



MISSING LINKS

**Closing the gaps in the active
travel network in and around Dumfries**



Acknowledgments

Acknowledgements

The original works on which this book is based were sourced from the Cycling Dumfries website. They were researched, written and photographed by Cycling Dumfries members:

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Follow progress online

We do not see this as a final document. Each year, during the Riding of the Marches season, we will ride and inspect progress towards filling in the Missing Links. Progress updates will be posted at:

missinglinks.scot

Join Cycling Dumfries and support our work, find out more here:

cyclingdumfries.wordpress.com
facebook.com/cyclingdumfries

The more members we have, the louder our voice will be – giving us more influence with the people who can make real changes to the cycling conditions in the area. We are an entirely voluntary organisation and the more people who are willing not just to join but to help out, the better.

Foreword

This publication represents the outcome of over a decade of activity by Cycling Dumfries. Since we were founded in 2011, we have been hearing from those who cycle – and, more importantly, those who would like to cycle but don't – about how gaps like these in the safe cycling network are a barrier to active travel in and around the town. Some are large, some are small, but each one represents a missed opportunity to join up the existing paths and routes and help make the Dumfries area one of the best places to walk, wheel and cycle in Scotland.

Even though Dumfries and Galloway is a largely rural area overall, over one-fifth of the population live in and around Dumfries – a town that is almost perfectly sized for walking and cycling. We are also at the heart of a widespread network of quiet rural roads that offer some of the best touring cycling conditions in the United Kingdom, not to mention our mountain biking exemplified by the 7 Stanes. Add in the growing take up of e-bikes (around half of those joining our group rides now have electric bikes or trikes) and it's clear that there's huge potential for residents and visitors alike to be taking many of their everyday journeys by bike.

Over half of all car journeys in the region are less than three miles – a distance that almost everyone could cycle with a suitable bike or trike. Converting just a tiny fraction of those journeys to active modes would have huge benefits, not just in reducing carbon emissions but improving people's health and well-being, tackling local transport poverty in an area with limited public transport, reducing pollution, and reducing pressure on parking spaces. People who walk or cycle for transport tend to spend more with local businesses and are more connected to their communities, while kids who walk or cycle to school even do better in class. We have so much to gain individually and in our wider society.

So why don't more people cycle more often in Dumfries? The answer for many, as it is everywhere in Scotland, is fear of traffic. We have some wonderful routes in and around the town that offer some people the ability to get to some destinations without having to mix with motorised vehicles. But a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and a network is only a network if it is joined up. This Missing Links publication is our attempt to identify where the network breaks down, along with ideas about how these gaps could be closed. By joining up existing routes, each gap we close will have a cumulative effect, improving the return on the investment already put in. I urge councillors, officials, ministers and anyone else with an interest in making Dumfries a better place to live to read it and join with us in a conversation about how we can start to make that complete network a reality.

Sally Hinchcliffe

Convenor, Cycling Dumfries



**" WHEN WE CYCLE WE ALWAYS MEET PEOPLE WE KNOW "
- JULIA & NATHAN**



" I CYCLE TO SCHOOL, I'D LIKE IT TO BE SAFER TO RIDE TO TOWN " - HAZEL



**" IT GIVES ME A BUZZ, I FEEL FREE AND IT'S PAIN FREE "
- CHARLOTTE**



" IT'S HOW WE GET THE MESSAGES. " - ALAN



"I NEED DROPPED KERBS AND CONTINUOUS PAVEMENTS SO I CAN GET TO TOWN INDEPENDENTLY" - PAUL



**" I CAN STOP WHENEVER I HEAR AN INTERESTING BIRDSONG "
- FRANK**

In spring 2024, Cycling Dumfries ran a 4 week crowdfunding campaign to raise money to print this book and send copies to decision makers in the region. The initial target of £1,000 was raised in 10 days and we went on to raise a total of £1,719 from the community.

Thank you to the following people and 27 other anonymous donors for their financial contributions.

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Neil Whitelaw
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While the primary goal was to raise money to print and distribute this book, we also built up a lot of interest in the campaign online.

We created 2 campaign videos and 12 short video testimonials from supporters telling others how they benefit from cycling. We shared one of our original Missing Links posts each day of the campaign. Community feedback was positive, supportive and many contributed suggestions to our proposals.

Our YouTube channel saw a 60% growth in subscribers and our videos received over 4,300 views. We saw similar results on Instagram where our videos received over 5,000 views.

There is a genuine desire and support for the kinds of changes to infrastructure that we propose in this book. We hope you agree and will be supportive of these improvements.

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Map Key



MISSING LINK OR PROBLEM



EXISTING ROUTE



AREA OF CONCERN

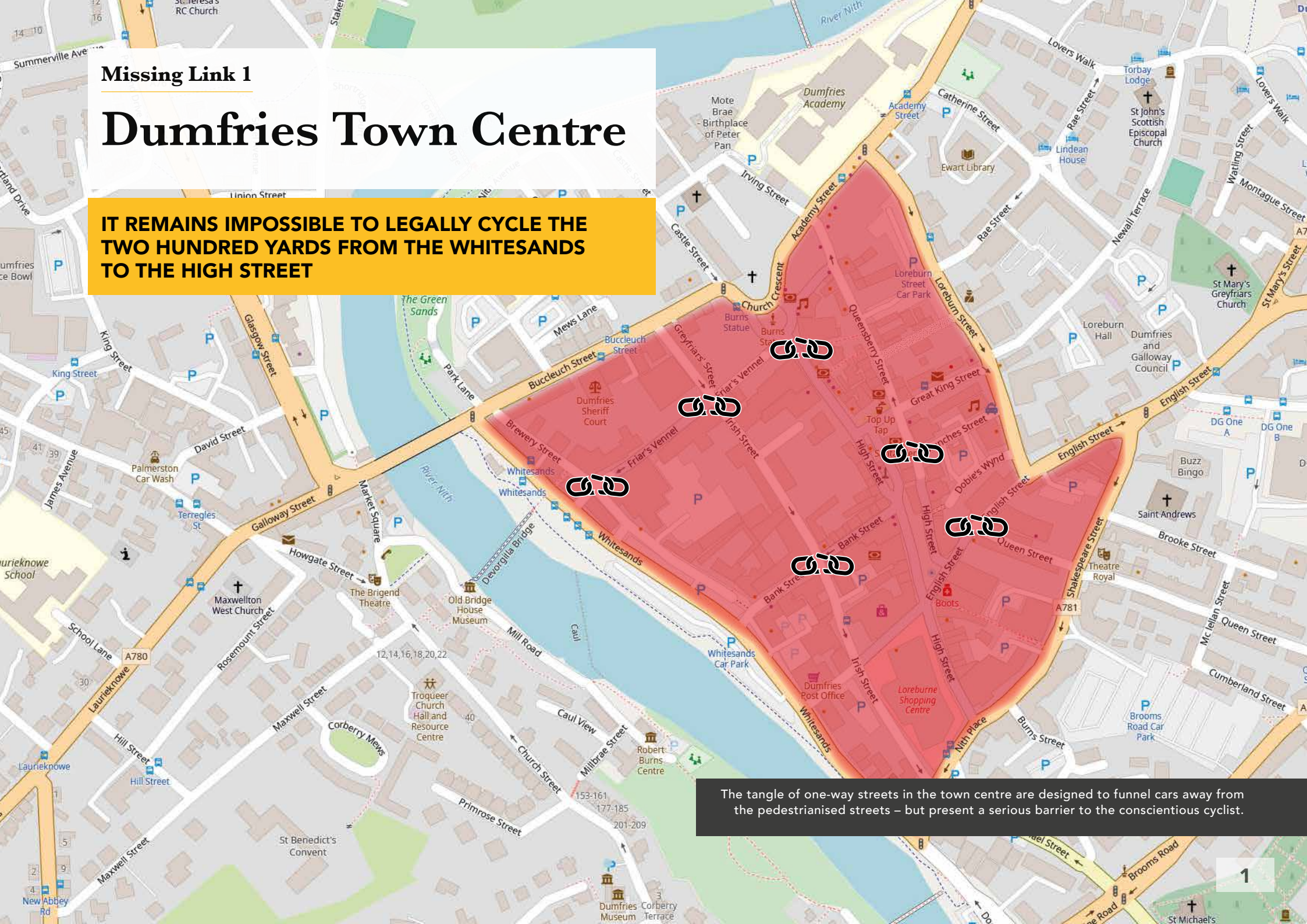


SUGGESTED ROUTE

Missing Link 1

Dumfries Town Centre

IT REMAINS IMPOSSIBLE TO LEGALLY CYCLE THE TWO HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE WHITESANDS TO THE HIGH STREET



The tangle of one-way streets in the town centre are destined to funnel cars away from the pedestrianised streets – but present a serious barrier to the conscientious cyclist.

LINK DETAILS

Council Ward:
9- Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Access to the High Street is difficult by bike from the traffic-free network, especially the Whitesands.
- Parked cars occupy pedestrianised spaces.
- Narrow pavements force pedestrians on to narrow roads which have cars illegally parked on double yellow lines.
- Narrow streets better suited to pedestrians and bikes are still used for moving a few motor vehicles.

PROPOSALS

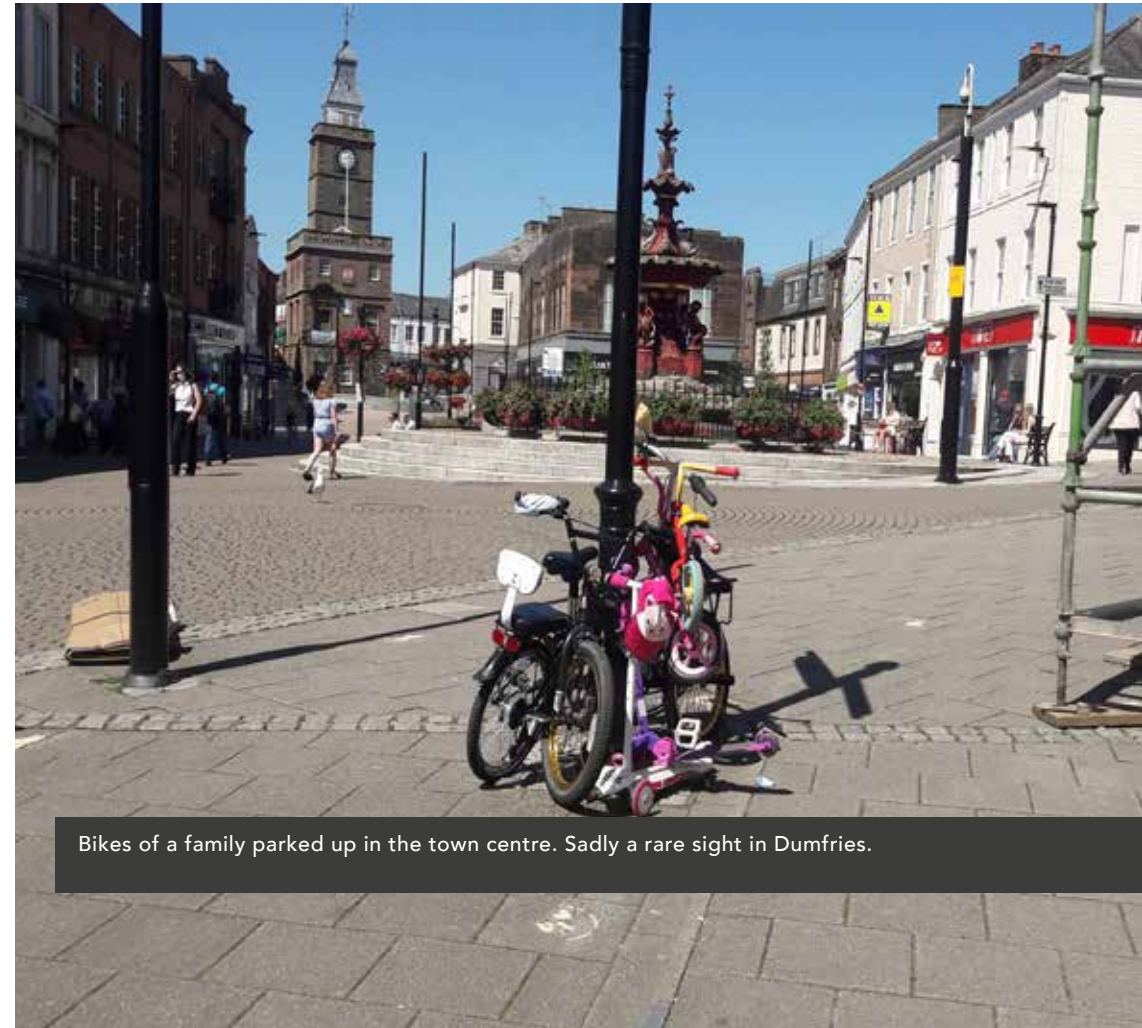
- Allow two-way cycling on Friars Vennel, Bank Street, Assembly Street and Queen Street.
- Enable safe and legal cycling to the High Street.
- Implement an existing plan to add a two-way cycle lane from the Whitesands to the south entrance of the High Street, continuing along Shakespeare Street.
- Pedestrianise Queensberry Street.

BENEFITS

- New routes from the Whitesands to the railway station, DG1 Leisure Complex, Morrisons and Lidl and on to Calside and Georgetown, all of which go via the town centre, and safe access to the High Street and English Street.
- Reduced pressure on parking spaces.
- More space for outdoor activities, eating and drinking and general commerce.

THE DETAILS

The town centre stands to gain so much if it were more welcoming to cyclists and pedestrians. Although more people are cycling into the centre of town than before, it hasn't seen the same boom as other parts of the town. The increase is mainly among men, rather than women or families, which is a sign of hostile conditions in the surrounding streets. When people don't feel safe cycling to the town centre, this puts more pressure on parking and makes it harder to reprioritise streets away from moving traffic around, into creating places for people. Plenty of research has shown that people who go shopping by bike, on foot or on public transport spend more overall than those who drive – something the local economy could do with right now.



Bikes of a family parked up in the town centre. Sadly a rare sight in Dumfries.

Accessing the High Street by bike

It remains impossible to legally cycle the two hundred yards from the Whitesands to the High Street except via the regular one-way system. This means pulling across three lanes of traffic on Shakespeare street to access the High Street. As well as enabling access to shops and cafes from existing cycle routes, easier cycling through the town centre could help join up some of the currently disjointed parts of the cycling network. For instance, the town centre offers the most direct route between the railway station and NCN 7, which runs along the Whitesands, but while it's currently perfectly legal to cycle from the station down to the Whitesands along Bank Street, there's no legal way of doing it in the other direction.

As most of the streets in the town centre are either nominally pedestrianised or low traffic, there should be no safety concerns involved in allowing two-way cycling along the otherwise one-way streets, especially the High Street, Friars Vennel and the top end of Bank Street. This would formalise what happens in practice anyway, but it would be better if cyclists had a legal right to cycle through the town centre, rather than taking the law into their own hands.

Enabling two-way cycling down Queen Street from English Street would not only provide a safe access to those living in the recently improved Queen Street area, and make DG1 Leisure Complex and Morrisons more accessible by bike, but could also form the start of a route towards Larchfield and Georgetown.

This really is one of the lowest of the low-hanging fruit: the council actually developed plans a few years ago to allow two-way cycling on all the (one-way) roads within the pedestrianised area (including Bank Street, Friars Vennel and the High Street). These proposals even included a new two-way cycleway using part of Shakespeare Street to link the south end of the High Street with the Whitesands. Despite getting as far as advertising the necessary changes to traffic regulation orders, we have yet to see any changes.

The High Street is supposed to only be accessed by motor vehicles during certain hours of the day. The top half of Bank Street and the Friars Vennel are access only (for the people who live there) with no waiting. In practice this is rarely enforced so motor vehicles park for long stretches on all of these streets at any time of day.



It's frustrating to see nice shopping streets like the Vennel, which should be a place for people to stroll safely become clogged with parked cars and impatient drivers who treat it like a normal road.

Properly enforcing the pedestrianisation (and parking restrictions) of these streets would benefit everyone apart from the tiny handful of people who currently park there outside loading times. There are three car parks that connect directly to the Vennel so availability of off-street car parking isn't an issue.

A barrier across the bottom of the High Street would be the easiest way to enforce the delivery hours, while creative use of parklets or planters would create more places for folk to linger, encouraging them to shop more, and also providing a place to rest (benches are an important mobility aid for people who can't walk that far at a stretch).

Encouraging businesses to follow the example of the Riverside Tap and put out more tables and chairs would also attract more people into the town centre, especially in fine weather (and with awnings and a bit of shelter, safe outdoor dining becomes an even more attractive prospect in our changeable climate).



The Riverside Tap make use of their outdoor space on the Vennel, more economically beneficial than car parking.



The case for more pedestrianised streets

Three streets were suggested for closure or traffic restrictions as part of the Common Space consultation – Assembly Street, Queensberry Street and the section of Queen Street between Shakespeare Street and English Street.

Queensberry Street is very narrow, with cluttered pavements and yet still provides a few parking spaces along one end. There are a few cafes and the Tam O'Shanter pub that might make better use of the space than storage for half a dozen cars, and it might attract more people to the shops around them. Apart from access or deliveries, there's no real need to use it as a through route for cars. Temporary pedestrianisation during the summer and at weekends might be a good way to try this. It could also offer scope for an extension to the market.

The section of Queen Street between English Street and Shakespeare Street has very narrow footways, is one-way and creates a loop that is used to park illegally near the High Street.

Assembly Street (between Irish Street and the Whitesands) has a very narrow pavement and only serves one property directly. Closing it off could provide an extra route for cycling up to the town centre and create a far more attractive pedestrian route between the Loreburne Centre and the Whitesands, including for those who park there.

These roads act as important links to/from the town centre. Improving the pedestrian and cycling environment would encourage more people to leave their cars either at home or in the parking towards the edge of the town, leaving any closer parking available for those with a disabled badge. An improved pedestrian environment here would also make the Theatre Royal more accessible from the town centre.

Dumfries town centre is undergoing some exciting changes with a number of projects to bring people back to live right in the heart of the town. Putting people at the heart of the place with the suggestions we've made above, will be key to making these changes a success.



Dumfries Railway Station as an Active Travel Hub

Cycling and walking links are an important part of any worthwhile integrated transport system. As the railway station is a key part of creating an integrated sustainable transport network, we have dedicated an entire section of the Missing Links to connections to and from Dumfries railway station.

Passenger numbers for Dumfries railway station peaked during 2018-19 at 402,564. During the travel lockdowns of 2020-21 usage dropped to 11%. By 2023 this had recovered to 75% of the peak. Dumfries serves 290,000 passengers at the moment and this is set to grow. Over 90% of journeys in Scotland are between destinations in Scotland (Source: Scotrail).

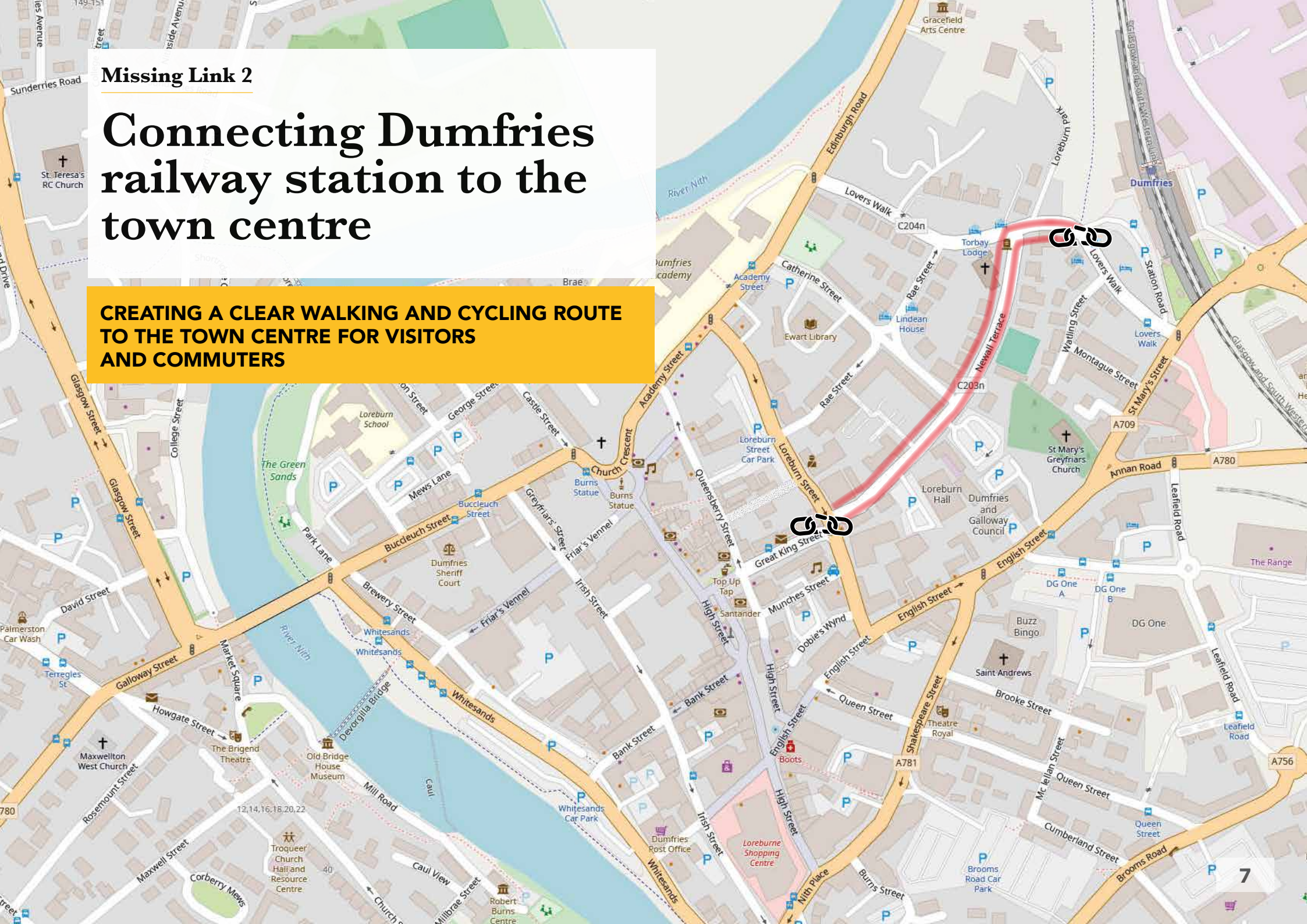
The next five chapters look at Dumfries railway station and how it connects with the centre and suburbs on the four main compass points: west, north, east and south. Finally, we conclude with a review of the cycle facilities at the station, including signage and the trains themselves.

Many of the station improvements will be the responsibility of ScotRail, but we would expect SWestrans and D&G Council to work closely with ScotRail to improve the signage inside and on the periphery of the station to benefit any improvements in the links to the station.

Missing Link 2

Connecting Dumfries railway station to the town centre

CREATING A CLEAR WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTE TO THE TOWN CENTRE FOR VISITORS AND COMMUTERS



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

600m

Travel times:

by bike ~2 minutes

Council Ward:

9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Dangerous crossing at Lovers Walk and Newall Terrace.
- Confusing and dangerous crossing at Newall Terrace and Loreburn Street. Unnecessary trip around Munches Street.
- Inadequate signage.

PROPOSALS

- Controlled crossing at Lovers Walk.
- More and earlier signage on Newall Terrace.
- Make Great King Street two-way to cyclists to avoid Munches Street.

BENEFITS OF IMPROVEMENTS

- Safer routes to the centre of town and the station.
- Increased footfall to town centre businesses and services.
- Connections to existing cycleways.
- Bring tourists into the centre of town instead of funnelling them around a one-way system that skirts the centre and its amenities.

Settlements

This could impact the entire population of Dumfries and surrounding villages. It would also be a benefit to larger villages on the Carlisle to Glasgow route: Kirkconnel, Kelloholm, Sanquar, Annan and Gretna (~15,000 people).

THE DETAILS

Better links between the railway station and the town centre could ultimately lead to a connection to the NCN 7 along the Whitesands helping to bring cycle tourists into the centre of town and making it easier for business visitors and students to reach the DGRI, The Bridge and The Crichton.

Some work has been done towards this end, but there is still no continuous link between the station and the town centre itself, let alone to the Whitesands. Given the station is just over 500m from Queensberry Square, this is a priority missing link.

Newall Terrace has been partially developed as part of this route. At the town centre end of this road there is a short length of eastbound one-way road with a contraflow cycle lane which means it is quiet enough for on-road cycling. However, the lane itself is regularly obstructed by parked motor vehicles, despite the presence of waiting restrictions. This forces cyclists into oncoming traffic that is anticipating a one-way street.

Heading towards the town centre, there is a controlled crossing on Loreburn Street between Newall Terrace and Great King Street, including for cycles. This works well for cyclists heading to the railway station from Great King Street. However, cyclists heading to the town centre have to turn left along the multi-lane Loreburn Street then right into Munches Street. Local residents familiar with the route may cope with this, however, for visitors it must be confusing as you have to cross the lanes immediately and there is no indication that Munches Street leads to the centre of town. If they miss this turn they would be forced down English Street and away from the town centre.

Cyclists with a green light at the crossing are put in conflict with vehicles turning right from Great King Street. Whilst there is a 1 or 2 second delay before these



Contraflow cycle lane on the short one-way eastbound length of Newall Terrace from its junction with Loreburn Street. Note the with-traffic lane on the opposite side.

vehicles get a green light, and they have to travel a short distance to get to Loreburn Street, they are then in conflict with any cyclists from Newall Terrace who arrive at the junction with the green light. Neither cyclists nor drivers would expect this, which is concerning.



The combined pedestrian and cycle crossing across Loreburn Street, looking from Newall Terrace and showing a red light for cyclists who are required to "rejoin the carriageway" and turn left along Loreburn Street, just as traffic is emerging from Great King Street.

One solution would be to stagger the green lights, although this would either mean a shorter green time for crossing or longer waits for traffic on Loreburn Street. The ideal solution would be to make Great King Street two-way for bikes while still one-way for cars (without a contraflow lane). This avoids the need for cyclists to tackle Loreburn Street at all.

The bigger issue with this route to and from the station is the need to cross Lovers Walk to get between Newall Terrace and the station. Lovers Walk is part of the temporary 20mph speed limit, but this is a busy road and a bus route. Heading towards the station, at the Newall Terrace/Lovers Walk junction there is adequate visibility to the left, but very restricted visibility to the right. Some cyclists prefer to divert along Rae Street to make the turn easier. The crossing is no easier for pedestrians or users of mobility scooters, especially for those with limited mobility or who are hard of hearing. There is reasonable visibility in both directions when coming from the station, but it still feels a leap of faith when coming out of the forecourt entrance on to the main road.

The width of the road and footway corridor between these two junctions is limited. Putting in a controlled crossing for both bikes and pedestrians would require a stretch of shared path and hence wider footways, and it is hard to see how this could be done without acquiring land from adjacent properties. However, some form of solution is required if the council is serious about prioritising active travel and creating a continuous, usable and safe walking, wheeling and cycle route between the railway station and the town centre. Doing so would not only connect up the station and the town centre, but also provide a continuous route on to the Caledonian and Maxwelltown paths, creating significant network effects by joining up the existing traffic-free routes.

To summarise, in order of priority, this route could completed by:

- Remove the conflict between cyclists and vehicles at the Loreburn Street crossing.
- Create a safe crossing of Lovers Walk for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Provide clear walking and cycling signs from the station to the town and vice versa.
- Make the 20mph limits on Newall Terrace (and beyond) permanent and increase repeater signs on Newall Terrace and Lovers Walk.

- Provide “Except cycles” signs below the “No through road” signs on Newall Terrace at the Catherine Street junction.
- Make Great King Street two-way for cyclists.

The issue of the regular obstruction of the contraflow cycle lane at the end of Newall Terrace requires serious consideration. This appears to be complicated by the adjacent cellar access for the Fleshers pub, meaning the brewery dray stops there to deliver (although other vehicles also block this lane).

Some possible actions and options to address this specific issue include:

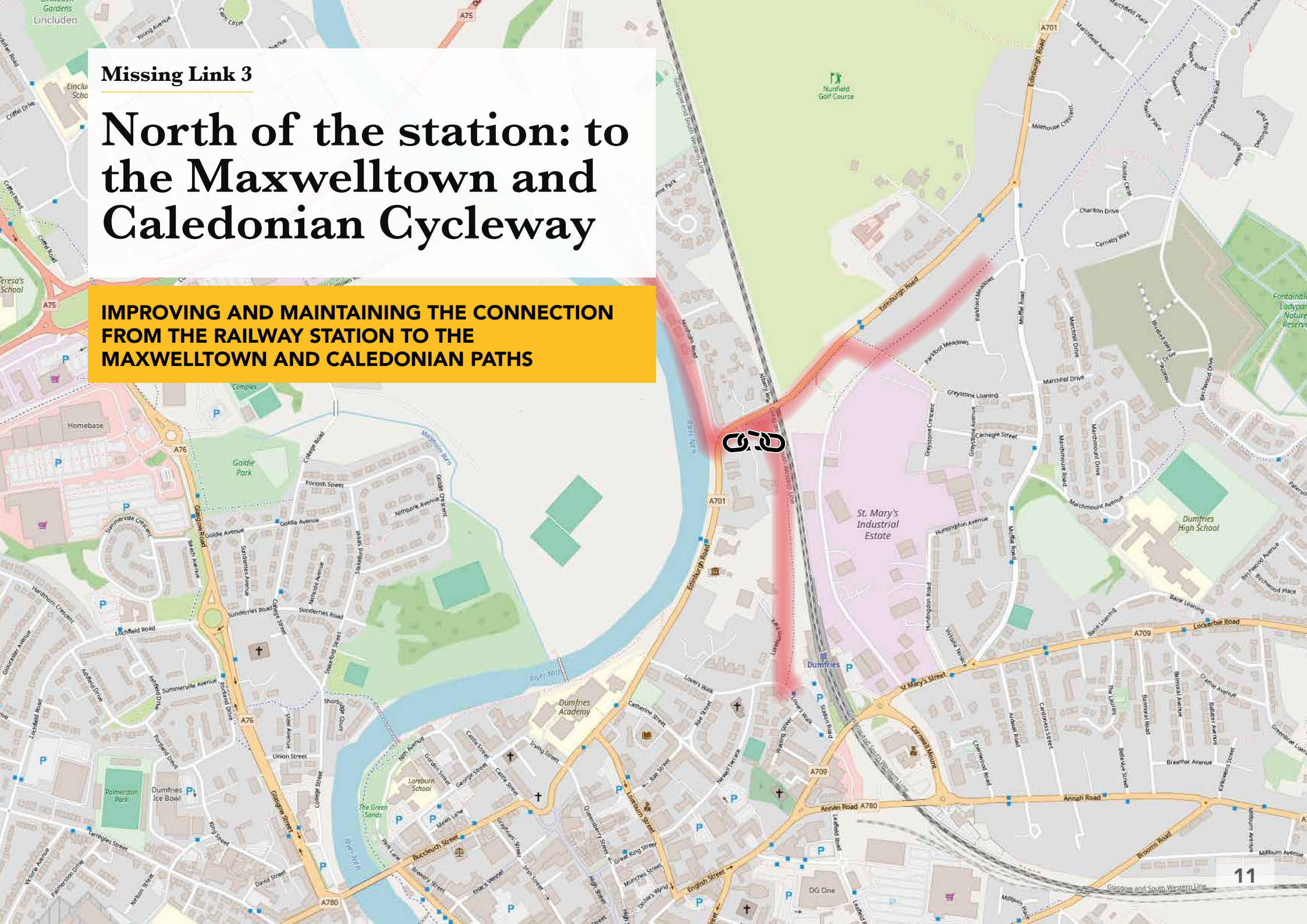
- Parking enforcement.
- Changing the advisory cycle lane to a mandatory one, although this would still rely on enforcement.
- Extending the no loading/unloading restriction at the junction eastwards along the full length of the advisory lane.
- Provide intermittent kerbs and/or bollards along the edge of the advisory cycle lane to physically separate the lane from the road and to prevent parking in the lane.
- Widening the footway on the south side of Newall Terrace along the length of the current advisory lane, to allow a segregated lane.
- Provide parking on the north side of Newall Terrace immediately to the east, by removing part of the existing “No Waiting At Any Time” restriction by the Oasis Youth Centre. This would remove any excuse for the current illegal parking, whilst also slowing traffic by narrowing the effective width of the road.



Missing Link 3

North of the station: to the Maxwelltown and Caledonian Cycleway

IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING THE CONNECTION FROM THE RAILWAY STATION TO THE MAXWELLTOWN AND CALEDONIAN PATHS



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

~600m

Travel times: by bike

~2 minutes

Council Ward:

9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- 90 degree bend with poor visibility and narrowing of the path.
- Personal safety issues due to restricted visibility in parts.
- Slippery surfaces if not regularly maintained.

PROPOSALS

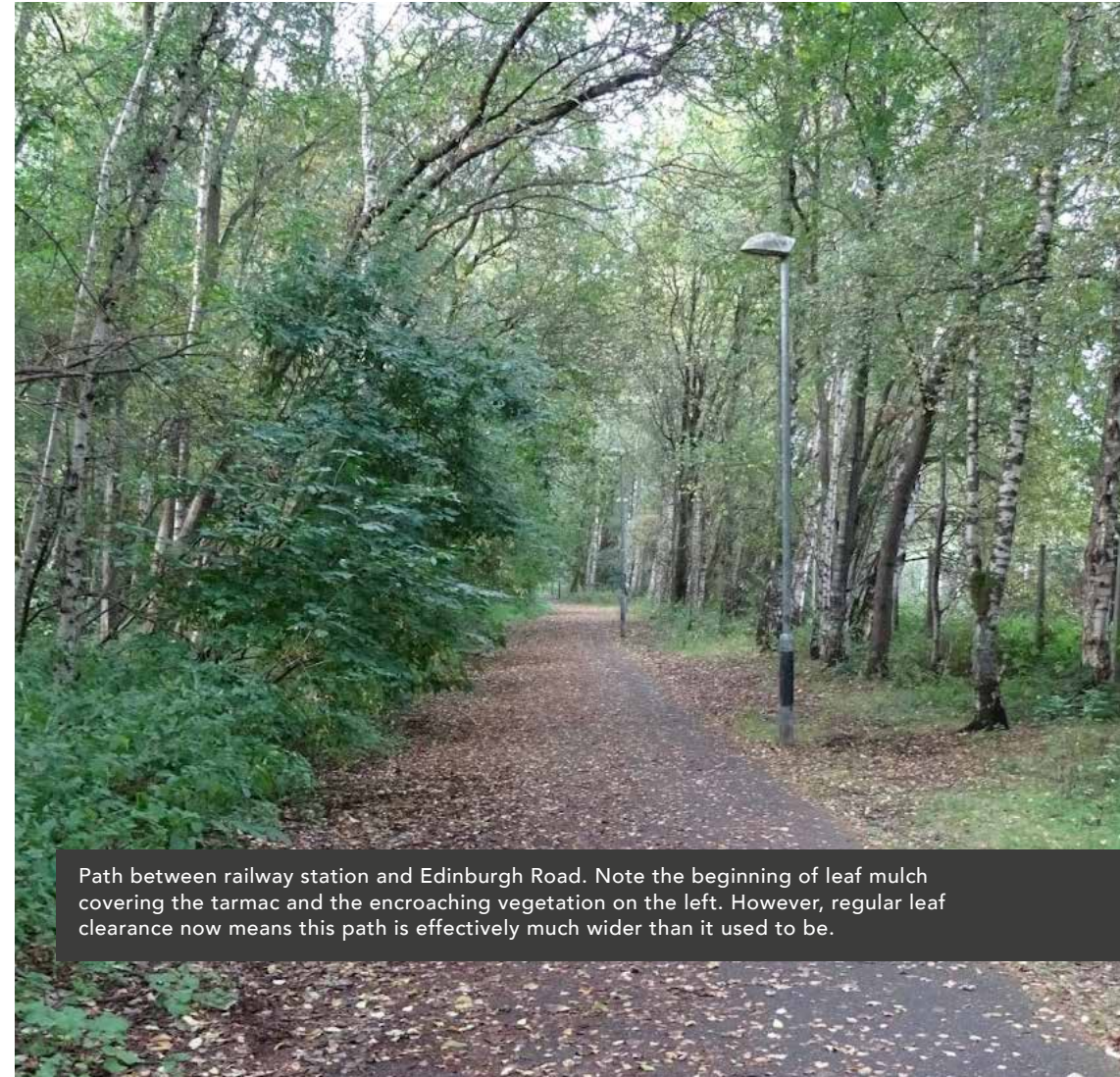
- Look into widening the path at the Edinburgh Road end, to avoid the need for a ‘cyclists dismount’ signs.
- Add the path to routine vegetation management for roads to provide a “verge” along either side.
- Regularly deploy the footway sweeping and gritting vehicle, especially in winter.

