

SPOKES RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE MEADOWS TO UNION CANAL CYCLE ROUTE

Introduction

1. SPOKES welcomes the opportunity to comment on these proposals. In recognition of the importance of these proposals to cyclists in Edinburgh we have prepared the attached detailed note on the proposals rather than complete the short consultation questionnaire on the form or the on line “survey monkey” version. We trust that this is acceptable to you.
2. The proposals have clearly benefited from the stakeholder workshop held earlier in the year. We were pleased to be invited to take part in this workshop and suggest that such pre consultation workshops should be used on a regular basis for similar cycling proposals in the future.

Our views on the general approach

3. We strongly support the principle of providing a cycle route from the Canal to the Meadows as part of the Family Friendly network.
4. We also strongly support the proposals for segregated cycle ways on Home St and Brougham Place linked into toucan crossings. Our understanding is that these 2 way cycle ways will be 2.5m and 2.9m wide respectively after allowance is made for a 0.5m separating kerb. Given that these cycle ways are 2 way, in our view, they should be 3.0m width.
5. Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that cyclists travelling north and south along Leven St/Home St can get easy access to the cycle route
6. Care will be required with the detailed design of the toucan crossings to ensure that cyclists can access them in each direction without dismounting. Clear markings on the toucan crossings will be required to indicate that cyclists can access them directly without having to dismount while maintaining due care for pedestrians.
7. Although we would have preferred a 2 way, segregated 3m cycle way along Tarvit St to link into the 2 cycle ways mentioned in paragraph 3 above, we do not object to the Council’s proposal to close the road to through motor traffic at the Home St end with cycle access through the road closure **providing** satisfactory arrangements are made to allow cyclists to get access to and from Gilmore PI and to Leven St. The current proposals are silent on this significant point

Other Points

8. There is nothing in the consultation proposals about the access from the canal towpath to Lochrin Place although this is part and parcel of the route and the cover photograph shows cyclists on the cobbled area by the canal side which is part of the route. In our view it is essential that this cobbled area, which is at present very uncomfortable for all cyclists and almost impossible to use for cycling with small wheeled collapsible cycles, should include a smooth, non cobbled, 3m stretch clearly marked for cycling.
9. The plans include no proposals for Lower Gilmore Place which is also an integral part of the cycle route. Although this is not a busy road, parking on both sides of the road can obstruct sight lines. At present parking on the the south side of the road is notionally restricted in weekdays between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm by a single yellow line although this is not consistently enforced despite the proximity of the parking attendant's office, We suggest that parking should be further restricted on this side of the road by a continuous double yellow line and that this should be enforced.
10. We welcome the proposal for removing 2 pay - and - display parking bays on Lochrin Place to allow cyclists travelling eastwards to cross the road to get access to the toucan crossing. This is an essential part of the overall scheme and must be retained.
11. We also welcome the proposal to re-site the bus stop, currently close to the Cameo cinema on Home St, further along and closer to Lochrin Terrace. This is essential to avoid buses backing up and blocking exit from Lochrin Place as can happen at present.. The success of this change needs to be monitored and further changes made if it is insufficient to tackle this problem.
12. There is a strong case for allowing contra flow cycling on Leven Terrace and Valleyfield St. This would improve access to and from the Links/Bruntsfield area.
13. We think that it is important that adequate signage is provided to ensure that cyclists understand how to negotiate through the route.

Conclusion

14. We look forward to further progress on this route in line with our comments. We would be very happy to discuss this further if this would be helpful.

Richard Grant

On behalf of SPOKES Planning Group

24 October 2014