



STRATHCLYDE CYCLE CAMPAIGN

Strategy & Policy Integration Team
Transport Scotland
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Dear Sir/Madam

Station Car Parking Policy in Scotland

Thank you for your letter of 31 July 2009 regarding the above.

We do not think that there is any need for a common policy on station car parks in Scotland. Car parks cannot be imposed on the areas around stations from a central body, but instead will develop organically depending on local demand, local availability of land, and the wishes of local residents, who may not wish to have the extra traffic that a station car park will attract.

We also do not support the proposal to allow car park users to reclaim the cost of parking off of the cost of their train travel. Car park users are benefiting from an extra service, and if there is a charge for this service, then they alone should foot the bill. If car park users were to be allowed to reclaim car parking charges, then those who currently pay their own way to the station should be allowed to claim back bus fares incurred getting to and from the station, and cyclists and pedestrians should be paid mileage for their journeys to the station, as well as allowed locker space at the station e.g. for wet weather clothing or bike storage, the cost of which should again be reclaimable against the rail ticket cost.

Instead, cycle and walking routes to the stations should be enhanced, to discourage car use on journeys to the stations, as well as local bus service information promoted better (Traveline Scotland and Transport Direct websites do not make it easy to find out what services are available, and full timetables for services are not downloadable from either site, even if this information is available elsewhere e.g. on operator websites), again to encourage people not to drive to stations. This applies equally to bus services operating to stations and to bus services that go directly to the passenger's eventual destination, removing the need to catch a train in the first place.

Better cycle parking is needed at stations. The current “one size fits all” open rack is unsuitable for less secure stations, where bikes may be subject to petty vandalism as well as possible theft. However, where lockers are provided, it should be simple for users to obtain use of a locker, without having to apply in advance or obtain a season ticket first. Cycle parking should be positioned at all suitable entrances to stations, e.g. on both sides of the railway line, in order to allow cyclists convenient access to stations without having to use busy road bridges or stepped footbridges.

Walking routes between bus stops and stations should be enhanced to promote interchange between buses and trains. However, altering bus routes to go closer to the station may not be appropriate where it causes additional delay to other bus users. Again these measures should be taken to discourage car use to stations.

Patrols should be instigated at appropriate times to enforce laws forbidding idling engines of parked vehicles and illegal parking e.g. on footways, verges, across path entrances, on corners and junctions, etc, to reduce the menace to local residents, pedestrians and cyclists caused by motorists driving to stations to pick up train passengers.

Take for example, Shettleston station. Three car park areas are provided on the south side of the station, but many motorists using the station choose to park in the streets to the north of the station, often on footways and a grass verge, blocking corners and at junctions. However, there is only one cycle parking stand, offering parking for up to two bicycles, and not the 3 racks indicated on the Scotrail website. Cyclists coming from the north have to negotiate a busy roundabout and a hump-backed bridge, then turn right off of the main road on a bend in order to access the cycle parking stand. No cycle parking is provided at the northern entrance to the station.

Many of the motorists using the station are doing so not because it is their closest station, but because it is the station on that side of the city closest to the city centre with a car park. Some of these motorists could be using local bus services from nearby their points of origin to get directly to the city centre, e.g. the 41 and 42 services serving the area to the north and the 61 and 62 services serving the area to the south. Those from further afield could use other stations or bus services and not drive to this station.

The pedestrian routes around the area of the station are barely adequate, with no direct access to the adjacent supermarket (other than one route through one of the car parks where the car park entrance regularly floods preventing dry access on foot), and access to and from the city-bound bus stop is somewhat convoluted, being some distance down the road. The station footbridge is stepped, so anyone unable to use it has to use the local road network to access the station, where dropped kerbs are not provided at all road crossings.

In conclusion, we hope you are able to improve access for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, and not encourage more driving to stations.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Preece

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Go Bike! Strathclyde Cycle Campaign