BENEFITS

- Allows the full width of the path to be used.
- Reduced leaf mulch coverage and quicker drying of the path.
- Reduced conflict between users of all kinds.
- Improved road and personal safety through better visibility.

THE DETAILS

The southernmost part of the Caledonian Cycleway starts at the railway station access road. This is a shared pedestrian and cycle path to the Edinburgh Road and is considered part of the council’s public road network (F(C)14 on the list of public roads). From Edinburgh Road the route continues north on the Caledonian Cycleway to Locharbriggs and Heathhall or you can cross it via controlled crossings to get to the Maxwelltown Path and onwards to Sandside, Summerhill, Palmerston Park, Lincluden, Lochside, Barnhill, Cargenbridge, DGRI and beyond.



Path between railway station and Edinburgh Road. Note the beginning of leaf mulch covering the tarmac and the encroaching vegetation on the left. However, regular leaf clearance now means this path is effectively much wider than it used to be.

The path is now regularly cleared of leaves by the council, which is a significant improvement, and makes it much more usable and safer for cyclists and pedestrians alike in autumn and winter. Recent scrub and tree clearance has also helped with the encroachment of vegetation. Tree roots have lifted the surface at one point, forming a bit of a hazard.

The path is level except for a short sharp gradient at the railway station end and a steep, narrow (approximately 1 metre wide) section at the Edinburgh Road end where there is a cyclists dismount sign. There is an approximately 90 degree bend at the bottom of the slope and forward visibility here is restricted by vegetation.

Widening the narrow section at Edinburgh Road would remove the need for a cyclists dismount sign and provide a better visibility at the 90 degree corner. Land acquisition would be required to achieve both improvements. This could perhaps be undertaken as part of any development of the adjacent field, which currently has planning permission for a single house.

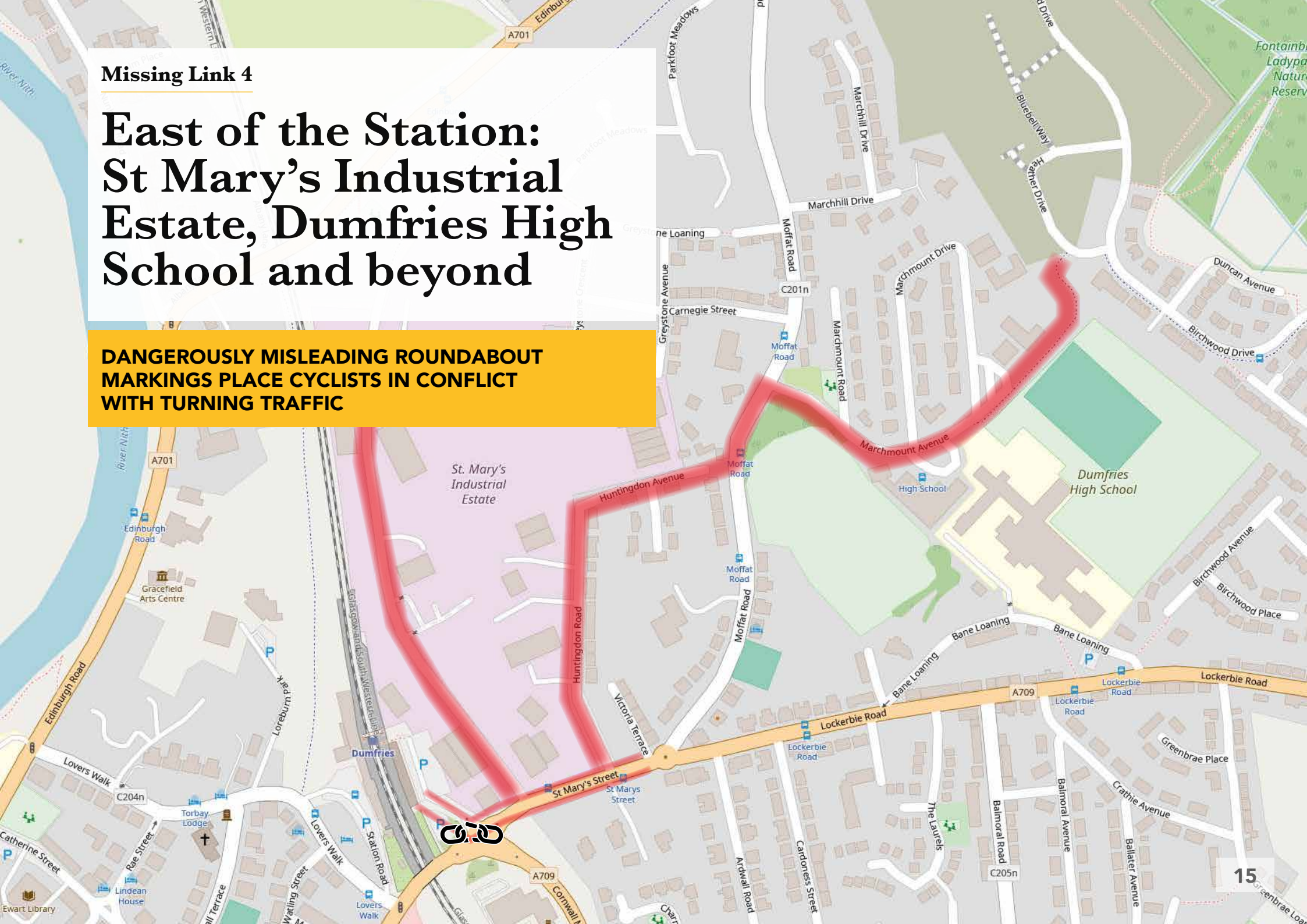


90 degree bend in path at bottom of ramp up to Edinburgh Road, showing the very limited forward visibility and the Cyclists Dismount sign.

Missing Link 4

East of the Station: St Mary's Industrial Estate, Dumfries High School and beyond

**DANGEROUSLY MISLEADING ROUNDABOUT
MARKINGS PLACE CYCLISTS IN CONFLICT
WITH TURNING TRAFFIC**



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

~800m (Platform 2 to Dumfries High School)

Missing link length:

170m

Travel times:

by bike ~3 minutes

Council Ward:

9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- People exiting the railway station encounter a large, high-speed roundabout at the junction of St Mary's Street and Cornwall Mount.
- No safe access to low-traffic routes avoiding St Mary's Road and Moffat Road.
- None of the signage indicates these low-traffic routes for any mode of active travel.

PROPOSALS

- Reinstate the orange cycle box markings at the end of the railway bridge.
- Create a two-way cycle track on the north side of St Mary's Street from the Cornwall Mount roundabout to the St Mary's Industrial Estate Road. Extend to Huntingdon Avenue, with raised table crossings at the junctions with St. Mary's Industrial Estate Road and Huntingdon Road.
- Provide signs to the Caledonian Cycleway at the "No through road" signs at the St Mary's Industrial Estate Road and "Except cycles" at the Huntingdon Road junction.
- Provide direction signs for pedestrians and cyclists at either end of the routes along St Mary's Industrial Estate Road and along Huntingdon Road and Huntingdon Avenue.

- Create a 20mph speed limit on St Mary's Industrial Estate Road.
- Increase the number of 20mph repeater signs on Huntingdon Road and Huntingdon Avenue. Provide 20mph roundel markings on Huntingdon Road and Huntingdon Avenue, reflecting their role as a cycle route.
- Address flooding on St Mary's Street which creates a significant hazard.
- Ensure all the traffic lights around the station respond to cycles as well as cars.
- Narrow the approaches and carriageway of the Cornwall Mount roundabout to make space for a Dutch-style cycle-friendly design.

BENEFITS

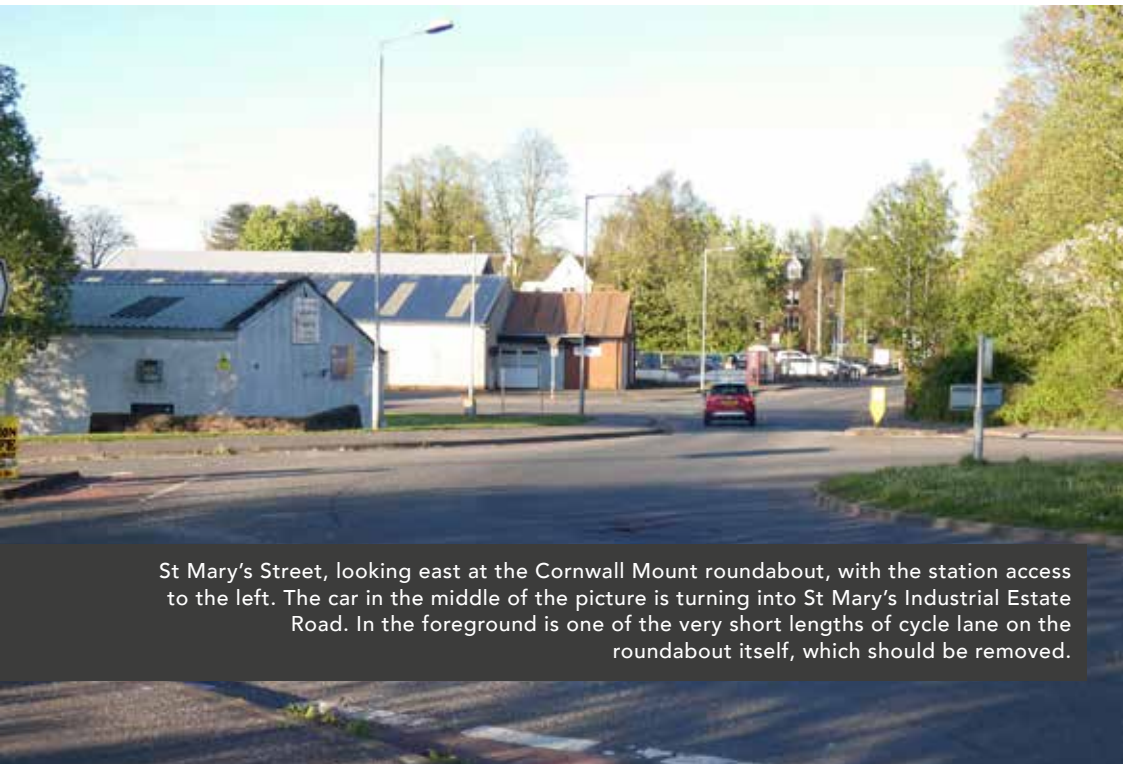
- Creation of a second route to the railway station via St Mary's Industrial Estate that serves communities along the Caledonian Cycleway.
- Creation of a low-traffic route between the station and Dumfries High School and David Keswick Centre.
- Improved safety on the St Mary's/Cornwall Mount roundabout.

THE DETAILS

St Mary's Street (which becomes the Lockerbie Road) and the Moffat Road are both busy and hostile to all but the most confident cyclists. The large roundabout which forms the junction between Cornwall Mount, St Mary's Street and the station access to platform 2, is an immediate barrier to cycling. Dangerously misleading cycle markings place cyclists in conflict with turning traffic. The roundabout carriageway is very wide, even though it only has a single circulating lane enabling drivers to enter and exit the roundabout at high speeds. This would make enough room to make a Dutch-style cycle-friendly roundabout (see chapter 12, Glasgow Street, for details).

Providing a cycle track on the north side of St Mary's Street from the Cornwall Mount roundabout to the St Mary's Industrial Estate Road should be a priority as it is only 90 metres, but has the great benefit of creating an alternative route to the Caledonian Cycleway and businesses in the industrial estate. At present this is signed as a dead-end, no-through-road which it is for motorised vehicles, but St

Mary's Industrial Estate Road does connect directly to the Caledonian Cycleway. From the entrance of St Mary's Industrial Estate Road it is then approximately 80 metres to the junction with Huntingdon Road. Huntingdon Road was given a



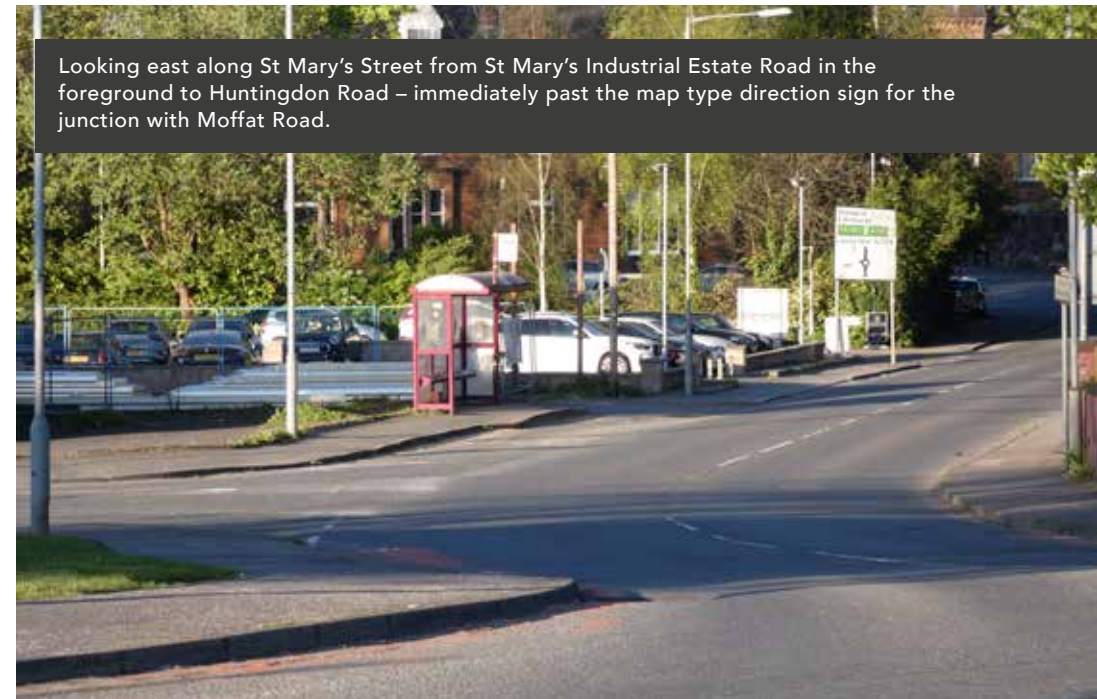
St Mary's Street, looking east at the Cornwall Mount roundabout, with the station access to the left. The car in the middle of the picture is turning into St Mary's Industrial Estate Road. In the foreground is one of the very short lengths of cycle lane on the roundabout itself, which should be removed.

20mph limit as part of the partially implemented works to improve active travel links to and from Dumfries High School. It is lightly trafficked although there are large goods vehicles using it to access the industrial premises along it, and to get to and from the Dumfries Auction Mart. Huntingdon Road, and its continuation as Huntingdon Avenue, has a short length of shared-use path connecting it to Moffat Road, and the shared-use path on the west side of that road that connects to Carnegie Street. This is an ideal low traffic route to Marchmount and Dumfries High School.

Extending the cycle track along St Mary's Street might require land acquisition to meet modern standards. The bus stop would also need to be redesigned to avoid conflicts between bus passengers and cyclists. Moving the bus stop out into the carriageway would improve bus reliability as the bus would not have to pull out into traffic.

Connecting both sides of the railway station

If these cycle facilities were provided on St Mary's Street then the next obvious step would be a connection from the Cornwall Mount roundabout westwards (heading into town) over the railway bridge to the junction with Lovers Walk. This would then create a connection to the cycle parking at the west side of the station and also to the Caledonian Cycleway path link to Edinburgh Road. Crossing the railway bridge has obvious constraints, in terms of the overall carriageway width between the parapets and the parapet height, but it would appear achievable.



Looking east along St Mary's Street from St Mary's Industrial Estate Road in the foreground to Huntingdon Road – immediately past the map type direction sign for the junction with Moffat Road.

In brief this would involve:

- Creating a cycle path on St Mary's Street between the Cornwall Mount roundabout access to the railway station and Lovers Walk.
- Create a cycling and walking corridor along St Mary's Street between Lovers Walk and English Street/Annan Road as part of a connection between the railway station and the town centre, perhaps by making it access only to motor traffic.

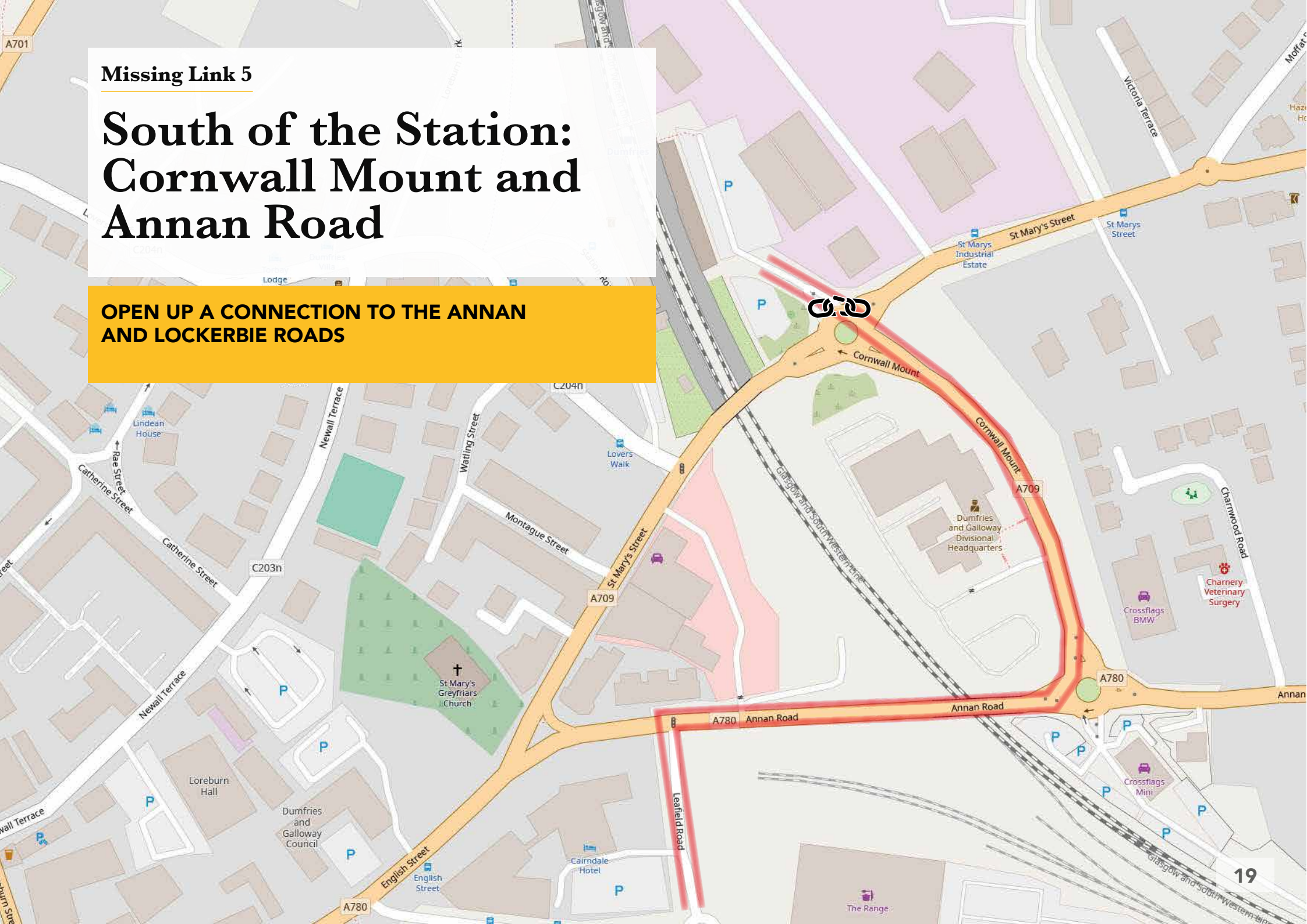


Looking west along St Mary's Street from the junction with Lovers Walk (right).

Missing Link 5

South of the Station: Cornwall Mount and Annan Road

**OPEN UP A CONNECTION TO THE ANNAN
AND LOCKERBIE ROADS**



LINK DETAILS

Route length: 200m

(500m if extended as far as DG 1 Leisure Complex)

Council ward:

9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Lack of a cycle track on a busy road.
- Dangerous road markings on a fast roundabout.

PROPOSALS

- Replace the dangerously misleading markings from the roundabout on Cornwall Mount / Annan Road with a Dutch-style cycle-friendly roundabout.
- Narrow the approaches and carriageway of the Annan Road roundabout to create a more compact layout and calm traffic.
- Create a cycle track along one side of Cornwall Mount.
- Link into future cycle tracks along the Annan Road and Brooms Road.

BENEFITS

- Greatly improved safety at the two roundabouts at either end of Cornwall Mount.
- A key link in building any kind of cycling infrastructure from the railway station to settlements in the south of Dumfries.

THE DETAILS

The nearest cycle facilities south of the station are some short lengths on Brooms Road, either side of the Leaffield Road roundabout. Therefore it is difficult to talk about missing links when there is nothing to link to! However, as we cover in our chapter on Annan and Lockerbie Roads there is scope to provide a cycle track along the Annan Road and Brooms Road. However, accessing either of these roads involves Cornwall Mount which has busy, daunting roundabouts at either end.

In the previous chapter we made recommendations about improvements to the roundabout at the station end of Cornwall Mount. The south end of Cornwall Mount, where it meets Annan Road, also has peripheral cycle lanes which are dangerously misleading. The same comments, and possible changes, therefore apply to both roundabouts.

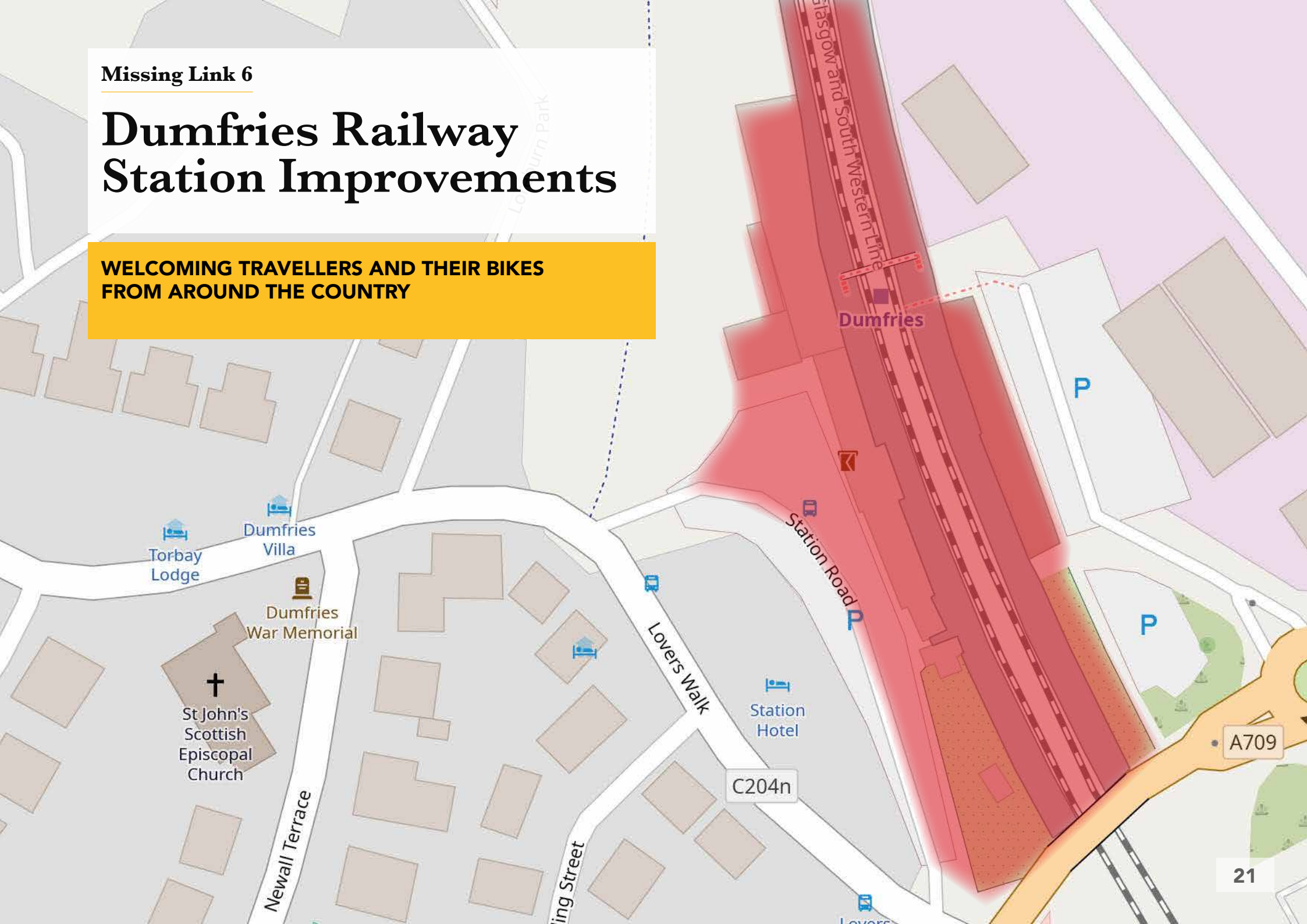
There is sufficient room to create a cycle track along one side of Cornwall Mount, ideally considered at the same time as the suggested redesign of the roundabouts at either end. Initially this would at least create a cycle connection to and from the Police headquarters. It would be a start to onward expansion of the cycle network southwards and across the Annan Road railway bridge to the Annan Road/ Leaffield Road junction. From there it is just a short distance to the DG1 Leisure Complex and retail park on Leaffield Road.



Missing Link 6

Dumfries Railway Station Improvements

WELCOMING TRAVELLERS AND THEIR BIKES FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



A709

C204n

MAIN PROBLEMS

- A lack of information about, and sign-posting of safe routes to key destinations in Dumfries and popular tourist destinations.
- No signage directing people to the bike parking.
- Unnecessarily complex bike parking on platform 1.

PROPOSALS

- Provide cycle parking signs outside the station near both sets of cycle racks.
- Provide active travel maps in key locations in the station and at exits.
- Provide direction signs for pedestrians and cyclists to the town centre, NCN 7, the infirmary and destinations on the Maxwelltown and Caledonian paths.
- Reinstate timetable posters by the station entrances and on platforms.
- Introduce Highland Explorer cycle carriages to improve accessibility and increase provision.

BENEFITS

- Increased number of journeys by bike to and from the railway station (which also has several bus stops).
- Increased use of the train by visitors to the region who want to cycle.

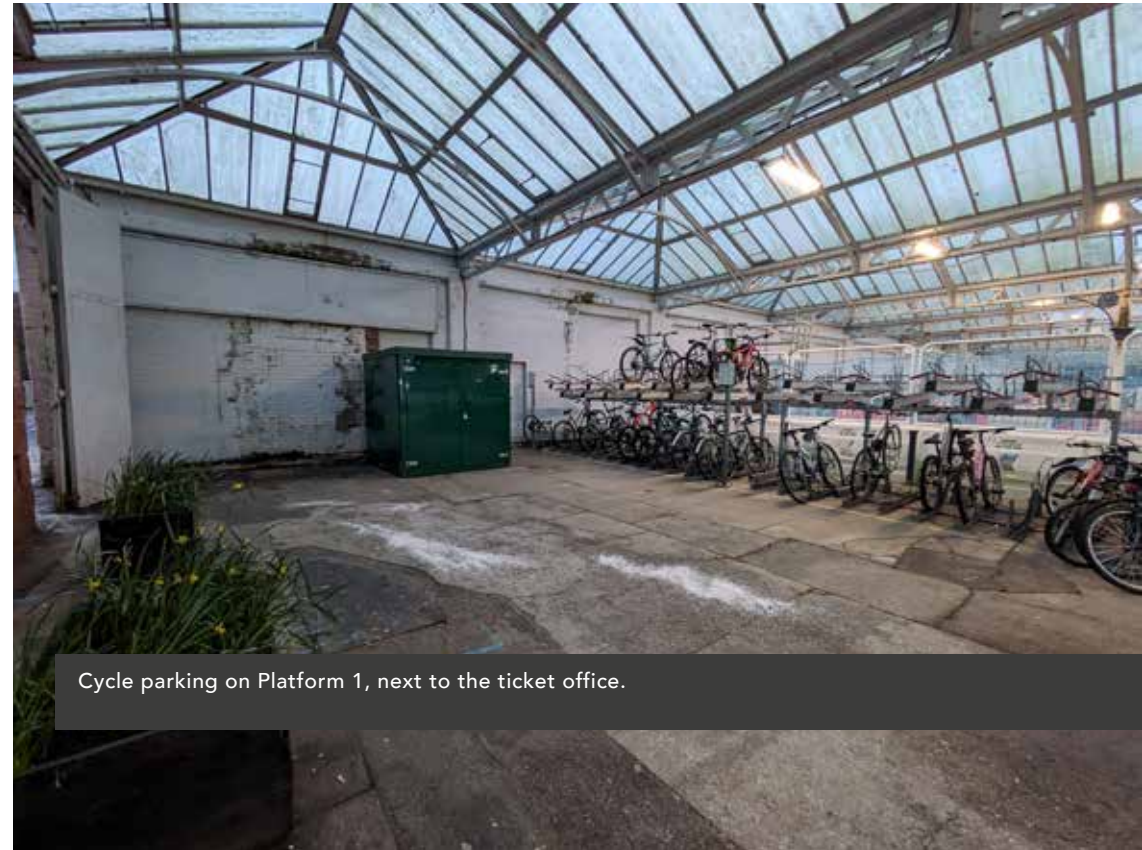
N.B. In this chapter we will refer to the two station platforms. Platform 1, is on the side of the station with the ticket office and the Station Hotel. The platform 1 side has exits to the start of the Caledonian Cycleway, Lovers Walk, and the junction of Lovers Walk and St Mary's Street. Platform 2 exits to the roundabout where St Mary's Street and Cornwall Mount meet. At the time of writing, an accessible bridge and lifts between were being installed at the station.

Where transport options are fully integrated between rail, bus, bike and car, greater distances can be covered sustainably. What happens once you've got your bike to the railway station is almost as important as how easy it is to cycle there. Secure bike and trike parking, decent signage and cycle facilities on the trains themselves all play their part here.

Secure parking

At the north end of the platform 1 (the ticket office side), there is a double-decker cycle rack which can accommodate 42 conventional cycles. This is under cover and there is a CCTV camera covering it. However, there are no signs for this facility for cyclists arriving from the town – a “Cycle P” sign on the external wall or on the adjacent old sliding door would seem a simple fix for this. On platform 2 (the cafe side) there is a covered cycle shelter at the south end of the building which can accommodate 10 bikes and uses more conventional Sheffield stands. This is also covered by a CCTV camera, but would benefit from signage on the platform and at the entrance to to the station car park.

The double-decker parking design provides plenty of space but is awkward and not very intuitive to use. It is also not possible to use these racks with any kind of non-standard cycle such as a trike, cargo bike, or even some mountain bikes. This leads many cyclists to attach their bikes to the temporary barriers nearby. Adding more conventional Sheffield style stands would offer options to all kinds of bike user.



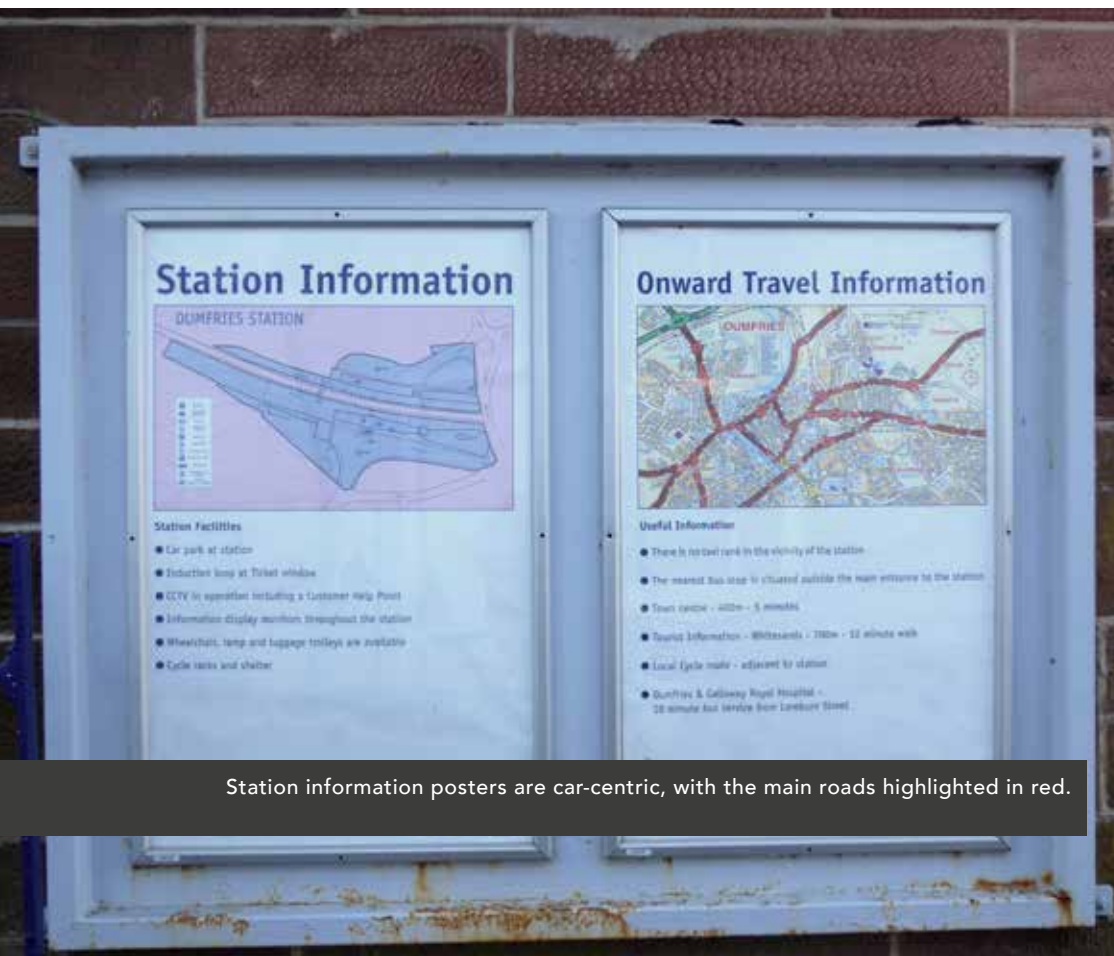
Cycle parking on Platform 1, next to the ticket office.

