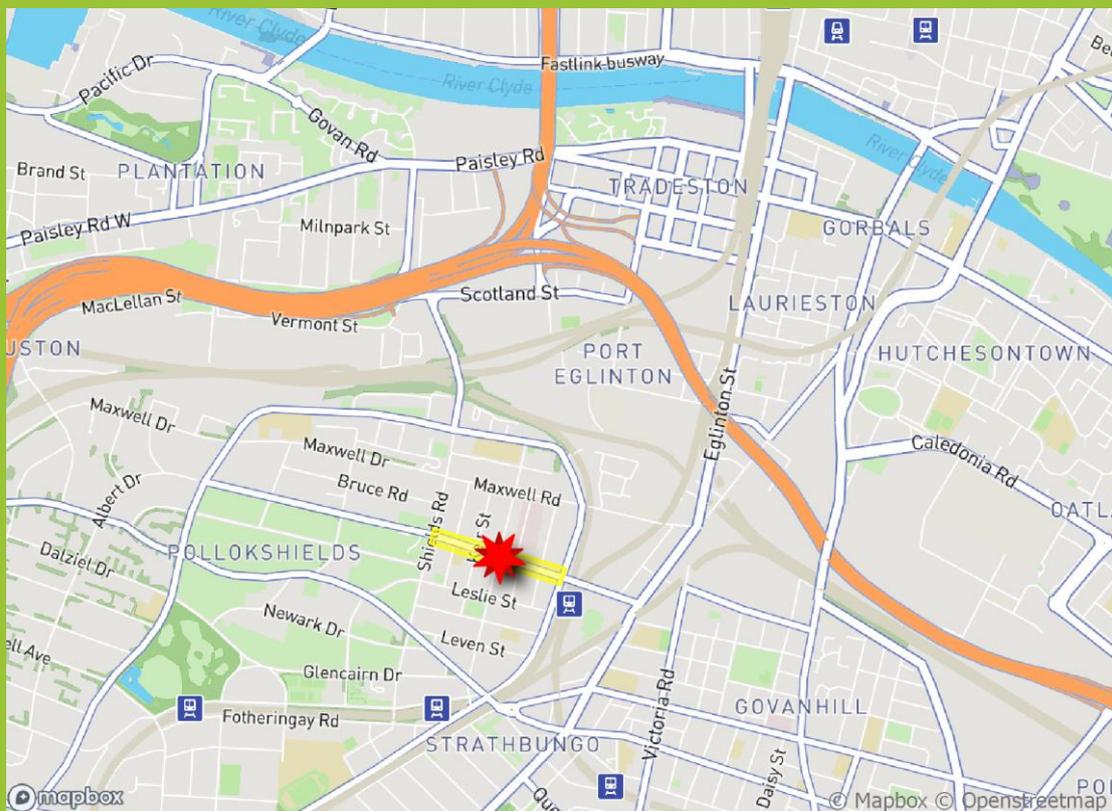


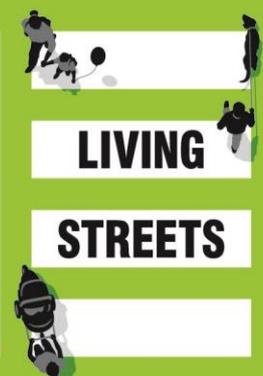
# Pedestrian conditions assessment

## Albert Drive, Glasgow (Southside H.A.)

### Social Housing Partnership Fund for Improved Cycling & Walking Facilities 2020-21



We are Living Streets Scotland, part of the UK charity for everyday walking. We want to create a nation where walking is the natural choice for everyday, local journeys.



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# Summary

## Key points for Registered Social Landlord

Our assessment of the area around Albert Drive (East), which should be checked with residents and other stakeholders, leads us to conclude that pedestrians are disadvantaged by these key issues:

- Key destinations can only be reached through areas lacking passive surveillance, and after dark or later at night such journeys may feel unwelcoming or risky.
- Parked vehicles dominate the residential streets, making crossing these more difficult for some people, and decreasing the sense that they are places that can be put to wider uses.

