

**Objection by Lenzie Community Council to
Planning Application TP/ED/16/0295
9 houses with associated access and car parking and
Planning Application TP/ED/16/0294
Restaurant and licensed bar at former Larkfield Resource Centre**

Summary

These two Applications are taken together, as they depend on a common access to Woodilee Road and this is the aspect on which Lenzie Community Council are objecting. The grounds of objection are that:

1. The existing practical and safe crossing of Woodilee Road into the Strathkelvin Railway Path (SRP) extending northwards to Kirkintilloch will be rendered useless by the creation of a vehicle access as shown on document PL7 'Proposed junction off Garner (Garngaber) Avenue' (Figure 1 - see Application TP/ED/16/0294).
2. Removal of this recently formed pedestrian/cyclist crossing is against the East Dunbartonshire Council policy of promoting active travel as the Strathkelvin Railway Path is a key element in that strategy.

Background

The sections of the SRP from Woodilee Road to Whitegates and Industry Street in Kirkintilloch have provided a vital traffic-free pedestrian and cyclist link for decades. Before construction of the Initiative Road link, the SRP continued from Woodilee Road southwards to Chryston, directly across Woodilee Road at the point where the new access is proposed. The start of this southerly section passed through the Glasgow-Edinburgh Railway line viaduct and the line of the new road meant that the SRP could no longer be followed at this point. An alternative route was signed following Woodilee Road eastwards, across Initiative Road at the traffic lights and subsequently southwards on a previous path in the Woodilee Hospital grounds, to rejoin the original SRP at Bothlyn Cottage.

More recently, improvements to cycling accessibility have been made, including on-road, advisory cycle lanes on both sides of Garngaber Avenue, along the whole length westwards from the Easter Garngaber Road junction. There are also dropped kerbs at this Easter Garngaber junction and a 2.5m wide, shared pavement on the south side of Woodilee Road, extending to the Initiative Road traffic lights (see figure 2). (In passing, it is not clear that the Application drawings reflect the increased width of this pavement.) The north side of Woodilee Road could not be treated in this way, neither by a widened footpath nor an on-road cycle lane, as Woodilee Road is much narrower overall than Garngaber Avenue.

These improvements have been highly effective in promoting active travel, as they link Kirkintilloch Leisure Centre, the centre of Kirkintilloch, the centre of Lenzie, the Station and bus routes, with housing areas such as Woodilee Village, McGavigan's Field and Larkfield. Areas to the south of the Edinburgh-Glasgow Railway line also have safe access via Easter Garngaber Road and the widened shared pavement on Woodilee Road. The key factor in this scheme is the current provision of a safe crossing of Woodilee Road at the entrance to the SRP.

Users and Routes

The purpose of this section is to consider the requirements for a safe pedestrian/cyclist route along Woodilee Road in either direction, equal to that currently available. From casual observation, users of the SRP include (in descending order of frequency) walkers/joggers, cyclists, horse riders

and users of mobility scooters. Walkers are often pushing buggies or prams. No statistics on numbers of users are available to Lenzie CC but surveys, based on electronic counting, were carried out at the time of the Healthy Habits project and should be available to EDC.

Some users arriving at the south end of the SRP, principally walkers, will be able to reach certain desired destinations by turning immediately left or right along the north side of Woodilee Road, although the relatively busy Larkfield Road junction has to be crossed in the direction of the Woodilee junction traffic lights. However, these are not particularly suitable routes for those pushing prams or for cyclists, as the footpaths are too narrow for shared use. The widened pavement on the south side of Woodilee Road has therefore provided a significant improvement as it offers an open and safe route for pedestrians and cyclists. This option covers cycle traffic up Garngaber Avenue to Lenzie centre and Station, southwards along Easter Garngaber Road to the area south of the Edinburgh/Glasgow railway line and along Millersneuk Drive to Lenzie Station. This route is also used for walking to and from Millersneuk school and is a preferable route eastwards to the Initiative Road traffic lights (which have pedestrian/cycle phase provision). However, if a safe crossing of Woodilee Road were not to be available, the situation would revert to the previous configuration where cyclists were obliged to share Woodilee Road with fast-moving vehicles and make left and right-hand turns into and out of the SRP, leading to some conflict with pedestrians, if not also with vehicles.

