

6 Existing Route Review



6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 A cycle review of the A862 and the minor roads between Inchmore, Kirkhill and Dunballoch was undertaken. The route review has been broken down into sections as shown in Appendix G, from the junction with King Brude Road to Beauly town centre:

- Section A: King Brude Road and Clachnaharry
- Section B: Clachnaharry to Bunchrew
- Section C: Bunchrew to Inchmore
- Section D: Inchmore to Easter Moniack
- Section E: Easter Moniack to Dunballoch
- Section F: Dunballoch to Beauly train station
- Section G: Beauly train station to Beauly town centre
- Section H: Inchmore to Kirkhill
- Section I: Kirkhill to Dunballoch

6.1.2 An itinerary of the existing infrastructure is presented for each of these subsections in tabular form on the following pages, together with photographic references.

6.2 Section A: King Brude and Clachnaharry

<p>Section A: King Brude Road Junction</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large three arm signalised junction with pedestrian phases and some short, isolated sections of advisory cycle route. • All red phase when Swing Bridge on canal is in operation. • 30mph speed limit • Facilities for pedestrians 		
Width	Various, between 7.4 and 8.0m. Left and right turn lanes between 3.8 and 3.9m.	
Surface	Good condition, recently resurfaced	
Gradient	Excellent – flat	
Signage	No existing signage for cyclists	
Lighting/ Visibility	Good visibility, junction lit	
Problems/barriers for cyclists	<p>No advanced stop lines</p> <p>Two left turn filter lanes that force cyclists to change lanes in order to go straight on – a manoeuvre which may be difficult and daunting to novice cyclists</p> <p>Wide junctions can also be intimidating to cyclists and inter-green times may not be long enough to allow cyclists to clear</p>	

Section A: Clachnaharry

Key points:

- Narrow road fronted with mostly residential properties, some businesses and local award winning pub famous for real ale.
- Advisory cycle lanes throughout most of village that stop by old school
- 30mph speed limit
- Footway continuous on southern side of road, partial on northern side



Width	Various, between 6.8 and 7.2m. Cycle lanes vary between 1.0 and 1.5m.
Surface	Good
Gradient	Excellent – flat
Signage	Some advisory cycle lanes signs
Lighting/ Visibility	Mostly good visibility, but poor in some sections. Lighting adequate
Problems/barriers for cyclists	<p>There are times when there is a lot of on-road parking outside residential properties and the pub.</p> <p>Narrow road can lead to drivers overtaking cyclists too closely.</p> <p>Section of road travelling towards Inverness hems cyclists in as it has a wall sitting directly on the edge of the carriageway where there is no footway.</p>

Section A: Railway/Bridge at Clachnaharry


Key points:

- Three way signalised junction on bridge over railway
- Anti skid surfacing
- Recent bridge renovation
- No facilities for pedestrians
- Inter-green time seems adequate for cyclists





Width	Bridge is 6.6m from kerb to kerb. East side of traffic lights 7.3m from kerb to wall. West side of traffic lights 7.5m
Surface	Good condition, recently resurfaced
Gradient	Mostly flat, small incline on approach to bridge going towards Clachnaharry
Signage	No existing signage for cyclists
Lighting/ Visibility	Very poor visibility in all directions, lighting adequate
Problems/barriers for cyclists	No advanced stop lines Narrow road can lead to drivers overtaking cyclists too closely Identified in consultation as a particular hazard for vulnerable road users



6.3 Section B: Clachnaharry to Bunchrew

<p>Section B: Clachnaharry to Bunchrew</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard width carriageway • No footways • Carriageway bounded by seawall on northern side • Five properties on southern side of road very close to carriageway • Small residential community in Bunchrew with narrow footways in some sections on southern side of road • 60mph speed limit 	
Width	Approx 7.3m
Surface	Good
Gradient	Excellent - flat
Signage	No signage
Lighting/ Visibility	Mostly good visibility, but poor in some sections. No lighting
Problems/barriers for cyclists	<p>Narrow road can lead to drivers overtaking cyclists too closely</p> <p>Traffic travels at high speed</p> <p>Cyclists hemmed in by seawall and have no room to take evading action</p> <p>No lighting</p>



6.4 Section C: Bunchrew to Inchmore

<p>Section C: Bunchrew to Inchmore</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard width carriageway • Footways on northern side of road through Inchmore • Carriageway bounded by railway and seawall on northern side for most of this section • Five properties on southern side of road very close to carriageway • 60mph speed limit but dropping to 40mph in Lentrane and Inchmore • Toucan crossing at Inchmore 	 
Width	6.3m in Inchmore
Surface	Good
Gradient	Excellent – flat
Signage	Interpretation board at Old North Inn at Inchmore detailing local paths
Lighting/ Visibility	Mostly good, but poor in some sections. Lighting within Inchmore
Problems/barriers for cyclists	<p>Narrow road can lead to drivers overtaking cyclists too closely</p> <p>Traffic travels at high speed</p> <p>Cyclists hemmed in through some sections and have no room to take evading action</p> <p>No lighting</p>



