

SUMMARY NOTE by Spokes

Union Canal Towpath - Edinburgh

Proposal for Improvements & Supplementary Cycle Routes

Meeting with City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), Sustrans and Scottish Canals (SC) to discuss Improvements along Union Canal Towpath & supplementary cycle routes

Date: 9th May 2014

Location: CEC, Waverley Court

Present: Chris Brace (CEC), Chris Torrance (CEC), Craig Wood (CEC), Richard Millar (SC), Alasdair Smart (SC), Paul Downie (Sustrans), Marion Preez (Spokes), Liane Bauer (Spokes)

Minutes of the meeting to be provided by Alasdair Smart. This however is a summary of the meeting to discuss the document with proposals for improvements along the canal, which have been developed by Marion Preez (UrbanPioneers) for Spokes.

The document was presented and each section and proposal was discussed as we went through it:

Access

Bridge between Viewforth & Yeaman Place: The Canal Strategy by CEC mentions a foot / cycle bridge between Viewforth and Yeaman Place to improve access and alleviate pressure particularly once new school is opened. CEC aware of issues and it's been on their list for awhile. Monies are available and require to be spend, but have been ringfenced for a new bridge. Additional money to improve surrounding would have to be raised.

Viewforth access: Will be dealt within proposals by developers but CEC is aware that ramps with sufficient width to accommodate high number of users need to be installed.

Yeaman Place access: CEC is trying to find an access through adjacent site and has started a dialogue with owner(s).

Allan Park: A ramp would be noncompliant - CEC also in discussion with Scottish Waters regarding path widening towards Colinton Road.

Scottish Canals will sort draining issue at bottom of ramp.

Slateford Road: No issue with installing wheelie ramp. CEC/SC to look into this.

Surfacing

Along Canal Basin: Significant part of the surfacing around the basin is privately owned and therefore potential barrier to improve the surface. Consent from Historic Scotland is required to any changes to surface. HS haven't been very cooperative in accepting other surfacing so far. Flat cobbles were mentioned and both SC and CEC were open minded about this. All subject to costs and HS consent. In general CEC is aware of the issues with cobbles and is looking into improvements when adjacent new development is taking place.

Gilmore Place: CEC will investigate improvements along canal basin to Gilmore Place as part of new cycle link to meadows

As for suggested separate / segregated cycle path at the stretch between Gilmore Park and past Viewforth: this was not seen as appropriate as there was the feeling that this might encourage cyclists to speed up and also cause confusion as this would be the only segregated section.

Supplementary routes:

In general both routes were seen as important to implements as they cater for different users. It was agreed to prioritise Route B (Fountainbridge, Dundee Street, Slateford Rd, Lanark Rd) as this route would take more pressure of the towpath. Anticipated timescale 2-3 years - could be possibly pushed as ATAP

First improvements along Fountainbridge could be seen March '15 subject to timescale and collaboration with the new development taking place there. Most likely segregated cycle path along this section but it won't be segregated all the way. We didn't go into more detail about what kind of cycle path etc.

It was agreed to have further meetings to discuss progress and more details as and when required, but no date has been set yet.