

Spaces For People

Town Centres consultation – Morningside Road

Response from Spokes South Edinburgh

10 July 2020

We are a local group of Spokes, covering the South Edinburgh area. We support the Spokes combined town centres submission, and our submission goes into detail on Morningside.

We welcome this first Phase (of 2) to create space for pedestrians through Morningside where pavements vary from reasonably spacious (e.g. at Maxwell Street) to ridiculously narrow (on the pavement opposite Waitrose and others). Use of pavements by traders including Waitrose should be discouraged to keep pavement spaces as clear as possible. We recognise that while individual traders have done much to make their premises safe, it is only when the connecting pavements and the overall environment is safer that people will be happy to return to multi shop shopping.

CYCLING PROVISION

We are very disappointed that cycling will only be made safer once Phase 2 starts in late Summer which may mean changes won't be ready until the Autumn. We asked at the earlier meeting that phase 1 should make improvements for cyclists AND at the very least should not make cycling more dangerous. On balance we feel that there are some improvements heading North but more danger heading South where narrowing road-space means cyclists will have to remain in the line of traffic rather than finding ways round the traffic. The Southbound uphill section from Holy Corner to Churchill should also be segregated. Also uphill (northbound) should be segregated wherever possible, for safety and to avoid the intimidation of slow cyclists by traffic behind. Overall, new cyclists will not be encouraged and existing ones will feel little benefit.

On your map, the blue line delimiting the 'line for cycle lane' is confusing. It is in most cases very close to the new pavement edge - too close to be a safe haven to cycle in. Furthermore, introducing a segregated cycle lane in phase 2 would appear to entail a partial re-narrowing of the extended pedestrian width. Otherwise, looking at the remaining road space once the new pavements are marked out, it is difficult to see how there will be enough space for segregated cycling.

If the Council is unwilling to provide segregation at this stage, it risks increasing danger and deterrence for cycling on Morningside Road. We therefore would ask for reassurance that Phase 2 will be in the near future, not kicked into the long grass, and will include segregation.

OTHER ASPECTS

We are disappointed that no measures have been included to reduce traffic. Furthermore, on this busy shopping street, if traffic is not to be reduced, consideration should be given to a 15mph speed limit.

We are encouraged to see that most roadside parking will be removed and that this change will allow the traders to see whether this has a positive or negative impact. (We could do with some way to objectively measure what impact the removal of parking - a street survey might be useful).

We strongly recommend that delivery to customers by cargo-bike becomes a normal thing for all shops along the street to support, and we ask for a bike/cargo-bike hub to be included by phase 2. This will encourage the message to 'leave the car at home' to be supported by the shops.

The addition of around 1.5 meters to pavements is very welcome. It is not clear what will define the new edge of the pavement. In the short term assuming the level remains at street level rather than road level measures should be taken to stop drivers parking anyway. This could be by including double yellow lines or perhaps some other structures. Such as planters or park-lets would serve the same purpose. The segregated uphill cycle lane which we request would also prevent such rogue parking.

Attention should be paid to joining up the routes by which cyclists arrive into Morningside in particular linking the concurrent A702 segregation, but also to make connections into Morningside from side roads safe.

SECTION BY SECTION DETAILS

Northbound (uphill) from Morningside station to Churchill

- The busy Morningside station junction is unsuitable for less confident cyclists. A redesign of the junction should be part of Phase 2 and should tie in with the segregation of A702 which is running concurrently.
- The bus stop at Morningside Station (Maxwell St) projects out already but not on plan. How does the cycle lane allow buses to pull in and cycles pass? At the moment it is possible to pull out to cycle around a stopped bus as the road is wide enough there. This would be a good floating bus stop location for Phase 2.
- The traffic island at the corner of Maxwell St could benefit from a bicycle lane symbol / marking as often this is a close pass point.
- When travelling towards Grange / Marchmont / Meadows the right turn into Canaan Ln is often awkward with cars accelerating uphill behind. Often they undertake a cyclist in the empty parking bays. How do novice cyclists cross the traffic lanes and feel safe when turning right?

- Between M&S and the Merlin more bike space provision could be added at the Library and a more spacious pavement here means segregated uphill cycle provision should be implemented
- Is there vehicle tracking for Waitrose articulated lorries (LGV? / HGV?) turning right to ensure it doesn't overlap with pedestrian / cycle space?
- Could the loading bays on the steepest section north of Waitrose be repositioned to the ends of Newbattle Tr & Morningside Pl? Avoiding any conflict and also widening the pavements? This parking space width could then be shared between pedestrians and cyclists (as per Sustrans design guide).

Southbound from Churchill to Morningside station:

- This section is downhill but the extra pavement width means there is no space for cyclists to escape the line of traffic for much of the way through this very congested section. It is not clear what solution there is in Phase 1.
- Is there vehicle tracking for Waitrose articulated lorries (LGV? / HGV?) turning left from Falcon Rd W (Cafe Nero) to ensure it doesn't overlap with pedestrian spaces?
- Cars & bikes turning right into Morningside Park (M&S) are being squeezed with the widened pavements. This may create conflict with cars going downhill as at busy times currently cars can undertake cars / bikes using the loading / parking bays. Can a haven of some kind be provided
- Can hospital / rat-running traffic be redirected / discouraged from approaching this way? There are other routes into the hospital
- There is no cycle provision between Canaan Lane and Morningside Station and it is single yellow with restricted loading and parking times. A segregated bike lane would be useful here to the traffic lights.
- The traffic island at the corner of Maxwell St could benefit from a bicycle lane symbol / marking as often this is a close pass point.
- The final section from Hermitage Terrace to Morningside station is marked for an increased pavement (which we agree is necessary) but makes this section worse, narrowing the traffic in a very congested area which suddenly widens out to multiple lanes at the junction. Cyclist need a safe passage to the ASLs at the Junction
- There are no loading bays opposite the Morningside Station bus stop but plan says these are retained? Is this correct?

Northbound from Churchill to HolyCorner :

- Needs double yellow just before bus shelter
- Loading bay missing from plan
- How does a cyclist get from cycle lane to go straight ahead or right at the HolyCorner Junction. Like the junction at Morningside station this junction needs to be made safer for cyclists being wide and busy. This would be an obvious place to divert traffic away from. Morningside.

Northbound from Churchill to HolyCorner:

- Parking at Eric Liddell centre appears to be left in (disabled parking ? but if this is an oversight this section would benefit from a cycle lane being uphill and just ahead of a narrowing road. From a standing start a cyclist can find it difficult to hold the lane, or re-enter traffic to get to the right part of the ASL depending on whether turning or going straight ahead.

GENERAL NOTES FOR PHASE 2

- Junctions at Morningside Station and HolyCorner seem to be appropriate places where traffic could be re-routed around Morningside. Consideration should be given to a temporary bus gate at these points.
- There is a need to Study the traffic around Morningside Park. . In particular this seems to come from vehicles using REH as a rat-run and vehicles running between Astlie Aynsley and REH. Re-routing some of this traffic would make Morningside Park and Cannan Lane good entry points for cyclists with connections to Quiet Routes on the East side and Myreside / Roseburn etc on the west side. This section has had many near accidents for pedestrians and cyclists. Entry from Morningside rd from Morningside Place could be via the parking place in front of M&S
- Raised Tables - The existing raised tables / continuous footway marking (red asphalt) so could these surfaces be renewed (as part of these works) as many are in a poor state of repair. Also applies to the side roads from the Morningside Clock up to Braidburn Valley Park.