6.5 Section D: Inchmore to Easter Moniak

<p>Section D: Inchmore to Easter Moniak</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard width carriageway • Footway/cycle track on southern side of road, but in poor state of repair • 60mph speed limit 	 
Width	Cycle track is reduced to 1.0m due to vegetation. True width approximately 2.0m.
Surface	Good
Gradient	Excellent – flat
Signage	Fingerposts and interpretation boards along this section
Lighting/ Visibility	Mostly good visibility, but poor in some sections. No lighting
Problems/barriers for cyclists	<p>Off road track can be hard to spot to cyclists who are new to the area</p> <p>Path is poorly maintained and not signed specifically as route for cyclists</p> <p>No lighting</p>


6.6 Section E: Easter Moniack to Dunbolloch

<p>Section E: Easter Moniack to Dunbolloch</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard width carriageway • No footways • 60mph speed • Very few properties along this section 	 
Width	7.2m
Surface	Good
Gradient	Excellent - flat
Signage	None
Lighting/ Visibility	Poor at a number of locations. No lighting
Problems/barriers for cyclists	<p>Narrow road can lead to drivers overtaking cyclists too closely</p> <p>Traffic travels at high speed</p> <p>No lighting</p>


6.7 Section F: Dunballoch to Beauly train station

<p>Section F: Dunballoch to Beauly train station</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard width carriageway • No footways • 60mph speed and beginning of 30mph zone through Beauly • Pinch point at Lovat Bridge (listed) • Very few properties along this section • Sharp bend at junction with A831 	 
Width	7.2m
Surface	Good
Gradient	Two hills – one on the approach to Beauly going over the railway line, the second from Dunballoch to Lovat Bridge which is quite a considerable incline
Signage	Fingerposts at Dunballoch
Lighting/ Visibility	Mostly good, but poor in some sections. No lighting until 30mph zone
Problems/barriers for cyclists	<p>Narrow road can lead to drivers overtaking cyclists too closely</p> <p>Traffic travels at high speed</p> <p>No lighting</p> <p>Steep inclines</p> <p>Pinch point at Lovat Bridge was identified in the consultation as a particular hazard for vulnerable road users</p>



6.8 Section G: Beauly train station to Beauly town centre

<p>Section G: Beauly train station to Beauly town centre</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard width carriageway • Footways on both sides of road • 30mph speed limit • Local as well as through traffic 	
Width	9.0m at pedestrian crossing
Surface	Good
Gradient	Excellent - flat
Signage	None
Lighting/ Visibility	Good visibility and adequate street lighting
Problems/barriers for cyclists	Cyclists face typical urban cycling problems: parked cars, traffic stopping and starting, pedestrians crossing unexpectedly, no cycle parking

6.9 Section H: Inchmore to Kirkhill

<p>Section H: Inchmore to Kirkhill</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard width carriageway on approach to village, but narrower within Kirkhill • Footway on east side of road into Kirkhill, footways within village • 30mph speed limit in village, 60mph on the approach • Traffic calming and 'Twenty's Plenty' advisory 20mph zone outside school • Zebra crossing in village 	
Width	6.0m on approach to Kirkhill
Surface	Good
Gradient	Excellent - flat
Signage	None
Lighting/ Visibility	Good visibility and adequate street lighting
Problems/barriers for cyclists	<p>Fast traffic speeds on the road to Kirkhill</p> <p>Am and pm peaks in traffic, especially around the school during term times</p>

6.10 Section I: Kirkhill to Dunballoch

<p>Section I: Kirkhill to Dunballoch B9164</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow single track roads with passing places • 60mph speed limit • Local traffic only 	 
Gradient	Considerable incline up from Wester Lovat to Wester Kirkhill
Signage	Fingerposts at a number of locations
Lighting/ Visibility	Poor visibility in some places and no lighting
Problems/barriers for cyclists	Gradient Poor road surface Poor visibility in some places

6.11 Summary

- 6.11.1 Apart from the hill between Lovat Bridge and Dunballoch, the ten mile section of the A862 from Beauly to Inverness offers cyclists an almost completely flat and attractive, scenic route. With two way traffic flows of approximately 5000vpd, the road meets design guidelines for an on-road cycle facility for roads with 85th percentile speeds of up to 35kph; however through site observations and from cycling the route it is clear that for the majority of the route speeds are in excess of this figure hence it is considered that any cycle facility should be segregated from motorised traffic.
- 6.11.2 For the majority of the time, vehicles are able to pass cyclists safely, giving them plenty of room as traffic flows are relatively low, but there are times when drivers will pass dangerously close to cyclists if there is oncoming traffic, rather than wait to overtake. This scenario was reported as one of the main hazards faced by cyclists during the consultation. Furthermore, the lack of lighting along many sections of the road makes cyclists feel even more vulnerable at night.
- 6.11.3 The two hardest sections for cyclists are the bridge over the railway at Clachnaharry and Lovat Bridge. For cyclists familiar with 'Cyclecraft', the definitive guide to safe cycling techniques and recommended by ROSPA, the correct way to tackle pinch points such as these are to cycle directly in the flow of traffic to ensure that vehicles cannot overtake. Unfortunately, not all existing cyclists understand or carry out techniques such as these and for the novice or child cyclist, this concept is usually regarded as 'dangerous' or can make them feel very exposed and at risk.
- 6.11.4 The sections of the A862 within the settlements of Beauly and Clachnaharry are suitable for cycling on road as part of the general traffic flow as they are lit and have a 30mph speed limit, but again, the less confident or child cyclist is likely to be intimidated by general traffic and routine hazards such as manoeuvring around parked cars, car doors opening, pedestrians crossing, etc.