It is not clear from Document PL7, mentioned earlier, how SRP users are expected to cross Woodilee Road at this point or any other, as the arrival point in crossing from the SRP entrance will be in the middle of a busy access junction.

Woodilee Road configuration

Woodilee Road between Easter Garngaber Road and Initiative Road comprises several consecutive, reversing curves and a simultaneous abrupt drop in height just to the east of the proposed access junction. The view of approaching traffic to the right, for users crossing from the SRP is as a result restricted, partly by tree growth (see figure 3). Likewise, the bank to the east of the proposed crossing restricts the views from opposing, approaching vehicles.

These features reflect the former historic presence of two intersecting railways at different levels and a road passing through a single-track tunnel. This road could now be made safer for the increased traffic levels generated by Initiative Road by straightening and regrading the most tortuous part just to the east of the proposed access. Likewise, the proposed access is a legacy of the long-gone railway and subsequent footpath line, now redundant. Choosing this site for access results in a left and right-hand bend in the approach road to the pub/restaurant and an acute turn in on the approach from Initiative Road (see figure 4 - document PL3 in TP/ED/16/0294).

Conclusions

1. The access proposed for these developments does not respect the requirement for a practical, safe crossing point on Woodilee Road. Such a crossing point currently exists and elimination of this would be a retrograde step.
2. Safe crossing is a key factor in the use of the Strathkelvin Railway Path, extending to Kirkintilloch and beyond. Any change that threatens the viability of the SRP would be a backward step with respect to East Dunbartonshire's policy on promoting active travel.
3. Deficiencies in the overall configuration of Woodilee Road have been identified and rectification of these may provide an opportunity to create a more suitable access point to the developments envisaged, without degrading the existing crossing point for users of the Strathkelvin Railway Path and the Garngaber cycleways.

Figure 1
Proposed access
off Woodilee Road

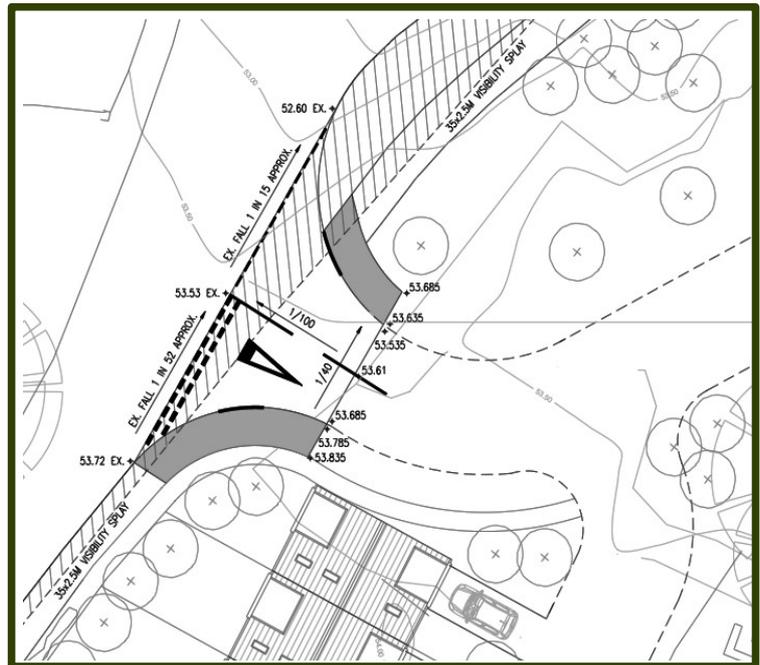


Figure 2

View from Garngaber Avenue/Easter Garngaber Road junction towards Initiative Road. Note ends of cycle lanes, dropped kerbs on Easter Garngaber and shared footpath on right-hand side of Woodilee Road.



Figure 3

View from the end of SRP towards Garngaber Avenue, showing curvature of road and obstructed view of approaching cars.



Figure 4

Proposed access road layout showing junction with Woodilee Road and multiple bends between access and pub / restaurant

