



The Lothian Cycle Campaign

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COVID-19 Cycling and Walking Emergency Response Measures - Proposed footway widening and pedestrian improvements, Corstorphine High St, Featherhall Avenue, Kirk Loan and Dovecot Road

Response from Spokes, 12th February 2021

Spokes submits the following response to the above Spaces for People proposal. We appreciate that this is primarily an intervention to improve pedestrian provision for social distancing, but note that there are some elements that will affect cycling provision and accessibility.

We have broken down the intervention into constituent parts in order to clearly feedback on the proposal.

- *Introduction of footway widening along Corstorphine High Street, particularly along key areas around the primary school entrance, in readiness for the staggered re-opening of the school. Space for loading for businesses and blue badge parking is retained.*

We understand the benefit that this footway widening has for pedestrians, especially around Corstorphine Primary School and access to St Margaret's Park and other local amenities. However, we would like to note that this narrows the carriageway which predominantly has no provision for cycling. This may deter less confident cyclists from choosing this route, due to less space available on the road. We note that the narrower carriageway could potentially help to slow vehicle speeds, thus making the road feel a bit safer. So this is a mixed bag for cycling provision.

This could be improved for cycling by re-evaluating the scheme and including temporary cycle lanes along the full stretch of the High Street, ideally protected. We appreciate this may be difficult due to space constraints.



- *To aid with footway widening and create a safer space for people pedestrians, traffic calming build outs are also included along the High Street.*

These build-outs could help to slow speeds along the High Street, which is a known blackspot for speeding and has endured a range of collisions and serious incidents over the last few years.

The build outs on the High Street create a pinch point and potential danger for cycles, whilst less confident cyclists might find this intimidating and be put off. To address this we suggest the following modifications.

Make both build outs completely on the left hand side of the road and within them incorporate a bicycle by-pass. This has benefits

- less confident cyclists do not need to move out to the other side of the road
- cyclists can keep going even when oncoming vehicles have priority because they are keeping to the left and not in conflict

On the down side by-passes can be omitted from the road cleaning regime and over time can become strewn with debris, so if this were to be taken forward the bypasses would need to be swept to keep them attractive and safe.

- *On Featherhall Avenue, parking restrictions have been introduced to deter pavement parking and thereby provide safer more accessible pavements for physical distancing when walking.*

This is good news. This is a common route for cyclists travelling north/south and it's improved with the parking prohibition. This stretch is a dangerous pinch point and blind spot; clearer sightlines and more space will be an improvement for people cycling.

- *At all side roads along the High Street, including Kirk Loan, corner radii have been tightened so that there is more space for pedestrians.*

This should help to slow vehicles down at the tightened junctions and ensure that drivers are more mindful of their maneuvers. Hopefully this will provide minor improvements for people cycling, as junctions are dangerous spots for cyclists. Drivers will be less likely to swing out of junctions at speed with these changes. The Dovecot Road junction is especially welcomed, as this is a designated Quiet Route.

- *Cycleways have been introduced at the west end of the High Street and Ladywell Road to provide safe space for cycling, these will tie into further cycleways along Ladywell Road that are due to be brought forward under notification in a few weeks' time through the SfP Meadow Place Road scheme.*

While we welcome consideration for the provision of cycles at the junctions of Ladywell Avenue and Featherhall Avenue, it is very piecemeal and looks to be painted cycle lanes only from the plans. We understand that this temporary lane is to join with protected cycleways further to the west along Ladywell Road, towards Meadow Place Road. This is an improvement, but only really benefits cycle journeys that exit/enter Ladywell Road at Ladywell Avenue and Featherhall Avenue.

We note that extra-wide cycle lanes are provided at the central island pinch point, to reduce the chances of drivers attempting to close-pass at or just before the island. For maximum effect at these danger points, the lanes need to have coloured surfacing.

We know that the road surface at this section of road is very poor. If temporary painted cycle lanes are to be provided, we would expect the road surface to be improved significantly due to potholes, drains and other defects making it dangerous to cycle.

The south side of the cycleway looks very narrow heading westwards after the Ladywell Avenue junction. Is there any scope to improve this?

There is no additional cycle provision further along the High Street, which we have already mentioned, meaning east/west journeys will be of two halves.

- *On Dovecot Road, at the junction with Ladywell Avenue and at the entrance to St Margaret's Park, footways have been widened to help create safer spaces for pedestrians.*

Cyclists use St Margaret's Park to avoid Saughton Road North (a busy road) and Ladywell Avenue (a rat run) - will these footway build outs be permeable for cycles? We would like to see dropped kerbs here or some kind of access that means cyclists do not have to dismount to enter the park from the south.

- *Bus stops have been retained.*

This is not a regression and is unlikely to impede cyclist movement. Should the scheme become permanent at a later date, bus stop bypasses should be installed if feasible, using the designs which we understand the council is developing under the Street Design Guidance.