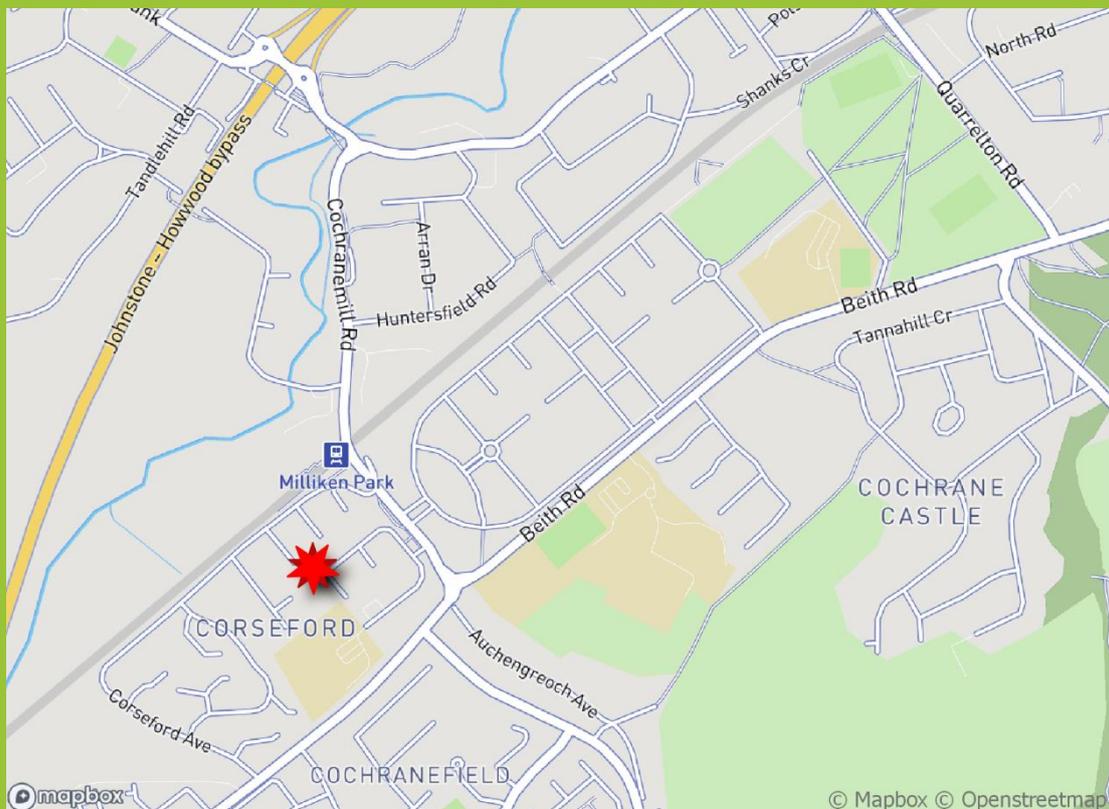


Pedestrian conditions assessment

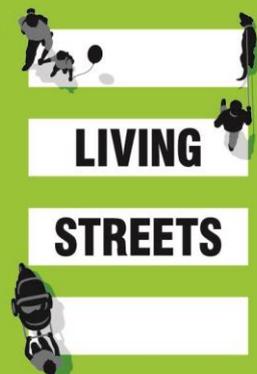
Corseford, Johnstone (Linstone Housing)

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 Corseford, Johnstone, which should be checked with residents and other stakeholders, leads us to conclude that pedestrians are disadvantaged by these key issues:

- The distance to key facilities, some of which have been located to suit those travelling by car (and a wider situation which has developed over the longer term, giving advantage to those with access to a car).
- The poor conditions experienced on any longer pedestrian journeys, many of which rely on walking (or wheeling) beside roads which have been designed for vehicle speed and flow, with buildings set back from the carriageway or absent.
- Locally, journeys characterised by the need to negotiate carriageway space designed with little consideration for pedestrians, with key connections between paths and streets blocked.
- Access to public transport, including to buses, involving walking through or waiting in places where pedestrians are likely to feel isolated, particularly after dark.

