

COVID-19 Walking and Cycling Emergency Response Measures: Proposed segregated cycleways on Gilmerton Road

Response from Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign, July 2020

This response considers the proposals shared by the Spaces for People Team on 17th July 2020

We strongly support the proposal to install temporary protected cycle lanes on Gilmerton Road. Gilmerton Road is an important route for cyclists heading into the city centre not just from The Inch, Moredun and Gilmerton, but also from large sections of Midlothian.

General comments

Pinch points: We are pleased to see cycle lanes which get wider at pinch points such as traffic islands. These will be some of the first instances of such a layout in Edinburgh, and we therefore hope that appropriate evaluation and monitoring of their effectiveness is carried out, so that they can be used more widely if successful.

Junctions with side roads: We believe that red screed should be applied at all places where the cycle lane crosses a side road.

Pedestrian crossings: The zig-zag markings at pedestrian crossings should contain a “cycle lane” - as has been done in the recent Spaces for People scheme on Old Dalkeith Road.

Bus stops and cycle lanes: Although we believe that floating bus stops are the safest way of dealing with conflict at bus stops with adjacent cycleways, we recognise that their implementation will not always be feasible in Spaces for People projects. However, it is important that monitoring and evaluation of the bus stop boarders on Gilmerton Road also takes place, and that they are modified if found to be unsatisfactory. Monitoring must also consider cyclists who choose to enter the carriageway in order to pass buses at bus stops.

The ramps at bus stops should not be too steep or narrow, as this will cause problems for people using non-standard cycles such as recumbent bikes or handcycles.

Cyclist stop lines: In a number of places, stop lines are put in the cycleway. We consider these to be unnecessary and counterproductive, as they will lead to increased conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

Liberton Road: Whilst we are pleased to see provisions for cyclists on Gilmerton Road and the Craigmillar Park/Minto Street corridor, the lack of similar proposals for the connecting section of Liberton Road is disappointing. The following suggestions should be considered:

- Repainting the southbound ASL box at the Liberton Road/Gilmerton Road.
- Resurfacing the Liberton Road/Gilmerton Road junction.
- A cycle lane, similar to those proposed at the Craigmillar Park/Liberton Road junction, could be painted through the Liberton Road/Gilmerton Road junction, in order to emphasise to drivers that cyclists may be going straight on from the left hand lane at this junction. Such a lane would need careful positioning, in order to discourage drivers from overtaking cyclists in the junction.
- Shortening the bus lane, and relocating the bus lane camera accordingly. At present, many drivers pulling into the left hand lane at the end of the bus lane cut up cyclists who are already in the left hand lane. A shorter bus lane may reduce the prevalence of this.
- The radii of the junction could be tightened, in order to force drivers to slow down more before turning left.

Detailed comments

Northbound: There is a zebra marking just past Walter Scott Avenue. It is not completely obvious why it is here, as there is no pedestrian crossing at this location, and so we want to check that this wasn't a mistake.

A 1.3m cycle lane width at Double Hedges Road is far too narrow, especially given the proximity to the traffic island. A 3m wide cycle lane, as at other pinch points in the proposals, would be more appropriate.

Since the central hatchings will be removed outside Liberton PS, there is more than enough room to have cycle lanes which are 2m wide, or even wider. The general traffic lanes are proposed to be 4m wide, and these should be narrowed in order to help reduce vehicle speeds outside a primary school.

Southbound: At the traffic island just past Glenallan Drive, the carriageway is 5.25m wide (including the cycle lane). We think that is probably too narrow for a 1.8m cycle lane, and that close passes will therefore continue at this location. The cycle lane should widen to 3m here, as at other pinch points in the proposals.