

Calls go out For safe city Cycle routes

By Marie Louise McCrory

A CYCLING organization has called for dedicated cycle routes across the Westlink as part of a 104 million road works scheme.

The Northern Ireland Cycling Initiative said it was concerned the current scheme did not appear to include plans for cycle provision.

The initiative said the widening scheme taking place would remove barriers for cars and lorries "at the cost of increasing barrier to the movement of pedestrians and cyclists"

Sally Liya, from the Steering Group of Northern Ireland Cycling Initiative, said it was calling upon Roads Service to "insist on the building of dedicated cycle routes".

"International research shows that a city's competitiveness depends on attracting a young well-education workforce to live and interact within the city", she said.

"Young people are increasingly

environmentally conscious and want to cycle. It is therefore in Belfast's best interest to provide high-quality cycle linkages across the Westlink".

Steven Patterson, national director of Sustrans which co-ordinates the cycle network, supported the calls for increased cycle routes.

"The Westlink is a barrier for people cycling from west Belfast to the city centre and people want proper cycle trails on busy roads to increase their safety and this is an excellent opportunity to improve these roads for cyclists," he said.

A spokeswoman for Department for Regional Development (DRD) last night said cyclists would be able to cross the Westlink at one point.

"We are going to provide a facility for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the Westlink via the Grosvenor Road bridge," he said.

He also added that there would also be a footway and cycleway between the Broadway and Grosvenor Road junctions.