Information and Signage

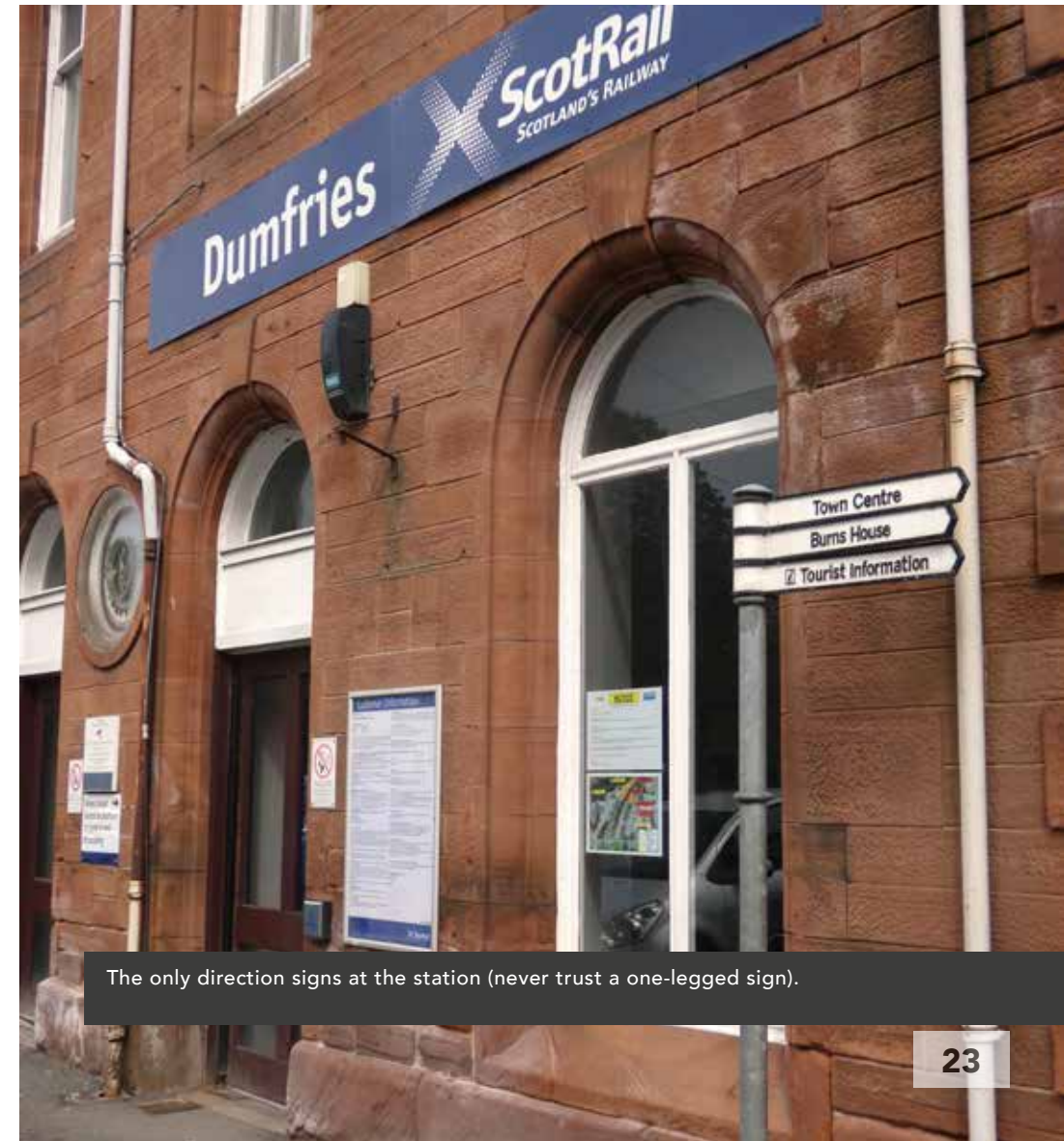
When leaving the station a lack of signage means that our best cycling infrastructure is overlooked. At minimum, the town centre route via Newall Terrace, and connections to the Maxwelltown and Caledonian paths should be signed. This would highlight traffic-free routes to the Infirmary and, for visitors, the virtually traffic-free route from the station to Mabie Forest, and a very family friendly one from the station to Ae.

Information posters advising passengers of “station facilities” and “onward travel information” for passengers arriving from Carlisle and the south (platform 1) are located at the south end of the main station building, away from the ticket office door, and so perhaps not immediately obvious to all passengers. This is complicated by there being three exits from this platform – through the ticket

office and at both ends of the building. There is no information at the exit at the north end of the building, at the cycle racks. On the platform side of the building near the ticket office is a plan of Dumfries town centre. There are no station information posters on platform 2, i.e. for trains arriving from Glasgow and the north. There are two exits from this platform, at either end of the building. There are currently two local maps, within the station building, opposite the ticket office on the west side of the station. These are very small and above head height for many passengers and inaccessible for anyone in a wheelchair.



Station information posters are car-centric, with the main roads highlighted in red.



The only direction signs at the station (never trust a one-legged sign).

The onward travel information poster includes a general OS map and advice that a local cycle route is adjacent to the station and that the town centre is a five minute walk away. The map does not include any specific active travel routes. Displaying copies of the council's active travel map for Dumfries alongside the existing station information posters would be helpful and should be repeated at every exit.

Direction signage outside the station is limited to a cast iron finger post sign assembly near the ticket office exit from platform 1, with nothing outside platform 2. One of the finger posts is for "Town centre" but it is unclear if this is for the route via English Street or the one via Newall Terrace. Either way, there are no further signs for pedestrians or cyclists once they've left the station, except for the overgrown sign at the entrance to the Caledonian Cycleway. Signs along the route between the station and the town centre (and vice versa) via Newall Terrace would be helpful to visitors using the station and an easy, quick improvement to encourage active travel.

Travelling with your bike

Once on the train, there are spaces for six bikes for every two carriages; many services are just two carriages, but busier trains sometimes have four carriages, and hence space for 12 bikes. This is more generous than most trains, which normally only have two spaces per train and often require you to book in advance. The bike spaces do not compete with wheelchair or buggy space, or with luggage space, so are usually left clear by other passengers. On the downside, you are required to lift your bike and hang it by the back wheel. This is impossible for many people, especially those using e-bikes or adaptive cycles, or who are physically disabled, or just don't have the upper body strength to manage.

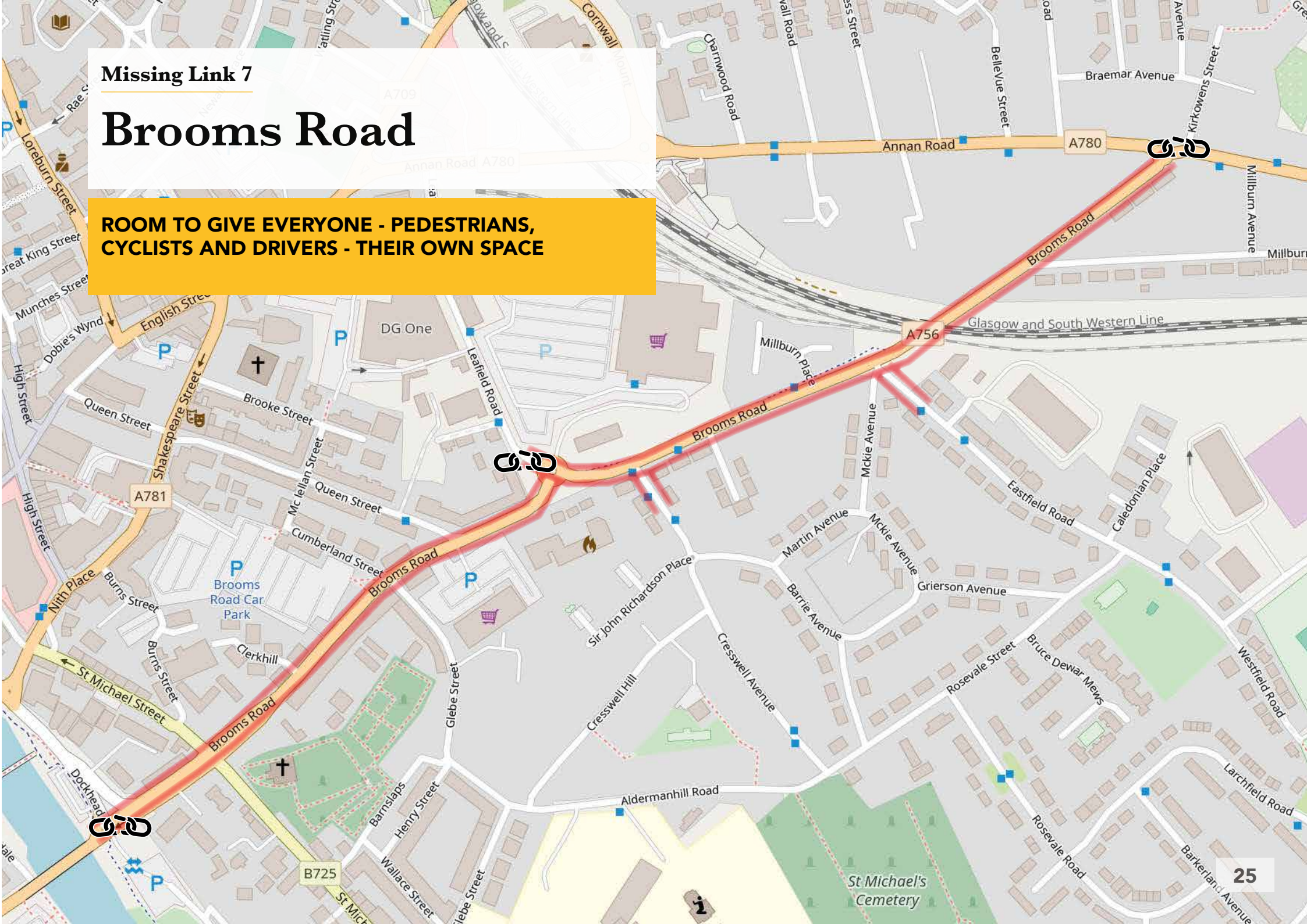
Scotrail have recently brought in generous cycle carriages to their Highland Explorer route which show what can be done without requiring bikes to be hung up on hooks. Using this style of carriage as standard on the Glasgow-Dumfries-Carlisle route would be a significant improvement.



Missing Link 7

Brooms Road

ROOM TO GIVE EVERYONE - PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND DRIVERS - THEIR OWN SPACE



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

0.65 miles / 1km

Travel times:

by bike 3 minutes; by e-bike 3 minutes

Missing link length:

0.65 miles / 1km

Council ward:

9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- This is a 1km stretch of arterial road with one complex roundabout at Morrisons and complex junctions at Lidl and St Michael's Street.
- There is a short stretch of segregated cycle path between Morrisons and the railway bridge that leaves people stranded.
- Painted cycle lanes cross busy supermarket junctions.

PROPOSALS

- A two-way cycle track the full length of Brooms Road that makes negotiating the roundabouts at Morrisons and junctions at Lidl much safer for cyclists and pedestrians of all abilities.
- Connections from the new cycle track to routes into Cresswell and Georgetown.
- A CYCLOPS junction at the St Michael's junction with Brooms Road.

BENEFITS

- Creation of a corridor for cyclists and pedestrians from Annan Road to St Michael's Street and traffic-free routes along the river.
- Increased active travel options for two of the main supermarkets in the centre of town.

THE DETAILS

If you've driven in Dumfries, you've probably used Brooms Road. It's a key artery through the town for cars. And if you've cycled anywhere in Dumfries, the chances are that you've taken a route that avoids Brooms Road. It's not a pleasant place to ride, especially around Morrisons and Lidl or at the St Michael's junction. Brooms Road could be as important a route for bikes and pedestrians as it is for cars, if there was safe space to cycle on it.

Brooms Road does have a short section of segregated cycle track, but it's a bit of an island. To access it from Annan Road you have to cycle along Brooms Road and then cross both carriageways. Once on the cycle track you are deposited by the Morrisons roundabout with no crossing and in conflict with cars exiting from the petrol station. It's also too narrow and faces the usual issues of sharing space between cyclists and pedestrians.

Glasgow builds segregated routes for cycling along busy main roads. We don't always have the volume of road space that Glasgow does, but Brooms Road is one of the places where we could finish the job that the short stretch of cycle path started and open up a corner of town that is currently inhospitable to cycling.

Starting where it comes off Annan Road, Brooms Road is wide. One side is flanked by businesses, so there's the option to have a cycle track along here, taking space from the roadway if needed, to make room for cyclists and pedestrians. This would then usefully join up with Millburn Avenue, which forms a useful low-traffic alternative to Annan Road and exits onto the Georgetown Road on the edge of



Georgetown. The railway bridge over Brooms Road is a pinch point, which might mean a brief section of shared-use path, or else narrowing the carriageway a bit to make space.

The existing stretch of Brooms Road path was built when design standards were different. More space is needed here for pedestrians and cyclists on a two-way path. A kerb or other physical marker is needed between the two so that visually impaired pedestrians can avoid the cycle side of the path. To extend its utility, there needs to be usable crossings onto Eastfield Road and an upgraded crossing at Barrie Avenue (the signed cycle route into Georgetown). At the moment there isn't even a dropped kerb at the point where the path ends, just a 'cyclists dismount' sign.



At the other end of the path it's even worse. Cyclists can either dismount, or take their chances on the Morrisons roundabout with its painted cycle lanes that actively put you into danger by encouraging cyclists to ride around the outside of the roundabout where they could be left hooked by exiting cars (this is no longer in the design guidelines fortunately).

There's plenty of space on the other side of the road to bypass the roundabout altogether. A decent crossing here would enable cyclists to get away from the traffic altogether. If heading to Morrisons then it would be better to provide a separate pedestrian/cyclist entrance to the supermarket. As the 'desire line' shows, many pedestrians have forged their own way, something that could be easily formalised in conjunction with the supermarket.



Continuing along Brooms Road, there are cycle lanes, but these are actively dangerous, placing cyclists in conflict with cars turning into Lidl. Although we're not keen on cycle tracks that switch back and forth between the sides of the road, one swap here would be okay, and there's plenty of room to give everyone – pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers – their own space here for most of the length of the road.

Once past Lidl, there are houses on both sides and not enough space to make a decent cycle track until you get to the Brooms Road Car Park. From there on, however, the road is wide and increasingly hostile for both cyclists and pedestrians, with another on-road cycle lane putting cyclists into conflict with turning traffic.

Desire line to Morrisons created by pedestrians. The people have spoken. Is this something we could be formalising?



As Brooms Road turns into St Michael's Bridge there's masses of space not just to put in a cycle track but even to have Dumfries's first CYCLOPS (cycle optimised protected signal) junction as per Cycling By Design guidelines. This would help with access to schools like St Joseph's and St Michael's, by connecting them to the main traffic free route along the Whitesands and via Dock Park.



Some call painted cycle lanes like these 'murder strips'. If you're going straight on, then you're in direct conflict with turning traffic. Paint is no protection here.



Three lanes for cars ... was there really no space to put in a cycle track away from the turning traffic here?



The junction with St Michael's St as it is now.

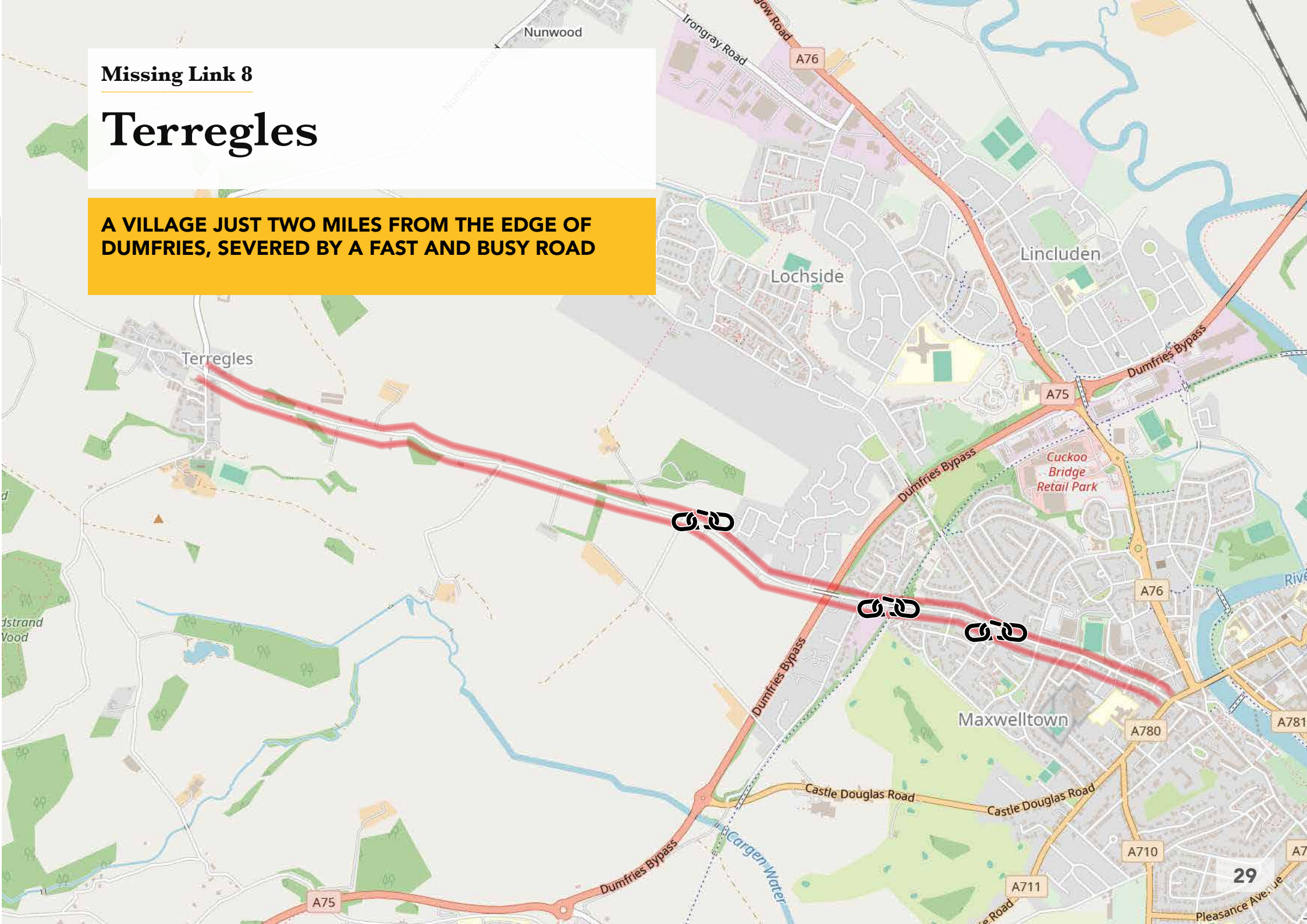


As it could be? Diagram of a CYCLOPS junction from the new Cycling By Design.

Missing Link 8

Terregles

A VILLAGE JUST TWO MILES FROM THE EDGE OF DUMFRIES, SEVERED BY A FAST AND BUSY ROAD



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

2 miles to Dumfries; 3 miles to town centre.

Travel times:

by bike 14 minutes; by e-bike 10 minutes.

Council wards:

4 - Castle Douglas and Crocketford; 6 - North West Dumfries

Amenities en route:

Queen of the South, Ice Bowl, North West Community Campus, Cuckoo Bridge retail and Charlotte Medical Practice via the Maxwellton Path.

MAIN PROBLEMS

- High speed direct route with no pavement.
- Missed opportunities where links exist, but are not signed.
- Unnecessary barriers to safe routes in Barnhill.

PROPOSALS

- Speed reduction on the direct route.
- Creating a dedicated active travel path for bikes and pedestrians.
- Better signage.
- Removal of barriers.
- Cycle track between the Maxwelltown Path and Hardthorn Road roundabout.
- Bypass for bikes at Hardthorn Road roundabout.
- Extension of the 20mph zone from Hardthorn Road roundabout to Lochfield Road roundabout.

BENEFITS

- Link Terregles safely to Dumfries and the traffic-free networks around town.
- Improve permeability for bikes and pedestrians and encourage more active travel around Summerhill, Barnhill and Blackley Park.
- Improved access to schools.
- Make many safe shortcuts currently known only to handful of users more widely used.

THE DETAILS

Terregles village lies 2 miles from the edge of Dumfries (Barnhill) with no big hills or uncrossable main roads between the two settlements. This makes it an ideal candidate for utility cycling and commuting. However, the current speed limit on the Terregles road is 60mph. On the straight sections, vehicles are likely to travel close to this speed.

We start with the connection between Terregles and the edge of Dumfries. Then we'll look at connections off Terregles Road as far as the junction with Hardthorn Road.

Terregles to Dumfries

The road between Terregles and the edge of Dumfries encourages vehicles to travel quickly. It is wide enough for vehicles to pass one another, with a central dashed line in some places which reinforces the idea that there isn't a need to concede space or slow down when encountering other road users. The road also tends to be busy, particularly at commuting times. Equally importantly, there is no provision for pedestrians to walk the 1.5 miles to the closest part of Dumfries. Reducing the speed limit here is crucial. Only 1.35 miles of road between the village and Dumfries has a 60mph limit so lowering it would add little to drivers' journey times but would significantly improve cyclists' experiences and the perception of road safety.

While this would make life better for existing cyclists, it will not be enough to encourage more cautious people to cycle on this road. A more ambitious change would be to turn half the existing carriageway into an active travel path, suitable for cycling, walking, wheeling and horse riding. This should be at a different level to the road or have another form of visual and physical separation from traffic. Relying only on visual distinction such as a different colour of surface, is unlikely to be sufficient in changing driver behaviour. This shows people that there is a safe route to ride and walk.

An alternative proposal in the same vein would be an off-road route between Terregles and the Maxwelltown Path, connecting existing footpaths. This would require buy-in from the landowners affected.

Connections within Dumfries

Once on the outskirts of Dumfries how do we links up with the various destinations people might need to reach?

Barnhill

As the map shows, there are two housing areas between Terregles Road and Hardthorn Road, either side of the bypass. Terregles Road also connects with the Maxwelltown Path and the shared-use path along Hardthorn Road and up Alloway Road to the North West Community Campus in Lochside.

The first part of Dumfries which Terregles Road reaches is Barnhill. Despite there being a path linking Sandypoint Court to Terregles Road, possibly an emergency vehicle access, this does not offer a clear route for cyclists as there is a gate which is not always open and no dropped kerb. A dropped kerb and an opening beside the gate (or at least just having the gate permanently open) would allow cyclists to get off the busy road sooner and provide a useful link through to Hardthorn Road on to Lochside and the North West Community Campus etc.



Emergency vehicle access from Sandypoint Court to Terregles Road. This seems like an obvious opportunity to provide a shortcut for pedestrians and cyclists into the housing estate here.

Further east along Terregles Road, cyclists could access Hardthorn Road, and therefore Lochside etc., through the residential streets of Barnhill via a path joining Barnhill Road and Caulstran Street. However there is no dropped kerb on the Caulstran Street end and the no entry signs make it unclear whether or not cycling is permitted. It also makes access to the paths very narrow for bikes, cargo and adapted bikes, mobility scooters and pushchairs.



Access from Barnhill Road to Caulstran Street. Replacing the "No Entry" bollards with a single "Cyclist and Pedestrian" one encourages all users, such as double buggies, adaptive bikes and mobility scooters.

The nearby path connecting Yarrow Drive and Blackley Park Road is a better example and highlights inconsistencies in our infrastructure.

Path continuing directly from the end of Blackley Park Road, welcoming cyclists and pedestrians and accessible to all.



The housing estates between Terregles Road and Hardthorn Road have excellent potential for pedestrian and cycle permeability and access akin to Summerpark. Making all the connecting paths in these areas suitable for cycling and signing routes to amenities would help achieve this. It would also be helpful to include all the connecting paths, even as they are, on the Dumfries Active Travel Map.

Maxwelltown Path

After passing over the A75 on Terregles Road into town, cyclists have the option to join the Maxwelltown Path which takes them either west towards DGRI or eastwards, towards Cuckoo Bridge, Goldie Park and ultimately the town centre and the railway station. To reach the path, cyclists must first turn right across oncoming traffic to double back onto the path access at the edge of Summerhill. Doubling back is always grating as it's an additional distance to pedal and worse on foot. Crossing the road at this point is also hazardous as the hump of the bridge over the path reduces visibility. You also have to know it's there – for some reason this connection is missing from the Dumfries Active Travel Map.

Yet, there is actually another path before crossing the A75 which links Terregles Road to the Maxwelltown Path, avoiding the need to cross the road. This path is from Yarrow Avenue, just 20 metres from its junction with Terregles Road (see photo below).



Looking from Terregles Road into Yarrow Avenue. The path leading to the Maxwelltown Path is on the right, behind the yellow grit bin. A lack of signage means most cyclists aren't aware of it.

There is also a series of paths in here around Yarrow Drive that connects to Blackley Park Road and Hardthorn Road.



Looking down from Terregles Road to the Maxwelltown Path in the foreground. The path leading away from this is the other end of the path connecting to Yarrow Avenue. Just visible at top left is the spur from that path connecting to Yarrow Drive and onwards to Hardthorn Road.

None of these paths are signed, nor do they appear on the Active Travel Map. These remain routes for people 'in the know'. Fortunately, Open StreetMap is more up to date and shows all the paths and accesses mentioned here.

Hardthorn Road

Continuing into town along Terregles Road, the road is very wide offering ample room for a segregated cycle track along it. If this were on the south side of the road it could connect directly to the existing link to the Maxwelltown Path (to the left of the picture below).



Plenty of room for off-road cycle infrastructure on the Terregles Road between the Maxwelltown Path and the Hardthorn Road roundabout.

There is also room for a bypass for cyclists to avoid the Hardthorn Road roundabout, which has poor visibility for traffic coming from the left along Hardthorn Road.

From this point it is only about 170 metres to the 20mph traffic-calmed part of Terregles Road which starts just south of the roundabout junction with Lochfield Road. Extending the 20mph limit to the Hardthorn Road roundabout would make it continuous all the way to Laurieknowe.



Missing Link 9

Hollywood and Ellisland

**JUST HALF A MILE OF MISSING SHARED-USE
PATH ALONG A TRUNK ROAD**



Ellisland Farmhouse

35

LINK DETAILS

Total route length (Holywood):

3.5 miles / 5.3 kms

Travel times:

by bike 20 minutes; by e-bike 15 minutes

Missing link length:

0.5 mile / 800m

Council ward:

8 - Lochar

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Holywood sits on a junction of the A76 the fast main route to Glasgow and Ayrshire.
- The shared path from Dumfries ends at Newbridge, 800m short of Holywood.
- Poorly positioned dropped kerbs at access roads to the A76

PROPOSALS

- Complete the missing half-mile stretch of shared-use path along the A76 between Newbridge and Holywood.
- Ensure a safe crossing of the A76 where the shared path begins in Newbridge.
- Give cyclists and pedestrians priority at junctions along the shared path.
- Create a shared-use path to link the quiet back road from Holywood to the Ellisland entrance.

BENEFITS

- Completion of a 10 minute direct route to schools, healthcare and employment, and a further 10 minutes to the town centre.
- Open up a key local tourism destination to sustainable travel.

THE DETAILS

Holywood is less than 3.5 miles from the centre of Dumfries, the same distance as Locharbriggs which has the excellent Caledonian Cycleway link into town. It hosts a primary school that serves children from the village and the neighbouring villages. New developments are being built between the A76 and Irongray Road and the area is getting busier.

Acting now to close the one gap in the cycle network to Holywood should be a quick win as most of the infrastructure is already in place. At the moment a shared-use path (for pedestrians and cyclists) goes from Newbridge to Lochside and from Lochside cyclists have routes to amenities such as the North West Community Campus, Cuckoo Bridge retail park, The Bridge and onwards to the town centre.

However, between Newbridge and Holywood, the footway is for pedestrians only. There is room for this footway to be moved away from the very fast trunk road and widened so it could be formally adopted as a shared-use path for the half a mile to Holywood, creating a traffic-free, direct route to and from the town. There are a number of access roads on to the A76 where using the dropped kerb



involves turning into the secondary road. Cyclists and pedestrians could be given priority at these junctions and the dropped kerbs removed in favour of raised table crossings (see photo below). This has the added advantage of calming traffic joining the A76.



Example of a raised table crossing of a side street at New Abbey Road.

Connecting to Ellisland

Ellisland farm, where Robert Burns lived, and now a museum, is a short ride (3 miles) from Holywood through lovely countryside on a quiet road. Eventually the route has to rejoin the A76 for the final half mile to the turn off for Ellisland. This road has fast traffic and puts off most cyclists. There is no pedestrian path.



So close but yet so far – from the Ellisland turn, the exit to Holywood is only half a mile further on the left.

A coordinated approach to the various Burns sites in the area is on the agenda of bodies like the Burns Quarter and the South of Scotland Destination Alliance. A shared-use path alongside the A76 from where the back road from Holywood comes out, all the way to the track to Ellisland would add to any strategy to ensure that Burns is a central part of the region's tourism strategy.

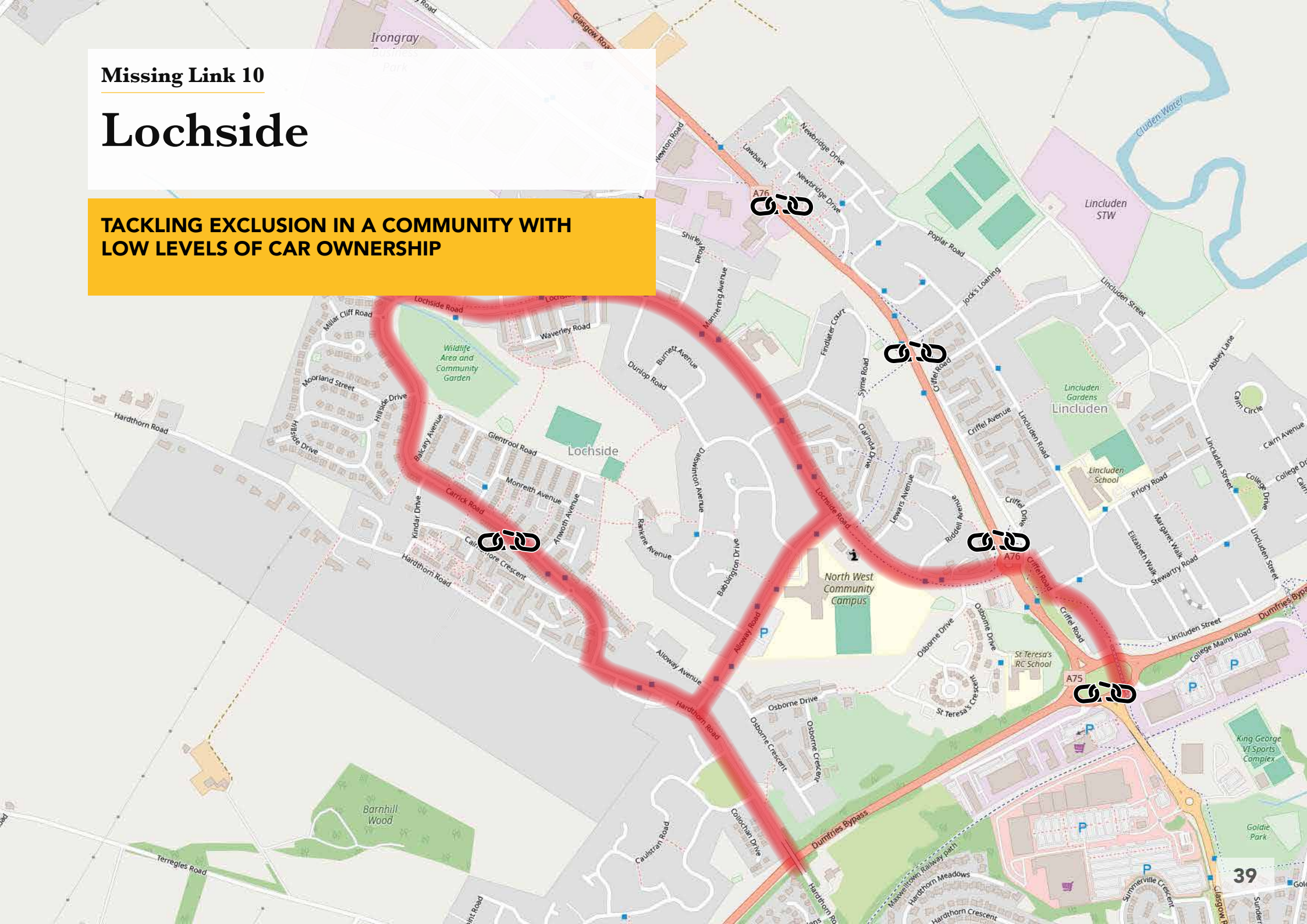
Or following in the footsteps of Burns, maybe there's a cross-country route that could be explored? A riverside route linking to Friars Carse would add even more scope for leisure and tourism rides.



Missing Link 10

Lochside

TACKLING EXCLUSION IN A COMMUNITY WITH LOW LEVELS OF CAR OWNERSHIP



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

3 miles / 5kms to town centre

Travel times:

by bike 15-20 minutes; by e-bike 10-15 minutes

Council ward:

6 – North West Dumfries

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Although most of Lochside is easily accessible by bike, the paths along the main roads are incomplete.
- Lochside is severed by the A76 from Lincluden and routes into town, and by the A75 from the nearest supermarkets.

PROPOSALS

- Complete the network of cycle routes alongside or parallel to the four main roads (Lochside Road, Hardthorn Road, Alloway Road and Carrick Road).
- Improve connections to Lincluden and the crossings of the A76.
- Investigate additional crossings of the A75, connecting directly to the retail park and Maxwelltown Path on the other side.
- Provide suitable bike parking at shops and facilities and secure bike storage in homes and flats that can also be used for other items (buggies, mobility scooters etc.).

BENEFITS

- Provide an alternative to costly buses and the need to run a car, tackling transport poverty and exclusion.
- Prevent traffic congestion as more housing is built in the area.

THE DETAILS

Lochside has great potential for active travel for people of all ages both within the area and outside. However, at the moment, it can feel quite cut off from the rest of Dumfries by the A75 and A76. Planned regeneration will bring more houses and could create more traffic which would make cycling less attractive - but it also offers the opportunity to upgrade the roads and active travel routes within Lochside.

Routes within Lochside

Lochside already has many of the characteristics of a low traffic neighbourhood in that most of the side roads are dead ends or do not provide through routes for motor vehicles but do for people on foot or on bike, and this should be maintained. All of Lochside has a 20mph speed limit except for Hardthorn Road at its southern edge. Most of its roads are quiet and safe for cycling without any additional infrastructure, except for the four main through routes: Hardthorn Road, Lochside Road, Carrick Road and Alloway Road.

Lochside Road and Alloway Road

Lochside Road is the main road through Lochside and the least pleasant to cycle along. It has “speed cushions” (see photo) along most of its length and between those and the parked cars, creating conflict between bikes and motor vehicles. It is only really comfortable to ride on this road at times when there is not much traffic, and many cyclists who do use it, especially children, ride on the pavement which creates conflict with pedestrians. As more housing is built in the neighbourhood, increasing traffic will make Lochside road even more hostile.

There is a shared-use cycle and pedestrian path along Lochside and Alloway Road, from the McDonald’s to Hardthorn Road, but it is busy with pedestrians, especially during school run times and the school lunch break. There are wide grass verges along all of Lochside Road, so there is plenty of scope to create separate cycle and pedestrian paths along its full length, which would reduce conflict with pedestrians and drivers alike. More crossings, including zebra crossings, would help make this road safer for children.



Speed cushions on Lochside Road, which even extend into disabled parking bays. A cyclist here would be forced to either ride in the 'door zone' of the parked cars, or go over the hump. These are particularly dangerous for trikes.



