

The City of Inverness Area Committee (26 August 2021) voted to remove the '*Space for People*' interventions forming the 1-way system around Inverness Castle.

The shared-use lane along Castle Road was promptly removed but, as had been reported to the meeting, the Traffic Lights at View Place are not expected to be reinstated until December. As a result, Castle Road remains 1-way (north) towards the Ness Bridge. However the single general traffic lane has become two lanes (three lanes near the junction) – all in the same direction.

Away from the Bridge, there is only a pavement on the river side of the road. It is mainly 1.5m wide reducing to 1.2m or 1.0m at fixed obstructions. The base of one tree is on the pavement. As well as branches and leaves near the base, the roots have caused an uneven pavement surface.

Transport Scotland advises 2.0m as the desirable width for a pavement with 1.5m as the absolute minimum over a short distance. For another comparison, the deck of the Infirmary Bridge is (an unrestricted) 1.7m wide (for the full 90m). Most people would consider it to be quite narrow.

Before the introduction of the interventions, people could cycle in both directions in the general traffic lanes (with the motor vehicles). While the interventions were in place, people could cycle in both directions using the '*Spaces for People*' lane.

The '*Spaces for People*' lane wasn't ideal because it was shared-use for walking, wheeling, and cycling. However, this was greatly

mitigated by its generous width (about 3m) and the continued availability of the original riverside pavement for pedestrians.

Since the '*Spaces for People*' lane was removed, there is no longer any route south for people cycling. Unless these people take the much longer and steeper Castle Street route, they have to transfer to the pavement and push their cycle. It will come as no surprise that some people cycle on the pavement.

Even walking with a bike adds to the congestion on an already narrow pavement. This is to the disadvantage of all people using the pavement. It is a severe reduction of pavement provision for pedestrians compared to what existed before the interventions.

This increased congestion is likely to have greatest impact on disabled people such as wheelchair users and blind or visually impaired people. It would be interesting to know if an Equality Impact Assessment was prepared.

This sub-standard provision is expected to last for three months. It would seem accurate to describe this area as a roadworks site. The works started with the removal of the '*Spaces for People*' lane and will be completed when normal 2-way traffic is restored.

During the period of these roadworks, it would further seem appropriate to provide a suitable temporary contra flow cycle lane along Castle Road. This would avoid any increase of congestion on the pavement as a result of people with cycles. As a suggestion, it would be most convenient to locate this cycle lane beside the existing pavement so that it leads on to Ness Bank.

Thanks in advance
Inverness Living Streets