As the Registered Social Landlord, it may only be possible for Linstone 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:

- improving the connections between the path network and the streets; and
- improving conditions for pedestrians in the cul-de-sac carriageway areas.

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. As a check of the accuracy of this assessment we discussed our initial findings in detail with local staff from Linstone Housing Association and a representative of the local 'Tenants and Residents Association'. 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.

Introduction

Living Streets has received funding from the Social Housing Partnership Fund for Improved Cycling & Walking Facilities, administered by Cycling Scotland. As part of this work 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 the Linstone Housing Association property at Corseford, Johnstone.

Key factors we assess

Our assessment looked at issues such as the following:

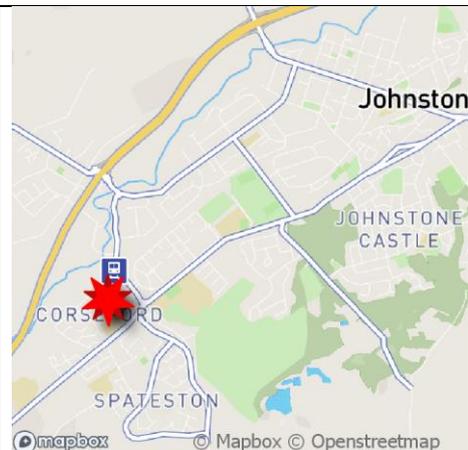
- **Footway (i.e. pavement)¹ and path provision:** the presence, surface quality, continuity, width, obstruction, and design of footways and paths.
- **Accessibility:** how far footways and paths, and their interaction with the carriageways of streets, have been designed to accommodate disabled people 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’² 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.

¹ 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.

² 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

Corseford is at the southwest edge of Johnstone.



Location

The boundaries of the estate are clearly defined in most directions:

- to the northwest by a railway line, which has no crossing points in the vicinity other than at Cochranemill Road;
- to the northeast by Cochranemill Road, which is designed for vehicle flow and speed, with buildings generally set back from the road;
- to the southeast and south by Beith Road, and the site of Fordbank Primary School (Beith Road being designed for vehicle flow and speed, with buildings generally set back from and facing away from the carriageway);

To the southeast a change of housing style marks a more gentle transition into a different area. The border between the two is easily crossed for those using the path network here.



Boundaries

Observations

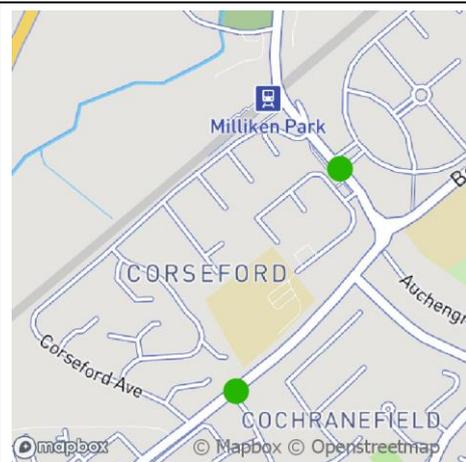
Key observations

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.

Crossing points for the boundary roads, and the railway, are likely to be key features in many pedestrian journeys. Beith Road has only one signalised crossing (i.e. with traffic lights) in the area. Cochranemill Road has only one signalised crossing.

Unless walking out of the immediate local area the railway can only be crossed using the road bridge carrying Cochranemill Road. Beith Road and Cochranemill Road have been designed with a focus on vehicle speed and flow, with any neighbouring buildings set back and/or facing away from the carriageway.

These crossing points may be adequate for the most common existing journeys, but they indicate how effectively Cochranemill Road and Beith Road act as boundaries to the area for pedestrians.



Signalised crossings of bounding vehicle orientated roads

Key facilities are some considerable distance from this estate. There is what we assume to be an important small local convenience-style shop close by (100-400m) on Ness Avenue. However the nearest larger supermarket is the Morrisons store beside Johnstone town centre (there is also a smaller Lidl store within the town centre).