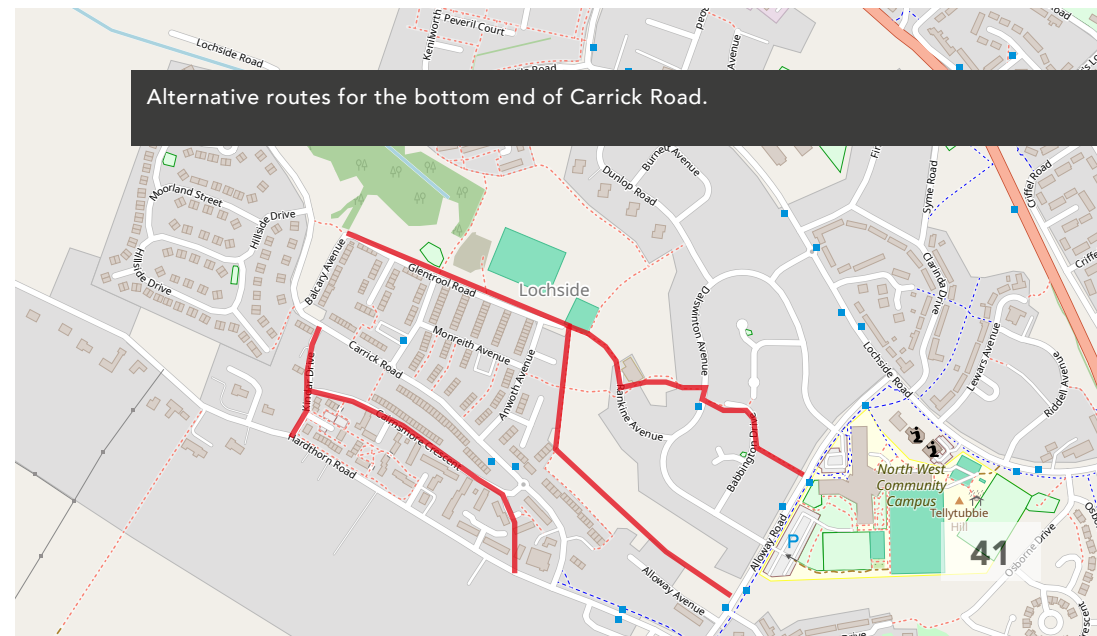
Alloway Road looking north along the shared path. Note that passengers boarding buses have to cross the path, which goes in front of the shelter rather than behind it, while cyclists have to give way at the side street in the foreground.]

Hardthorn Road and Carrick Road

Hardthorn Road also has a shared-use path which runs from Carrick Road, and crosses the A75 on a bridge at road level, to reach the Maxwelltown Path entrance. There is also room here to create separate provision for cyclists and pedestrians, and to extend it west, to avoid the need to use Carrick Road as a cycle route.

Carrick Road has a narrow shared-use path from Kindar Drive to Lochside Road (with paths on both sides of the road for some of its length) There are grass verges along this stretch of road so there would be scope for wider provision or segregated cycling and pedestrian paths as far as Kindar Drive. It's disappointing that even though this end of Carrick Road was built from scratch in very recent years, it only has narrow shared provision for bikes, to the detriment of pedestrians, and even a stretch with no footway at all, right next to the bus stop near Kindar Drive, despite there being plenty of space. This could easily be upgraded to a separate cycle track on the east side of Carrick Road as far as Kindar Drive.

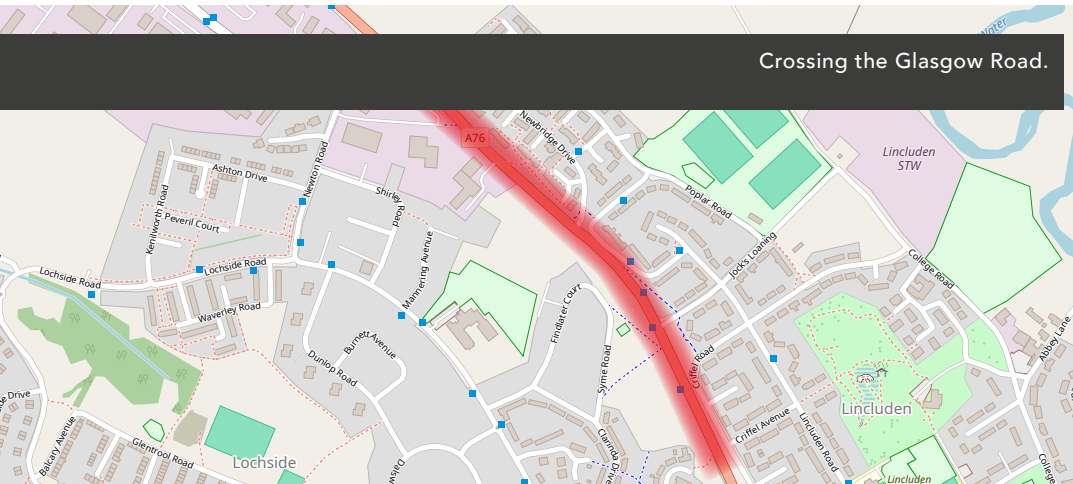
However, the stretch of Carrick Road from Kindar Drive to Hardthorn Road does not have space for cycling provision as it stands. Rather than try and squeeze in sub-standard provision on that road it would make more sense to provide an alternative, well-signposted route making use of the quieter streets around Carrick Road. The most obvious option would be to extend the Hardthorn Road path as far as Kindar Drive and direct cyclists along that route.



Connections in and out of Lochside

Better connections to Lincluden would join the two communities. It also provides an alternative route to town (via College Road and the 'curly wurly' bridge) as well as a slightly shorter route to Heathhall for anyone willing to use the shared-use path from Lincluden alongside the A75 (not for the faint hearted). There is also a cycle route that runs along the A76 corridor on the Lincluden side which would open up routes to the countryside to the north.

There are a number of crossings of the A76: a toucan crossing at the garage and crossing points without lights but with traffic islands at various points. Not all of these crossings line up with the paths within Lochside, which makes them less useful. The most important are those at the McDonald's roundabout, which are the most direct connection to the foot and cycle bridge over the A75/A76 roundabout. Unfortunately these crossings are substandard - they take two cycles of the lights to cross, and have narrow caged islands in the middle which are inaccessible to adaptive bikes.



The foot and cycle bridge crossing the A75/A76 roundabout at Cuckoo Bridge is a well-used route from Lincluden to Dumfries, but it is less direct for residents of Lochside, and you can see even on Google Streetview that pedestrians are instead crossing the A75 at the roundabout on the Lochside Road side, which is very dangerous. In addition, the foot/cycle bridge is accessed via an alleyway which is not that welcoming after dark - it curves round between two fences, making it impossible to see anyone lurking round the corner.

The other crossing of the A75 is via Hardthorn Road, where the shared-use cycle path extends as far as the Maxwelltown Railway path. This provides good access to the hospital to the west and the railway station to the east but the most direct route into town requires rejoining the Hardthorn Road and then onto Terregles Street. Both of these roads are quite hostile to bikes, being busy and with speed cushions making the route only really accessible to more experienced cyclists.



Cycle parking and storage

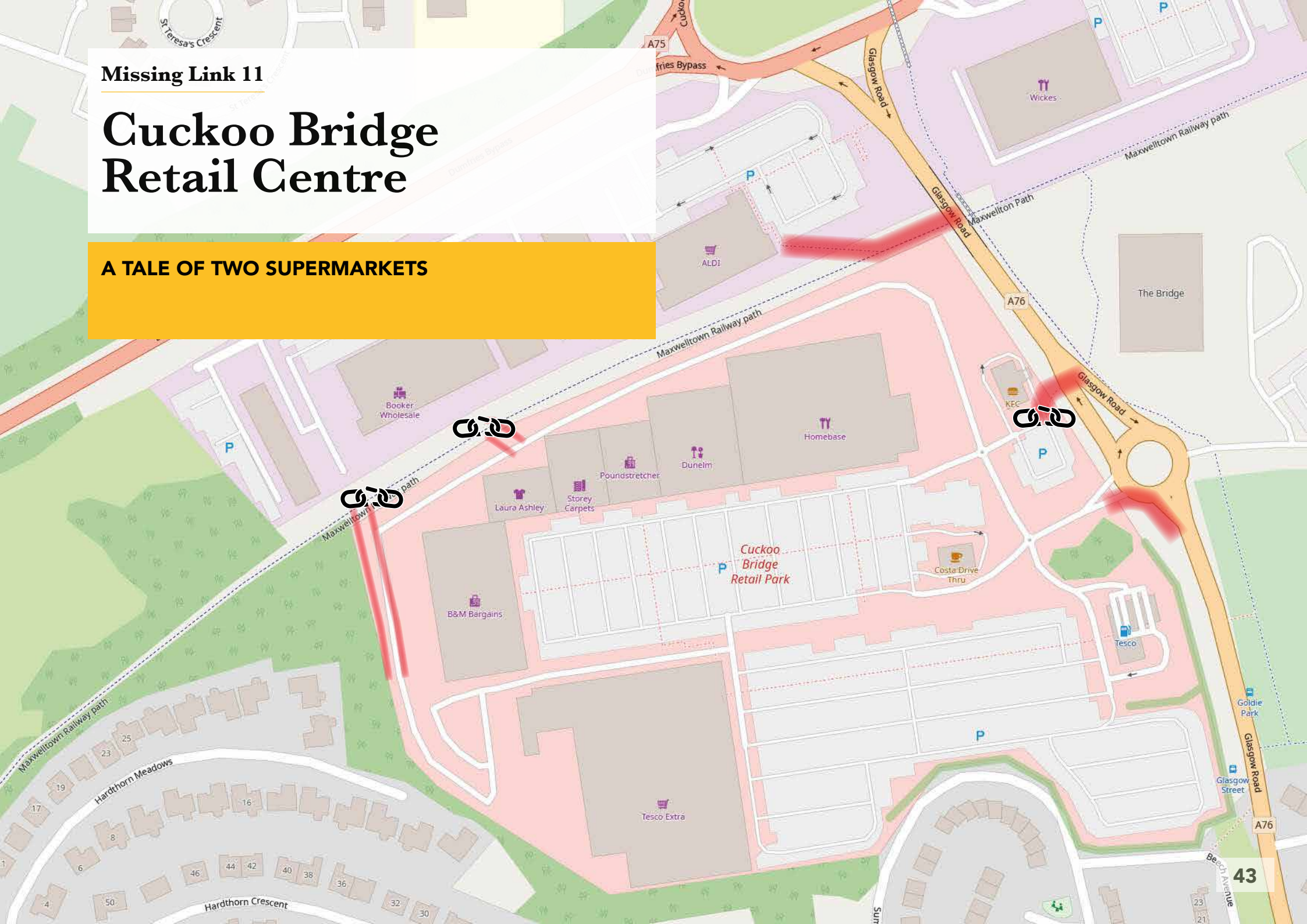
Only the YMCA and North West Campus provide any bike parking stands - there is no bike parking at the Scotmid shop or the social club, nor at McDonald's or the retail strip opposite it. Employees commuting by bike especially need secure parking, ideally covered and with CCTV coverage for security, but even for shoppers and visitors this helps to allay fears of bike theft. Putting in some secure cycle parking at bus stops might also encourage people to try multi-modal trips if they work further afield. Employers should also be encouraged to provide changing facilities for active commuters coming from further afield.

Every household should have access to secure, covered bike storage on the ground floor with enough space for multiple bikes (or buggies, mobility scooters or other valuable but awkward items). The flats at Dunlop Road have some 'breadbin' style cycle stores which are a good way of retrofitting storage to existing properties and converting a car parking space into space for multiple bikes. Charging points for e-bikes should also be considered.

Missing Link 11

Cuckoo Bridge Retail Centre

A TALE OF TWO SUPERMARKETS



LINK DETAILS

Council ward:

6 - North West Dumfries

MAIN PROBLEMS

- The entrance to the retail park sends people down a steep path and into conflict with drivers using the KFC. Very poor sight lines for those exiting the drive-through.
- The entrance then exits into a carpark with no clearly marked paths within the retail park.
- No direct route into the retail park from the Maxwelltown Path, serving people in Summerhill, Barnhill, Lochside and Lincluden.

PROPOSALS

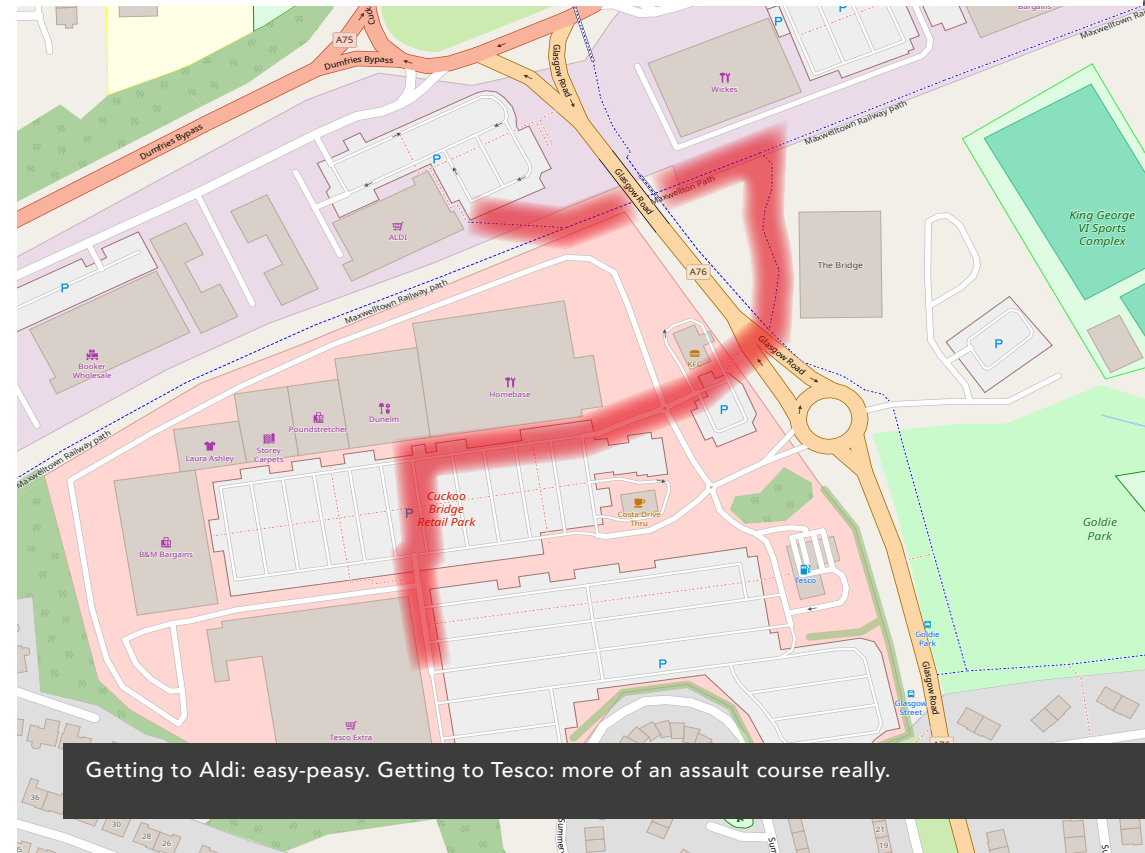
- Update the Glasgow Road crossing to prioritise those walking and wheeling, and cycling (as is laid out in the sustainable transport hierarchy).
- Remove barriers at the Glasgow Road crossing, to make it more accessible, allowing people to cross in a single cycle of the lights, rather than having to wait in the middle for the green man.
- Realign the current steep entrance at the KFC to reduce conflict with vehicles exiting the drive-through.
- Create a clear and direct pathway to both sets of shops, with an improved cycle route from both crossings of Glasgow Road into the retail park.
- Create a new direct route from the Maxwelltown Path into the rear of the retail park and join it to the access road which runs behind Tesco

BENEFITS

- Clearing barriers at crossing and making them single cycle crossing would reduce waiting times and increase accessibility.
- Increased road safety within the retail park.
- New direct routes which encourage more active travel and reduce congestion.

THE DETAILS

This missing link is a tale of two supermarkets – Aldi and Tesco, both of which are a stone's throw from the Maxwelltown Path, the flagship part of our traffic-free network. Yet, as the map shows, getting to one from the path is a lot more straightforward than getting to the other.



The map shows the short, direct route from the Maxwelltown Path to the cycle parking by the Aldi entrance.

Getting to Tesco, or any of the dozen or so shops in the Cuckoo Bridge Retail Park from the nearest point on the Maxwelltown Path, is more complicated (see the yellow line on the map). First the Maxwelltown Path exits beside The Bridge on the opposite side of Glasgow Street to the retail park. So now you're on the wrong side of a busy road and the crossing looks like this. You have arrived at the intersection of the A75 and A76.



Crossing to the Cuckoo Bridge Retail Park. Via the KFC drive-through.

Once you've waited for both sets of lights and negotiated your bike or shopping trolley or wheelchair or double buggy through the barriers in the middle, you're faced with your next obstacle. The official entrance by bike or on foot to one of our largest shopping areas is through the exit of the KFC drive-through.



Here's how cyclists enter the Cuckoo Bridge retail park now ... right past the drive-through exit.

Coming from town is a little better, in that the crossing from Goldie Park onto the shared-use path beside the retail park is a single cycle of the lights, although you're still very much on your own once you've crossed and want to access the shops. All in all, cycling feels very much like an afterthought, rather than something that has been encouraged and built in from the start.



The other entrance to the retail park. There's nothing for bikes here except a dropped kerb to get you off the shared-use pavement.

The difference between these two destinations is in a sense a good news story – when the Aldi opened in 2017, direct access to the Maxwelltown Path for cyclists and pedestrians was a planning requirement. This shows that it’s a lot easier and cheaper to build active travel into developments from the start rather than trying to add them on to a car-centric design after everything has been built. Out-of-town retail parks can have a detrimental effect on town centres, but places like Cuckoo Bridge are part of Dumfries now, and at the very least, they should be more accessible by bike from all directions, and people shouldn’t be hampered by long crossing times or sent the long way round while cars just go straight in.

Not all of our proposed improvements are within the remit of the council. Working in partnership, the council and the owners of the retail park could significantly improve access to this key part of the town’s economy – and help enable more people to make their shopping trips more sustainable.



Missing Link 12

Glasgow Street

A STREET THAT COULD BE SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST A TRAFFIC ARTERY INTO DUMFRIES



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

0.6 miles / 1km

Travel times:

by bike 2 minutes; by e-bike 2 minutes

Missing link length:

0.6 miles / 1km

Council ward:

6 - North West Dumfries

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Glasgow Street is a four-lane road that cuts across many official and potential cycle routes.
- It lacks controlled crossings, making it a 1km long barrier between communities and amenities, rather than a route for everyone.

PROPOSALS

- Cycle crossings at the Lochfield Road / Sunderries Road roundabout.
- Cycle track along the entire west side of Glasgow Street from Galloway Street to the A75 roundabout.
- An improved crossing from Steel Avenue.
- Signage on the west side of Glasgow Street at the Portland Drive ramp to show that cyclists can continue right after crossing Glasgow Street on the shared-use path to Lochfield Road.
- Dropped kerbs off Lochfield Road to the medical centre path and from the King Street cul-de-sac to Glasgow Street.
- Two-way cycling at the junction of King Street and Terregles Street.
- Immediate review and improvement of signage of all routes on Glasgow Street to better indicate existing traffic-free routes.

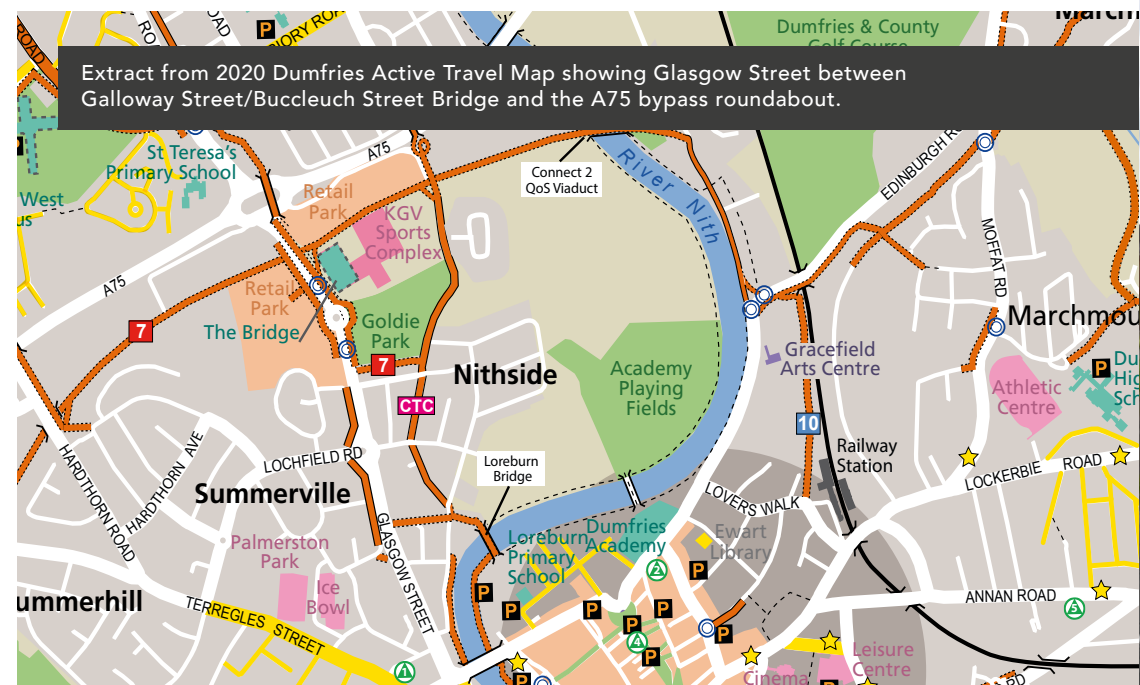
BENEFITS

- Glasgow Street could be much more than just a traffic artery into Dumfries – it could be a key part of a joined up cycling network, that would also make walking and wheeling more pleasant.
- Improved east-west mobility for pedestrians, wheelers and cyclists.
- Increased use of sustainable options into town and the retail and industrial parks for people living north of the A75 bypass.

THE DETAILS

Glasgow Street is a busy four-lane road which creates a barrier to people travelling east-west on foot or bike, and is off putting for those wishing to travel north-south. However, it also serves key destinations such as The Bridge, the Cuckoo Bridge retail park and Sandside, Lincluden and Lochside. It also bisects a number of key cycling routes. Making Glasgow Street pedestrian and cycling friendly is a key step in completing the town's active travel network.

We've divided this chapter into three parts: crossing Glasgow Street, improving Glasgow Street and improvements to some of the surrounding network.



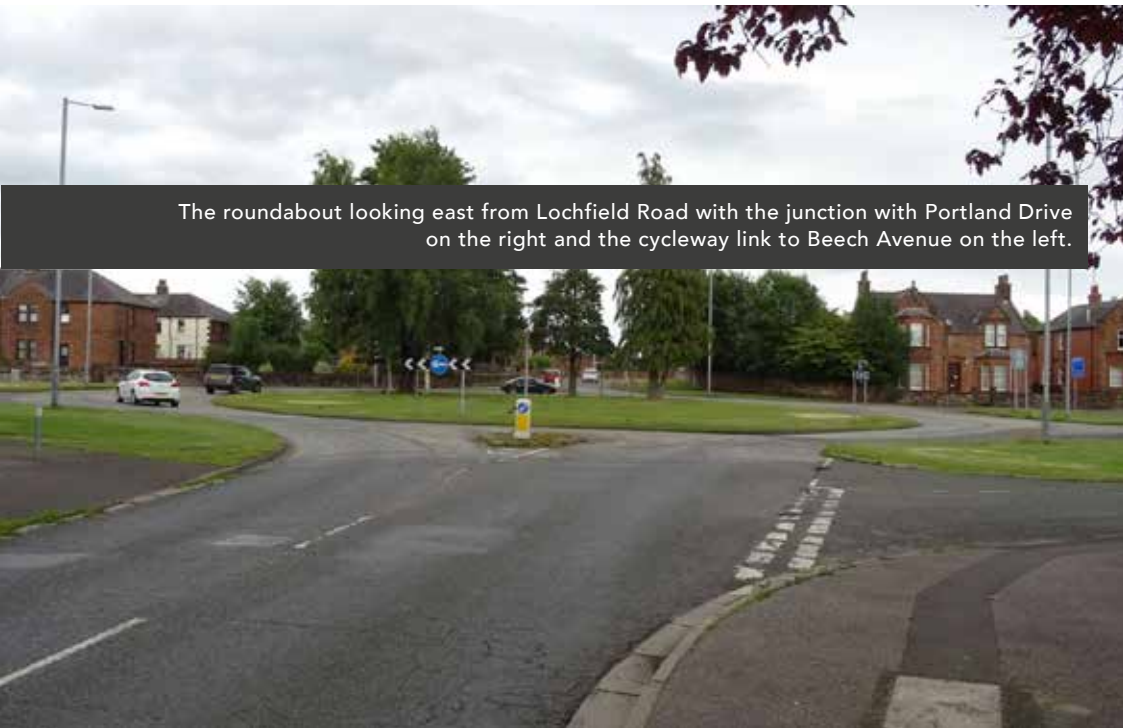
Crossing Glasgow Street

We cover two key crossings that need improvement: Lochfield Road and the Steel Avenue path. Crossing Glasgow Street where it meets Galloway Street and the Buccleuch Bridge are covered in a separate chapter.

Crossing 1 - The Glasgow Street / Lochfield Road roundabout

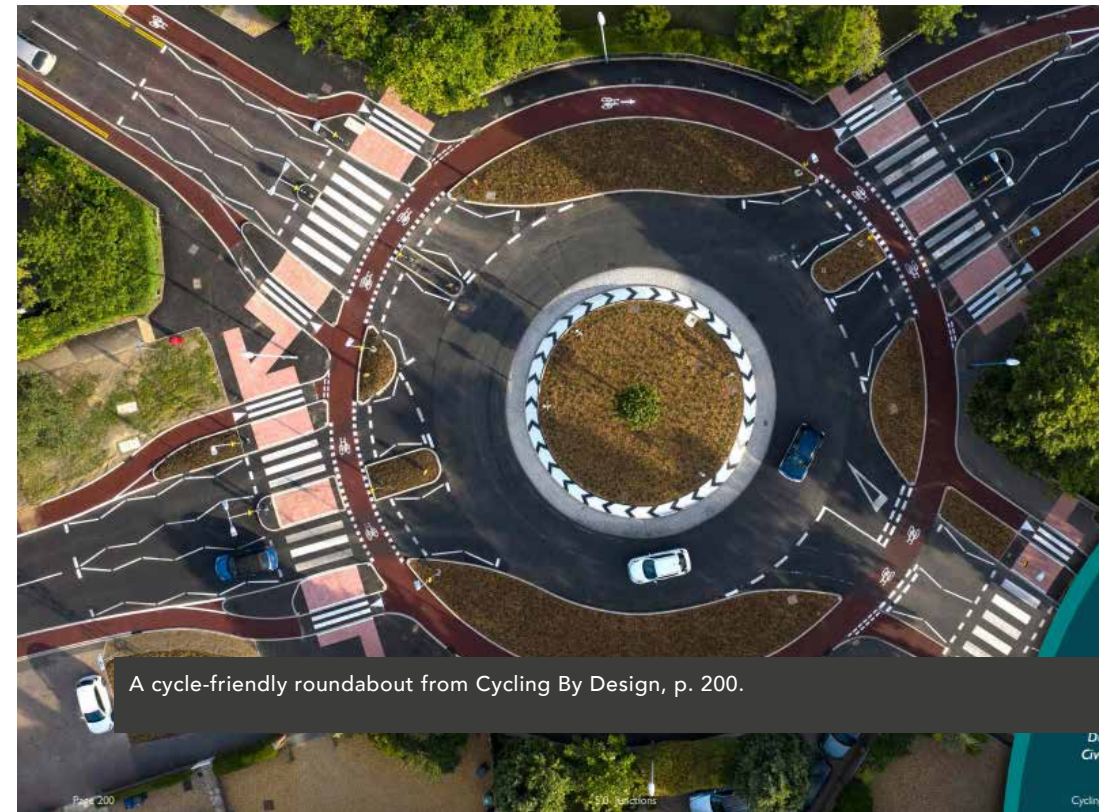
The roundabout at the junction with Lochfield Road and Sunderries Road sits at the northern end of Glasgow St, close to the Lochfield Road Primary Care Centre. As the Active Travel Map shows there is a cycle route along the west side of this stretch of Glasgow Street. This uses quiet roads (Portland Drive and Beech Avenue) and connecting lengths of cycle path. A big issue with this route is crossing Lochfield Road, because of the proximity of the large Glasgow Street/Lochfield Road roundabout.

Lochfield Road and Sunderries Road also form a potential east/west cycle route, joining up with College Street with its connection to the Loreburn Bridge, Loreburn Primary, The Academy and the town centre. Unfortunately the roundabout as it stands is a barrier to using such a route.



The roundabout looking east from Lochfield Road with the junction with Portland Drive on the right and the cycleway link to Beech Avenue on the left.

Given that both north-south and east-west routes meet here, cycle crossings are needed on at least three of the four arms of this roundabout – both Glasgow Street arms and Lochfield Road. There are various ways to do this. One option would be toucan crossings on each arm of the roundabout. A second option would be to replace the roundabout with traffic signals, including controlled crossings for pedestrians and cyclists on all four arms. A more ambitious improvement would be to remodel the roundabout into a cycle friendly roundabout as shown below. There is more than adequate space in the centre of the current roundabout for this type of layout.



A cycle-friendly roundabout from *Cycling By Design*, p. 200.

Crossing 2 - Steel Avenue path to Loreburn Bridge

A short traffic-free path provides a handy cut-through from Loreburn Bridge (by the Rowing Club), past Steel Avenue and through to Glasgow Street – but once there, cyclists and pedestrians have to negotiate the four lanes of traffic on their

own. A toucan crossing here would benefit pedestrians and cyclists alike as there is currently not a single controlled crossing along the entire length of the Glasgow Street until you get to Tesco at Cuckoo Bridge retail park.

Once across, there's a nice ramp down onto Portland Drive for cyclists heading south towards the Ice Bowl. But to join Portland Drive heading north, cyclists are meant to use the shared-use path on the west side of Glasgow Street, up to the bus lay-by. Unfortunately this is not well signed and there are no road markings indicating this permitted use (this is also the case for a lot of Glasgow Street). Clarifying this with some more and/or clearer signage and road markings would be beneficial.

Note that the camber on the Steel Avenue cycle path is awkward for trikes, wheelchairs and mobility scooters and should be improved to make it more accessible.

Completing the route along Glasgow Street

Glasgow Street is a busy road for a reason – it's one of two main roads north out of Dumfries. It connects to key parts of the cycle network including the Maxwelltown Path, and the pedestrian and cycle bridge over the A75/A76 roundabout. Most cyclists prefer to use College Road as it is quieter, but if Glasgow Street catered for them better, a continuous cycle route could be created from Galloway Street right up to the Aldi on the bypass.

At the moment there is a bus lane on the southbound carriageway into town, but not northbound. There's scope to make better use of the space at the south end of Glasgow Street either for a bus lane or to reallocate some of the carriageway for active travel.

Looking north along Glasgow Street with the uncontrolled crossing to Steel Avenue on the right and the path to Portland Drive on the left. But can cyclists use the path ahead to get to this crossing or not? A shared-use sign at the bus shelter in the distance suggests they can, but it's not adequately signed.



Glasgow Street looking north with David Street on the left. Ample room for a bus lane or to otherwise reallocate road space – a cycle track along here would be a powerful demonstration of a commitment to active travel.



To complete the final stage to Aldi, the crossing of the road into and out of the Cuckoo Bridge Retail Park needs to be improved. At the minimum, a wider refuge island would be an improvement and could be created by removing one of the three lanes into the roundabout from the retail park.



From Cuckoo Bridge Retail Park towards The Bridge. Do we really need three lanes entering the roundabout here?

Finally, extend the shared-use path on the west side of Glasgow Street to the road at the Maxwelltown Industrial estate, and make the pedestrian access to Aldi suitable for cycling. This would also provide a link to the Maxwelltown path via Aldi removing the need to cross the road here.



Glasgow Road looking north to Dumfries bypass roundabout. On the left is the access to Aldi, with a sign asking cyclists to dismount.

Improvements around Glasgow Street

Lochfield Road

The 2020 Commonplace survey included the suggestion of a cycle path on Lochfield Road to the junction with Ashfield Drive (opposite the health centre). This would provide a connection to the quiet roads west of Glasgow Street that connect to the Ice Bowl.

From Lochfield Road, there is a route through the medical centre grounds to Summerville Crescent and traffic-free access to Tesco. However, this lacks a dropped kerb to access the south end of the shared-use path and improved signage for this route (unfortunately not shown on the council's Active Travel Map).

Lochfield Road looking east, with the medical centre on the left (where the cycle route starts). There is ample space for a cycle path here (the bus lay-by is currently unused).



King Street

King Street passes the Ice Bowl and connects Glasgow Street and Terregles Street by the entrance to Lauricknowe primary school. It could be the main quiet route from Terregles Street to Glasgow Street by allowing two-way cycling on the short one-way length of King Street at its junction with Terregles Street, either with 'except cycles' signage or a protected contraflow cycle lane.

There is also a cul-de-sac on King Street with a path through to Glasgow Street which would benefit from the addition of dropped kerbs.

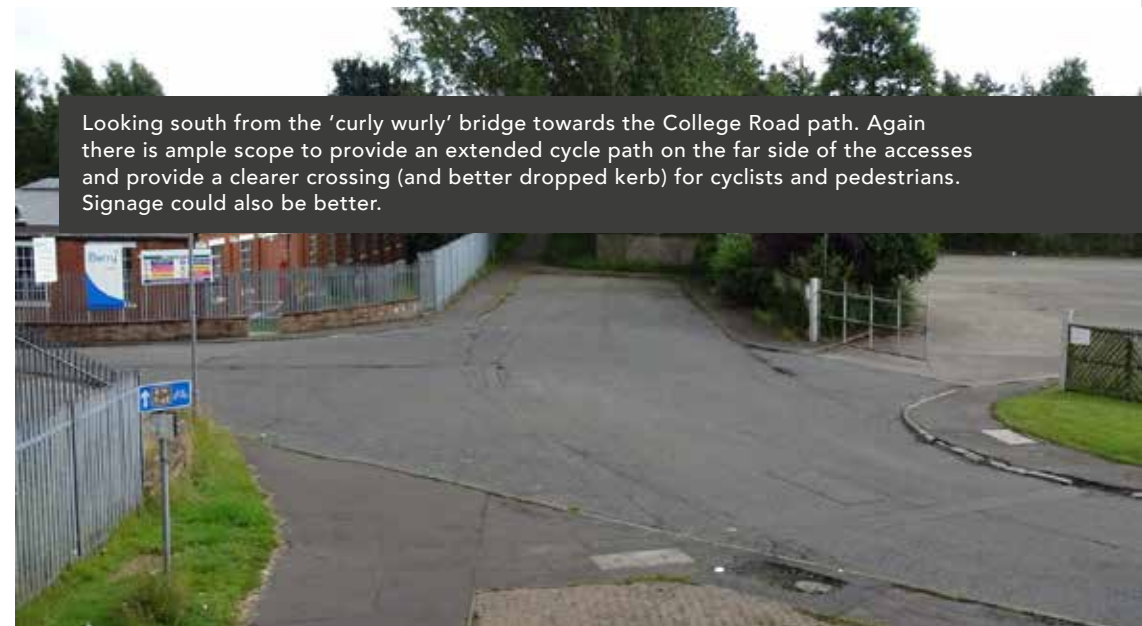
Connections to Lincluden via College Road

College Road runs parallel to Glasgow Street. It begins as College Street exits Sandside and continues the length of Lincluden. It is a key route to and from Lincluden, a route to the Maxwelltown Path and allows low-traffic access to DIY and electrical goods stores by the College Mains Road.

