

Midlothian Active Travel Strategy (Draft)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In August 2018 the Partnership were invited to make provide comment to the consultation of Midlothian Council’s Active Travel Strategy (draft). SEStran welcomed the opportunity to respond recognising the opportunity that active travel presents particularly on the cross-boundary routes with City of Edinburgh and East Lothian.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The consultation detailed an outline strategy for the county with specific improvements proposed for settlement clusters, developing a wider network of infrastructure.
- 2.2 A series of nine objectives along with an action plan covering six main themes are proposed to enable a strategic plan to improvement implementation.
- 2.3 SEStran submitted a response as seen in Appendix 1, on 23rd August 2018. The questionnaire for consultation is included in Appendix 2 for noting.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The report asks the Board to note the appended response.

Appendix 1 – **Midlothian Active Travel Strategy Response**

Appendix 2 – **Midlothian Questionnaire**

Peter Jackson
Active Travel Officer
6th September 2018

Policy Implications	Addresses strategic active routes previously highlighted in SEStran SCBCD study (2015).
Financial Implications	N/A.
Equalities Implications	N/A.
Climate Change Implications	N/A.

Appendix 1 – Midlothian Active Travel Strategy Response

Consultation Response

Midlothian Draft Active Travel Strategy

SEStran recognises the work that has gone into producing the draft Strategy document and would commend Midlothian for seeking to create a strategy to inform their actions around Active Travel. The strategy reads well and highlights the great work that is being carried out by a number of organisations alongside Midlothian Council initiatives to encourage the uptake of more active lifestyles around the county. In particular, it is noteworthy to mention the work around the Borders Railway and conversion to active travel from users at the Midlothian stations.

Views regarding the outlined network improvements presented in the strategy maps and explanatory tables.

The network improvements presented and detailed in the strategy are in line with findings that were highlighted in the SEStran Strategic Cross Boundary Cycle Development study. Many of the aspirational routes were identified as missing links or key barriers to facilitating further modal shift to active travel.

SEStran recognises that one key barrier is the A701 between Penicuik and the A720 Edinburgh City bypass and taking account of new standards¹ and best practice², welcome the proposal of a cycleway along this route. Similarly, the A7 corridor improvements would provide a boost to current provision and allow for further cross boundary cycling.

Measures outlined in the Objectives and Action Plan

SEStran welcome the Objectives as drafted, with all aspects of active travel covered throughout.

IND2. *Where appropriate, ensure developers connect proposed developments to the existing walking and cycling network*

SEStran support the use of developer contributions to add to active travel networks but would encourage developments to be orientated towards active travel and reduce vehicle dominated streetscapes.

IND4. *Continue to increase the length of advisory cycle lanes on Midlothian roads, where appropriate*

SEStran would encourage infrastructure improvements that follow the latest standards and best practice as previously stated. On-road cycle lanes are most suitable in

¹ [Standards for Highways](#)

² [Sustrans Design Guidance](#)

environments where speeds are at a maximum of 30mph and restrict vehicle over run unless explicitly required.

***IND6.** Identify, widen and convert existing footpaths into multi-user paths or cycleways, where appropriate*

SEStran recognises that existing guidance makes provision for shared use paths where the flow rate of pedestrians and cyclists is low and can make for a pleasant environment where paths are not connected to carriageways. However, consideration should be given to all user groups and the purpose of journeys that cyclists in particular might make on these paths. The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)³ and The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association⁴ have particular concerns for shared space and the ability of those with sight problems to navigate paths and negotiate crossings.

SEStran would encourage that where opportunity is available to widen footpaths, that accommodation is fully explored for segregation of user groups to the extent of preferred widths within best practice guides.

Other Comments

Throughout the draft strategy there are references to the use of on road cycle lanes, whilst recognising that most of these are historic in some nature, many no longer would meet the desired standard. It therefore can be confusing to classify such cycle lanes as part of an asset register of active travel infrastructure. This is particularly pertinent if as stated in some of the explanatory tables, they are viewed as a detriment to road safety for cycling.

The national target for everyday journeys made by bicycle is 10% by 2020. The draft strategy references the SEStran Regional Transport Strategy target of increased walking and cycling journeys by 5% by 2020, though the ambitions for the draft strategy are set much lower. Given the proven success of the behaviour change programmes instituted around travel to train stations, there would be room for a more ambitious target even if that were to be a target set beyond the refresh of this strategy.

³ [RNIB](#)

⁴ [Guide Dogs](#)

Appendix 2 – Midlothian Questionnaire

1. Are you responding on behalf of:

- Yourself as an individual
- A local authority or community council
- An educational establishment
- A business
- A charity, voluntary or community organisation
- Any other group or in any other capacity

2. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation (local authority, community council, educational establishment, business, charity, voluntary or community organisation, or any other group) please tell us the name of the organisation.

3. Was the Midlothian Active Travel Strategy document easy to understand?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please add any comments

4. Please share your views regarding the outlined network improvements presented in the strategy maps and explanatory tables.

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the measures

outlined in the Objectives and Action Plan section?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Please add any comments

6. Anything else? Please leave any additional comments or feedback in the box below.