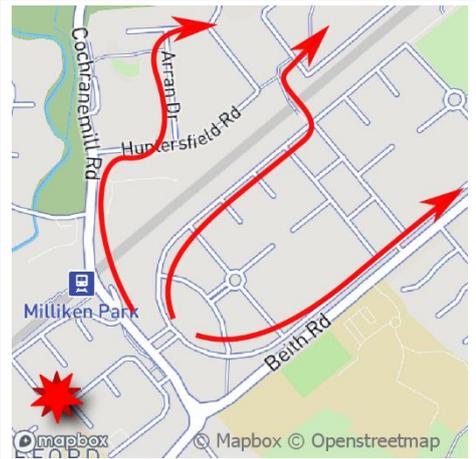
This is around 2.5 km from the estate. While many pedestrians might consider such a journey achievable on an occasional basis this is clearly not a local shop, and the quality of the route therefore matters. The site for this supermarket seems to have been chosen primarily for ease of access by vehicle from the nearby major junction on the A737 dual carriageway.

Although 2.5 km would be more easily covered on a bicycle there is no clear route to the supermarket which would be of sufficient quality so that many people would consider cycling.



2.5km to supermarket

Journeys to key facilities outside the estate for pedestrians are likely to be made tedious or actively unpleasant by the need to travel along sections of vehicle orientated roads, including in particular Beith Road or Cochranemill Road. There will be issues of noise, spray from vehicles in wet weather, and of being dazzled by headlights after dark. More importantly perhaps, the vehicle orientated design of these roads means that there are few nearby buildings, and that pedestrians may feel very isolated after dark or later at night.

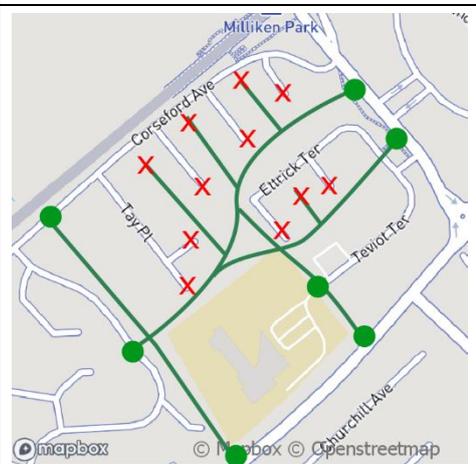


Key routes toward Johnstone

The lack of connectivity within the estate, between the internal estate path network and the surrounding streets is unusual, and may limit the flexibility of pedestrian journeys.

There are many locations in which a connection between a street and a path would have been expected. Commonly there is minimal separation between the two, often only a wall – although this is not the case in all of the locations marked on the map (right). Access at these points is only through buildings – in theory available only for their residents.

We understand that when using the station some non-residents currently choose to walk through these buildings to connect to/from the path network.



Approximation of path network. Green dots indicate connection to streets. Red crosses indicate places where connection would have been expected.

The lack of footways within the cul-de-sac carriageway areas would seem to make trips to and from any nearby bus stops much more difficult and unpleasant than they ought to be for such a short distance. The lack of dropped kerbs on any footways which do exist is an additional problem here.

Links to representative images on Google Streetview:

[Forth Place](#)

[Clyde Place](#)

The vehicle-orientated nature of Corseford Avenue (between the estate and the railway) may also be problematic for access to buses. Some bus stops are not well overlooked from the nearby buildings, and vehicles may be driven on this road at much higher speeds than are acceptable given that pedestrians are not properly catered for. It is difficult to assess how much of an issue this is without visiting.