Lincluden is accessed via the spiral ramp bridge (aka the 'curly wurly bridge') over the A75 bypass. The main area for improvement is section of path leading to this bridge from town. It is narrow and awkward to negotiate, and the route is not signed. Reaching the curly wurly bridge means crossing the entrance to the industrial site for Covetrus and Berry BPI. It is used for HGV parking and movements and has poorly placed dropped kerbs even though there is plenty of room to provide an accessible option.



Looking north from the end of College Road to the bridge over the Maxwelltown Railway Cycleway. Note the broken-off bollard in the middle, and the lack of any signage. There is ample room to widen the paved section of the path.



Looking south from the 'curly wurly' bridge towards the College Road path. Again there is ample scope to provide an extended cycle path on the far side of the accesses and provide a clearer crossing (and better dropped kerb) for cyclists and pedestrians. Signage could also be better.

Missing Link 13

Crossing Galloway Street

A CAR-CENTRIC JUNCTION THAT SEVERES A KEY NORTH-SOUTH ROUTE FOR CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS



LINK DETAILS

Missing link length:

300 yards/ 0.1km

Council ward:

6 - North West Dumfries

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Railings and the lack of a crossing on the Buccleuch Street Bridge arm of this complex junction impede pedestrians and prevent a natural continuation of the College Street cycle path to Market Square.
- North-south travel is impeded by the amount of time it takes to use the pedestrian-only crossings on Galloway Street and Glasgow Street and there isn't enough capacity for both pedestrians and people walking their bikes.
- Both Howgate Street and Market Square are one way southbound, meaning a steep and long diversion up Maxwell Street when cycling north.
- Very poor sightlines due to parked vehicles and the volume of traffic make exiting Terregles Street treacherous, whether turning onto Galloway Street, crossing to Howgate Street or turning right on to Laurieknowe.

PROPOSALS

- Introduce a crossing at the Buccleuch Street Bridge arm of the junction that enables cyclists and pedestrians to move north-south using College Street and Market Square without having to divert across Glasgow and Galloway Streets.
- Allow two-way cycling on Market Square and Howgate Street.
- Consider introducing traffic lights at the end of Terregles Street where it meets Laurieknowe.
- Eliminate up to 5 minutes of waiting time for cyclists and pedestrians trying to cross Galloway Street.

BENEFITS

- Open up an alternative north-south cycling route through Dumfries when the Whitesands is closed or busy.
- Better access to shops on both sides of Galloway and the adjoining streets.
- Improve access for cyclists from the west using Terregles Street.

THE DETAILS

The junctions of Glasgow Street, Terregles Street and Galloway Street form a significant barrier to people walking or cycling on the Maxwelltown side of the river.

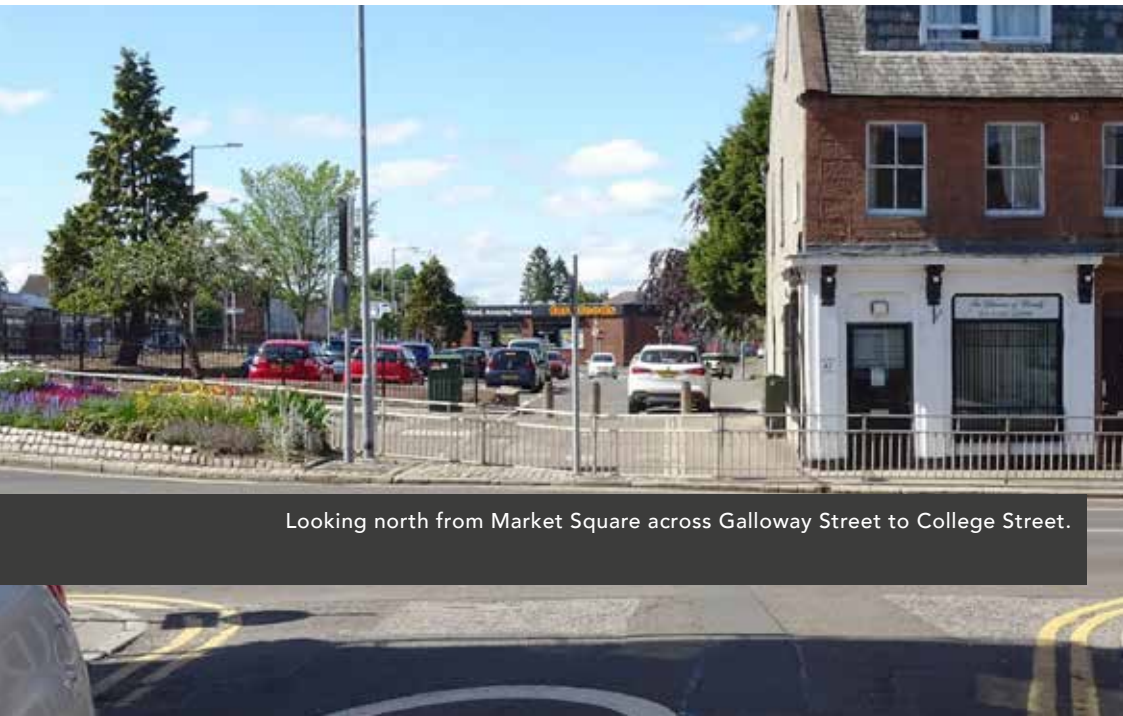
Galloway Street / Buccleuch Street Bridge / Laurieknowe (or Galloway St from now on for ease of reference!) is very busy and intimidating to cycle along or across. It's a very active barrier to active travel where vehicle movements are prioritised over pedestrians and cyclists. The pedestrian crossings are "walk with traffic" crossings of Galloway Street and Glasgow Street. No crossings are provided on the Buccleuch Street Bridge arm of the junction — indeed pedestrians are blocked from crossing at all by a lengthy set of railings. There are advanced stop lines for cycles on all three arms of the junction with Glasgow St, but there are only advisory lanes to get to them on the Galloway Street and Buccleuch Street Bridge arms.

This junction effectively divides the Maxwelltown side of the river into two, north of and south of Galloway Street. To the north, a shared cycle and pedestrian path on College Street links to other cycle infrastructure, including the Maxwelltown Path and routes to Lincluden, Barnhill and Lochside. There is also a connection to the Loreburn Bridge, and thence to the Academy and Loreburn Primary, the town centre and the east side of the river. However, it is blocked by the pedestrian railings at the Galloway Street end.



Looking south from College Street across Galloway Street to Market Square. Extending the existing cycleway to Galloway Street and across to Market Square seems natural.

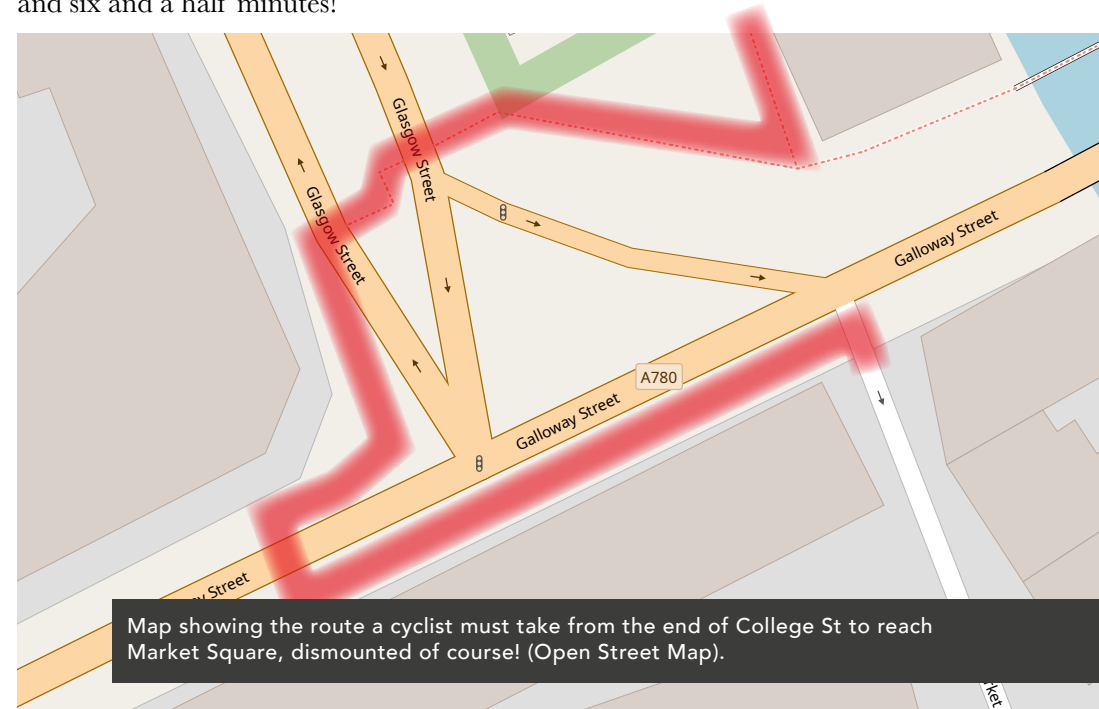
South of Galloway Street are lightly trafficked 20mph roads that connect to the path through Mill Green and down the west side of the River Nith to the Kirkpatrick Macmillan Bridge and onwards to Mountainhall, the Crichton and settlements in the south.



Looking north from Market Square across Galloway Street to College Street.

There is clear potential for a good cycle route from the north side of Dumfries to the south side, all the way down the west side of the River Nith, except for this short gap – but without a convenient way to cross from the cycle path to the quiet streets beyond, it might as well be miles.

Currently, cyclists must dismount – something which is not always possible for those riding adaptive cycles such as trikes – at the end of the shared-use path on College Street, walk to the staggered crossing on Glasgow Street then to the staggered crossing on Galloway Street then along the pavement to remount once on Market Square (see the map). This, incredibly, takes anywhere between four and six and a half minutes!



A toucan crossing between the end of College Road over to the entrance into Market Square offers the best solution. This would provide a route suitable for cyclists and save a lot of time, making it much more appealing to cycle and walk this way. It would also provide a crossing that is accessible for users of trikes and other adaptive cycles and mobility scooters, as well as a much nicer and more convenient way for pedestrians to cross, which could lead to more footfall at the nearby shops. The current sequence of the traffic lights even has a phase when

no or little traffic is moving in that section of road so it need not cause extra congestion by delaying traffic.

Looking north from Mill Road along Market Square towards Galloway Street and, on the opposite side, College Street. There is no alternative one-way street going the other way.



When heading north, there is a second obstacle in that the two roads connecting Mill Road to Galloway Street, Market Square and Howgate Street, are both one-way north to south so you cannot legally cycle from Mill Road to Galloway Street.

This makes it even more time consuming to head northwards – the shortest route being up Maxwell St – one of the steepest hills in Dumfries – and then back down along the main road, or dismounting and wheeling your bike. The alternatives involve crossing the river twice, including carrying your bike down the steps on Devorgilla Bridge. In the worst case, a rider who is unable to dismount or get their bike down the steps, and feels unsafe on busy roads, would need to cycle all the way down Mill Green to the Kirkpatrick McMillan Bridge, then all the way up Whitesands to the Loreburn Bridge to return to the west side of the river – a diversion of almost 3 miles.

This could be easily solved by allowing contraflow cycling in Market Square, either through signs permitting it or removing a few parking spaces to put a contraflow cycle lane in. Alternatively, making Market Square a cul-de-sac for cars but

permeable to bikes would keep it as a quiet street but enable it to be used as a cycle route in both directions, not just one.

Creating a continuous cycle route on the west side of the river would then offer an alternative route when the Whitesands is occupied by fairs, is flooded or when construction of the flood protection works goes ahead. It also allows cyclists to avoid the shared-use path along the Whitesands which can get very busy with pedestrians, reducing cyclist-pedestrian conflict.

Further west along Galloway St/Laurieknowe, there is another busy junction at the end of Terregles Street. Terregles Street is the direct route from Summerhill and communities west of Dumfries (see the Terregles chapter) to the town centre. It has a 20mph speed limit, making it potentially more attractive to cyclists as a route, albeit made more difficult to cycle on due to speed cushions. Terregles Street is also home of the DG2 Wheels bike shop, so a key destination for cyclists.





The tricky junction where Terregles Street meets Galloway Street / Laurieknowe. Howgate Street is on the left and Rosemount Street opposite.

For cyclists heading into town, there is the option of crossing straight into Howgate Street to avoid cycling along the busier roads. If a useful solution was implemented at the end of Buccleuch Bridge, as described above, and there were safe attractive crossing points along Glasgow St (see previous chapter), then cyclists would tend to use that. However, as it stands, crossing to Howgate Street is currently the least worst option when coming in from the west for cyclists heading for this side of the river. It is also the obvious route for cyclists heading towards New Abbey Road.

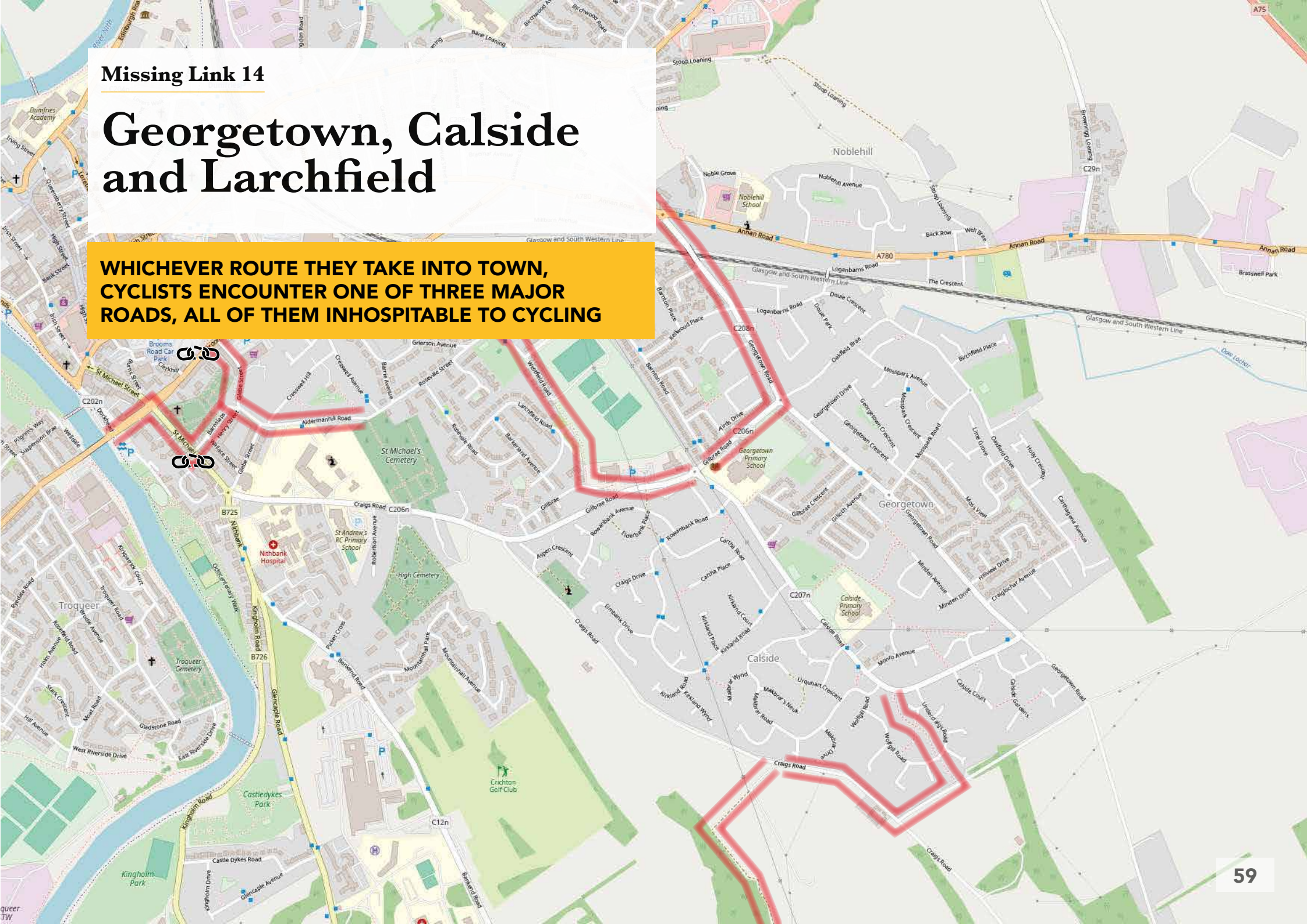
Where Terregles Street meets Laurieknowe, there is nothing to make a cyclist feel safe. This junction is tricky for any road user, but particularly for a vulnerable cyclist. Parked cars limit visibility, meaning it can be necessary to edge into the main road to get a clear view. Queueing traffic, which also limits visibility, a bus stop, and the traffic coming round the corner from Glasgow Street all need to be contended with. Traffic signals on the main junction with Terregles St, if this were possible, would make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to use, and potentially safer for all road users. As with Market Street, making Howgate Street two-way for cyclists would allow cyclists to reach Terregles Street northbound without having to divert or dismount.



Missing Link 14

Georgetown, Calside and Larchfield

WHICHEVER ROUTE THEY TAKE INTO TOWN, CYCLISTS ENCOUNTER ONE OF THREE MAJOR ROADS, ALL OF THEM INHOSPITABLE TO CYCLING



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

between 1-2 miles / 2-3kms

Travel times:

by bike 7-14 minutes; by e-bike 5-8 minutes

Council ward:

9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Whichever route is taken into town, cyclists will encounter one of three major roads: Annan Road, Brooms Road or St Michael's Street, all of which are inhospitable to cycling.
- The railway line to the north of Georgetown means there are fewer quiet roads exiting the residential area than normal.

PROPOSALS

- Make cut-throughs more accessible by removing barriers and adding dropped kerbs.
- Reduce the speed limit on Craigs Road and the Gillbrae Road link between Craigs Road and Georgetown Road.
- Extend the 20mph zone across the whole residential area.
- Signing routes into town and the Crichton.

BENEFITS

- These are three large residential areas, very close to town centre amenities and the Crichton. Improving active travel routes into town would reduce traffic on arterial roads.
- More sustainable travel to the schools and colleges adjacent to the area.

THE DETAILS

Accessing Dumfries by bike from Georgetown, Calside or Larchfield can be summed up by the phrase “so near, but yet so far ...”. The entire area sits within 1-2 miles of the High Street. Georgetown and Calside are relatively easy to cycle around – there are plenty of quiet streets, an existing 20mph zone around the schools and even a few handy little cut-throughs for pedestrians and bikes.

Leaving the area is more difficult. There are three main routes to town depending on your starting point and confidence level: Annan Road, Brooms Road and Aldermanhill Road. Let's look at them in turn.

Annan Road route

To make this route better:

- Remove the guard rails from the roundabout that joins the Annan Road and Georgetown Road, widen the pavement and create a direct connection from Georgetown Road to Millburn Avenue.
- Create a safe way for someone on a bike to rejoin Georgetown Road from Millburn Avenue.
- Give bikes an advance start at the traffic lights over the railway bridge on Georgetown Road.
- Make Greenbrae Loaning a no-through-road for cars, but accessible for bikes, to provide a route from Georgetown Road towards Lockerbie Road.
- Create a safe way for someone on a bike to negotiate the roundabout between Greenbrae Loaning and Georgetown Road.
- Sign the route



The roundabout on Annan Road/Georgetown Road – Millburn Avenue is seen just past the bollards.

Brooms Road route

There's a decent route into town which skirts the St. Joseph's playing fields, but it becomes more difficult when it reaches Brooms Road. See the Brooms Road chapter for details.

Aldermanhill Road route

With the improvements suggested below, this route really has potential to form a route suitable for a novice rider:

- Make Aldermanhill Road a no-through-road for cars, even if only during the school run, to prevent it becoming a rat run for drivers.
- Convert the crossing from Glebe Street to Cumberland Street into a toucan crossing, giving people on bikes easy access to the traffic calmed Queen Street area.
- Create a cycle route from where Barnslaps joins St Michael's Street to Brooms Road, and continue it along the Dock Park side of Brooms Road down to the Whitesands.
- Sign the route.



Barnslaps – a potential linking cycle route to Dock Park/Whitesands.

Even with our suggestions, the Annan and Brooms Road routes would only be suitable for reasonably confident cyclists, as a person still has to get into town once at the end of Brooms Road. Aldermanhill Road has potential to be the safest route.

Towards the Crichton

The Maidenbower path offers a traffic-free, albeit steep, route from Craigs Road to the Crichton, D&G College, USWS and Mountainhall Treatment Centre – if you know how to find it. Signing this route and lowering speed limits would open it up to more people.



Part of the cut-through from Calside Road to the Maidenbower path via Craigs Road. The chicane at the top was recently removed making it much more accessible.

Missing Link 15

Dumfries High School

WHAT WOULD REAL AMBITION LOOK LIKE
WHEN IT COMES TO KIDS CYCLING TO SCHOOL?



LINK DETAILS

Council ward:

8 - Lochar (Pupils attend from multiple wards)

This chapter is in response to a planning application (2023) to rebuild Dumfries High School and the associated David Keswick Sports Centre. While we have no objection to replacing the school and sports centre, we submitted a planning representation due to the need to improve cycling access to the school, and lack of adequate cycle parking.

The case officer's report notes that the level of cycle parking is lower than the standards given in the national guidance because the number of students cycling to Dumfries High School is so low (currently 1.6% of all pupils). They concluded that cycle parking to accommodate 10% of pupils will be sufficient as it is unlikely that the number of children cycling to school will increase to the levels where the amount of bike parking given in the guidance would be needed (41%).

While true, it also reflects a lack of ambition when it comes to sustainable travel. Just across the North Sea, in the Netherlands, those levels of cycling to secondary school would be normal.

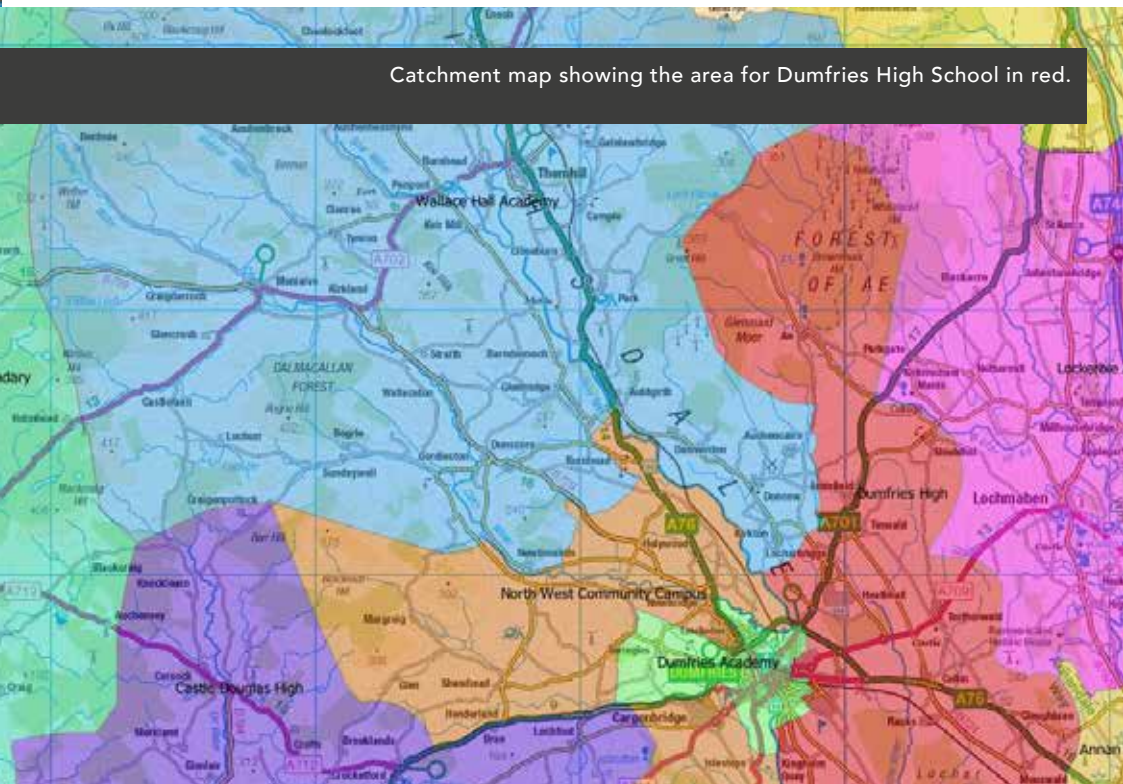
So why is cycling so low among school kids in Dumfries? There are cultural reasons of course, but Dutch towns and cities have been built in such a way that cycling pretty much everywhere, including to school, is safe not just for secondary-school age kids, but those in primary school as well. By contrast, although Dumfries High School is now linked by a cycle path from the Summerpark estate and from there to the Caledonian Cycleway, cycling to school from other directions is still pretty challenging, and not what you'd want your 11-year-old having to tackle on their way to school.



This active travel map outside the school entrance is a great start – but it only shows the signed routes to and from the Bridge and other schools.

In our planning representation we noted that the route to the school from Marchmount is incomplete (as is also noted in the Travel Plan that forms part of the planning application) and that the route from Summerpark is unsigned, and lacks a dropped kerb for access by bikes.

Neither issue is dealt with in the planning report. Although it notes that development proposals should “prioritise personal travel by mode in the following order: walking, cycling, public transport and lastly car” and “provide opportunities



satisfied with the arrangements in the plan, apart from some requirements around



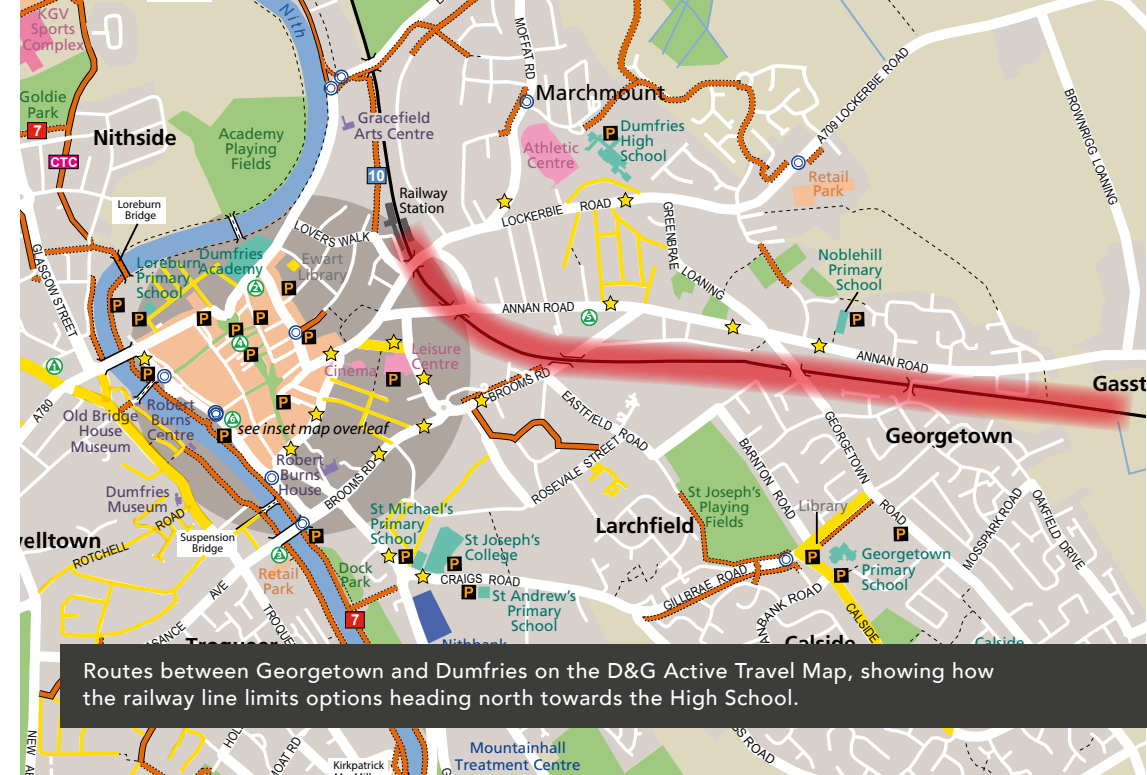
traffic calming, off-street parking and electric car charging. Nothing is included about improving access for cycling either in the immediate area of the school or from any of the surrounding areas where its pupils live. In other words, we've decided to accept the status quo: concentrating on taming and managing traffic as best we can, instead of working to reduce it. This is disappointing, for a council that has not just declared a climate emergency – but has also been designated as part of an international bike region by the UCI.

So what do we suggest? In the long run, we believe that we'll only see substantial numbers of pupils cycling to school by ensuring they can do so safely, and that means tackling the missing links in the network connecting the school to its catchment areas and The Bridge. The map below shows the High School catchment area. Viewing this area for potential school journeys, it's clear that access from the west and the north is very close to being good, while access from the south and east is much more difficult.

Coming from the West: The Bridge

There is a signposted walking route of 1.6 miles between the Bridge and the High School, by way of the Maxwelltown Path and Carnegie Street, crossing the Moffat Road using a pedestrian crossing and coming into the existing school via

The red arrow indicates the entrance to the path up to the High School from Heather Drive. Note the lack of a dropped kerb, and absence of any signs. Signage here and from the Caledonian Cycleway would act as a guide to cyclists and also a prompt for people to consider cycling as an option.



Routes between Georgetown and Dumfries on the D&G Active Travel Map, showing how the railway line limits options heading north towards the High School.

High School, but there is no wayfinding either at the start of the path, nor on the Caledonian Cycleway. Having this route clearly marked would save cyclists from having to use the Moffat Road, which has no cycling provision at all and is a busy and hostile road to cycle on.

Marchmount Avenue. But this route is incomplete for cycling – the crossing of the Moffat Road is for pedestrians only, not bikes and there is no cycling provision along Marchmount Avenue, which will be busy and hence dangerous during school run times. Otherwise, this distance would be very easy and quick to cycle and completing this route would be very easy to achieved.

From Summerpark, Heathhall and Locharbriggs

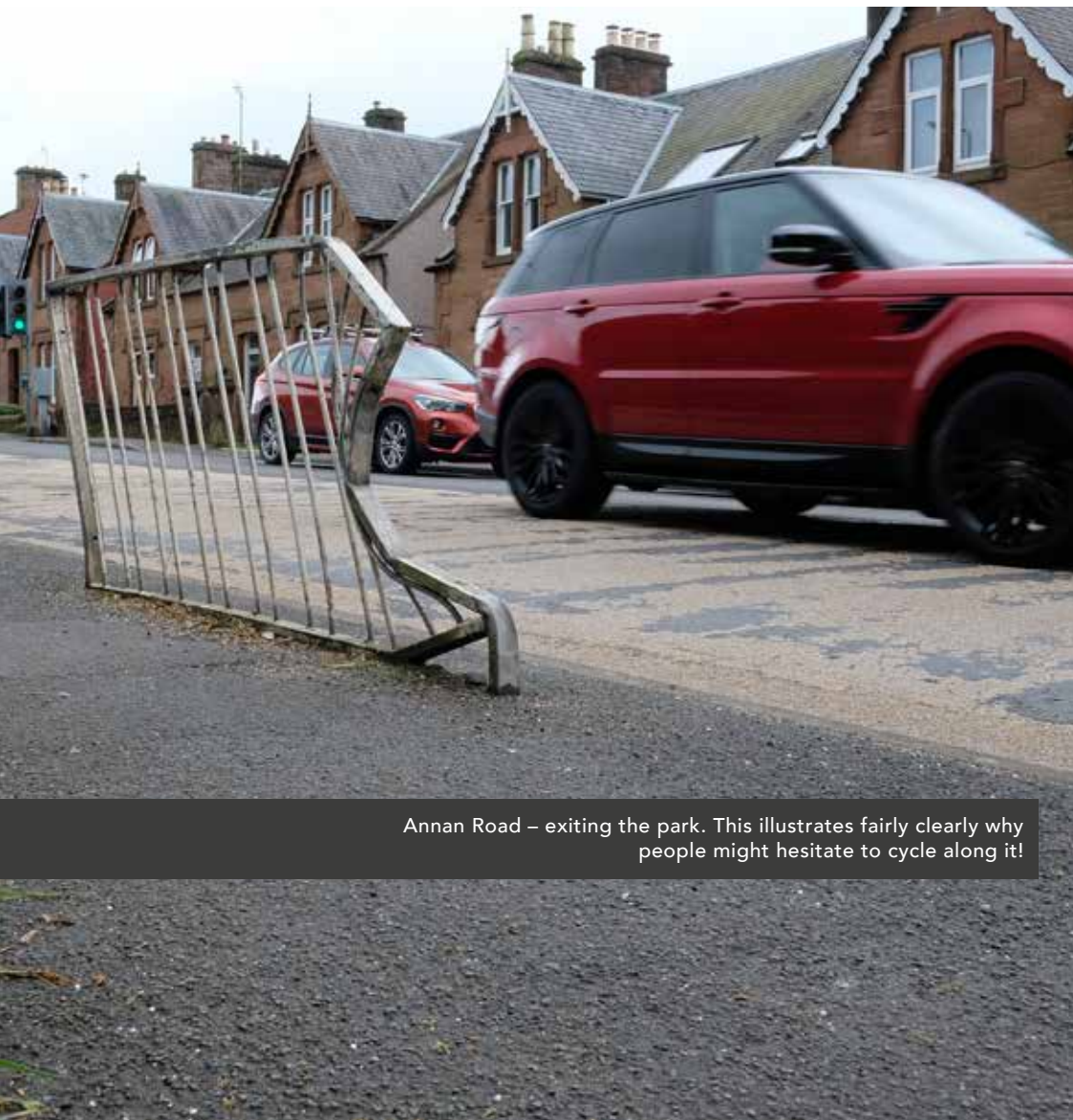
As noted, there is now a path that connects the back of the High School to Summerpark, which in turn provides good cycling conditions and connects well to the Caledonian Cycleway which serves Heathhall and Locharbriggs. These journeys are less than 3 miles and largely flat – easily accessible for a secondary school student. There is a shared-use path along the length of Summerpark Road which provides a safe route from the Caledonian Cycleway to the path to the



The roundabout where Georgetown Road joins the Annan Road.

From Noblehill, Georgetown, Calside and Larchfield

Students living closest to the school are likely to want to walk to school rather than cycle, but for those coming from Georgetown, Calside and Larchfield, a distance of 1-2 miles, cycling would save time. However, none of the routes from those areas are very inviting, especially for children cycling independently. We've tackled Georgetown, Calside and Larchfield in another chapter, but the main problem is that the railway line acts as a barrier, with only three possible crossing points.



Annan Road – exiting the park. This illustrates fairly clearly why people might hesitate to cycle along it!

When approaching via Eastfield Road and Brooms Road, there is no cycle path along the top end of Brooms Road. Once under the railway line, there would potentially be room to put one in. There would need to be a suitable crossing of the Annan Road to get cyclists onto Kirkcovens Street to bypass the roundabout there, and then wayfinding measures through the residential streets up to the Lockerbie Road. There is already a pedestrian crossing of the Lockerbie Road which connects to a path through to Bane Loaning and the school entrance, which could be converted into a toucan (bike and pedestrian) crossing to complete the route.

Approaching via Georgetown Road, the junction with the Annan Road is very hostile to pedestrians and cyclists, with a busy roundabout surrounded by railings narrowing the pavements on all sides. Removing some of the railings to allow cycle access down Millburn Avenue. Creating a crossing opposite the cafe and shop would provide a route via the park up to Greenbrae Loaning which is slightly less busy as it is filtered by a one-way section at one end. However, Georgetown Road itself is also both narrow and busy, with the bridge over the railway line forming a bottleneck, and hence a barrier to cycling for most people.

