

Transport Scotland submission of 28 March 2024

PE2065/B: Improve and prioritise pedestrian safety

How Scotland's Active Travel Vision to 2030, the National Transport Strategy and the Road Safety Improvement Fund will work to directly address street clutter

Scotland's [Road Safety Framework to 2030](#) sets out a vision for Scotland to have the best road safety performance in the world by 2030 and an ambitious long term goal where no one is seriously injured or killed on our roads by 2050. The framework adopts the 'Safe System' approach to road safety which is recognised internationally as best practice in road safety delivery. For the first time, mode and user specific targets for key priority groups have been created to focus attention by partners on our priority areas, this includes a 40% reduction in pedestrians killed or seriously injured.

£9.5m was dedicated to a Road Safety Improvement Fund in 2023/24 which has supported local authorities to reduce casualties and risks on their roads through the implementation of Safe System measures. Some local authorities have utilised their allocation to improve pedestrian safety within their area.

The [National Planning Framework 4](#) highlights that one of the 6 qualities of a successful place is well connected with networks which make a place easy to move around. This includes designing for pedestrian experience including safe crossing, pedestrian priority, reduced street clutter and more.

The Scottish Government announced record funding for Active Travel of £220m in its draft budget proposal for 2024-25. The £189.2m budget for 2023-24 included the Cycling Walking Safer Routes grant of £35m that goes directly to local authorities on a pro rata basis for active travel improvements.

The record budget for 2023-24 included a £20m Transformation Fund, providing grant funding to partners to support the delivery of eligible construction-ready active travel schemes. The fund sees Transport

Scotland assume responsibility for authorising funding and programme management in a more direct partnership model, and puts into practice for 2023-24 our theory of what transformation needs to look like for 2024-25 in a pragmatic and enabling manner.

In 2023-24, through our established programmes, including Cycling and Walking Safer Routes, Places for Everyone and the National Cycle Network, we will continue to support infrastructure projects that contribute to the transformation of our towns, cities and villages and the delivery of our 2030 vision for place and people-focussed communities that enable active travel modes to be the most popular choice for shorter everyday journeys.

It is for local authorities to identify streets that are in need of decluttering and utilise available funding to improve safety on these streets.

Whether Transport Scotland has considered a national approach to improving the visibility of pedestrian crossings

Guidance on pedestrian crossing design is provided in UK guidance, the [Traffic Signs Manual](#), published by Department for Transport. It sets out three types of crossing facility and indicates a site assessment should be carried out by an experienced practitioner to enable the designer to make an informed decision about whether a crossing is needed and if so, what type it should be:

- a) Uncontrolled or informal crossings; for example a pedestrian refuge or dropped kerb,
- b) Zebra and Parallel crossings; which give pedestrians and cyclists (as appropriate) a right of way over vehicles when on the crossing, and at which drivers must give way, and
- c) Signal-controlled crossings; which require drivers to stop at red lights, and which give users a push button to register the demand for a green signal.

Traffic Signs Manual indicates that site assessments should include "...details of the driver's view at various points on the approach and of the pedestrian's view of approaching traffic at the crossing point..."

Specifically in relation to controlled crossings not at junctions, for example those within a length of road, the guidance in Traffic Signs Manual states that "...Pedestrians should be able to see and be seen

by approaching traffic. Different groups will have different requirements – for example, wheelchair users and children may be harder for a driver to see as they are lower in the landscape”, and “Visibility should not be obscured or restricted by factors such as parked vehicles, trees or street furniture. Obstacles should be moved or removed wherever possible, especially if doing so enables a crossing to remain on the desire line. If the carriageway is wide enough, it may be worth building out the footway to provide enhanced sight lines...” .

It should be noted that the guidance is aimed at new crossings or where the need for changes has been established. Crossings may have been established prior to current guidance, and local authorities have a statutory duty to monitor these areas and consider appropriate measures which will safeguard road users and residents.

Furthermore, there is an established process of independent auditing of road schemes to identify road safety issues (at design stage, and upon completion prior to opening to traffic) which would consider issues such as pedestrian safety – road safety audits are a mandatory requirement on trunk road schemes.

Additionally, research studies are underway by Transport Scotland on zebra crossings and active travel infrastructure, and updates to guidance such as Cycling by Design which considers where pedestrian and cycling infrastructure interact.

Introducing a mechanism to report pavement parking

Finally, to address your point on introducing a mechanism to report pavement parking, It may be helpful if I explain that prohibitions for pavement parking, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs were introduced by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 and are aimed at promoting, supporting and advancing the rights of pedestrians to ensure that our pavements and roads are accessible for all.

The last of the secondary legislation to support this was laid in parliament and approved, meaning local authorities have the tools to enforce these prohibitions from 11 December 2023. As local authorities are responsible for the day-to-day enforcement of the prohibitions, it would be a matter for each local authority to decide whether to set up their own reporting system via their websites and indeed some have already put this in place.

Road Safety Policy Team