

Roseburn to Leith Walk – Cycle Route and Street Improvements

Comments from SPOKES, 7 July 2016

Introduction

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the suggested amendments and revised designs as set out in the recent paper and diagrams circulated to all members of the Active Travel Forum.

We submitted a detailed response to the earlier consultation which contained many constructive suggestions for possible improvements to the cycle route. Although the recent paper covers the whole of the route, it is not clear that all our suggestions have been considered. We have referred below to the most important suggestions where a response appears to be outstanding and we have attached a copy of our earlier submission for ease of reference.

Our comments are set out below.

Roseburn

The 2 alternative options

Of the 2 alternative options discussed in the paper, **we are strongly in favour of option A which maintains the route along Roseburn Terrace with changes to meet the concerns of local businesses.**

This option is more direct for cyclists and also allows for significant improvements to the pedestrian environment. It also allows for local businesses to benefit from passing cycle trade. It can be used by cyclists coming from the Murrayfield area and commuting cyclists using the A8 as well as those joining the route from the Council's "quiet routes" from the Saughton and Corstorphine areas. It provides the essential basis for a future main road arterial segregated route along the A8 to Corstorphine and the west. In our judgement it is more likely to help support the claim that the proposed route is "transformative" when it is assessed by Sustrans against competing bids by various councils for vital Community Links Plus funding.

By contrast, option B is cumbersome for cyclists requiring 3 crossings of major roads to get from West Coates proposed cycle path to the quiet road Roseburn Place. The additional crossings will inevitably create further barriers to the flow of motor traffic and cause extra congestion in the Roseburn St/Terrace junction. It may also conflict with deliveries to Tescos which could be potentially dangerous for cyclists as heavy trolleys are manoeuvred across the path of cyclists. In short, it will be very unattractive to cyclists and is likely to be ignored. It is simply not cost effective and wasteful of public money

For the avoidance of doubt, we concur with the Council's comments on the further option put forward in a local petition. This should not be progressed further.

Points of detail

- We supported the narrowing of the exit from Murrayfield Avenue, but we are content that it should have 2 lanes as proposed. Although the paper does not mention the former proposed cycle lane crossing Murrayfield Ave from Murrayfield Gardens, we note that this appears to have been dropped and are content with this. We would, however, wish to see some clear, visual acknowledgement that cycling across the Old Colt Bridge, to join the cycle lane on Roseburn Terrace, is allowable.

- Although we believe that “floating bus stops” can work satisfactorily if designed well, we are happy for the bus stop at Randolph Cliff to be moved further west if this is the generally preferred option.
- In order to prevent rat running through side streets to avoid the main Roseburn Terrace/ Roseburn Street junction, we are happy to support the street closure on Roseburn Crescent and Roseburn Place at the new no entry proposal (subject to an exemption for cyclists) at the eastern end of Roseburn Place.
- We would be grateful for reassurance that the new, proposed off peak loading bay on the north side of Roseburn Terrace will be on the road space and that the cycle path will continue to be protected.
- In addition, this proposed off peak loading bay needs to be designed and managed to avoid potentially dangerous conflicts with cyclists. The design should make it difficult for delivery vehicles and cars to attempt to park on the cycle path itself and there should be sufficient clearance to avoid the risk of van doors being opened into passing cyclists. It may be desirable for the loading bay to be moved closer to the centre of the road. The “off peak” nature of this loading bay and its use for genuine loading should be properly enforced as this is clearly not the case at present.
- We are content that the loading bay on the south side of Roseburn Terrace should be designated “all day”.

West Coates

- We are strongly opposed to the proposal to reduce the width of the cycle lane. No details are given of the new proposed width, but the original plans showed the width as only 2.5m i.e. the minimum specified in Government guidance for a 2 way, segregated cycle path. Any reduction would make the width “substandard” and, it is unlikely that any practical reduction in this width could contribute a significant space towards an extra lane for motor traffic. We suggest that the Council should revert to its earlier proposal to remove the middle bus stop on West Coates since 3 bus stops in this relatively short distance inevitably adds to delay.
- We have no objections to the other changes proposed for this area but we recommend that consideration should be given to points 1 to 3 of our response to the earlier consultation on this part of the route (page 5 of our submission) as these points are not commented on.

Haymarket Terrace area

- We are content with the proposed changes and look forward to seeing the results of the separate design project to mitigate the significant problems for cyclists that have resulted from the current arrangements for crossing the tram tracks outside of Haymarket station. Although this is not strictly speaking part of the new, proposed cycle route it would be anomalous to construct the new route without also resolving this continuing problem.
- We recommend that consideration be given to points 2 and 3 of our response to the earlier consultation in this area (pages 5 and 6 of our submission) as these were intended as constructive proposals to reduce the risk of cars queuing across the cycle lane at Coates Gardens and to assist cyclists approaching from Dalry Rd by blocking motor traffic from entering Grosvenor Street from Haymarket Terrace.

Other areas

We understand that changes for these areas are not yet finalised and that there will be separate consultation on any significant changes. Our views on these areas are set out in detail in our earlier submission to the consultation, but we would like to offer the following points in response to the latest comments on these areas.

- We welcome the clarification of the arrangements for using Bishop's Walk for the cycle route.
- Our point about the need to continue the 1 way cycle lanes from Melville Terrace into Manor Place (para 2 on the Palmerston Place section – page 6 of our submission)
- We have concerns about the “end on” car parking now proposed for Walker St as we believe that this is a potential hazard for cyclists.
- We are grateful for clarification of the crossing arrangements to and from Randolph Place, for the decision to improve the quality of the surface in Randolph Place itself and for more detail on the proposals for Charlotte Square. However, we did set out the case for more general improvements to be made to Randolph Place with the restriction of parking to residents and a prohibition of end on parking (see para 2 on the Melville St to Charlotte Sq area – page 7 of our submission).
- We are very concerned about the negative comments made in connection with the proposals for South St David Street and Princes Street. In particular, there is a major north-south cycle flow along the Bridges from south Edinburgh: good connections to Leith Street and to George Street are vital to assist these people and to maximise the potential of the entire East-West route. We ask therefore that work to resolve these difficulties and find a suitable design solution is conducted at an early date.
- Similarly we are very concerned about the comments made in relation to the crossing of Elder St. A 2 stage crossing for cyclists will never work in practice and again we trust that a more satisfactory solution is identified.

Cycle parking

Paragraph 9 on page 3 of our earlier submission mentioned the need for cycle parking facilities to be installed along the route. This is not mentioned in the paper but we trust that the need for this has not been forgotten.

Dave du Feu

SPOKES

For any further information or follow up, please contact:

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Attached - Spokes submission to the January 2016 consultation, which is referred to at several points in these comments.