

MUSSELBURGH ACTIVE TOWN CONSULTATION CRITIQUE

My observations are as a walker and cyclist living in Musselburgh for the past decade and having visited the town for over 30 years.

1. **The need for all of these schemes and the financial cost to the public purse has not been justified** . Why not? There are plenty of options for walkers of all types and ages and cyclists to undertake active travel in and around Musselburgh at present without difficulty. These proposals seem to be a scheme looking for a project rather than a response to a pressing need.
2. **The proposed schemes are heavily skewed towards cyclists**, but my observation of use levels is that pedestrians as walkers, pram/buggy wheelers and wheelchair wheelers are far more significant. **So, the scheme developers need to undertake a fundamental review of the priorities of these schemes** to favour pedestrians. Remember that being active out of doors benefits human health and wellbeing and should be for the majority not the minority. Also cycle users tend to be of two types: recreational users at weekends often in large groups or as family groups, and journey to and from work which tends to be mornings and teatime.
3. The bias in the schemes towards cyclists mean that much greater attention is required to **improve the behaviours of cyclists towards walkers** of all sorts and towards traffic regulation measures, such as traffic lights. The majority of cyclists are responsible but there are far too many who treat walkers with disdain and who wilfully ignore traffic lights and the rules of the road. The purposes of these schemes must at the same time devise a **code of practice for cyclists** to ensure that they are responsible and accountable for their misdeeds. That could be a useful role for Parking Wardens.
4. **Route 1** This route has very low cyclist use and makes no real sense so why is it being proposed? Specifically, Keer's Wynd is not suitable for cyclists, especially the passage through the pend where cyclists must dismount. Allowing cyclists to contraflow along Short Hope Street is nonsensical for motorists and for pedestrians who are the main users and should be removed.
5. **Route 2** All of these proposals are sensible as this is the main cyclists route. But its development crucially depends on the provision of multipurpose bridge at the New Street/ Eskside East crossing point. Any such new crossing must bear in mind the two critical uses: the utilities of gas, electricity, water and drainage which cross the river on the lower bridge at present and the pedestrian connection between lower Fisherrow and the town centre, including the important school students traffic from Loretto.
6. **Route 3** It is quite wrong to see these route as being part of the MFPS. What is the justification in writing please? It is totally unnecessary to construct a new crossing of the river at the coast as is proposed, especially given the potential for a crossing where the Electric and Pipe Bridges are at present. Walkers and cyclists can easily travel up from the coastal path alongside Newfield to cross on the existing bridges. More fundamentally, it is against natural common sense, which ELC should be taking into account since it has declared a nature emergency. Such a bridge will affect the diurnal movement of birds within the estuary and will require an Appropriate Assessment under the Birds Directive Regulations by NatureScot. Also, such a bridge will disturb the natural movement of sediment around the river mouth which is so important to retain the net sand accumulation occurring there for many decades.
7. **Route 4 no comments.**
8. **Route 5** This proposal makes no sense as it fails to utilise the existing riverside path. What is needed is to formalise the connection between QMU and the river crossing on the steel trellis bridge immediately upstream of the East Coast Mainline rail bridges. Again, the link to the MFPS is superfluous. That would avoid cyclists having to use the main route into the town from the A1 and City Bypass along Monktonhall Terrace and Eskview Terrace which is congested and parked cars quite justifiably outside residences.
9. **Route 6** the proposed connection is useful, but the route selected ignores the existing off-road routes from QMC to Newcraighall. Why?