The third crossing point, at Loganbarns Road, is a little quieter than Georgetown Road but involves a substantial detour. Thinking big, a pedestrian and cycle-only bridge over the railway line would serve to open up Georgetown more widely to active travel.

From Collin

It is not much further from Collin to the High School than it is from Locharbriggs – at least as the car drives: 3.3 miles, a very achievable ride for a teenager to tackle. As covered in our Collin chapter there is no safe, direct cycle route from Collin to Dumfries. The closest thing to a safe route (via Roucan Loch, and the Heathhall Industrial estate to the Caledonian Cycleway) is almost double the distance, at 5.7 miles. Until there is a cycle path from Collin into town, this is going to be a non-starter for most secondary school children.

Conclusion

The fact that this chapter draws on routes in a number of other chapters shows the importance of a complete cycling network to support active travel, especially

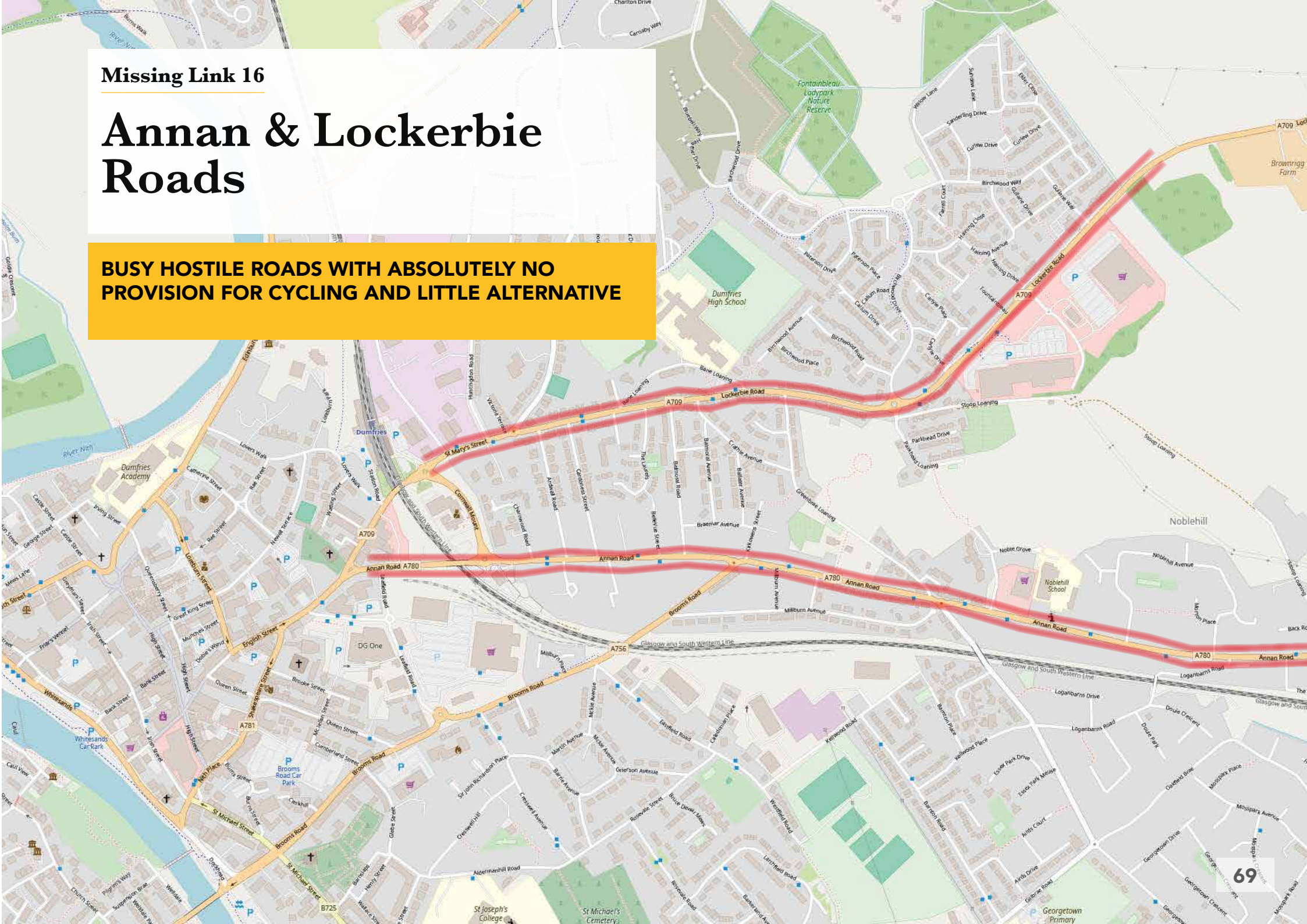
for children. It also shows how the benefits of closing any individual gap have the potential to multiply as the network grows, connecting more and more parts of the town to each other. We need to be seizing every opportunity to add links to the chain until we have completed a coherent network, which would serve not just one school, but ultimately the whole town and its surrounding area. That is how the Dutch have created such remarkable levels of cycling across all levels of society – something that would benefit us all.



Missing Link 16

Annan & Lockerbie Roads

BUSY HOSTILE ROADS WITH ABSOLUTELY NO PROVISION FOR CYCLING AND LITTLE ALTERNATIVE



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

Lockerbie Road 0.8 miles / 1.25km; Annan Road 1.4 miles / 2.25km

Travel times:

by bike 3 minutes (Lockerbie Road) and 8 minutes (Annan Road); by e-bike 3 minutes and 6 minute respectively

Missing link length:

1.4 miles / 2.25km (Annan Road)

Council wards:

8 - Lochar and 9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- The eastern side of town, served by the Lockerbie and Annan Roads has absolutely no provision for cycling and alternative routes to town are highly convoluted.

PROPOSALS

- Create a cycle track along the Annan Road.
- Close Lockerbie Road to through traffic.

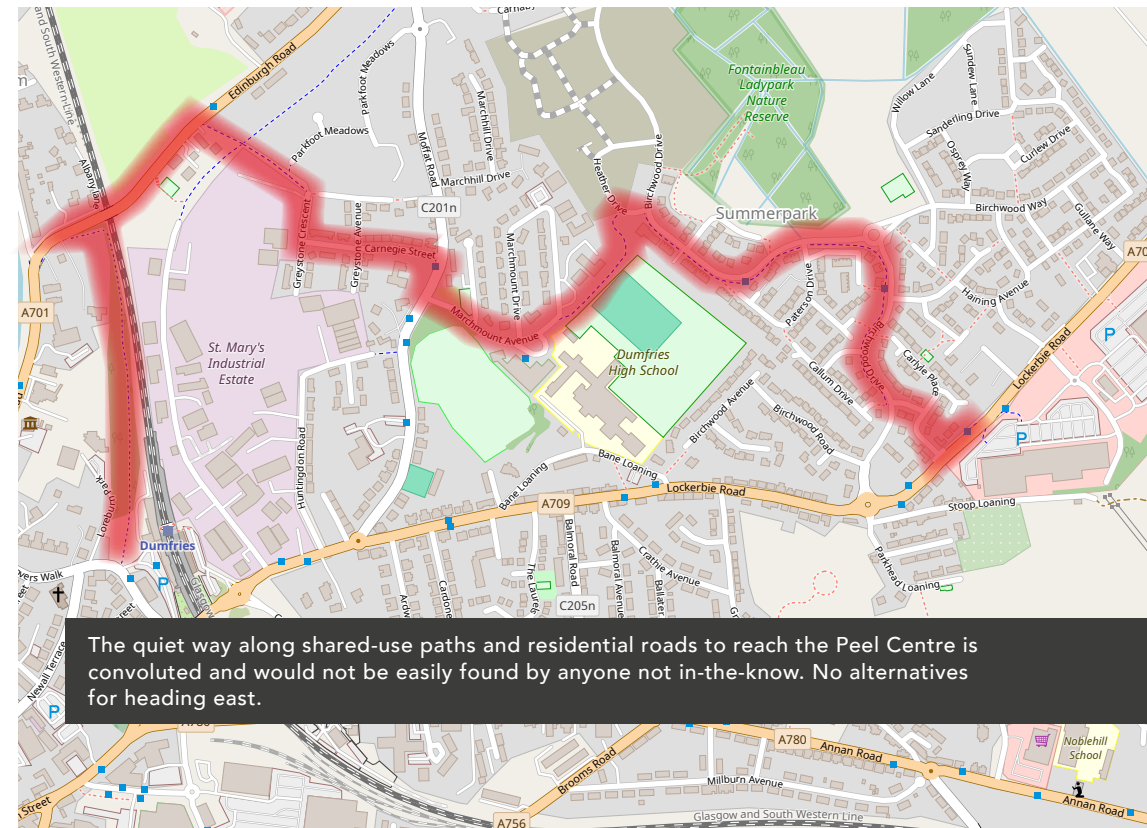
BENEFITS

- The creation of safe, intuitive cycling and walking routes for residents in the east to their local shopping, leisure and school facilities.

THE DETAILS

Two of Dumfries's toughest nuts to crack are the Lockerbie and Annan Roads. Anyone approaching Dumfries from the west by way of the Maxwelltown Path, the north by way of the Caledonian Cycleway or even the south via NCN 7, might feel that Dumfries has a good cycling network with reasonable provision for cyclists of all abilities. However, anyone living to the east of the town would not share this view. The two main routes coming into the town from this direction, the Lockerbie and Annan Roads, have absolutely no provision for bikes at all and are busy, hostile environments for any form of active travel.

The alternative bike-friendly route for going east from the town centre (see map) involves an unintuitive, long detour, a steep incline behind the High School and requires a good sense of wayfinding. It also doesn't easily lead you to or from the town centre and the route is only accessible from Summerpark and the retail park. Anyone on the south side of Lockerbie Road is faced with a busy road to negotiate to enter Summerpark's shared-use pavements.



This means that people wanting to visit the retail park or who live along either of these roads are more or less forced to drive or use the bus unless they're very confident cyclists or cycle on the pavement. Lockerbie Road in particular is very hostile to cycling – narrow and busy near the town centre with intimidating roundabouts, and very fast flowing as you get out towards the bypass. This side of town is the most glaring gap in the cycling network and should be a priority for the council to sort out if it wants to encourage more people to cycle.

The lack of routes mean that the Peel shopping centre, the Noblehill area and Dumfries High School are disconnected from the town centre for cyclists and so people travelling to or from these places, or even within the Noblehill area, are less likely to choose to cycle. It also means that any improvements to connect Dumfries to villages east of the town would be unsuccessful until this area is improved. Better routes could also offer the town's eastern residents easier access to Heathhall forest from Lockerbie Road without the need to drive.

Annan Road



Annan Road – wide enough to give bikes their own space.

The Annan Road does have room for decent cycling provision and this should be the first priority. The options are cycle lanes (i.e. on-road space for bikes) and cycle tracks (where the bikes are physically separated from both cars and pedestrians by means of a raised curb). Badly designed cycle lanes are often worse than useless, especially if they disappear at junctions, cars can either park on them, or they run outside the line of parked cars, putting bikes in danger if a driver opens their door just as they're trying to cycle past.

On the Annan road there is room to put in a decent width of lane – a minimum of 1.5m in both directions, and for extra protection the lane should run along the inside of any parking, keeping bikes away from the traffic. Even better would be a segregated track, of the sort seen below in Glasgow or more recently on New Abbey Road.



Segregated two-way bike track in Glasgow. Cycle Streets.

This would keep cyclists safe from the traffic, and would be a very visible encouragement to cycle, although such tracks are not cheap to put in. We think that it would be worth creating such a facility in Dumfries to demonstrate that cycling doesn't have to be confined to old railway lines and river paths – bikes can be given their own space on the main roads as they are the routes that go where people want to go and connect amenities.

Such cycle lanes or tracks would need to connect to further infrastructure in the town centre across the railway bridge and could also link to improved infrastructure from Georgetown and along Brooms Road.

Lockerbie Road



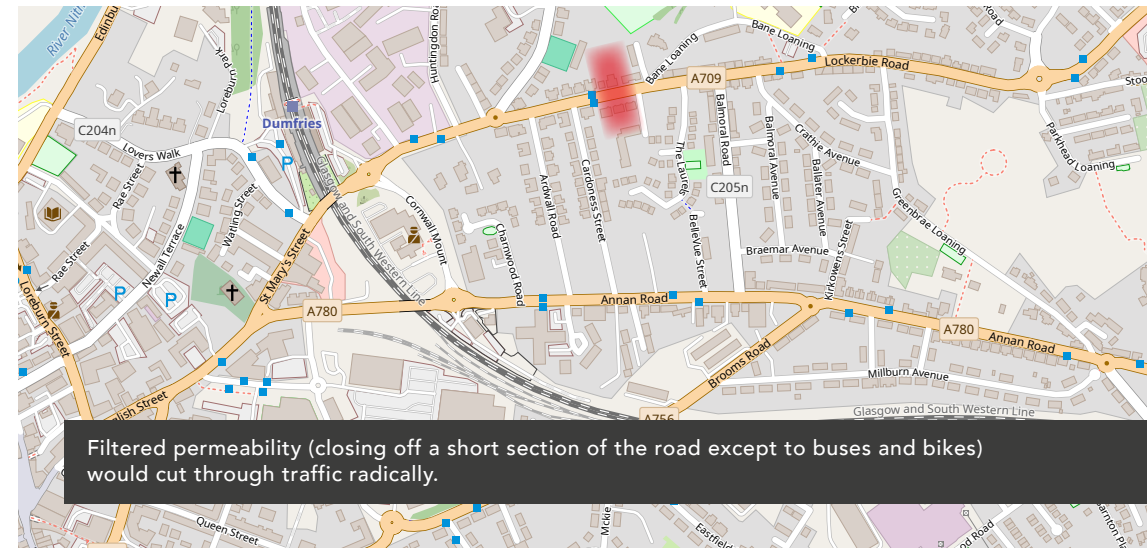
Lockerbie Road: narrow, congested, and with on-street parking.



The Lockerbie Road is even tougher as there's simply no room for a solution of this kind. Even drivers tend to avoid it, if they can take the Annan Road instead. A high-quality segregated route on the Annan Road might be enough, but there are other things that can be done on a road like this. The first, and simplest, is to make it a 20mph road, which would instantly make it safer for pedestrians, drivers and cyclists. However, it's unlikely that this alone would make it attractive to novice cyclists as they would still have to contend with buses and lorries. Further out, where the speed limit goes up to 60mph, there is room for a fully segregated path and this would be the minimum provision we'd recommend given how fast and busy that road is now.

The second option is to make it one-way along the narrowest part of the route for cars, but two-way for bikes. This would make space for a contraflow bike lane – but would seriously inconvenience buses on the Lockerbie route, as well as people

living by that section of road. Making the road two-way for buses would leave no extra room for bikes, although it would cut down on the traffic for cyclists to contend with and make the road more pleasant for pedestrians as well.



Filtered permeability (closing off a short section of the road except to buses and bikes) would cut through traffic radically.

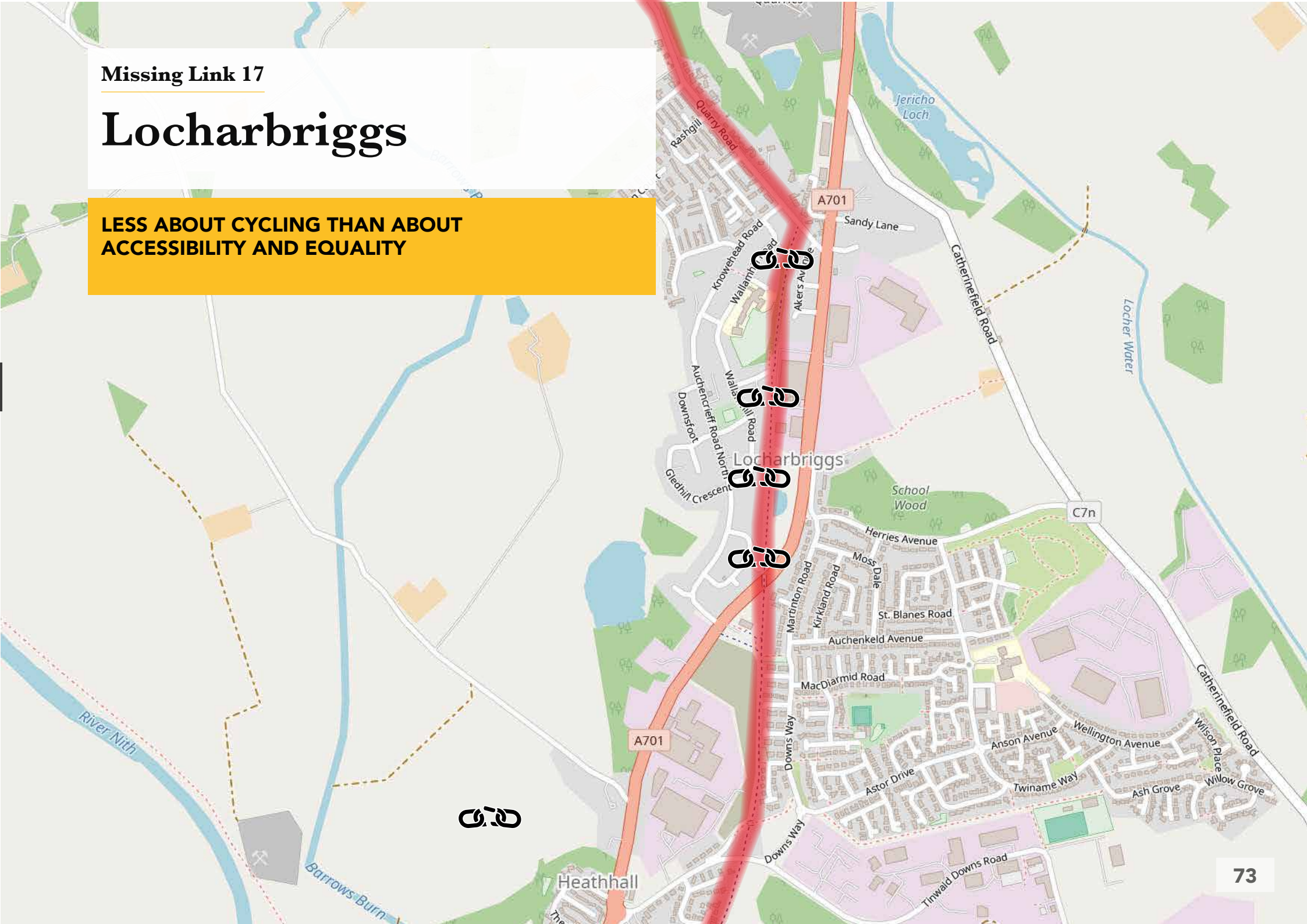
Finally, a more radical solution is 'filtered permeability', i.e. closing the Lockerbie Road off part way along its length, with a gate for buses and bikes, but not other traffic. The remainder of the road would still be two-way – but it would only serve the houses and businesses along its length. The radical drop in traffic that this would entail would make it much less hostile to bikes, especially if combined with a 20mph zone. Drivers to the retail parks could still reach them via the cross streets further up, while traffic going to and from Lockerbie would have a slightly longer trip round on the bypass. Residents could still get through on the side streets easily enough – and they would also be able to choose the bike or bus as a more direct alternative, as well as enjoy a much quieter and less polluted environment. The Annan Road would get busier, but not by as much as you might think. Just as when new roads are built they quickly fill up with traffic, when roads are closed, some of the traffic simply disappears as people find alternative ways to get about.

We appreciate this proposal is pretty radical. However it is just the sort of approach – cutting through routes for cars, creating them for bikes and buses – that the Dutch have used to create cycling rates of 25% of all journeys – and 50% in some towns and cities. Imagine the difference this would make to Dumfries.

Missing Link 17

Locharbriggs

LESS ABOUT CYCLING THAN ABOUT ACCESSIBILITY AND EQUALITY



LINK DETAILS

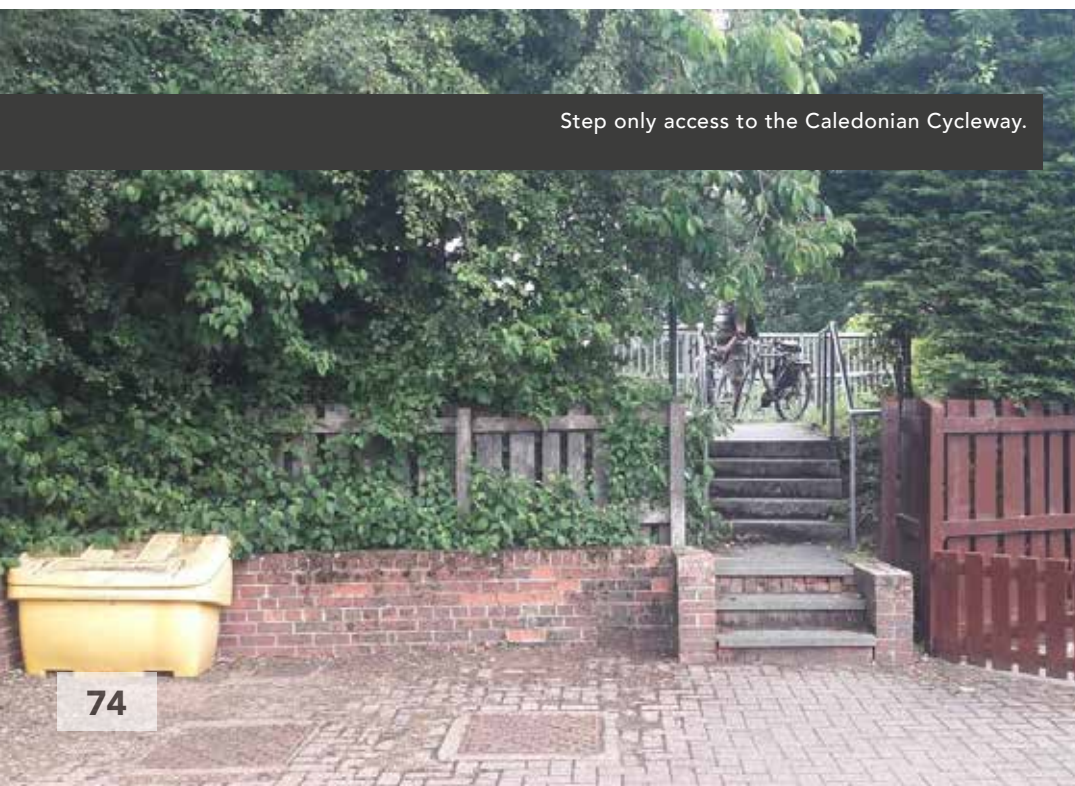
Council ward:

8 - Lochar

Unlike the majority of chapters in this book, this one is less about cycling than about accessibility and equality.

The Caledonian Cycleway provides a safe, direct traffic-free route from Locharbriggs and Heathhall into Dumfries and is well used. However, in contrast to Heathhall and the new housing at Summerpark, Locharbriggs has very few step-free and accessible accesses onto the path.

In some places, there are steps because the path is high above the road, but that's not always the case. For instance, this entrance from Catherinefield Crescent, which would provide a large number of houses with easy access to the pathway, could easily be a ramp.



Step only access to the Caledonian Cycleway.

Further along we find an access point that has a gravel surface, making it hard to use wheelchairs and buggies:



There's a reason why the default bike in Dumfries seems to be a mountain bike...

The steps down to Locharbriggs primary school would be challenging to turn into an accessible step-free access, but not impossible. The wheeling channel – which is intended to allow (non-disabled) cyclists to push their bikes up and down the steps – is far too close to the handrail to be usable with most bikes. It's certainly not a viable option for anyone with a laden bike, a child-seat, a trailer or cargo bike (for instance to transport children) or anyone using a trike, a wheelchair or pushing children in a buggy.

It's clear that the population of Locharbriggs would like better access to the path because all along the route you can find 'desire lines' – pathways created informally by people simply making their own way. For instance, informal paths have been created joining the Caledonian Cycleway to the shops and other amenities. At the moment they're only accessible to determined non-disabled pedestrians (and mountain bikers) but they're clear evidence that proper paths are needed.



The route to Locharbriggs school.

Making the Caledonian Cycleway more accessible to the population of Locharbriggs is first and foremost a matter of equality. The current situation means that anyone reliant on a wheelchair, parents with pushchairs, and anyone unable to negotiate steps or scramble up a bank has less access to this key route into town, or to a path which many people use for recreation as well as transport.

Fortunately, the solution to these missing links is pretty clear: just upgrade what's already there, including the paths people have made themselves. Converting the sub-standard accesses and existing desire lines into usable step-free entrances would be a straightforward and relatively cheap way to increase the usability of the town's traffic-free network.

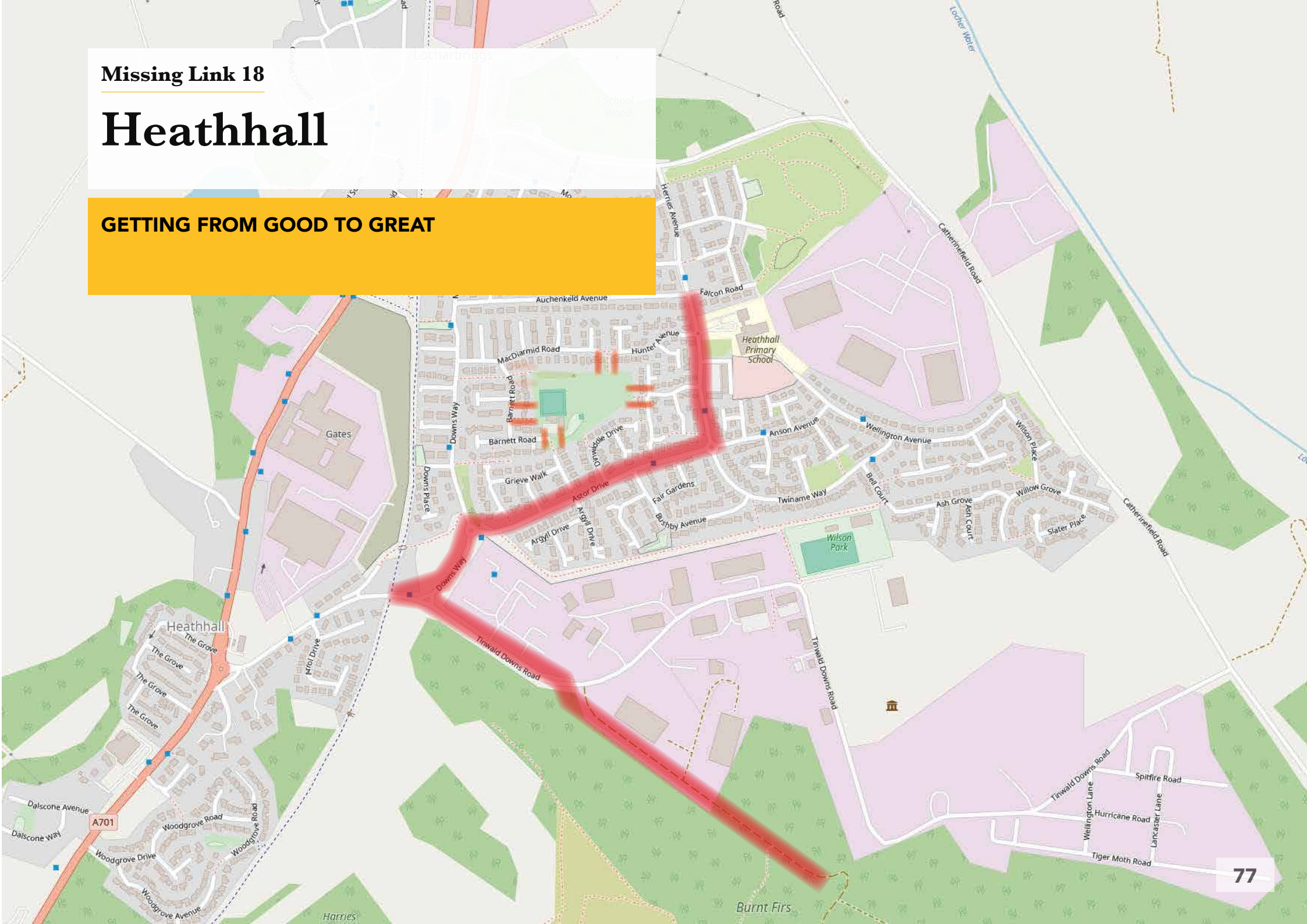


If paths aren't put in, people do find a way...

Missing Link 18

Heathhall

GETTING FROM GOOD TO GREAT



LINK DETAILS

Council ward:

8 - Lochar

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Heathhall's internal connections need to be improved to support growth in use of the very good traffic-free connections into town.
- New housing planned for Catherinefield Farm will need to be similarly well connected.

PROPOSALS

- Build a cycle track alongside Astor Drive and the bottom end of Downs Way, to connect up with the path alongside Tinwald Downs Road and ultimately the Caledonian Cycleway.
- Build a cycle path along Herries Avenue from Astor Drive at least as far as the school.
- Put a well-surfaced, signposted and lit path around the perimeter of the recreation ground behind the community centre and remove all barriers from the connecting paths.
- Create paths from the planned new housing at Catherinefield Farm onto the Caledonian Cycleway and south into Heathhall.

BENEFITS

- Improved safety within Heathhall.
- Growth of the existing active travel culture in the community, in particular among more vulnerable or less confident users.

THE DETAILS

Unlike a lot of the other missing links we cover, Heathhall doesn't have poor cycling connections to town; thanks to the Caledonian Cycleway it has an excellent and well-used off-road path that connects it almost to the town centre. However, the older parts of the suburb don't have as good connections internally, making the primary school less accessible to pupils who might otherwise be able to cycle there.

Heathhall has a great deal of potential for active travel: the primary school topped the leaderboard during Beat the Street, and the suburb - combined with Locharbriggs - represents more than 10% of Dumfries' population (Heathhall 3,225 and Locharbriggs 1,600). New houses are under construction and new housing developments are in planning. According to the last census 2.4% of the population cycled to work (slightly higher than the average for central Dumfries) and 8.1% walked.

We have an opportunity here to greatly increase those numbers. When parents feel safe cycling with their children to school, it becomes easier for them to continue on their own commute by bike, for instance into town, which is a 15 minute commute. It also gives children the confidence to continue cycling to school independently once they transition to secondary school. Heathhall has a decent traffic-free route to the Dumfries High School via the Caledonian Cycleway and Summerpark (see High School chapter).

Heathhall Primary serves pupils from further afield than Heathhall, so good connections between the school and the Caledonian Cycleway are key. Cycling conditions have to be excellent before most parents of primary school age children will contemplate it for their kids.

Most of the roads within Heathhall are now 20mph, and McDiarmid Road / Hunter Avenue offer an example of 'filtered permeability' (meaning that cyclists and pedestrians can get through but cars and other motor vehicles can't). As you can see in the photos below, a dropped kerb would improve accessibility, and Hunter Avenue exits at a mini roundabout opposite the school, which may discourage novice cyclists.



Filtered permeability on McDiarmid Road.



Astor Drive. There's so much space here, it encourages speeding. There's plenty of room to have separate cycle tracks as well as a pavement and trees.

Astor Drive is the main east-west route and this is a 30mph road that looks built for speed. Downs Way, which connects Heathhall to Tinwald Downs Road, and is the most direct and obvious route to the Caledonian Cycleway, is a similar 'racetrack' of a road.

The green space and recreation ground behind the community centre joins up a number of quiet streets and is right in the heart of Heathhall. There are accesses to it from all corners, making it ideal to form the heart of a network of quiet routes. However it is unpaved and unlit so would be uninviting as a route in winter. At least one of the entrances is also blocked by a chicane barrier that would block access to a wheelchair or adaptive bike of any kind, including a trailer or cargo bike for transporting children and shopping.



The primary school is on a 20mph road with traffic-calming measures, but these are in the form of 'speed cushions' which make it hard to cycle alongside traffic, especially for young children as the humps put drivers into conflict with cyclists vying for space. There's also a mini-roundabout to negotiate and the railings on the street around the school entrance suggest that traffic is considered a hazard. It's likely that most children cycling here will do so on the pavement.



Entrance to the school

Some relatively small interventions could unlock the potential for active travel that Beat the Street demonstrated and enhance active travel in the community and onwards to the industrial estate, the off-road leisure routes to the south, secondary schools and Dumfries town centre.

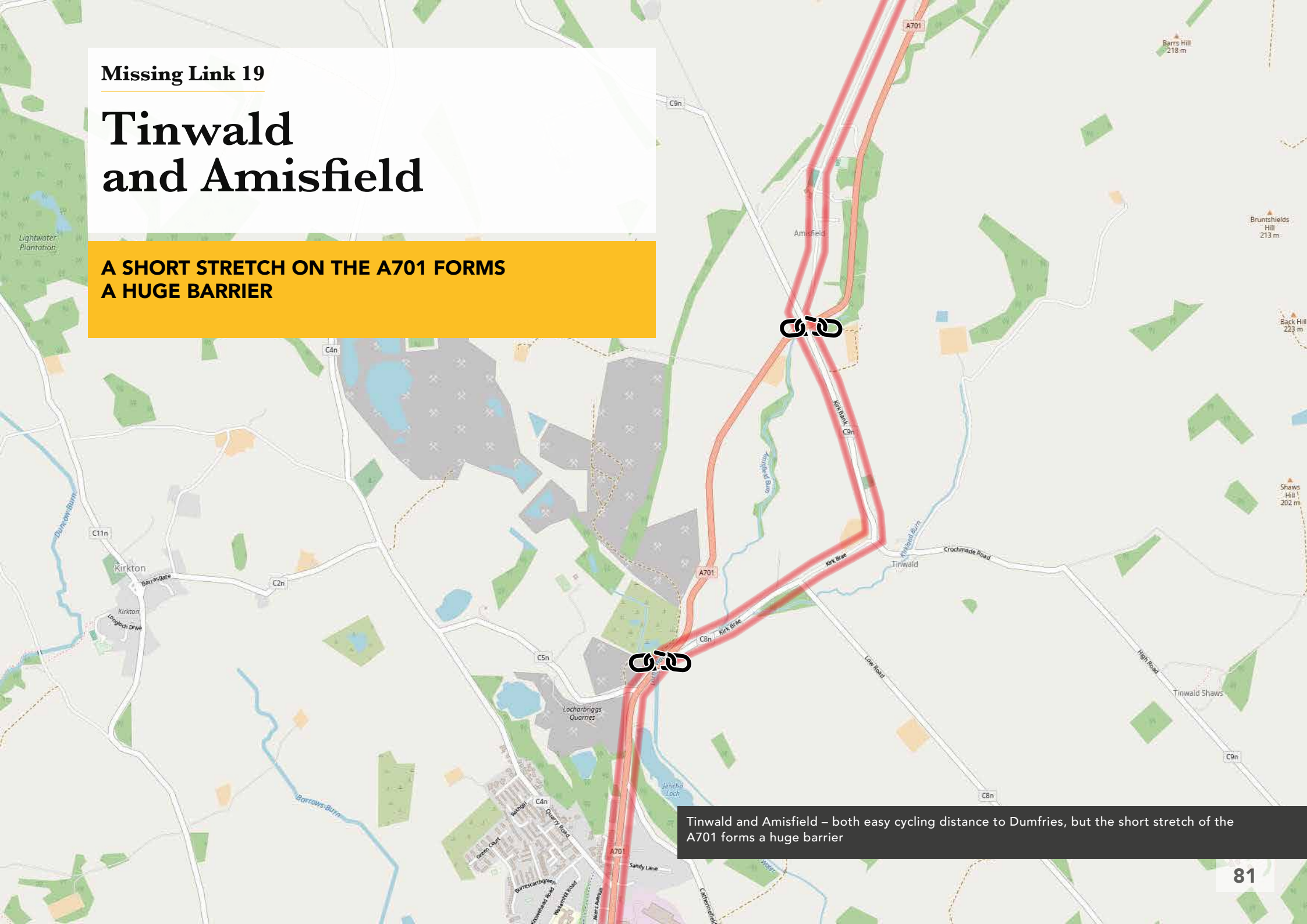
New proposals for housing at Catherinefield Farm will need connections to the Caledonian Cycleway to the west (via a signalised crossing of the A701) as well as paths connecting the new houses south to the community of Heathhall. These should be in place before the first occupants move in, as moving house is a key moment for people to form a new habit, such as cycling to work or school. Let's not build any new missing links as new developments are planned!



