities. As above, this is used by many students walking to/from halls/study locations. This ramp also slows slow/nervous cyclists further due to the incline- to provide no extra width at this location is extremely disappointing."

Council Response

The replacement of the existing structure which ramps up towards Llys Tal y Bont Road is out of scope of this scheme due to the costs involved in replacing the structure, land constraints, and impact on existing trees.

Intersection between Taff Trail and Cycle Route should not be Shared Use

"The shared use areas could be significantly improved to maintain the discrete and separate cycle and pedestrian areas if a more creative and fully funded scheme was involved. Why

always take the easy way out and say it has to be shared use - it doesn't! This applies in particular where the scheme branches into two (near Talybont) and then rejoins for no apparent reason. The area is simply wasteland in between the two paths, so why not join them up and extend the cycle way and footpath."

"The current design creates shared space where the space narrows which is arguably designing in conflict. This is particularly pertinent as this area likely experiences the greatest movements through it of all of the route as it also allows east to west movements from Llys Tal Y Bont Road to the bridge at the nearby weir. When so much of the scheme is widening existing routes and formalising cycle and walking segregation, this ought to continue throughout rather than opting for shared space when it gets narrow and more difficult to build."

"I can understand the need for a shared space area near the Tal-y-bont section. However if the upgrade is a success, and lots more people cycle then this could become a real conflict and should be revisited at a later date"

Council Response

The design of the interface between the cycle route and the Taff Trail is constrained by a level difference between the two routes and the location of existing trees. Due to these constraints all paths will need to be shared use.

Cyclists using the cycle route from the North Road Car Park to travel to and from Excelsior Road will be able to avoid the interface with the Taff Trail using the eastern path.

The junction between the cycle route and the Taff Trail itself has been redesigned to take the form of a square, which will reduce approach speeds for path users travelling in all directions.

Issues with vehicles entering shared path from Llys Tal y Bont Road

"Please could we also have much clearer signage and/or some bollards for vehicles at the bottom of Llys Talybont – there are regular occurrences of people driving over the hump and driving onto the shared path, before they realise their error and struggle to reverse back out."

Council Response

Signage will be reviewed at the bottom of Llys Tal Y Bont Road to ensure that it is clear that vehicles are only permitted to continue for access only.

Approach to Excelsior Road

"The final section- I'm unsure why cyclists have to give way to a shared use area- why are they not guided to their destination?"

Council Response

Cyclists will need to take care around pedestrians using the footway on the approach to the parallel cycle zebra.

Extension of route north of Excelsior Road

“Where the route joins Excelsior Road at the roundabout - what are the plans to continue the dedicated cycle route into Gabalfa?”

Council Response

A scheme to improve conditions for cycling on Gabalfa Avenue is included on our Integrated Network Map (INM), scheme reference 132. This is currently prioritised for delivery within the medium term (next 5-10 years).

20th January 2020