



Coastal Cycleway & Pedestrianisation FAQs – October 2020

Did the pedestrianisation trials and pop up cycleway happen just to support social distancing?

No, this was only one of several aims. North Tyneside bid for funding for “increased capacity for walking and cycling to shops and local services”, “supporting local businesses by providing additional space to maintain social distancing”, “relieve pressure on public transport by improving cycling and walking conditions...parallel to Metro” and “healthy and active travel for work journeys”.

Were the cycleway and pedestrianisation projects always going to be temporary?

No. The requirement for funding was to work quickly using temporary materials and “evaluate any temporary measures they install, with a view to making them permanent, and embedding a long-term shift to active travel as we move from restart to recovery”. The council used a legal process (Experimental Traffic Order) intended to enable highway changes to be live trialled over up to 18 months. It was not a temporary order. A pre-determined outcome, irrespective of the success/failure of the schemes put in place, goes against the principle of an Experimental Order.

When was a decision taken to remove the cycleway?

We don't know. Until September gradual improvements were made to the cycleway to improve its appearance and the way it worked. It seems likely that at this point council officers decided it would be removed and halted any effort to improve it. There is no record of any political decision being taken either to stop the improvements or to cancel plans to build links from the cycleway to shops and schools.

Does the council have to remove the cycleway and pedestrianisation trials?

No, they could be made permanent or the trials extended until next summer.

Was there a public consultation?

Yes, the consultation on the cycleway and pedestrianisation projects ran from the beginning of July and is still ongoing, it is the longest running consultation exercise managed by the council since the adoption of the local plan.

What do the public think of the changes?

Opinion is divided. Around half of responses to the consultation are for or against. What the majority of the public think isn't known, no polling has been carried out. On many issues the quiet majority favour compromise rather than extreme positions. Nearly everyone favours action on health and climate change just as our councillors do.

Who benefitted from the cycleway and pedestrianisation?

Pedestrians are the main beneficiaries of all the projects. Motor traffic speed has dropped considerably along the coast making it easier to cross the road, sections of the promenade that were always too narrow are now improved.

Has use changed in winter?

Use of the cycleway has fallen a bit since August, there is no evidence that this has happened any more so than other facilities such as visitor car parks. With the ban on meeting friends indoors, businesses are making increased use of outdoor space. Large numbers of pedestrians are using the promenade, although no numbers have been released.

Could the cycleway be rebuilt with two-way motor traffic?

No. There are many sections along the coast where there is not room for a good quality promenade, cycleway and two motor traffic lanes. There are however several wider sections where two-way motor traffic could have been restored, for example creating two-way flows to and from car parking at Beaconsfield and adjacent to Tynemouth Park. Why would government provide money to build something next year having seen the council give up so quickly?

What can I do with this information?

Please share with your [councillors](#) and on social media, we've enjoyed some great experimental changes to our streets this year #ItDoesntHaveToGo