
Cycle Track Demarcation

EDTCE Scrutiny

Date of meeting: 05 November 2025

Lead director/officer: Daniel Pearman

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All Wards
- Report author: Daniel Pearman
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- Report version number: 01

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide members of the commission with details on the processes to create a cycle track, and the usage of demarcation signage/lines/material
- 1.2 To provide members of the commission with specific detail about the usage of concrete blocks as a protection measure for cycle tracks.

2. Definition of a cycle track

- 2.1 Though the terms are often used interchangeably, there is a legal distinction between a cycle track and a cycle lane.
- 2.2 A **Cycle Track** is defined in primary legislation as a way over which the public have a right to pass and repass by pedal cycle, and where they may also have rights on foot. It is an offence under §21 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 to drive or park a motor vehicle in a cycle track. These are usually identified by being physically separate from the carriageway, though that is not a fundamental requirement.
- 2.3 A **Cycle Lane** is specifically a section of carriageway that has been designated for the usage of cycles and may or may not permit usage by other vehicles depending on what markings are used. It is not a specific offence to park within a cycle lane, even a mandatory cycle lane, unless there are also waiting restrictions present. These are usually identified by being at carriageway level and marked with a white line, broken or unbroken.
- 2.4 For the purposes of this document, **Cycle Facility** is used when referring to both cycle tracks and cycle lanes.

3. Process to create a cycle facility

- 3.1 As a rule, a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is not required to create a cycle facility.
- 3.2 The exception would be where in the process of introducing the facility, there must be additional controls over usage – for example, creating a contraflow cycle track would require a TRO, as it reverses the direction of travel and applies a one-way restriction; introducing waiting restrictions alongside a cycle lane would also require a TRO.
- 3.3 Creating a cycle lane requires only that the authority install the necessary markings as prescribed within the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD).

- 3.4 A highway authority has powers under the Highways Act 1980 (§65) to create a cycle track. This may or may not involve construction work, depending on the nature of the cycle track and location, but the authority is obliged to clearly demonstrate that it has exercised its powers. The exact mechanism is not prescribed in law, and can be set by each authority depending on its constitution, governance arrangement, delegated powers, and equally by the works undertaken – construction work alone may demonstrate an intent to make use of the powers.

4. Purpose and types of demarcation and separation.

- 4.1 The ultimate purpose of a cycle facility is to provide users with a safe space away from other types of traffic, including pedestrians. This therefore requires the usage of some form of demarcation or protection to identify the extent of the facility.

- 4.2 These features can be split into three categories, as below. The presentation attached as Appendix 1 contains visual examples of each category:

i No protection

These may be marked out with compliant lining and paintwork, and may create an offence for a vehicle to drive into the space, but offer no physical protection from motor vehicles.

ii Lightly Segregated

Traffic cylinders, bollards, or low-level features with intermittent gaps and spacing are best considered lightly segregated features. They provide a strong level of visual and physical separation, but do not create a fully stepped and protected track

iii Fully Segregated

Usage of kerbs, either full or half-height, to separate the facility from other traffic. This may be raised to footway level, or may continue to operate at carriageway level but be otherwise separated via a kerb line or buffer strip.

- 4.3 Whilst compliant road markings do provide a designated space, they do not provide a means to physically deter or restrain vehicles and have been found to increase the volume and risk of close passes. They are not likely to be considered safe or attractive to cyclists, who will either avoid using them by not travelling, using the footway, or – if confident – may find it safer to ride in general traffic lanes.

- 4.4 The authority has a duty to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic across the road network, as well as a general obligation to ensure safety and take actions that deliver on local and national objectives around decarbonisation and sustainable travel. The delivery of cycling infrastructure that directly encourages modal shift fulfils all of these objectives.

- 4.5 Given the above, facilities that offer physical protection from motor vehicles are preferred by cyclists and by the authority.

- 4.6 For a constrained urban area such as Leicester, available space is the biggest constraint that dictates the type of facility. Providing sufficient space for cycling, motor vehicles, and pedestrians – alongside other facilities such as bus lanes, bus stops, or pedestrian crossings – can be a significant challenge. As a rule, lightly segregated facilities require less space, and are also easier to install around areas of particular difficulty, such as short stretches of multiple accesses or driveways.
- 4.7 The highway authority has a general power of improvement, that may be used to deliver works on the public highway without planning permission or requiring extensive consultation. This can be used to upgrade, relocate, or replace features on the network.
- 4.8 Note – there are other, additional, types of demarcation depending on specific circumstances. Bidirectional cycle facilities should have some form of visual separation between directions of travel, and if level with a footway there should be a raised section of trapezoidal kerb to provide a tactile level difference for visually impaired users.