As the Registered Social Landlord, it may only be possible for Southside Housing Association to lead action in connection with a small number of the issues and ideas described in this report. The most significant of these might be around:

- Supporting constructive community dialogue about additional measures to restrict through traffic.
- Supporting constructive community dialogue about longer term change, magnifying the voices of those who would benefit, ensuring that this is well informed, helping to ensure that this is not dominated by those who would be inconvenienced.

We report on wider issues because we consider that the better these are understood the greater the likelihood of change – whether locally and more generally.

## Background note:

Our urban environments are defined by interrelated features under the influence of many different bodies, and this report is about current conditions whatever their cause. Registered Social Landlords do not generally have control over the main factors which affect pedestrians in the wider areas around the properties they manage. Likewise local authorities - with limited resources and budgets, and facing numerous other constraints - do not have immediate control over many of the factors which affect pedestrians.

However, in the longer term it is helpful if problems are understood, and potential solutions are explored. Registered Social Landlords may be able to have a positive influence, making more immediate changes where they have the power to do so, supporting others to understand the issues their residents face, and playing their part in working toward change.

This report is based on an assessment which used mapping and information available from sources such as Google Streetview. Prior to finalising this report we presented the content to Southside Housing Association and a representative of Pollokshields Community Trust to check its accuracy. The intention is that the information in the report is used to support a longer informed discussion with local residents, as they are the real experts on the quality of the experience for pedestrians in the areas where they live.

*Map images in this document are copyright © Mapbox, © Openstreetmap contributors.*

# Introduction

Living Streets has received funding from the Social Housing Partnership Fund for Improved Cycling & Walking Facilities, administered by Cycling Scotland. We are assessing conditions for pedestrians around properties managed by Registered Social Landlords.

This report presents observations and suggestions for improving conditions, following an assessment of the area around Albert Drive (East), Glasgow – due to the involvement of Southside Housing Association in the area.

## Key factors we assess

Our assessment looked at issues such as the following:

- **Footway (i.e. pavement)<sup>1</sup> and path provision:** the presence, surface quality, continuity, width, obstruction, and design of footways and paths.
- **Accessibility:** how far footways and paths, and their interaction with the carriageways of streets, have been designed to accommodate disabled people and others less able to deal with complicated or dangerous conditions.
- **General area design and character:** whether this is an area full of human activity and street life or one dominated by the movement of or parking of vehicles and the provision of roads designed primarily to facilitate these things.
- **Local area traffic-related safety:** looking at possibility of risk of injury from vehicles, and evaluating the likely effects of this risk on behaviour, not least in terms of how easily pedestrians cross streets or junctions, but also on how pleasant or otherwise a journey might be.
- **Whether streets and paths are welcoming to pedestrians:** both in and around an area, including focusing on how they will feel after dark or later at night – considering in particular what ‘passive surveillance’<sup>2</sup> exists, and to what level streets and paths are overlooked from buildings nearby.
- **Area permeability:** looking at whether paths and footways connect to provide convenient shorter routes for pedestrians, and longer routes for those driving – or whether routes for pedestrians are defined by following streets which have been designed around vehicle use, or by the necessity to negotiate these safely.
- **Entry and exit points and routes from an area:** looking at what boundaries around the area define these points/routes, and conditions for pedestrians here.
- **Likely destinations outside the local area and routes to/from these:** considering pedestrian journeys primarily for utility journeys – including for shopping, education, and work – and conditions for pedestrians along these, distances, and potential use of public transport.

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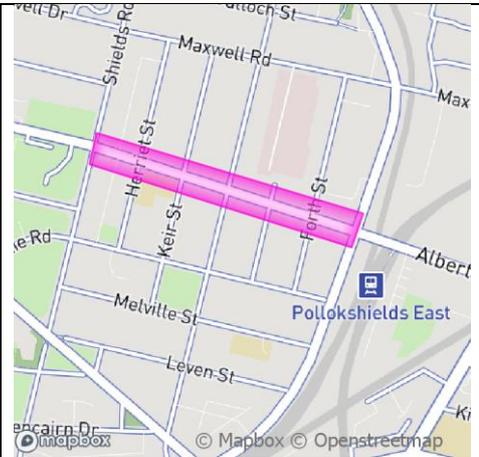
<sup>1</sup> For clarity this report uses the word term ‘footway’ rather than the phrase ‘the pavement’ to describe the space for walking on beside a road. We do this because the word ‘pavement’ is also used in technical discussion to describe the actual material a road or path is constructed from.

