

Spokes Public Meeting 15.3.18

Cycling & the Tramline Extension

www.spokes.org.uk/2018/03/west-east-cycleroute-to-end-at-pilrig-instead-of-leith-spokesmtg/

Notes from the QA session

This is based on notes taken by one listener and is not by any means a complete record. The qns below are numbered solely for reference here – the numbers do not refer to numbers in the QA session.

RL = Rob Leech, Trams extension Project Director

LM = Cllr Lesley Macinnes, Convener of the Transport Cttee, Edinburgh Council

ML = Martyn Lings, Senior Active Travel Officer, Edinburgh Council

Q1: What advice has been taken from Europe on tram/cycle integration, and in particular the [report](#) for Spokes and TIE by Dutch transport consultant Hans van der Stok?

RL – not yet looked at for the tramline extension

ML – the Dutch [CROW](#) manual has been used in developing the amelioration ideas now being [consulted on](#) for the existing tramline

Q2: Concern about proposals for lower Leith Walk – a woman who used to cycle in London but now will not cycle in Princes St, and won't be able to cycle in LW below Pilrig.

RL – Unfortunately due to space constraints and the needs of local businesses cycle provision below Pilrig will be onstreet lanes with offpeak parking and loading within them

Q3: Why not remove the central reservation, to give more width?

RL – The poles and equipment for a central reservation have already been purchased. Also to hang wires from adjacent buildings would probably need to go back to Parliament for approval (which would be a very lengthy process). [presumably as the buildings fall outwith the corridor approved in the tram act].

Q4: Cycling and walking should have priority over motor traffic in Leith Walk, so if there is too little space there should not be 4 lanes devoted to motor traffic at the expense of walking & cycling.

LM – Council is totally committed to being greenest Council in northern Europe, but has to listen to local business and seek a balance between competing demands for space.

Q5: Make Leith Walk traffic-free at peak hours

RL – this is the sort of suggestion they welcome in the consultation and it can be considered.

Q6: Council should see the tramline extension in context of the City Centre Transformation – so could cut traffic in Leith Walk and provide segregated cycle lane.

[full answer not noted]

LM – As part of its forthcoming Low Emission Zone (LEZ) the Council is considering creation of delivery consolidation hubs outside the city centre, with final delivery to premises by small vans and possible electric cargo bikes.

Q7: Why does the consultation only put forward one option?

RL – The tram team thought this the best initial option in terms of balancing all needs, but is very open to revising it if the consultation comes up with suitable alternatives.

Q8: Leith Walk will be closed for 18 months. This could be used to assess how well a continuing traffic ban, or a variant on that, would work.

RL – not feasible as the contract will be signed at the outset and any changes to it would be very costly and would disrupt the timetable – this had been a major problem in the original tram project.

Q9: How safe for cycling will be the single uphill traffic lane in the 18-month construction period?

RL – Not sure if it will permit cycling. Provision for cycling during construction still to be properly considered. Some of the adjacent cobbled streets may be given a temporary non-cobbled surface.

Q10. Existing tramlines have been badly laid and surface is deteriorating. Has tram team spoken to other tram installations in UK and Europe?

RL – Team is in constant touch with other tram systems in UK.

Q11: Research has shown that a road with tramline bike crashes suddenly becomes safe for cycling when motor traffic is banned as people are not forced into tramlines and are able to position themselves safely for turning across the lines.

ML – fully agrees that streets are safer for cycling if no motor traffic.

Closing statements

All speakers, and the Chair, urged everyone to participate in the consultations on [tramline extension](#) and on [phase 3 safety measures](#) for the existing tramlines.