Links to representative images on Google Streetview:

[Corseford Avenue at bus stop](#) (road marked for speed, missing footway)

[Corseford Avenue, second bus stop](#) (not well overlooked)

In addition to issues around the lack of footway space it is also clear that the cul-de-sac carriageway design is intended to support vehicle speed and flow, right up to and into the parking spaces themselves. If pedestrians are expected to negotiate these spaces (as they must to reach bus stops) this is an inappropriate design. It is also likely to support faster speeds and less attentive driving on the surrounding vehicle-orientated roads. More appropriate design intentionally slows vehicles *before* entering residential areas rather than after doing so – expecting that the disruption to flow on larger roads nearby is entirely appropriate.

Sketches showing how differently these streets could have been designed are provided later in this report.

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)
[Access from Corseford Road to Ettrick Terrace / Teviot Terrace](#)

Secondary observations

There is an important signalised crossing (i.e. with traffic lights) of Beith Road, for pedestrians travelling to Johnstone High School. However this is inconveniently placed, meaning pedestrians go out of their way to reach it. This may not be a major problem in itself, but it emphasises that routes to the high school are determined by negotiating the vehicle-orientated major carriageways in this area.

Pedestrians accessing Milliken Park station need first to negotiate the same issues as noted for bus access.

Access to the northwestern platform is only from Cochranemill Road. As on other sections of Cochranemill Road there are few buildings nearby, meaning that passengers may feel isolated and at risk, particularly after dark or later at night.

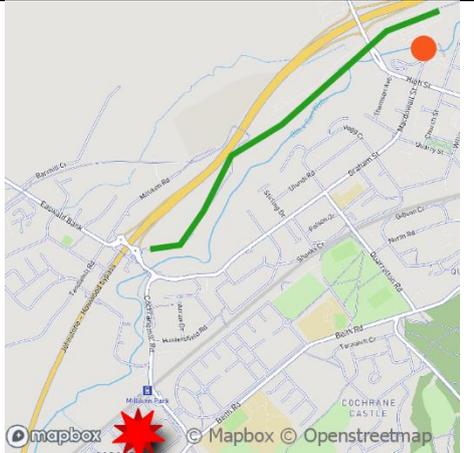
From some parts of the estate a journey to the station is likely to bring pedestrians to the junction between Cochranemill Road and Corseford Avenue. This junction is designed specifically to support vehicle flow and speed on both carriageways. There is nothing here to support pedestrians to continue safely if they are accessing the northern platform at the station. Unless they divert their journey by around 200m into Corseford Avenue, or walk across grass, they are forced to cross right at the mouth of the side road at its widest and most exposed point.

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)
[Junction to be crossed for station access](#)

<p>The most obvious routes toward Johnstone town centre – for those prepared to travel this distance - involve use of Cochranemill Road for the beginning of the journey. Later parts of a journey are beside more pedestrian-friendly urban roads, lined by housing. The initial section on Cochranemill Road may be unwelcoming after dark or later at night. Any buildings in the area are set back from the carriageway, and some areas are a long way from residential property. Pedestrians on such a journey may well feel very isolated.</p> <p>There are alternatives utilising paths over and/or beside a railway footbridge – which joins Greenend Avenue, Bute Drive and Ryefield Avenue – however these paths are also isolated, with pedestrians hidden from nearby houses by fences, hedges and trees.</p>	<p>Links to representative images on Google Streetview: <u>Cochranemill Road</u> <u>Route via footbridge</u></p>
<p>Beith Road is of a vehicle-orientated nature for significant lengths of any journey along it. Buildings are set back or absent entirely. While footways exist it seems likely that pedestrian journeys along this will feel tedious. After dark or later at night pedestrians here may feel very isolated.</p> <p>Much of Beith Road has space given over to a central hatched area, emphasising the design for speed and flow. This makes clear that the road could be redesigned making space for cycling, with little loss of capacity (but sacrificing speed and potentially flow). An increase in the number of people cycling here, a reduction in speeds and the moving of vehicles away from the kerbs, might make the road more welcoming for pedestrians. At one time this road would have carried traffic travelling from Ayrshire to Glasgow, and such a design may have been understandable, but the A737 now fulfils that role.</p>	<p>Links to representative images on Google Streetview: <u>Beith Road (toward Johnstone)</u></p>
<p>There are two further small convenience-style shops, a pub, and a pharmacy, on Hallhill Road. Fortunately there is a signalised crossing supporting access to this across Beith Road, and one of the estate paths links directly to this location. It is difficult to assess how welcoming this path is after dark – it seems to have sections which are not well overlooked from neighbouring buildings.</p>	
<p>There are areas which may be redeveloped in future within the estate bounded by Craigview Avenue and Greenend Avenue. There may be potential here for improving pedestrian routes, and routes for cycling, which enable people to stay on the southeast of the</p>	