Missing Link 19

Tinwald and Amisfield

A SHORT STRETCH ON THE A701 FORMS A HUGE BARRIER



Tinwald and Amisfield – both easy cycling distance to Dumfries, but the short stretch of the A701 forms a huge barrier

LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

2 miles / 3.2km for Amisfield to the Caledonian Cycleway via Tinwald
1.1 miles / 1.8km Tinwald to the Caledonian Cycleway

Travel times:

Amisfield by bike 12 minutes; by e-bike 8 minutes
Tinwald by bike 7 minutes; by e-bike 5 minutes

Missing link length:

~0.5 mile / 860m (Quarry Road to Jericho Bridge)

Council ward:

8 - Lochar

MAIN PROBLEMS

- The A701 - from the car dealership to the Jericho Bridge turning for Tinwald - is a high-speed road unsuitable for cyclists.
- Cyclists turning right over Jericho Bridge towards Tinwald face oncoming 60mph traffic while cars behind them crest a hill on a corner and would have very little warning that any vehicle or bike is waiting to turn.

PROPOSALS

- Adapt the existing pavement on west side of A701 from Quarry Road to end of car dealership to be a shared-use path.
- Add a crossing point at the car dealership.
- Adapt the pavement on east side of A701 to shared-use path.
- Extend the shared-use path from entrance to Jericho Loch to Jericho Bridge.
- Reduce speed limit from 60 to 40mph on the section of road from Quarry Road to Jericho Bridge.

BENEFITS

- Amisfield and Tinwald lie so close to the Caledonian Cycleway and this would create a direct traffic-free route into the Heathhall industrial estate, Dumfries High School and Dumfries town centre.
- Eliminates the primary danger spot on the most commonly used route to Lochmaben via Shieldhill.

THE DETAILS

The Caledonian Cycleway ends at Quarry Road in Locharbriggs. Continuing to Amisfield directly along the A701 is not a safe route for cyclists. It's a heavily congested road, with a mixture of traffic including fully laden quarry vehicles. Sections of it are winding, undulating and narrow and the road soon changes from a 30mph limit to a 60mph stretch before reaching safer, quieter back roads.

Our destination, Amisfield, lies approximately 1.5 miles north of Locharbriggs along the A701 (Edinburgh Road). The safest option is to go 2 miles on the back lanes of Kirk Brae and Kirk Bank from Jericho Bridge via Tinwald and then down the hill to Amisfield.

While this is the most viable route, there are still two main hazards. The first is where A701 meets the Jericho Bridge junction. The second is at the Amisfield crossroads with the A701.

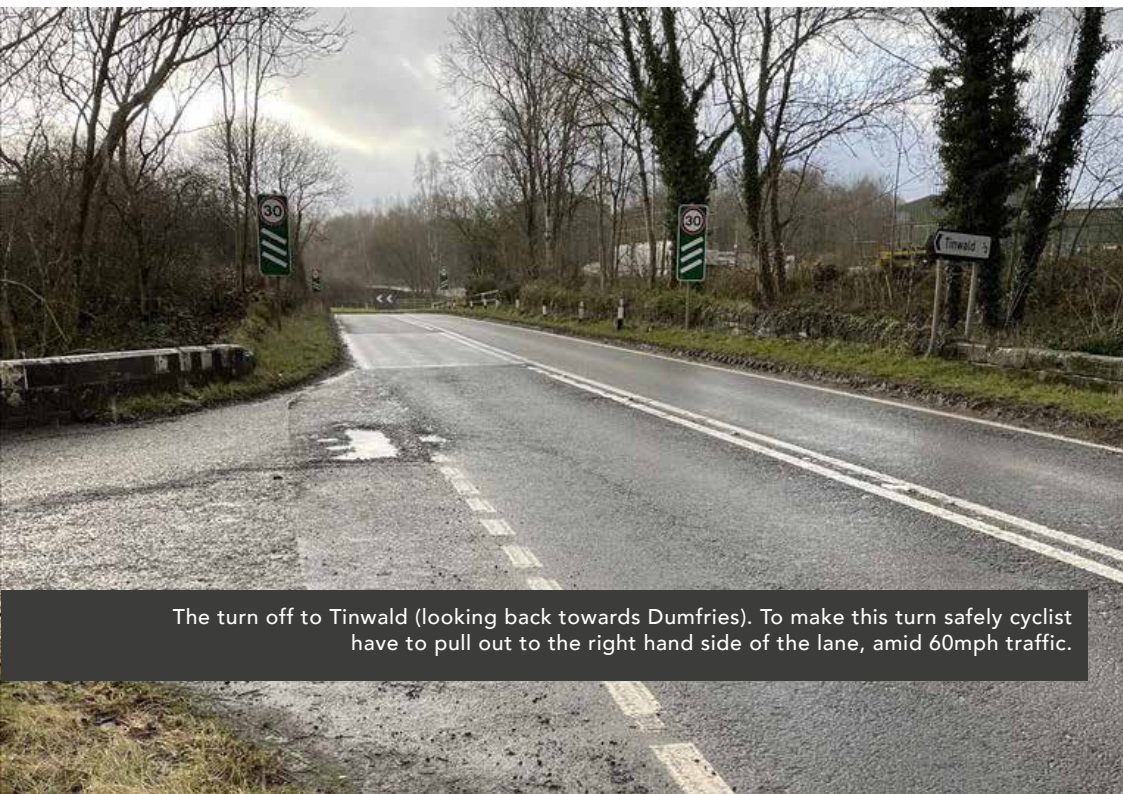
At the Jericho Bridge junction, where the speed limit is 60mph, turning right into Kirk Brae from the A701 is hazardous, with cyclists vulnerable not only due to oncoming traffic, but also very fast traffic coming up from behind, accelerating out of the 30mph limit just as they approach the bend. There is no right turn lane refuge here.

A shared-use path on the eastern side of the A701 with the crossing taking place near the car dealership (still a 30mph zone) would provide separation from the traffic for pedestrians and cyclists and avoid the need to cross the A701 in a 60mph zone with poor visibility.





Crossing the Edinburgh Road at Amisfield. Although there is the concession of a 50mph speed limit (!) by the village, this is a busy, fast trunk road.

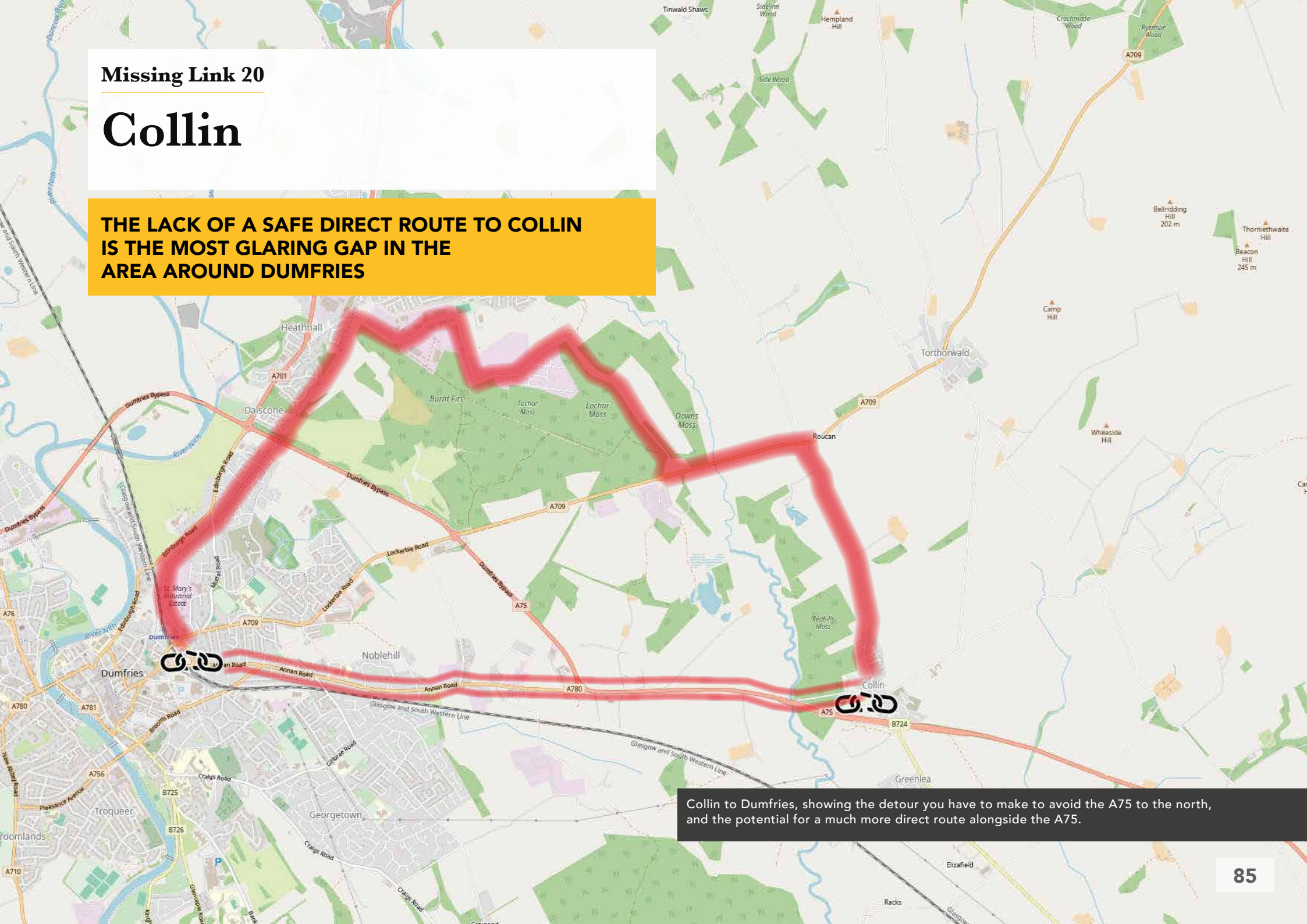


The turn off to Tinwald (looking back towards Dumfries). To make this turn safely cyclist have to pull out to the right hand side of the lane, amid 60mph traffic.

Missing Link 20

Collin

THE LACK OF A SAFE DIRECT ROUTE TO COLLIN IS THE MOST GLARING GAP IN THE AREA AROUND DUMFRIES



Collin to Dumfries, showing the detour you have to make to avoid the A75 to the north, and the potential for a much more direct route alongside the A75.

LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

4 miles / 6.8 kms

Travel times:

by bike 24 minutes; by e-bike 16 minutes

Missing link length:

1.75 miles / 2.8 kms Collin to roundabout of A75 and A780 (Annan Road)
/ 3 miles / 4.7 kms if the route continues to Noblehill Primary

Council ward:

8 - Lochar

MAIN PROBLEMS

- The A75 adjacent to Collin makes a direct cycling route into town all but impossible.

PROPOSALS

- Build a segregated cycleway alongside the route.

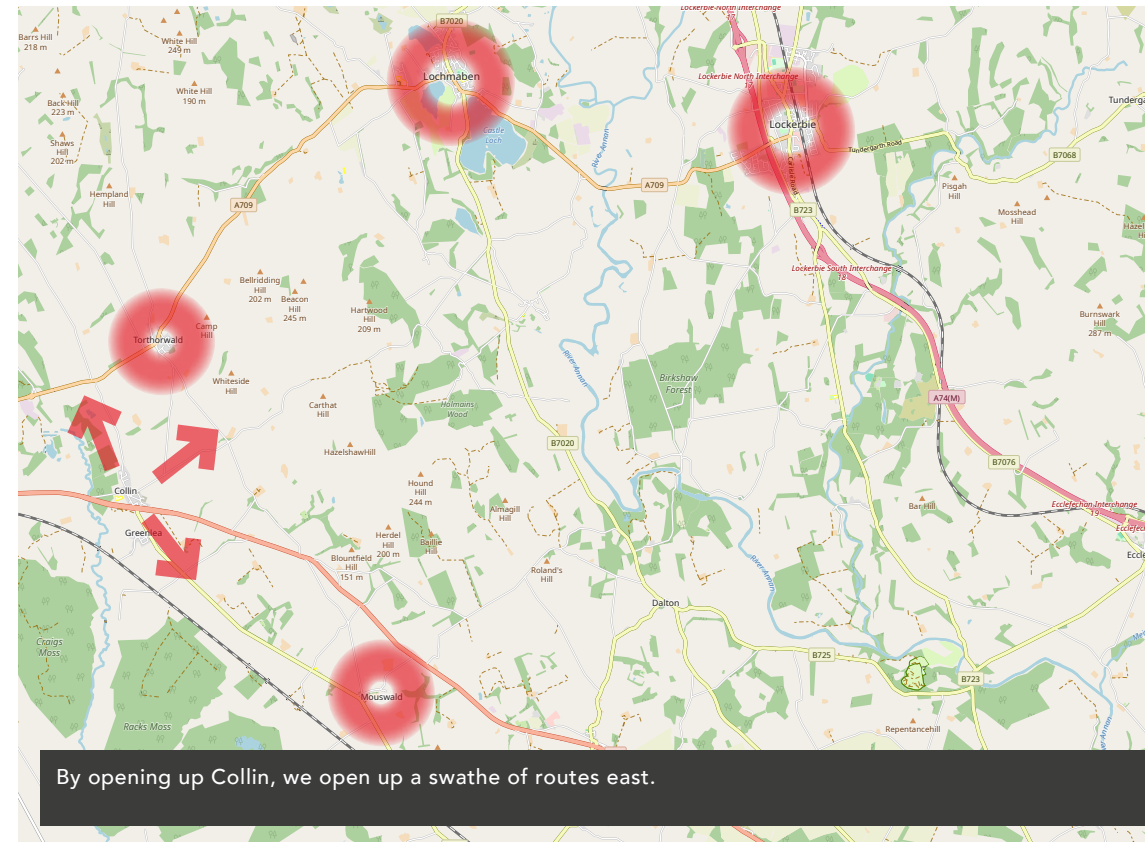
BENEFITS

- A safe, direct route to town that removes the need to more than double journey distances and travel time.
- Opens up new routes to a whole string of settlements to the east of Collin (see map).

THE DETAILS

Lack of routes to Collin represent the most glaring gap in connections to settlements just outside Dumfries.

Whenever we mention missing links in the cycling network, there's one name that comes up more than anywhere else: Collin. Just 4 miles from the town centre by car, via the A75, the only realistic option for most cyclists is more than twice as long, and still involves a stretch of the A709, itself not a road for the faint hearted.



This doesn't just matter for the population of Collin itself (around 800 people in and around the village). A direct route to Collin would enable cyclists to reach a network of minor roads that open up the countryside to the east of Dumfries, offering routes to Lochmaben, Torthorwald, the wonderfully named



A good example of a path set away from the carriageway at Penpont.



Heavy and fast traffic on the A75.

Heck, Hightae, and (via the underpass beneath the A75 at Collin) Mouswald, Clarencefield and Carrutherstown which also has an underpass beneath the A75.

The solution here is fairly obvious: a safe, shared-use path running parallel to the A75 straight into town (what to do once it reaches the Annan Road, in itself a not very appealing cycling prospect, is the subject of another chapter). This would have to be set well back from the dual carriageway – something like the path which runs alongside the A701 towards Beattock, for example, so cyclists aren't buffeted by every passing lorry and can get away from the traffic fumes.

This is a route which is not in the remit of the council. The A75 is a trunk route and the responsibility of Transport Scotland. However, that doesn't mean there's nothing the council can do about it. Transport Scotland doesn't build cycle paths alongside trunk roads unless they are doing major upgrades to them (which, with this stretch already dual carriageway, is unlikely in this case). The council would have to make the case to the Scottish Government to get this route built, but that shouldn't be an impossible task, given the government's stated commitment to active travel.

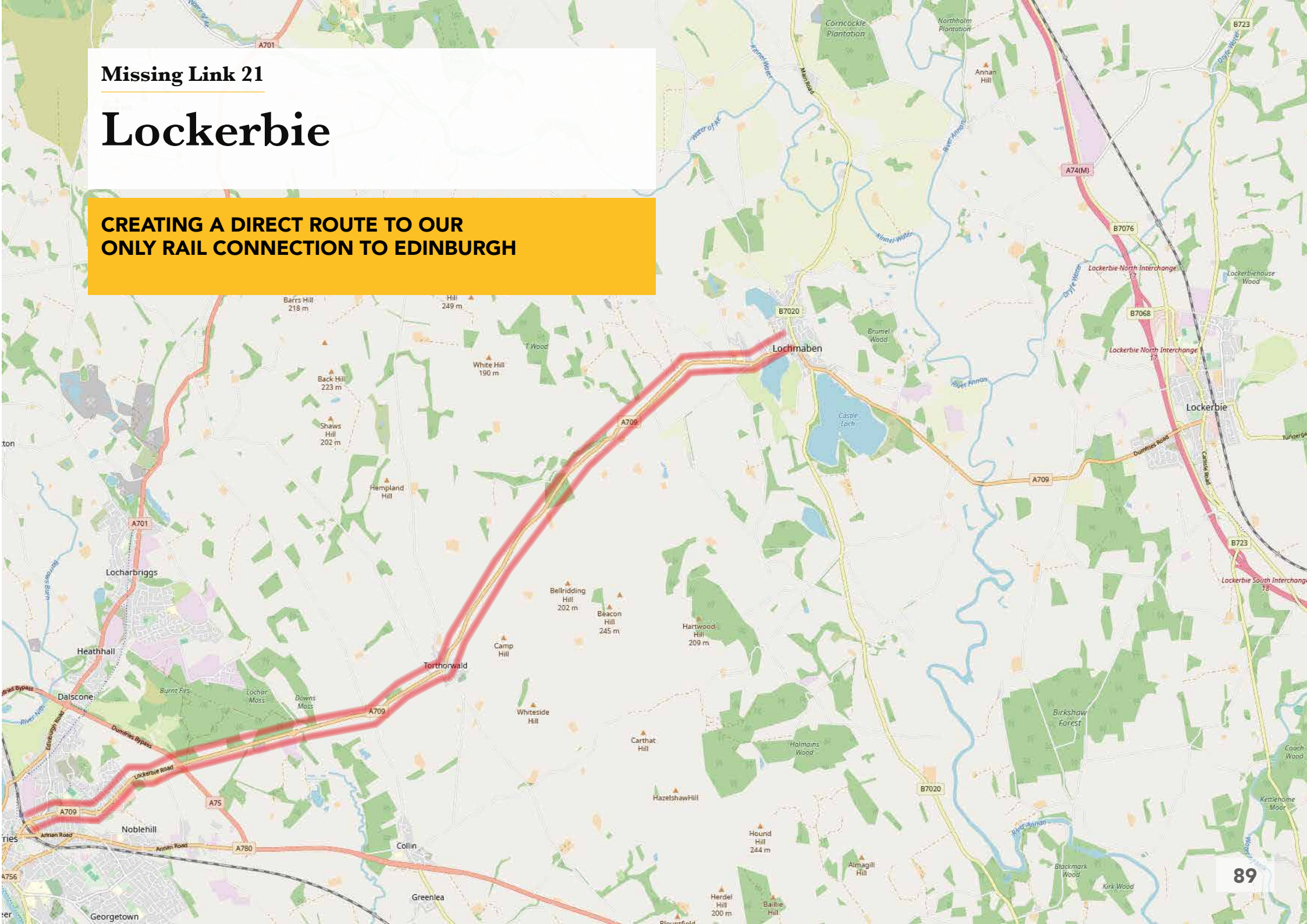
There are a lot of politicians, local and national, who are very vocal in their call for the dualling of the A75, which would cost billions of pounds. For a much more modest sum, by providing a relatively short stretch path alongside it, the A75 could be turned into a sustainable route that everyone can use, instead of a barrier to active travel. That seems like a bargain to us. And given both the Scottish Government and the council have declared a climate emergency, then it seems like an obvious way to show that they're serious about enabling sustainable transport.



Missing Link 21

Lockerbie

CREATING A DIRECT ROUTE TO OUR ONLY RAIL CONNECTION TO EDINBURGH



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

11.75 miles / 18.8 kms

Travel times:

by bike ~1 hour 20 minutes; by e-bike 1 hour

Missing link length:

10.5 miles to 11.75 miles / 16.4 to 18.8 kms

Council wards:

8 - Lochar, 11 - Annandale North

MAIN PROBLEMS

- The A709 is one of the busiest fast roads in Dumfries and Galloway. It is used by a large number of heavy goods vehicles.
- The alternative routes used by most cyclists double the distance and completely bypass other settlements such as Torthorwald.

PROPOSALS

- A cycle path or shared-use path that follows A709. There appears to be enough room on the side of the road to build a decent width path on the crucial stretches.
- Improve access to Tinwald (see our chapter on Tinwald and Amisfield) to access the quieter back roads to Lochmaben. The problem is there are so few roads and it is very hilly, and then there is still the issue of getting from Lochmaben to Lockerbie.
- Build a shared-use path to Collin (see our chapter on Collin) and then head from there to Lockerbie through Hightae using the back roads. Again there is the problem of crossing the River Annan if not using the main road. There is also the problem of the roads not being of great quality and not following a straight line from Collin to Hightae, which would add mileage.

BENEFITS

- Creating a direct cycle-friendly route from Lockerbie station to Dumfries would open up the region to visitors who want to visit by bike.
- New direct routes from Torthorwald (which would be very commutable by bike if it wasn't for the road) and Lochmaben.
- More options for getting to Lockerbie railway station, reducing pressure on parking.

THE DETAILS

Lockerbie is an important town and also has the nearest railway station offering direct access to Edinburgh (trains from Dumfries run to Glasgow). A decent cycle route between the two towns would also enable rail visitors using the Edinburgh to London west coast line to access Dumfries more easily by bike. It would also connect the NCN 7 which runs from Carlisle to Ayr via D&G and NCN 74 which goes from Carlisle to Glasgow.



A straight line drawn from the centre of Dumfries to Lockerbie goes through Torthorwald and bypasses Lochmaben to the south. Unfortunately there are no suitable roads following this route. Crossing the River Annan requires using the A709 route, which has a narrow traffic light-controlled bridge.

The main road between Dumfries and Lockerbie, the A709, is fast, narrow, hilly and bendy – not a road many want to cycle along. The route can be broken down into three sections: Dumfries to Torthorwald; Torthorwald to Lochmaben (a lovely destination in its own right) and Lochmaben to Lockerbie.

From Dumfries, the end of the cycle provision just past the Peel Centre on the Lockerbie Road puts a cyclist straight into a narrow bendy road. As you leave Dumfries you have to cross two large roundabouts with no protection for cyclists, one of which crosses the A75.

Heading up the hill out towards Lochmaben there is again room on the side of the main road to add a shared-use path which would make the experience of heading to Lochmaben much better.

The Lochmaben to Lockerbie Community Access Group are already working on options for a safe active travel route between Lochmaben and Lockerbie, and we leave the choice of the best route to them as the people with the best local knowledge.

Of these options the direct route along the A709 would be best, but some combination of either of the other two might be more achievable with signposting and construction of some shorter linking cycle route.

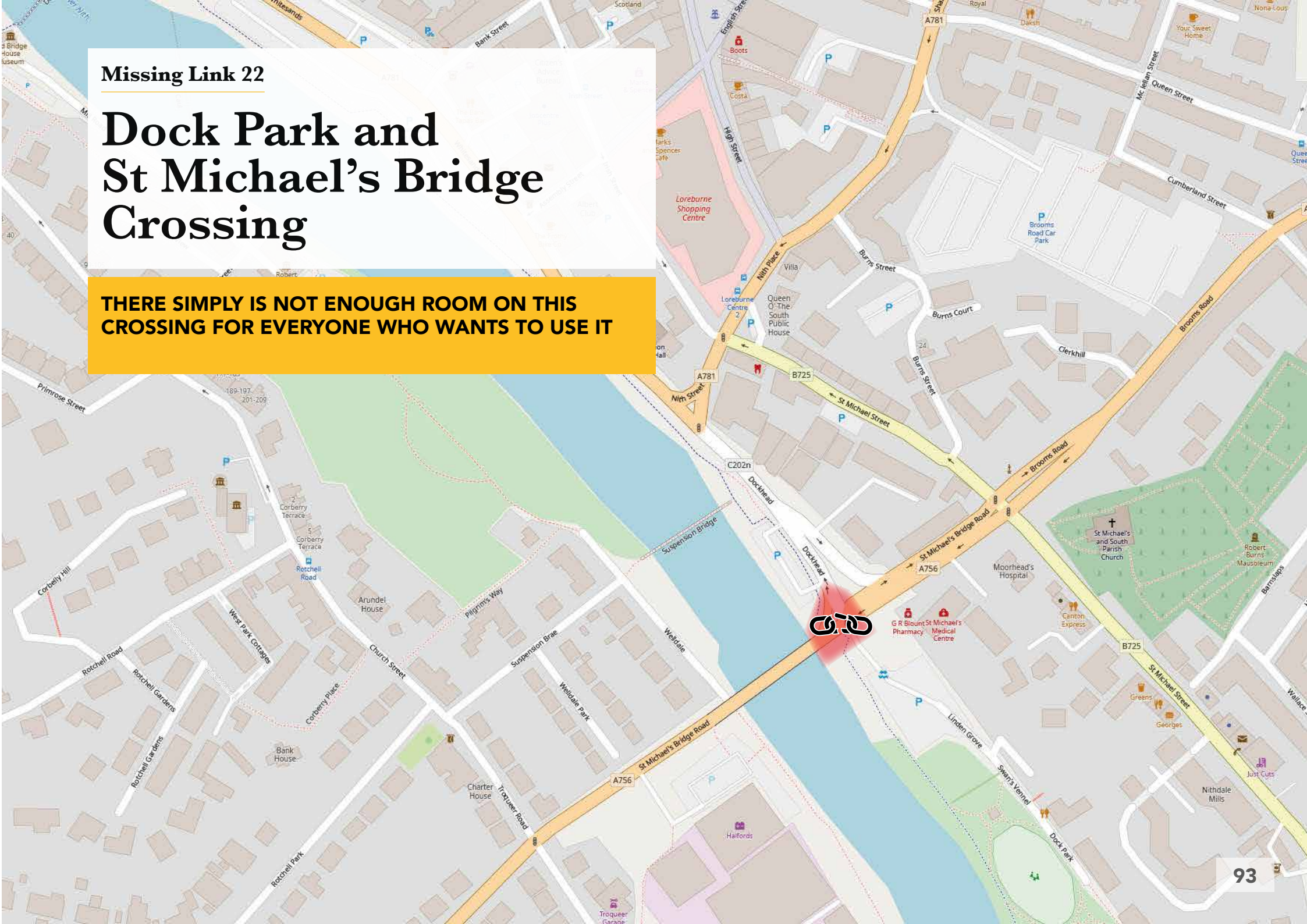


Heavy goods traffic and fast cars, the A709 Lockerbie - Lochmaben - Dumfries road.

Missing Link 22

Dock Park and St Michael's Bridge Crossing

THERE SIMPLY IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM ON THIS CROSSING FOR EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO USE IT



LINK DETAILS

Amenities served by the route:

Town centre, Dock Park, Robert Burns Centre, Dumfries Museum and Whitesands bus stops.

Communities served:

All of Dumfries, Castledykes, Kingholm Quay, Crichton Campus, tourists on the NCN7

Council Ward:

9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- The refuge in the middle is very small, making it difficult to negotiate with a bigger bike, wheelchairs, mobility scooters and buggies. It cannot accommodate more than four people crossing at a time, fewer if there is a mix of types of user. This encourages people to bypass the refuge and stand in the road to find enough space.
- You can wait over a minute for the green man at each stage of the crossing.

PROPOSALS

- Upgrade all the crossings so that pedestrians (and cyclists where allowed) can cross in one go, removing the need for barriers. This would allow people to cross much more quickly, in comfort and it would discourage people from nipping across during a gap in the traffic (which can be dangerous as sometimes the cars are coming from behind if they're turning right off the Whitesands).

BENEFITS

- Increased safety at crossing due to less pressure on limited space. Reduced wait times discourage crossing on red lights.

- Quicker crossing times to all users of the park , leisure users or commuters alike.
- Increased use of active travel infrastructure due to the removal of physical barriers that discourage less confident users.
- It shows that walking and cycling are welcomed as a healthy and sustainable form of transport.

THE DETAILS

The Dock Park crossing is another of those 'low hanging fruit' issues. The council have acknowledged that that the crossing is unsuitable for the level of usage it gets and inaccessible to many cycles and mobility aids especially when it's busy. For this reason, Cycling Dumfries have stopped using Dock Park as the starting point for our rides.

This is not any old crossing. Dumfries is rightly proud of Dock Park. It's a vital green space for the people of the town and a commuting route. It's also part of the National Cycle Network and the gateway into town for touring cyclists from the east. The traffic light cycles were set when the infirmary was at Mountainhall and traffic in this part of town was much worse. The infirmary has long since moved and we have an opportunity to take back some of that time for pedestrians and cyclists.



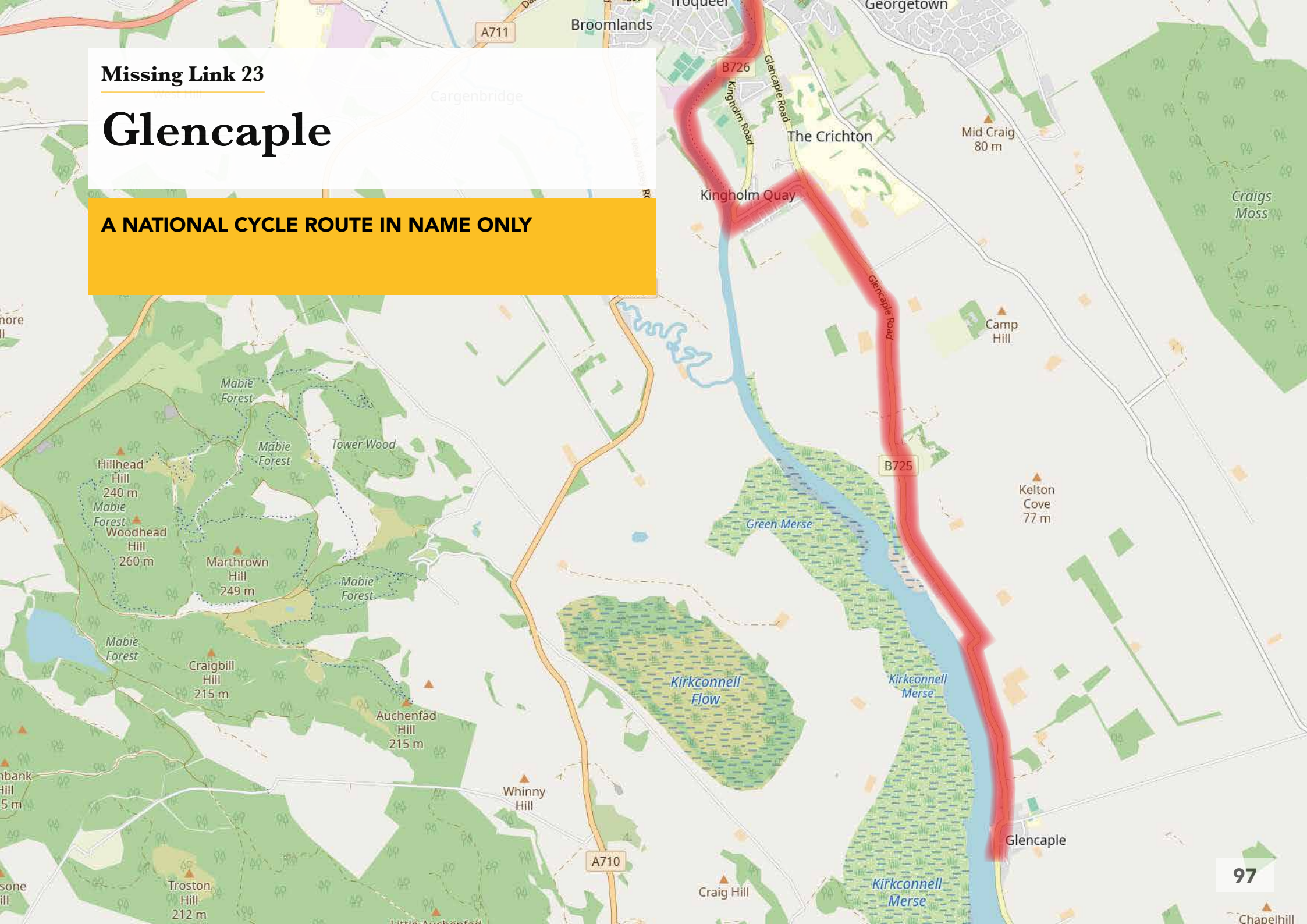


The crossing at Dock Park – a struggle at the best of times.

Missing Link 23

Glencaple

A NATIONAL CYCLE ROUTE IN NAME ONLY



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

~5 miles / ~ 8 kms

Travel times:

by bike 35 minutes; by e-bike 25 minutes

Missing link length:

3.5 miles / 5.5 kms

Council ward:

9 - Nith

MAIN PROBLEMS

- The Glencaple Road (B275) is a designated NCN route. This gives the false impression that it is a safe route. However, it is more likely to put people off cycling than encourage them.

PROPOSALS

- Create an off-road path that generally follows the route of the Glencaple Road from the Kingholm Quay roundabout.

BENEFITS

- A safe continuous route connecting Glencaple to the Crichton, Kingholm Quay and Dumfries town centre with very easy access to the rest of the traffic free network around Dumfries.
- Improvements to the leisure economy of Glencaple and surroundings.
- An alternative route during flooding.

THE DETAILS

Dumfries to Glencaple might seem like an odd addition to our missing links book – after all, the two places are joined by the National Cycle Network (NCN 7). The Glencaple and Bankend Road loop is a popular one with Dumfries cyclists looking for a 20-mile circuit. So where’s the gap?

In fact, the route down to Glencaple illustrates the difference between catering for (existing) cyclists and creating new cyclists – providing a route where cycling is not just possible for someone who is willing to mix with traffic, but one which positively invites cycling.

