

TRAMLINE EXTENSION, YORK PLACE TO LEITH & NEWHAVEN

21.3.18

This is a circular to Spokes members in areas nearest the Council's proposed tramline extension.

The consultation is now live and runs from 19 March to 29 April. As you probably know, although Spokes supports the principle of the tram, we are extremely unhappy about the proposals for Leith Walk below Pilrig.

We have not yet looked at the plans beyond Foot of the Walk, so unfortunately we cannot yet pass on any ideas, comments or suggestions on those areas (but it would be very useful to hear your thoughts if you have studied this).

However we are emailing urgently because the first of 4 public staffed drop-ins is this Thursday, 22 March. It is very important for members to go along to the exhibitions, speak to the officers, and leave comments - as well as completing the online survey.

The drop-ins are...

- Thursday 22 March: Leith Theatre, 28 Ferry Road, 11am - 6pm
- Tuesday 3 April: McDonald Road Library, 10am - 4pm
- Thursday 12 April: Leith Community Education Centre, 12A Newkirkgate, 3pm - 9pm
- Saturday 21 April: Ocean Terminal, 12 noon - 5pm.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Attend the exhibitions, speak to officers, leave written comments.
- Complete the online survey.
- Send Spokes your views and any issues you think we should be aware of, particularly for the areas beyond Foot of the Walk.
- If you feel strongly, speak to your councillors - find them at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/councillors.
- If you have the time and interest, our Planning Group would welcome one or two additional people, preferably who are familiar working with documents, to assist in preparing our official response. It is a major task, and should be made easier if the work is shared within a small group of concerned people.

FIND OUT MORE

- **The Consultation web page** is... consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/tramstonewhaven/
- **The official 'Trams to Newhaven' website** is... www.edinburgh.gov.uk/tramstonewhaven/
- **The report of our public meeting** about the tramline extension... www.spokes.org.uk/2018/03/west-east-cycleroute-to-end-at-pilrig-instead-of-leith-spokesmtg/
- **The Sustrans initial response.** We are delighted that Sustrans is making a very strong statement, which very much ties in with our own views as regards Leith Walk below Pilrig. www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Sustrans-initial-response.pdf
- **Our page of tramline-extension documents**... www.spokes.org.uk/documents/public-transport/tramline-extension-to-leith-newhaven/

LEITH WALK BELOW PILRIG

- A few years ago, with Sustrans 50/50 funding, this stretch was hugely improved, with wider footways, wide cycle lanes (though we wanted segregated) and only 2 traffic lanes (one each direction). It is now a far nicer place, much easier to cross the road, visit local shops, etc. It was expected that if the tram was built the layout would be largely unchanged, though the cycle lanes would probably become segregated (inside the parked cars) - as stated in the above Sustrans submission.
- Unfortunately the plans being consulted on now are based on increasing to 4 traffic lanes instead of 2, and there is also a central reservation between the tramlines. Thus walking and cycling are badly squeezed for the benefit of traffic. The cycle lanes will remain on-road and, astonishingly, will have parking and loading bays painted across them!
- Under the plans, the **inner lane** will be used *in peak hours* for bus and tram and *offpeak* for all traffic. The **outer lane** will be used *in peak hours* for general traffic (no loading or parking) and *offpeak* for parking and loading. So *offpeak* people will have to cycle round parked cars and lorries, right next to the tramlines - a certain recipe for crashes, especially if vehicles inadvertently move out at the wrong moment. Effectively this means that the Council's flagship West-East segregated cycleroute will end at Pilrig instead of at Leith, and even the most experienced cyclists will be at risk of tramline crashes below Pilrig.
- We support the Sustrans position that only the two existing traffic lanes should be provided. If necessary, cars could be banned during the peak period, to give tram and bus priority. After all, cars were banned totally in Shandwick Place in the first tram project. And the bottom section of Leith Walk is to be closed northbound for *1.5 years* during construction, so drivers will have learned a change of route or mode - does it really make sense to allow them back at the expense of walking, cycling and a people-friendly environment?
- Finally, the central reservation could be removed in this section of Leith Walk. The official argument that central poles have already been purchased is a pretty minor cost compared to the permanent impact on pedestrian and cycling conditions and the overall project cost. Poles could be installed on build-outs between car bays, or on the footway edge and/or cables could be hung from buildings.
- One of our members [tweeted](#) the picture below of a Dutch street, showing a shopping street with very similar width to this section of Leith Walk, and the sort of solution possible (though ideally with greenery replacing a few parking bays!).