railway on a journey toward Johnstone - as far as the bridge on Quarrelton Road - while avoiding Beith Road. It would be helpful if any housing built in this area recognises the potential to provide new key routes through the area (with a change of street layout). It is important, in order to have any significance, that such routes should feel to be overlooked and entirely central to the area's design. Given the distance to Johnstone it will not be sufficient to provide peripheral back routes joining a set of cut through paths between houses. Such a route would provide not only for Corseford, but also the other residential areas nearby.

Beginning close to the major road junction between the A737 dual carriageway and the B787, there is a path away from the urban streets, which follows a route fairly parallel to Black Cart Water, and which is signed as a cycle route. This might support much of a trip to Johnstone town centre by bicycle – or even on foot – in daylight. However this is likely to feel to be quite an isolated route, and a bigger problem for cycling is that access to it is only available along around 800m of Cochranemill Road and Kilbarchan Road. These provide conditions which very few people would accept for cycling on. Given these issues it is unlikely that this will support anything more than a tiny proportion of journeys.



Signed path (showing gap)

The closest outdoor play facilities for children appear to be in 1) Sandy Flats – around 400-800m away, but involving a journey along Cochranemill Road; and 2) in Spateston – around 500-900m away, accessible on more urban streets and paths. It seems unlikely that many parents would consider routes to either to be safe enough for children of a relevant age to travel unsupervised.

Trains to Glasgow from Milliken Park station take around 20 minutes, through Johnstone and Paisley. They depart around every 30 minutes at many times, with much reduced services on Sunday. The service also carries people to Ayr, Largs, and the Ayrshire coast towns.

Buses from Corseford Avenue, around every 15-20 minutes at busy times, take around 7-15 minutes to Johnstone town centre. Journeys are also possible to Paisley (30 minutes) and Glasgow (75 minutes).

It's difficult to assess (without visiting) how well overlooked the path network is, within the estate, from surrounding buildings. Given that the design tries to force pedestrians to use this network rather

than the streets themselves this factor is likely to be important in how pedestrian-friendly the estate feels. Any individual spots in the path network which are less well overlooked could badly detract from use of the network as a whole.

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:

Pedestrian access through the cul-de-sac areas

Conditions for pedestrians within the cul-de-sac carriageway areas could be improved.

As a minimum, the vehicle entrances to these cul-de-sacs should be significantly narrowed in order to force those driving into the areas to slow their vehicles to a walking pace before entering the areas. In the longer term it would be helpful to provide proper footways (pavements).

While higher quality and more permanent changes might take time it may also be possible to have an effect here with cheaper and more immediate interventions, some of which might be used to trial longer-term change.

Features such as planters or even smaller community managed plant-pot based gardens could be used to help to create obstacles which make it necessary to drive more slowly into or out from the cul-de-sac areas. More utilitarian obstacles, such as simple concrete blocks, would also work, but their ugly appearance may be counterproductive. Care should be taken not to create obstacles which block the views that pedestrians (including children or those using a wheelchair or mobility scooter) have of oncoming vehicles.

It may also be possible to reclaim some parts of these cul-de-sac areas to allow safer pedestrian passage, using simpler more temporary physical measures in the shorter term (like bolt-down kerbs or even if necessary painted walkways).

Connection of paths to streets

Unless it is very clear that the unusual design of the paths in this area has created a strong community feel, the path network should be properly connected to the streets.