<sup>2</sup> We use the term ‘passive surveillance’ to describe the way in which it feels safer to be on a street where there are other people nearby who may be able to see activity, including those who might look out from the windows of a building – even if nobody is currently actively doing so.

# Location

Albert Drive stretches over round 2.5km, but this report is focused on the 450m section of Albert Drive between its junctions with Shields Road and Darnley Street/St Andrews Road. For the purpose of this report we'll refer to this as **'Albert Drive (east)'**.

Albert Drive (east) is in the east of Pollokshields, around 1.5-2km south of the centre of Glasgow and the River Clyde (see map on front cover).



**Location of Albert Drive (east)**

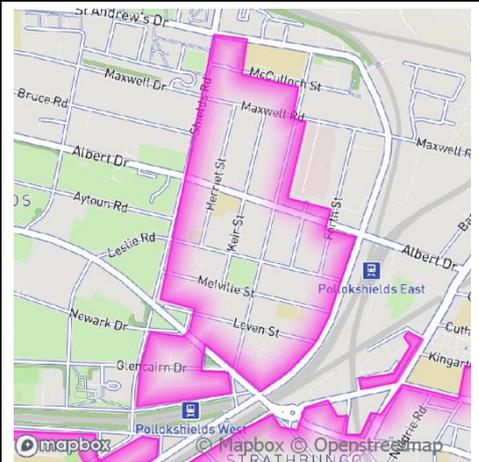
Albert Drive (east) sits at the heart of an area of residential tenement style housing in Pollokshields. This tenement housing is distinct from most other buildings in the wider area. Not only does it (we presume) provide for a high population density, but it also provides very good passive surveillance of the streets. We think this probably feels to be a fairly coherent 'neighbourhood'.

For the purposes of this report we will refer to this neighbourhood as **'East Pollokshields'**. In most directions the boundary of this area is obvious:

- To the west the tenements end abruptly at Shields Road. Beyond is much less dense housing and streets of a very different character.
- East, northeast and north, is a railway line, and streets here feel very different, generally lacking residential property and any passive surveillance.
- North/northeast is an area of more industrial use sitting between the railway and the tenements.

The southern boundary is less obvious. Larger areas of dense housing with good passive surveillance of the streets exist further south. However between this and the centre of East Pollokshields are:

- Nithsdale Road, which seems designed for larger volumes of faster moving traffic,
- a railway line with limited crossing points,
- Darnley Road, which seems designed for larger volumes of faster moving traffic,
- a second railway, with limited crossing points.



**Areas with tenement housing, or similar dense housing offering very good passive surveillance of streets.**

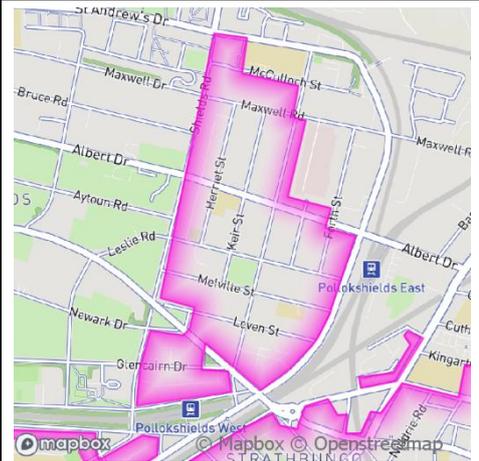
# Observations

## Key observations

We think that these issues (and any positive points) most strongly influence the experience of pedestrians in the area. These issues may arise from many different factors. The Registered Social Landlord, and even the local authority, may have little or no direct control over some of them.

There is a particularly strong sense of passive surveillance on the streets in East Pollokshields. Pedestrians within the area are likely to be visible from within residential buildings. In this respect the area is probably quite welcoming for pedestrians. It seems likely that the area remains relatively welcoming for pedestrians after dark or later at night.

