

Notes for Spokes deputation at Committee 16.5.16

East of Milburn Tower

1. Thanks for the opportunity to talk to the committee.
2. Spokes sees this development as especially important because its one of the first of a number of major housing developments in West Edinburgh. It has the potential to set expectations and we
3. Spokes is not interested in cycling for its own sake but sees it is a sustainable and safe mode of transport. It is more space efficient than car use, we get healthy exercise doing it, we don't cause air pollution and accident statistics are almost non-existent relative to motor transport.
4. In terms of support for sustainable travel we see little more than window dressing in the the East of Milburn Tower proposals. The development itself has features that look nice and support sustainable and active travel within the development but the travel outwith it does not seem sustainable at all.
 - Minimal investment in any infrastructure to support active travel (little underpass development, no bridges)
 - destruction of a good cycling resource on Gogar Station Road to be replaced by a convoluted route
 - without convenient and attractive alternatives, new residents will find the easy choice is not walking cycling or public transport but the car.
 - That is why Spokes continues to oppose this development as currently planned. We are very pleased to be in strong agreement with the transport analysis done by the Council officials in the report under your consideration today.
5. Councillors will be aware of national and local targets for increasing cycling
 - Nationally 10% of all trips supposed to be by bike by 2020
 - Locally the Council's targets are 15% of all trips to work in the city by 2020 and 10% of all trips.
6. We have these targets partly because of all the good things cycling can bring – improved health, reduced congestion and less pollution, but also because it makes such good sense for a growing city.
7. If city households are to increase in number by 39% in 25 years as national planning assumptions suggest, and if scope to increase road capacity is very limited, as it is in the city, we cannot have more cars. More cycling and less car use is essential if we want to have a pleasant and growing city.
8. The Council is doing a good job of moving towards its targets because it is investing in cycling. City travel to work mode share measured in the 2011 census was 4.3% nearly three times the Scottish average of 1.5%. **The 2014 Scottish household survey put the figure at over 8% (actual figure was 11.8% +/- 4%; see Spokes Bulletin 123).**
9. It is investment that drives higher levels of cycling. Netherlands, Denmark and Germany have high cycling rates because they spend money making cycling a safe and convenient choice not because they are flat or because they have better

weather conditions. [FACT on Investment levels in Copenhagen versus Edinburgh??]

10. The Council however can only do so much and given the poor state of public finances, developers should surely plan to meet Council mode share targets in terms of travel to and from their developments. They should provide infrastructure to make sustainable travel the safe and easy choice.
11. East of Milburn Tower's development proposals needs to enhance not diminish existing infrastructure.
 - Gogar Station Road should be at least as good as it is now for cyclists
 - walkers and cyclists need to get over the A8 to get to the Tram Stop or the new rail station.
 - The site of 1500 homes needs a bus service integrated into the city's network.
12. The proposals appear to be offering the very minimum and we have a real worry that if accepted would be very profitable for the developer but not for the city who would have to cope with the mess of unsustainable motor travel and poor connectivity the current plans will deliver.
13. We hope you will heed the advice of your officials and recommend that the Council refuses permission for this development as currently proposed.