5. Guidance

- 5.1 The Department for Transport is the body responsible for issuing design guidance to local authorities in England. It is a condition of government funding to follow this guidance wherever possible, and to document departures from standard where necessary.
- 5.2 Current cycle design standards are held within Local Transport Note 1/20 *Cycle Infrastructure Design*, which replaced LTN 1/08 *Cycle Infrastructure Design*.
- 5.3 Alongside providing design advice and guidance for engineers, LTN 1/20 outlines key principles of cycle network and scheme design that authorities are also obliged to follow – which includes ensuring there is safety and coherence at a network level, by ensuring there is safe segregation of cyclists from vehicles and pedestrians at all times and that space is allocated accordingly to ensure the most efficient modes are able to derive the most benefit.

6. Case study: Aylestone Road

- 6.1 Aylestone Road was designated as a Key Worker Corridor as part of the city council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, recognising the importance of the route for cycle journeys in all seasons. Though parallel and traffic free, the Great Central Way is not suitable for many users during the winter months or darker mornings/evenings.
- 6.2 In summer 2020, temporary traffic wands were installed on the existing advisory cycle lanes found along sections of Aylestone Road. These were to provide a safer route for the increasing number of cyclists traveling to and from major employment sites, whilst also serving to narrow the road width as a means of reducing vehicle speeds due to local concerns and recent fatalities and serious injuries along Aylestone Road.

- 6.3 The installation was monitored after installation, including comments received from the public. The number of such comments was limited, and the majority related to the temporary nature of the installation, rather than the purpose, and usage by cyclists was found to be increasing.
- 6.4 Funding from the Active Travel Fund, a government programme targeted at making permanent temporary measures introduced during the pandemic, allowed for the replacement of these temporary wands with a more permanent feature.
- 6.5 The installation of a fully stepped cycle facility, as may be found on Welford Road, was found to be out of scope due to cost and a need to deliver at pace to comply with the funding grant. The high volume of accesses along Aylestone Road as well as junctions within the scheme boundary would make the installation of a raised facility a costly and complicated matter, and would require specific consideration for onward connection into existing facilities.
- 6.6 The importance of Aylestone Road to buses, emergency vehicles, and freight was recognised, and a stepped facility was found to present significant challenges to retaining carriageway width without either a great deal of compromise or more heavy engineering works to ensure space was created from the available footway.
- 6.7 An alternative approach was sought and officers identified the concrete blocks that are now in situ. They had been used elsewhere in the country (notably Nottingham and Manchester) to great effect, and their installation was much more secure than the bolt downs that had been used on London Road. Crucially, their width allowed for a minor extension to the cycle tracks, and though it required the removal of some central markings and islands did mean that the relative widths could be maintained through that section of Aylestone Road.
- 6.8 Frontages and residents were notified from September of 2023 of the forthcoming changes to the cycle track, making it clear that this was an enhancement to the existing facility.
- 6.9 Similar features were installed on Braunstone Lane East as part of the same scheme.
- 6.10 Wands were used to provide an additional vertical reference point for drivers, and the spacing between the blocks was designed to ensure that access was maintained to properties, businesses, and junctions.
- 6.11 Red surfacing on the cycle tracks was also arranged, to ensure there was consistency with other sites in the city and to resolve outstanding concerns with the surface quality that had been raised by residents and users.
- 6.12 Some blocks required amendments during and shortly after construction, which resolved the majority of concerns related to access to or from properties and businesses. In addition, following concerns raised over visibility when joining Aylestone Road at certain points, further wands were installed alongside the concrete blocks to provide more vertical visibility.

- 6.13 The result is the creation of unidirectional cycle tracks along around 850m of Aylestone Road, providing protection for cyclists as they navigate a key section of the route. Future projects would look to further extend this section, and provide protection for journeys into the city centre or beyond and greater access to the surrounding amenities, residences, and destinations.

7. Financial, Legal, Equalities, Climate Emergency, and Other Implications

7.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. As and when new cycle facilities are proposed, the financial implications will be sought.

Signed: Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

Dated: 22/10/2025

7.2 Legal Implications

The report sets out guidance and information only relating to the process for creation of cycle tracks and cycle lanes. There are therefore no legal implications arising from the report. Various local highway authority powers are referenced throughout the report.

Signed: Zoe Iliffe, Principal Lawyer (Property, Highways & Planning)

Dated: 14/10/2025

7.3 Equalities Implications

There are no direct equality implications arising from this report, however as noted in the report, pedestrians' needs are considered in the planning of cycle tracks and lanes, and this will impact on a range of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Signed: Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer

Dated: 15 October 2025

7.4 Climate Emergency Implications

There are no direct climate emergency implications associated with this report. Understanding provision of safe cycling options is likely to be of future benefit in supporting active travel within the City.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext 372246

Dated: 14 October 2025

7.5 Other Implications

8. Appendices and Other Papers

8.1 Appendix 1 – Cycle Lane Demarcation EDTCE Presentation (.pptx)