The presence of the tenements, and the dense housing they provide, with this sense that streets are overlooked and are part of a community, together create the sense that this East Pollokshields area is an identifiable neighbourhood.



Approximate areas (in pink) seeming to have a very high sense of passive surveillance of streets.

Outside this East Pollokshields area many of the streets lack any sense of passive surveillance. This is likely to be an issue on many pedestrian journeys to key destinations outside the area.

The issue is most acute to the north and west of the area. A combination of railway lines, more industrial land use, and to the north the M8 and M74 motorways mean that there is little residential property here. It seems likely that these areas will feel unwelcoming to many pedestrians.

There are issues on journeys to the south, but for comparatively short distances. There are substantial areas of relatively dense residential property here.

To the west issues are more subtle, but substantial sections of street are lined with much less dense residential property, set back from the road, with private gardens bordered by trees, hedges and walls. The sense of passive surveillance here varies.



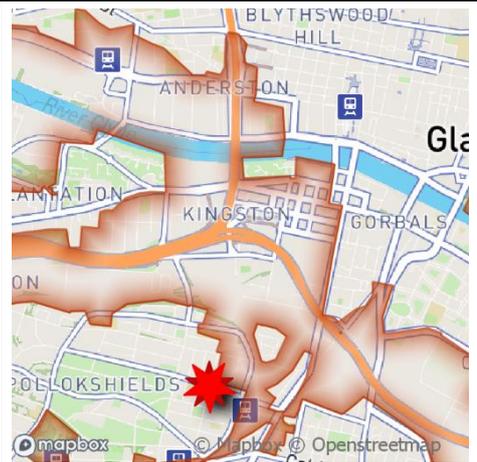
Approximate areas (in brown) seeming to have a particularly poor or non-existent sense of passive surveillance of streets.

(Also showing areas in pink seeming to have a very high sense of passive surveillance)

There are wide areas between East Pollokshields and the city centre where there would seem to be a particularly poor or non-existent sense of passive surveillance of the streets.

Much of this is associated with the presence of the River Clyde and Glasgow's inner city motorways. Alongside these tend to be more industrial uses of land or underutilised land previously used for industry.

These areas create powerful barriers discouraging pedestrian journeys. In some places and at some times pedestrians in these areas may feel to be at risk. At the least, journeys through these areas are likely to be uninteresting and to feel tedious.



Separation of Pollokshields from city by areas (approximate) where streets have particularly poor passive surveillance.

## Secondary observations

The tenements on Albert Drive (East) typically have a mixed use with ground floor properties dedicated to retail purposes (including restaurants and a bank), and floors above this being residential. The road also has a school and churches located on it.

NB: Google Streetview images date from before two major fires caused damage to buildings at Albert Cross – where Albert Drive and Kenmure St meet.

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)

[Albert Drive \(1\)](#)

[Albert Drive \(2\)](#)

The carriageway design in Albert Drive demonstrates a compromise between many uses.

- There is unregulated parking, which presumably provides mostly for residents rather than retail customers. To some extent parked vehicles dominate the space.
- The road is designed to allow for through traffic, but small roundabouts remove the priority that this traffic would have over side roads.
- There is only one central location where the presence of traffic signals (traffic lights) supports pedestrians to cross.
- There is only one other location nearby where traffic signals support pedestrians to cross, which is at the junction with Dalmeny Street/St Andrews Road. There are no zebra crossings.
- In the past there have been substantial changes to the kerb line, narrowing the carriageway at key junctions, making it easier to cross.
- The carriageway has a 'median strip' (see Streetview image link). Although this can be

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)

[Albert Drive at small roundabout](#)

[Albert Drive median strip](#)