In many places all that separates the paths from the streets is a wall, and a small strip of grass. In theory, where this is the case, fixing this might be relatively simple. This change would make access to bus stops and the station – which is essential given the distance to

key facilities – significantly easier. This might also discourage non-residents from accessing the paths through the common areas of the properties here.

Depending on current use of the path network it may be that some of the potential connections may be more suitable than others. Connections directly to Corseford Avenue may need to be made alongside changes to slow speeds on this road (see below).

With more immediate and direct links between the paths and the streets the less well overlooked areas may become less threatening after dark.

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:

Reducing vehicle speed in the local area

Improvements could be made throughout the local area to reduce the dominance of vehicles on the residential (and semi-residential) roads. Solutions using new high quality infrastructure would also improve the area in other ways, but much simpler solutions could be used on a shorter-term basis.

High priority locations are at the junctions of Corseford Avenue and of Teviot Terrace with Cochranemill Road. It should be possible to re-design these junctions to mark a sharp transition from a high speed carriageway to a slow-speed residential area. The current situation prioritises vehicle flow on Cochranemill Road over the safety of pedestrians crossing the end of both Corseford Avenue and Teviot Terrace. A more appropriate arrangement would mean those driving on Cochranemill Road needing to slow considerably before turning into these roads.

Changes here could utilise more temporary infrastructure, such as bolt-down kerbs and painted lines. More aesthetically pleasing additions, such as planters, could also be utilised – although care would be needed to avoid blocking the view of pedestrians crossing.

Access at speed from Beith Road to Corseford Avenue, and along Corseford Avenue from the southwest, may also be an issue. Improvements to Corseford Avenue which are designed to improve conditions for pedestrians might also be used to reduce speeds, making this feel more like a residential street and less like a fast vehicle-focused access road. While properly engineered solutions would be required in the long term, simple carriageway narrowing (led by the local authority) could be achieved with ‘bolt down’ solutions.

We understand that local people have raised concerns about difficulty crossing Corseford Avenue to the station when people are stopping vehicles to pick up or drop off passengers. We suggest that this issue could be tackled with solutions that intentionally narrow Corseford Avenue around the station, both providing formal drop off space and more protected crossings – at the same time as substantially changing the character of Corseford Avenue in order to decrease speeds.

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:

- The area around Greenend Avenue and Craigview Avenue may in future be redeveloped. Any housing here should be designed around, and focused on, routes which can be used by pedestrians to travel directly toward Johnstone. These must not be peripheral back routes created by joining together clever cut through paths, but instead central elements in the area, around which vehicle access takes second place.
- A small area of brownfield land to the northwest, between Bute Drive, Ryefield Avenue, Beech Road and Kilbarchan Road, may be redeveloped. The opportunity should be taken to provide high quality pedestrian routes connecting Bute Drive to the more residential section of Kilbarchan Road which begins east of Beech Road.
- It is clear that at the moment every one of the roads which follows a straighter path through the wider area has been designed to prioritise vehicle capacity, flow and speed – making pedestrian journeys on them much less welcoming. The remaining streets are indirect and disconnected. Even where these are better designed for pedestrian use they are of limited use for longer journeys. Redesign of some of the larger roads, to support both pedestrian journeys and cycling along these, could significantly re-connect this southwestern area of Johnstone to the town centre.