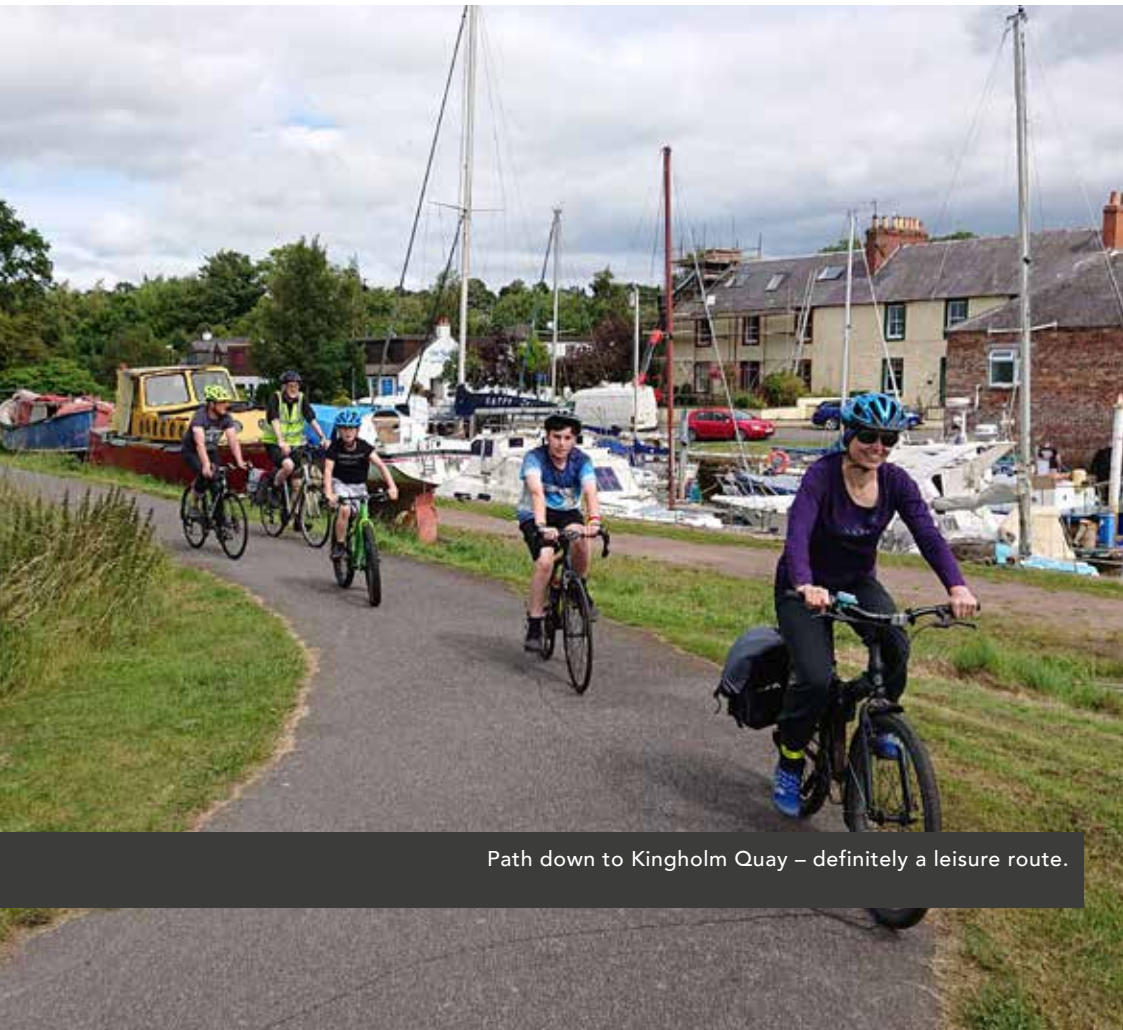


Cyclists aren't just middle-aged men in lycra. Some of them don't even ride bikes!

Glencaple is just 6 miles from the centre of Dumfries (depending on the route you take) and with two restaurants by the quay it should be a nice destination for a leisure bike ride. It's a substantial village, with plenty of people living there who work, shop or study in Dumfries, so making it easy to cycle to and from the village

could significantly cut car journeys. Assuming a not-too strenuous pace, it would be about a half-hour ride – and with an e-bike, well within the reach of most people to do without even breaking a sweat. And yet, most of the people you see cycling on this route seem largely to be doing it in order to break a sweat: adults, usually men, almost always sportily dressed and on road bikes, heads down, getting the miles in. There’s nothing wrong with that sort of riding – but where are the families, commuters, shoppers and tourists out for a nice lunch by the river that you would have thought the NCN was designed for?

The NCN 7 route to Glencaple starts off as a shared-use path through Dock Park and along the river path down to Kingholm Quay, definitely a nice leisure route and very pleasant on a sunny afternoon.



Path down to Kingholm Quay – definitely a leisure route.

So nice, in fact, that the shared-use path down to Kingholm is more or less unusable on a fine day – it means negotiating dog walkers, families out for a stroll, and all sorts of other pedestrians who’d rather not have to move out of the way to let a bike past. This path shows the limit of using green leisure spaces as if they were also through routes for bikes. While most cyclists are polite about slowing down and negotiating their way past, the potential for conflict is built in. The path is unlit, which makes it feel unsafe for many people after dark, especially women. Those who are in more of a hurry can use the Kingholm Road but this has a 40mph speed limit and, despite plenty of room alongside, no space for bikes off the carriageway.



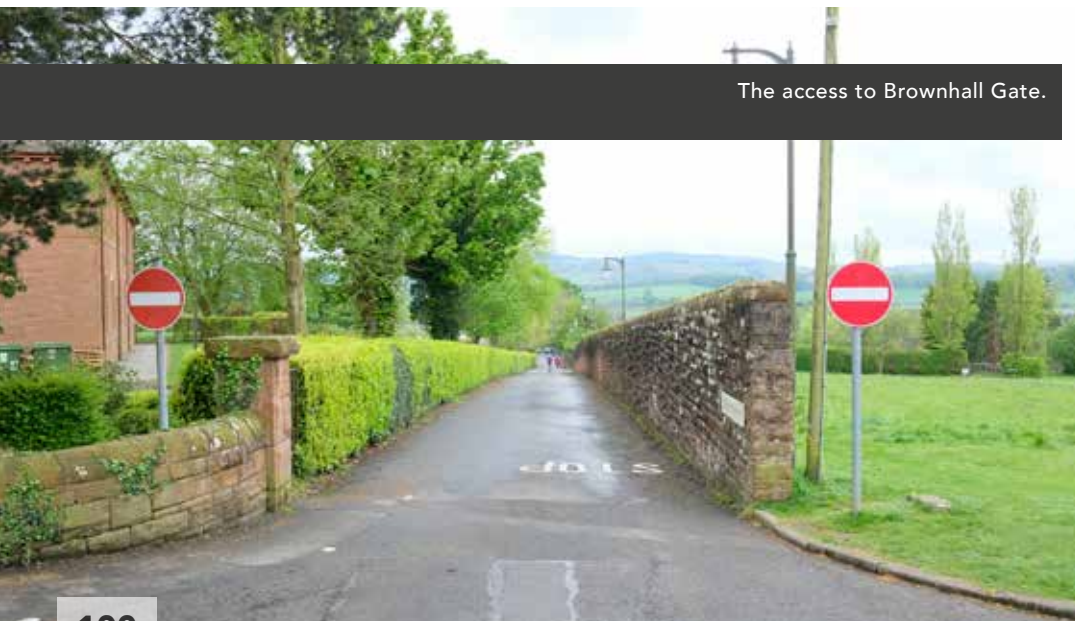
Kingholm Road

The more direct route along the B725 past the bottom of the Crichton is even less appealing to most, being narrow, walled in, and often involves negotiating round parked cars.



Glencaple Road looking back towards town, with the Crichton Campus to the right. This is a very challenging road to cycle on, with no safe space for cycling.

Cyclists could also make their way through the Crichton itself, avoiding the road, but the Brownhall Gate entrance is firmly ‘no entry’ the other way.



The access to Brownhall Gate.

Exiting the Crichton onto the Glencaple Road at the Brownhall Gate is currently illegal. Some signage and an exemption for bikes could connect the NCN with the campus and onwards along the Maidenbower Path to Georgetown and Calside. Once at Kingholm, NCN 7 heads up Kingholm Loaning – on the carriageway except for a short section on the pavement just at the mini roundabout where the route joins the Glencaple Road. This is helpful for avoiding the roundabout, but it isn't clear where you need to rejoin the carriageway – if you stay on the pavement, it becomes very narrow and the pavement runs out just at the point where the road reverts to the national speed limit.



Glencaple Road. if the pavement on the right is supposed to be a shared-use path, it is not at all clear and it is not easy to rejoin the road.

There is no sign indicating that cyclists should rejoin the road but if the footway on the right is supposed to be a shared-use path, it is very narrow and constrained by the railings. If you don't get off just at the roundabout there is then no dropped kerb until right at the end of the pavement.

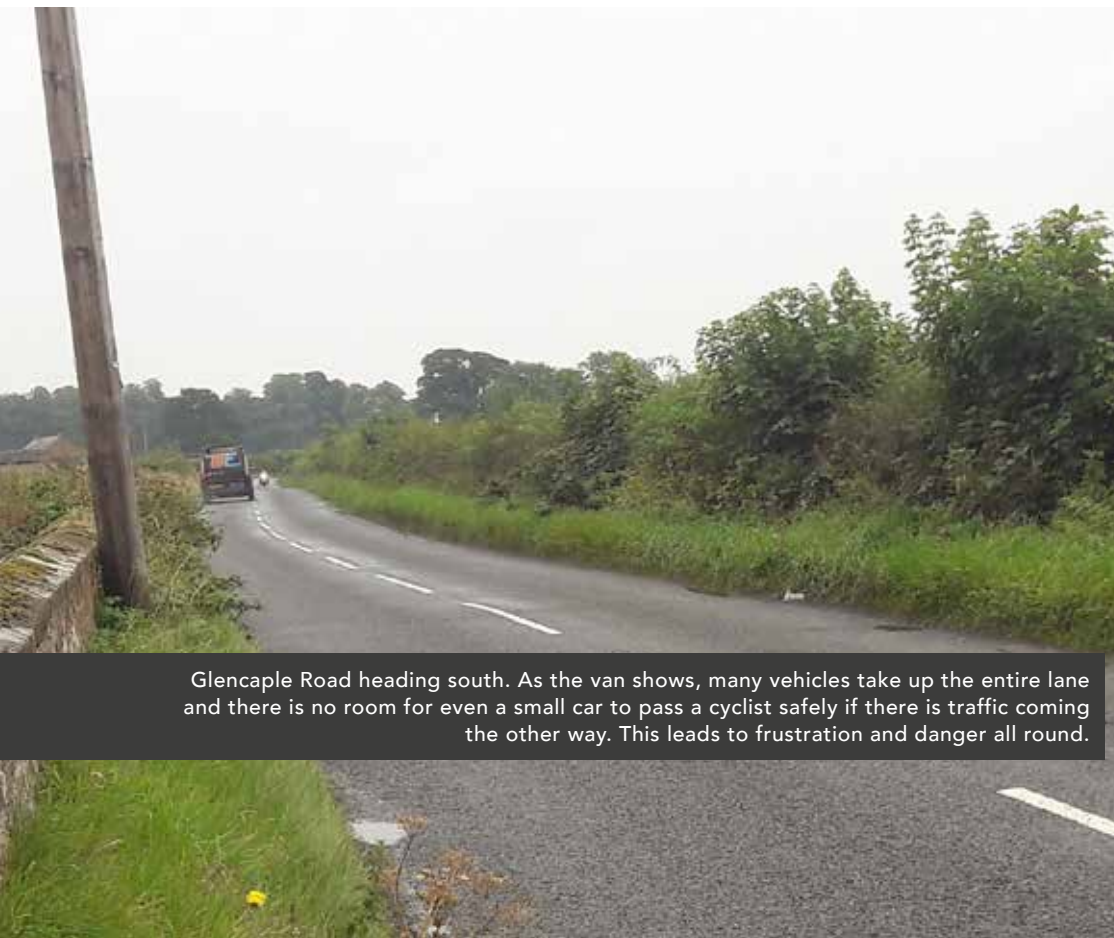
From then on, despite being part of NCN 7, there's absolutely no provision for cyclists, except for the directional signs. The road is fairly busy and fast, narrow

enough to barely accommodate two cars to pass each other, but with a white line down the centre, which means drivers don't feel they have to negotiate the space the way they might on a single-track road. This encourages close passes and impatient drivers. There are also a number of blind bends – the worst being the dogleg by the entrance to Conheath nursery. Although you're treated to some spectacular views of Criffel and the river, it's not a route where you can safely relax and enjoy the scenery. And we know that many would-be cyclists are put off by the experience, and opt for the safety of the car instead.

NCNs are supposed to be suitable for sensible 12-year-olds to cycle on independently – but we'd be hard pressed to recommend this route for any unaccompanied child, however level headed. Recently Sustrans has recognised that large parts of its network were unfit for purpose and have reclassified whole stretches of the NCN – including a stretch of the NCN 7 eastwards from Bankend.

They haven't done so for the Glencaple Road but, reclassified or not, we don't believe this route is good enough to make cycling between Glencaple and Dumfries a reality for the majority of the population, not just the quick and the brave.

Superficially, the riverside footpath along the Nith, looks like an alternative. It was built all the way to Glencaple, although a washed-out footbridge currently severs it. But it is also regularly flooded by the tide, making it unsuitable for a useful commuting route. Upgrading it to a surface that's suitable for all users (including wheelchairs) would not be appropriate for the sensitive riverside habitat it passes through. It would also suffer from some of the same problems as the path to Kingholm Quay, being unlit and somewhat lonely after dark. It would make a fantastic leisure route – but this is one to leave to the walkers and birdwatchers. Another suggestion might be to modify the Glencaple Road itself by removing the white central line, lowering the speed limit, and introducing cycle lanes to visually narrow the road and encourage lower speeds. This has been done in a few roads in Scotland, such as Gogar Station Road, and a similar approach is sometimes used in the Netherlands – but such schemes work best when the road isn't busy.



Glencaple Road heading south. As the van shows, many vehicles take up the entire lane and there is no room for even a small car to pass a cyclist safely if there is traffic coming the other way. This leads to frustration and danger all round.



Riverside footpath

We're generally loath to recommend on-road cycle lanes as they are generally considered to make routes less safe for cyclists, not better.

A better alternative would be to create a new path, away from the traffic but still alongside the road (for social safety after dark). In some places there is space to do this within the footprint of the road, but not everywhere. In those cases, land would need to be purchased to create space. This wouldn't be cheap, but it would mean creating a high-quality route that would actually encourage people to use their bikes for a journey that might have otherwise been driven – what we mean by creating cyclists, rather than catering for them.

As for the cost – well, thinking a bit laterally, the land needed for the route could also be used as a linear solar farm, helping to defray the cost – and doing even more to cut carbon emissions. The path would provide access to service vehicles too. It could even provide a few charging points for e-bikes and mobility scooters, making the route even more accessible to all comers. Now THAT's a way to create cyclists!



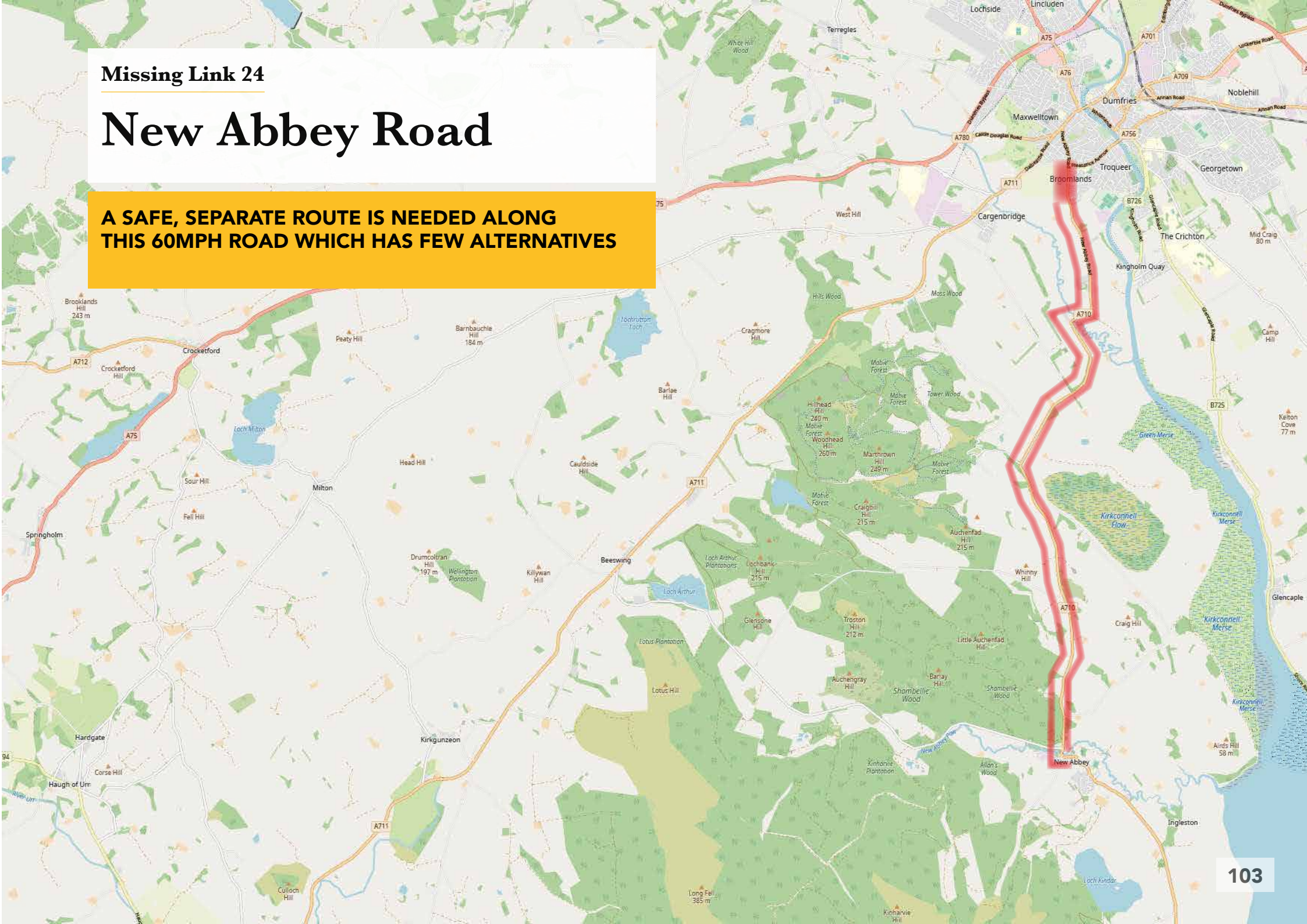
This path on Islay shows what a rural cycle route can look like – separate from the traffic, but alongside the road (making it feel less isolated, especially after dark) with no compromises on width or surface.



Missing Link 24

New Abbey Road

A SAFE, SEPARATE ROUTE IS NEEDED ALONG THIS 60MPH ROAD WHICH HAS FEW ALTERNATIVES



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

7 miles / 11.5 kms

Travel times:

by bike 50 minutes; by e-bike 40 minutes

Missing link length:

0.62 miles / 1km (Mavis Grove to Isle Steps); 4.5 miles / 7.3kms (Isle Steps to New Abbey adjacent to the A710).

Settlements en route:

Laghall, Cargenholm and Islesteps.

Amenities en route:

Mabie House and Forest, Mabie Farm Park, Kirkconnel Flow nature reserve, Airds Point, Shambellie House and Forest, Corn Mill museum, Sweetheart Abbey.

Council ward:

5 - Abbey

MAIN PROBLEMS

- New Abbey Road (A710) is a national speed limit road, heavily used in high-season and has a number of blind corners and narrow bridges.
- Alternative routes to New Abbey more than double the journey distance and bypass most of the amenities and points of interest.

PROPOSALS

- Extension of the current shared-use path from Mavis Grove to Islesteps.
- Creation of an off-road route adjacent to the A710 between Islesteps and New Abbey.

BENEFITS

- Open up key visitor destinations to cycle tourists.

THE DETAILS

New Abbey Road now has Dumfries's best stretch of cycle track – but it only extends along a short urban stretch of this key road. For the rest of its length, the A710 to New Abbey is a trip avoided by many cyclists and it's definitely not an option for other modes of sustainable travel except bus. Two much longer routes, one via the Old Military Road, Beeswing and Kinharvie, the other via Cargenbridge and Kirkconnell Flow, are more viable, but are circuitous and used by those "in the know". They aren't intuitive routes and certainly not something very apparent to visitors. They also bypass some of the points of interest along the route.

The direct route along the A710 is worth investing in as it's intuitive to visitors, used by people in the settlements along the route and is also well used by Doonhamers on day trips. Many points of interest along the route could be made easy to access by bike: Mabie House and Forest, Mabie Farm Park, Kirkconnell Flow (NatureScot reserve), Airds Point, Shambellie House and Forest, and New Abbey village (Corn Mill, pub, shop, Sweetheart Abbey, tea room). Criffel, Knockendoch and the Waterloo monument are also accessible from New Abbey without rejoining the A710. Needless to say there are also many holiday rentals along the entire route.

Mavis Grove to Islesteps

Laghall, Cargenholm and Islesteps are all within 3 miles of the town centre. But all current routes require an uncomfortable section on the New Abbey Road. At the moment a shared-use path extends from the edge of town (at the speed limit sign) to Mavis Grove. Extending this shared-use path another mile would include all the housing between Islesteps and Mavis Grove. There is a wide verge for most of the way to Islesteps which makes this a feasible option.



Looking towards town along the New Abbey Road.

Where the road bends right in the run up to Islesteps, there is less room for a separate path. Extending the 30mph zone from Islesteps to include this section would make rejoining the main road from a shared-use path much safer.



The bend before Islesteps – should anyone be going at more than 30mph around here anyway?

Islesteps to New Abbey

To continue on from Islesteps would require creating a safe, separate route on the 60mph sections to New Abbey. In rural areas with 60mph speed limits this is done by providing a shared-use path adjacent to the road but the other side of the hedge or dyke, with the path running through fields.

Excellent examples of this have already been built in Dumfries & Galloway at Penpont and at Eskdalemuir. They are also found in the Lake District and the Borders.

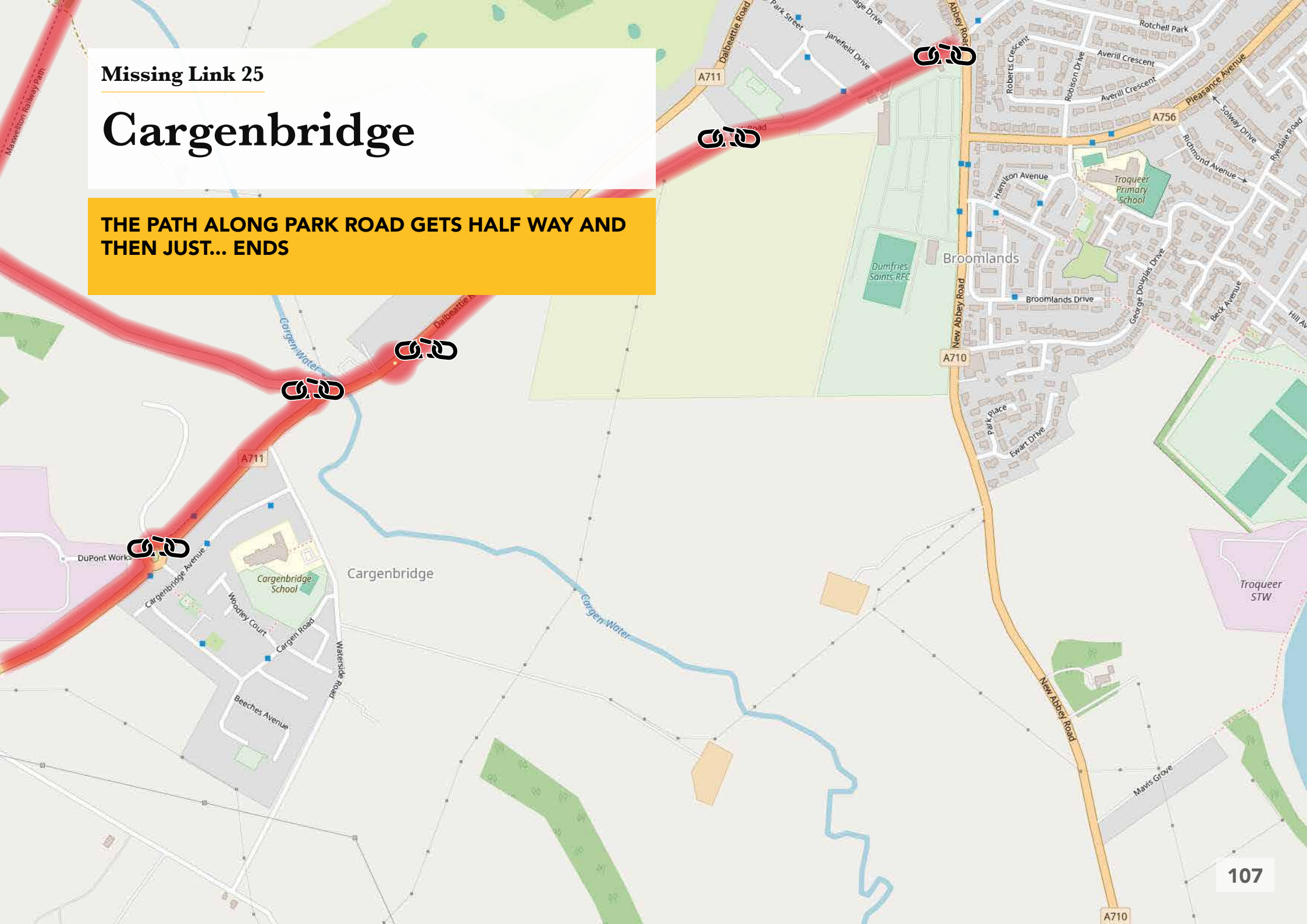


'Example of a rural shared-use path in Islay.

Missing Link 25

Cargenbridge

THE PATH ALONG PARK ROAD GETS HALF WAY AND THEN JUST... ENDS



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

2 miles / 3.2 kms

Travel times:

by bike ~13 minutes; by e-bike 9 minutes

Missing link length:

~250m on Park Road and crossing changes at Cargenbridge

Council ward:

5 - Abbey (Ward 6 boundary)

MAIN PROBLEMS

- Multiple, difficult road crossings at the start and end of the route.
- Abrupt end of the cycle path on the Dumfries end of Park Road.

PROPOSALS

- Complete the off-road link from Park Road to Cargenbridge.
- Extend the path along the south side of the Dalbeattie Road so that it goes directly into Cargenbridge without having to cross three junctions.
- Create safe crossings of the Dalbeattie Road near Cargenbridge to improve the safety of people travelling from Cargenbridge to the Garroch industrial park, DGRI and Kilnford farm shop.
- Run a new path along the west side of the Garroch to join the path at the Garroch roundabout.
- Create a safe crossing of the Garroch Loaning.

BENEFITS

- Simpler, quicker, safer routes to and from the industrial estate, DGRI and the centre of Dumfries.
- Greatly reduced number of crossings on the path from Dumfries to Mabie Forest via Cargenbridge.
- An almost continuous safe route between DGRI, Mountainhall, the Crichton, USWS campus and Dumfries College.
- Viable routes for secondary school children who want to cycle to school in Dumfries (NW Community Campus, The Bridge, The Academy and St Joseph's).

THE DETAILS

Cargenbridge sits only 2 miles from Dumfries High Street or 3 miles via the Maxwelltown Path. It could even be quicker to cycle to Cargenbridge than to drive there, depending on the time of day and the traffic. It's also the point where three cycle routes meet: the NCN 7 out to Castle Douglas and points west, the off-road route to Mabie, and the Park Road path which heads towards (but crucially doesn't quite reach) New Abbey Road, Maxwelltown and Troqueer.

However, what should be a place that's accessible by bike by all and sundry, rather than just experienced and confident adults, is hampered by a couple of key gaps.

Multiple uncontrolled crossings

Even though Cargenbridge and the Park Road cycle path are on the same side of the Dalbeattie Road, the official route has you crossing the Dalbeattie Road once, crossing the Garroch Loaning, and then crossing back across the Dalbeattie Road. All of these crossings have terrible sight lines and there are no zebras or signal controlled crossings. At busy times, it can take ages to find a safe moment to cross which can lead to dangerous behaviour. This is very off-putting for novice cyclists, someone cycling with children or for an unaccompanied older child.



Just one of the crossings you have to negotiate, with terrible sight lines – note that the island here has no dropped kerb so you can't even cycle across in stages.

Opting for the Maxwelltown Path in to town is a longer but flatter route and still requires crossing busy roads twice to join the shared-use path on the east side of the Garroch Loaning. To get to DGRI, you then have to cross the Garroch again after the roundabout because the path switches to the other side of the road.

Park Road path

The most direct route into town is the shared-use path along the Dalbeattie Road and Park Road. This gets halfway and then just ... ends. And on a nasty bend too. Pedestrians can cross the road and continue along the footway on the other side but cyclists have to join the road and tough it out with the traffic.

The new path and crossings at New Abbey Road and Rotchell Road open up safe routes into town, Troqueer and beyond. Unfortunately, as long as the gap in



Where the Park Road track ends... 250m before the New Abbey cycle path and links into town.

the Park Road path exists, this new investment won't reap the benefit in terms of increased cycling that you might otherwise expect. Cycle routes are only as strong as their weakest link and the Park Road path is a very weak link indeed.

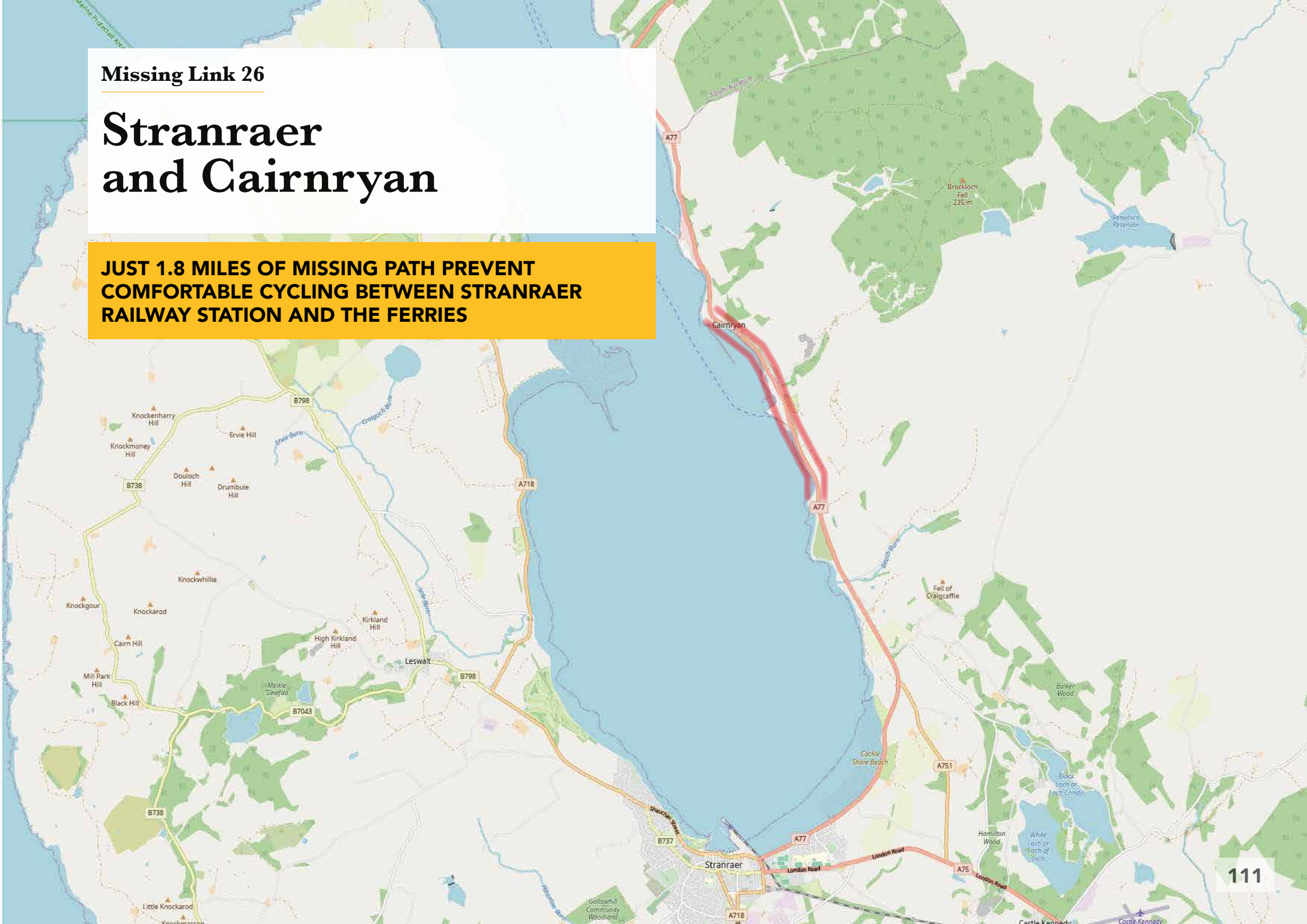
Making the suggested improvements will make it easier for people to cycle to work in DuPont, the council offices, Garroch industrial estate and DGRI, as well as allowing residents of Cargenbridge to use a bike instead of a car to get to Dumfries or the hospital for work, shopping and education. With plans for more development of the old ICI site at Cargenbridge, including a nursery, traffic will increase on already busy roads if people aren't given alternatives to driving. If the nursery does go ahead, then any infrastructure will need to be of the highest standard, if parents are going to feel safe transporting young children by bike or on foot.



Missing Link 26

Stranraer and Cairnryan

JUST 1.8 MILES OF MISSING PATH PREVENT COMFORTABLE CYCLING BETWEEN STRANRAER RAILWAY STATION AND THE FERRIES



LINK DETAILS

Total route length:

6.25 miles / 10 kms

Travel times:

by bike ~40 minutes; by e-bike 25-30 minutes

Missing link length:

1.8 miles / 2.8 kms

Council ward:

1 - Stranraer and the Rhins

MAIN PROBLEMS

- The cycle lane from Stranraer ends 1.8 miles short of Cairnryan leaving bike users on the A77 with HGVs and fast traffic.
- 700m (10 minute walk) from the now isolated Stranraer railway station on the abandoned quay to nearest transport connection.

PROPOSALS

- Complete the shared-use path to Cairnryan and the ferry terminal.

BENEFITS

- Safe access from Stranraer to Cairnryan and a reduction in people bypassing Stranraer.
- More footfall in Stranraer as cyclists heading from the ferry into Galloway are likely to stop over in Stranraer.

THE DETAILS

We usually concentrate on cycling issues in and around Dumfries, however there's one missing link that affects the whole region: getting to and from the ferry terminals at Cairnryan for the Northern Ireland crossings. This is on the face of it a simple missing link – just under 2 miles of missing shared-use path along the A77. But in fact it opens up a much larger can of worms about how we travel into and around our region, and how we could encourage more sustainable tourism across Dumfries and Galloway without risking destroying the qualities visitors come here to enjoy.

Since the ferry terminal moved from Stranraer to Cairnryan, there's been no rail connection to the ferry and there's been no safe and attractive cycle route between Stranraer and Cairnryan. There is a shared-use path that runs from the northern outskirts of the town along the A77 towards the ferry terminal. Unfortunately, with 1.8 miles still to go before Cairnryan it just ends.



There seems to be absolutely no reason why that gap couldn't easily be filled with a continuation of the path. It wouldn't be complicated to do – there are no junctions to worry about and there's plenty of space along most of the road. A simple shared-use path (fine in rural areas) would save cyclists from having to tangle with heavy ferry traffic, as well as providing a safe space for anyone on foot.

AND FINALLY ...

Our missing link recommendation ends here, but filling in that gap is only a tiny part of the issue with the link to the ferries. We have no direct train service between Dumfries and Stranraer: with the old Dumfries – Stranraer line long since closed, anyone wanting to travel to Belfast by train has had to head up to Kilmarnock and change. There is the 500 bus service from Dumfries, which does take bikes – but you're advised to ring ahead and check first as it's not guaranteed that the vehicle running the service will be set up for cycles.

Reopening the Dumfries-Stranraer line is outside the scope of our campaign, but bikes and trains are natural bedfellows and we are supportive of any moves to reopen the old line, in preference to converting it into a path – including preventing any attempts to infill the bridges that would make that impossible. Having any sort of a rail service west of Dumfries would transform the region in so many ways, opening it up to visitors to bring their bikes instead of their cars, and enjoy the many miles of quiet rural cycling on offer. A direct rail line would also enable lots of freight traffic to be taken off the roads, especially that destined for Northern Ireland, which would benefit everyone in the region.