<p>driven on if necessary it makes the carriageway feel substantially narrower. This section of Albert Drive is wider than other sections of the street (outside East Pollokshields), but the carriageway feels to be much more constrained. It seems likely that speeds here are lower.</p>	
<p>Similar compromises are visible on the wider street network across East Pollokshields. Relatively little distinguishes any streets as being 'residential' in nature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each street has unregulated parking, and this is in very high demand. It seems likely that demand for parking space far outstrips current supply.</li> <li>• Each street is designed to support through traffic, with little (other than the parking) to obstruct this.</li> <li>• There are no traffic signals (other than those noted above) or zebra crossings supporting pedestrians to cross any street within the area.</li> <li>• Unlike on Albert Drive most junctions have a traditional UK layout, with parking restricted at the street corner, but without any carriageway narrowing.</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Links to representative images on Google Streetview:</a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Typical East Pollokshields street (1)</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Typical East Pollokshields street (2)</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Typical East Pollokshields junction (1)</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Typical East Pollokshields junction (2)</u></a></p>
<p>With the exception of Albert Drive little distinguishes more major and minor streets.</p> <p>For example the only obvious differences between Nithsdale Road (an important east-west carriageway link), and Melville Street (a no-through road), is that one carriageway is slightly wider, and that there is a central 'warning line' dividing opposing lanes.</p> <p>It seems reasonable to assume that driving behaviours, and the priority assumed by those driving over pedestrians, will therefore change little. Risks associated with crossing the carriageway may limit unaccompanied journeys by children, anyone who moves more slowly, and anyone less able to see around or over vehicles. Low traffic volumes however will reduce this risk considerably.</p>	<p><a href="#">Links to representative images on Google Streetview:</a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Similar designs (no through road)</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Similar designs (central road through area)</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Similar designs (through road)</u></a></p>
<p>McCulloch Street, in the northwest of East Pollokshields, is a striking exception to the above points. The carriageway here has been substantially redesigned, making clear that this is intended to be a quiet residential street where vehicles can only be driven slowly.</p> <p>Parking areas are marked with a change in surface, and thus feel not to be part of the carriageway. Pedestrians have easy places to cross at footway (pavement) level where they can see around parked</p>	<p><a href="#">Links to representative images on Google Streetview:</a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>McCulloch Street</u></a></p>

vehicles (and can be seen). There are bollards contributing to the sense that parts of the street are very narrow.

We note that this may be one of the best examples in Scotland of a street being re-designed in this way.

The carriageway is cut in several places (see map), presumably with the intention that it reduces ‘rat running’ through this area. While this probably works it seems unlikely that the current closures are sufficient to make the streets feel substantially different. Short sections of individual streets may be substantially quieter. The area remains fairly permeable to traffic. Quieter streets with wide carriageways may encourage faster driving.

It is intended that there is a closure to traffic turning into the north end of Kenmure Street – with a blue sign indicating that only bicycles taxis and buses are allowed (southbound). There is nothing on the street to emphasise that this is anything other than an ordinary carriageway, and it seems likely that a high proportion of those driving will ignore the signs.

It seems possible that some driving regularly through this area do so on favourite routes, which they learn allow them to zig-zag through the residential streets, making steady progress instead of waiting at congested points on more major roads. Such a situation can reduce pedestrian safety, and can increase the dominance of traffic.

It is unfortunate that the existing closures were not designed to allow those cycling to pass easily. This may encourage people to cycle on or along the footway (pavement) in some locations.



Street closure points

The surfaces of the footways on Albert Drive (east) appear to be of relatively high quality compared to some other city streets. There are dropped kerbs (or low kerbs) supporting crossing of most junctions on Albert Drive (east). These are not of high quality, but many may find them helpful.

Dropped kerbs are of lower quality in the wider East Pollokshields area, and it appears that parked vehicles (sometimes on double yellow lines) may sometimes make crossing more difficult.

There are several places in East Pollokshields where small entrances mean that the footway (pavement) is interrupted. Some or all of these locations may create barriers for people who need level access,

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)

[Typical dropped kerb and carriageway narrowing on Albert Drive.](#)

[Typical low quality low/dropped kerb in East Pollokshields \(carriageway not narrowed\)](#)

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)

[Albert Drive \(1\)](#)

simply because of a (historic) desire to prioritise vehicle access. Vehicle access using some of these entrances is likely now to be extremely rare.

Even where vehicle access is more common alternative 'continuous footway' designs can be used, with a short steep ramp making it easy to drive modern vehicles slowly up and over a normal level (continuous) footway.

Some shopping needs may be met on Albert Drive itself, although shops here are generally of a 'convenience' style.

