

SPOKES *The Lothian Cycle Campaign*

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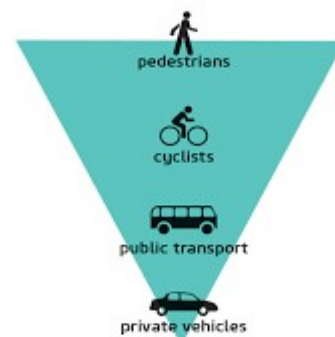
Spokes Response to the Spaces for People “Town Centres” Consultation. July 2020

Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign, welcomes the opportunity to comment on these *Spaces for People* interventions, at:

- Corstorphine, St John's Road
- Great Junction Street
- Gorgie Road & Dalry Road
- Morningside Road
- Portobello High Street
- Stockbridge

Spokes local groups for Portobello and South Edinburgh will also submit responses with respect to Portobello High Street and Morningside Road.

In earlier SfP responses, *Spokes* has welcomed the general principles of this important project. We are, however, disappointed with these schemes because, whilst they rightly extend footway space for pedestrians, **full through-traffic capacity has been maintained, generally resulting in little enhanced protection for cycling.**



Regrettably, it is our view that none of these schemes will encourage new people to start to travel to work or education by bicycle, nor will they assist families to safely cycle in their local Town Centres.

1. Such cycling protection as is included, can be characterised as being the left-over space between the extended footways and the traffic lanes and **has no continuity or segregated protection.**

For instance:

on Morningside Road: *Footway Widened to Width of Parking Bays. Line for Cycle Lane Outside Loading Bay Remains*

that's such a narrow gap, so the majority of cycling will have to be in the main running lanes.

- on Dalry Road: *Widen F/way by 1.5m Potential Room for Cycleway*

is more encouraging, but **sits in isolation.**

2. Even where there are generously wide traffic running lanes, such as on St John's Road, Corstorphine: *4.75m width running lane in either direction to provide additional space for cyclists on the carriageway.*

the opportunity has not been taken to incorporate segregated cycle lanes.

3. At the same time, no opportunity has been taken to introduce measures to reduce the volume or speed of through traffic; resulting in a distortion of the accepted transport hierarchy, with cycling being squeezed in the middle. People on bikes will be in a single and often narrowed all-traffic lane, thus suffering the fear of traffic behind which is keen to overtake but unable to do so safely. In addition to deterring existing and potential cycle use, and combined with much wider footways, this is likely to increase the prevalence of footway cycling.

4. This protection of through traffic capacity does nothing to benefit the economies of these Town Centres and it could in some cases be reduced by the use of bus gates. For instance, Portobello High Street is by-passed completely by Harry Lauder Road; Gorgie/Dalry is already by passed by the West Approach Road.

5. Images are now regularly being seen from cities across the UK where parts of the carriageway on local High Streets have been repurposed for outdoor cafe seating and parklets. Regrettably, we see none of that in these proposals, although hopefully some are planned, especially close to pubs and cafes.

Recommendations

Spokes urges that urgent consideration be given in this phase, or certainly in the next phase, to:

1. The creating of segregated cycle lanes on the wider of these Town Centres, such as St John's Road with its 4.75m running lanes.
2. Where overall width is limited, the traffic hierarchy principle should kick-in and traffic space reduced, perhaps by the use of speed-calmed one-way streets, with cyclist exemption or bus-gates. Gorgie/Dalry is substantially in parallel with the West Approach Road, and our Portobello group would like it considered in the next stage for Portobello High Street. At least one such bus-gate should be tested-out in the present phase of proposals.
3. Given that these are important and busy shopping streets, and especially where segregated cycle lanes are not provided, the remaining all-traffic lanes should have 15mph speed limits¹.
5. Every opportunity should be taken to introduce additional cycle parking facilities.
6. While we agree with Council's policy to remove guardrail, it's important to be aware that some guardrail is used as cycle parking where facilities don't exist or are at capacity. Please ensure that alternative cycle parking is considered for locations where guardrail is removed. This not only supports access for cyclists, but also improves conditions for pedestrians, by avoiding bikes being left in awkward positions on the footway.

Ewan Jeffrey, for Spokes Planning Group

9 July 2020

1 The City of London transport strategy is planning a 15mph limit across the entire Square Mile, and as part of their Covid-19 measures will introduce 15mph as an advisory measure.

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Services-Environment/covid-19-city-streets-explaining-the-changes.pdf>