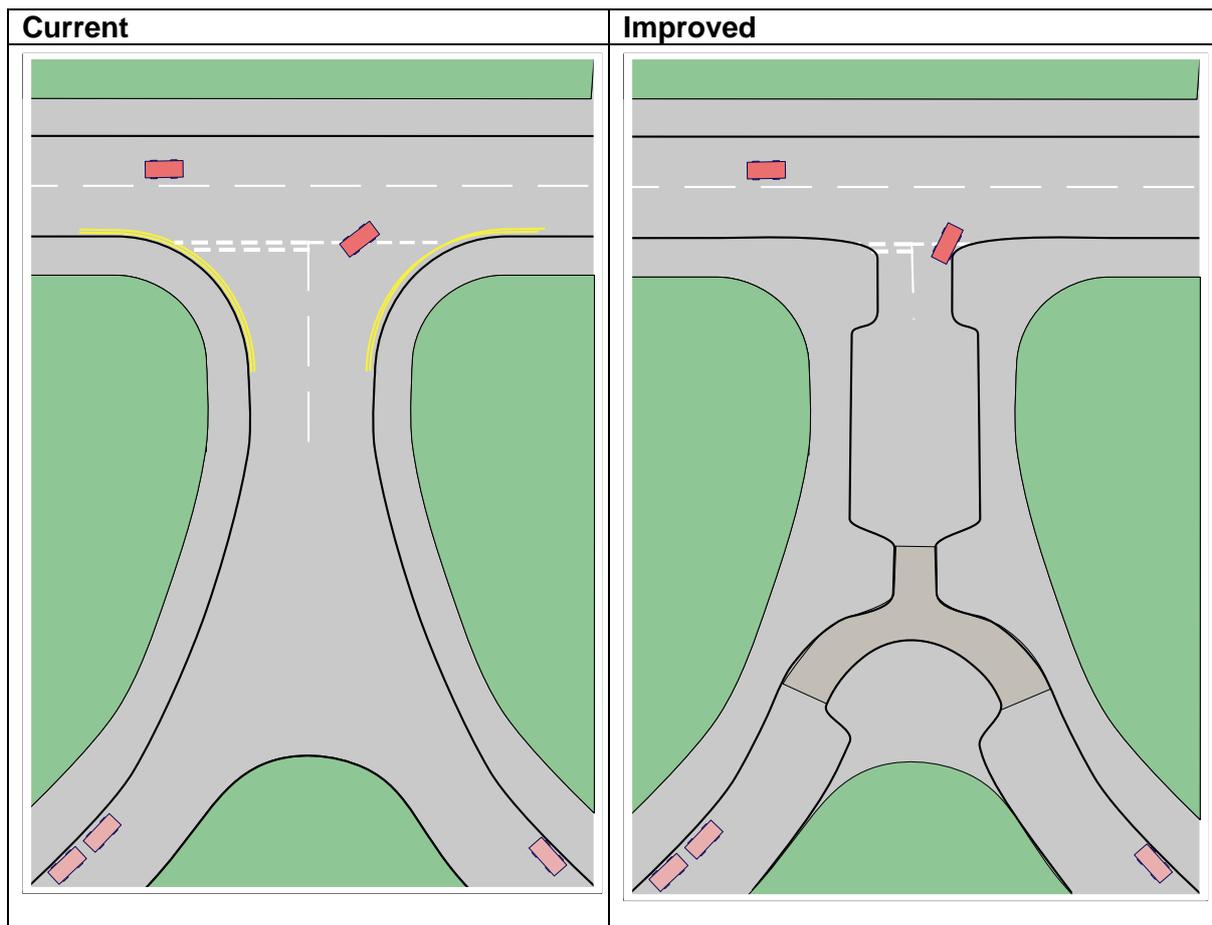
Further information

Illustrative sketches

Below are greatly simplified sketches intended to highlight how many of the junctions within and bordering the estate are designed to facilitate traffic flow into and on the surrounding roads.

It seems reasonable to suggest that junctions within residential areas should be designed to create a slow speed environment. Ideally traffic should be slowed *before* entering the slow speed residential area, while on any larger vehicle-orientated road. Beith Road, Cochranemill Road, and Corseford Avenue, are all well within the urban area, and they are used by pedestrians (and potentially by people cycling). Currently they are designed to promote vehicle flow over all other considerations.

Changes like those shown can be used as part of controlling speeds on the larger road as well as improving conditions within the residential area themselves. Given the noted issues with the vehicle orientated nature of Beith Road, Cochranemill Road, and Corseford Road this potential effect should be considered to be important.



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>