The closest larger shop is a Lidl supermarket on Victoria Road, east of Pollokshields East. Pedestrian journeys are of around 800m from Albert Cross (a central point on Albert Drive (east)). Many adults would walk this distance in around 10-15 minutes.

A journey to this supermarket takes pedestrians through areas where there is little passive surveillance of the street. It is difficult to determine how welcoming the streets on this route will feel after dark because at times they may remain busy with other pedestrians and with traffic.

Any routes to the supermarket also mean pedestrians walking beside sections of street designed for higher traffic speed and capacity, at the expense of their wider character. These sections of street may feel unpleasant (or uninteresting) even in daylight, making journeys seem longer.

Positively, this supermarket faces Victoria Road, with large windows looking onto it.

There is a larger 'Morrisons' supermarket around 1.2km from Albert Cross on Titwood Road.

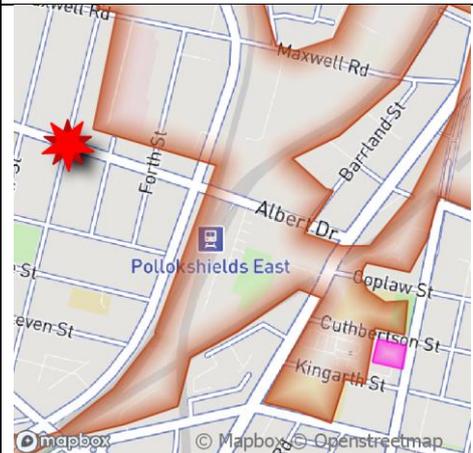
The supermarket appears to have been sited and designed to appeal to people driving. It faces a large car park, and has no windows looking onto Titwood Road – which is designed to support traffic volume and speed.

There are less direct routes to this supermarket, utilising the network of residential roads, minimising time spent on Titwood Road (and Darnley Road). These may be known by local people but they make the journey (from Albert Cross) closer to 2km. It seems likely that this journey is more attractive to people living in the southern part of Pollokshields East. For these residents parts of the route they

**Albert Drive (2)**

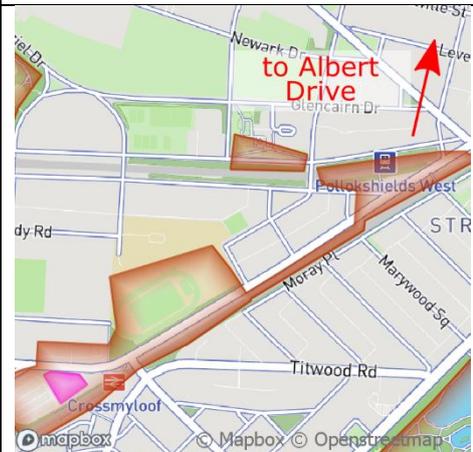
**Leslie Street**

**Herriet Street**



**Supermarket location (Lidl)**

Supermarket marked in pink, with Albert Cross marked with a star, and areas with very poor passive surveillance in brown.



**Supermarket location (Morrisons)**

Supermarket marked in pink with areas of particularly poor passive surveillance marked in brown.

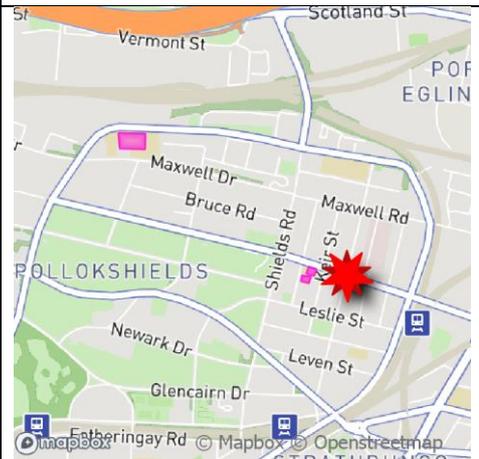
would utilise toward the Lidl supermarket are also less attractive.

Pollokshields primary school is on Albert Drive itself. The issues noted above may make pedestrian journeys here more difficult, but there are few other issues.

The journey to St Alberts primary school is of around 1km for pedestrians through the residential area to the west of East Pollokshields. The issues noted above, and particularly the lack of good passive surveillance of these streets, may feel to be an issue for some. The streets may feel more welcoming because of the presence of other pedestrians (including children) at busy times.

Bellahouston Academy is around 2km away for pedestrians, beyond St Alberts primary. The final stages of this journey may feel unpleasant because they take pedestrians beneath the M77 motorway, in an area lacking passive surveillance.

Holyrood Secondary School is just over 2km to the east for pedestrians. Most routes to this have substantial sections on streets which have high densities of residential use, with good passive surveillance of the streets. For initial parts of the journey the same issues exist as for journeys to the Lidl supermarket.



Primary school locations

# Potential improvements

This section lists some ideas for change. These are intended to prompt discussion, and are not necessarily recommendations. We've separated the ideas into three rough categories. The first ideas are about changes which might more easily be led by the Registered Social Landlord. The Registered Social Landlord may be able to have a strong influence in connection with the second group of ideas. The third group of ideas are generally for the longer term, or of a nature which means that a much wider group of agencies would need to be involved.

## **Led by the Registered Social Landlord:**

The Registered Social Landlord might consider trying to take a lead on the following issues, although the cooperation of other bodies might be required:

### **(none)**

It seems unlikely that Southside Housing Association can directly lead any substantial change to support pedestrians in this area.

## **Influenced by the Registered Social Landlord**

These more complex changes might require a much deeper involvement from other bodies, but we guess that the Registered Social Landlord ought to be able to provide strong encouragement or strong influence:

### **Increasing support for additional street closure points (or filters)**

Through traffic in the residential streets of East Pollokshields could probably be reduced further with a small number of further point closures (preferably as 'modal filters' designed to allow those cycling to pass easily). An equivalent effect might be achieved by making specific roads or short sections of carriageway 'one-way' (except for cycling) – making through journeys less convenient. A third option is to use 'diagonal filters', at crossroads. These allow pedestrians and people cycling to proceed easily in all directions, but force those driving to turn.

Such changes are often opposed vociferously by those whose driving behaviours are directly impacted (while creating little interest among those who might benefit). It may be that Southside Housing Association can support constructive dialogue about such changes so that debate is more balanced.

We understand that Pollokshields Trust has sought advice from Alistair McCay of Glasgow University in considering these kinds of intervention. It seems likely that each of the proposals discussed by Alistair McCay in his advice would have a positive effect, and that they could be implemented with temporary structures to test this effect.

## **Longer term or more complex change**

The potential improvements listed here are of a nature meaning that change is likely to take much longer, and that the Registered Social Landlord is likely to have much less influence:

### **Wider changes to street layout**

McCulloch Street provides a local example demonstrating how different carriageway designs can substantially change a street. The junctions on Albert Drive itself have been re-designed so that substantially narrower sections of carriageway must be crossed. If such changes were implemented across this dense residential area this could substantially re-balance the streets, making them much more friendly for pedestrians. It can be seen that levels of parking provided in McCulloch Street are similar to those in neighbouring streets, but that pedestrians are very much better provided for.

Southside Housing Association, if well informed about the advantages of such changes, may be in a position to support constructive dialogue about them.

### **Improving passive surveillance**

There is a site which we suspect might be available for development on the north side of Albert Drive, opposite The Tramway theatre. Any new buildings here could substantially improve (or further undermine) how welcoming this street feels to pedestrians, particularly after dark or later at night. A well designed residential building could also provide a sense of passive surveillance over the section of Albert Drive above Pollokshields East station. This could have the effect of substantially improving the sense of safety for those catching trains here after dark.

Some very poor attempts to support cycling have been made on this section of street. We note that an increase in people cycling here might further support the sense of safety for pedestrians – and that in places the sense that the footway is not overlooked may be compounded by the presence of parked cars.

Southside Housing may be in a position to support constructive discussion within the community about such options.

# Further information

## Potential funding

Funding for improvements to the urban environment might be available from a number of sources, including:

- Places for Everyone:  
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/2019/scotland/places-for-everyone/>
- Awards for All:  
<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/under10k>
- The Social Housing Partnership Fund for Improved Cycling & Walking Facilities:  
<https://www.cycling.scot/what-we-do/cycling-friendly/social-housing-fund>