

West Edinburgh Link TRO and RSO

Response from Spokes, 24.2.21

Spokes is pleased to see improvements to the projected West Edinburgh Link (WEL) at some of the places that we criticised in earlier consultation rounds:

- Sending the route past East Craigs Primary School instead of Bughtlin Market
- A single-stage crossing of the A8 at Dechmont Road
- Sending Quiet Route 9 to the north of the David Lloyd Centre, instead of the south where the path can flood
- Official recognition of the short cut through the Clocktower Business Park
- Removal of the slip road from Calder Road into Sighthill Industrial Estate
- Segregated, rather than shared, paths beside Westburn Avenue
- Narrowing of the high-speed slip road from Wester Hailes Road into Westside Plaza, and a signalled toucan crossing of it

Also welcome are some links and other improvements not present in the earlier plans:

- Removal of the steps on the path between Craigmount School and North Gyle Loan
- Links from the Wester Hailes Road cycle path to Sighthill Loan (for Napier Campus), the canal towpath, Calder Gardens and Sighthill Drive
- Cycle lanes on Harvester's Way and an improved link to Clovenstone

We also support the principle of a Low Traffic Neighbourhood in East Craigs, for which Spokes will send a separate response.

But there are still some awkward points and queries about other parts of the route. Some of them were brought to our attention by Spaces for People (SfP) plans in the area, made after the last round of WEL consultation.

Drum Brae North

We would like to see the WEL extended north past the crossing of Queensferry Road onto the path to Barnton Grove, which is the obvious link to National Cycle Route 1 at Braepark Road. The original SfP project (which Spokes [responded to](#), but was amended later) made cyclists dismount and walk across Queensferry Road, not a good advertisement for a core cycle route. Instead, we would like to see the junction layout there altered to make it easier for cyclists to cross.

Craigmount Avenue North is a good route for cycles as it avoids the extremely steep hills on Drum Brae North. At the junction of Craigmount Avenue North and Drum Brae North, the WEL plan shows the right-turn lane in Drum Brae North as a cycle lane at cycle-lane width and (apparently) no right turn for motor vehicles; the SfP plan shows it as a car-width lane with right turn legal for all vehicles. Whichever it is, we would like a central island in Drum Brae North to the south of the junction to protect cyclists turning right into Craigmount Avenue North. We would also like a crossing of Drum Brae North at Craigmount Way to improve cycle access to the streets leading to Drumbrae School and the Community Hub.

Maybury Drive

We welcome the removal of the roundabout at the junction of Maybury Drive and North Bughtlin Road, but removing a lane in each direction on Maybury Drive south of it will cause problems for cyclists. We would like to see the removed lanes converted to cycle lanes, to allow safe cycling between the WEL and the western parts of Bughtlin. The cycle lanes should extend at least as far as Mearenside and Hayfield, and eventually to Maybury Road to link up with future plans for segregated cycle lanes there and with the new developments at West Craigs.

Links to the Gyle Centre

We are glad that there is a proposal for crossings of the Gyle Centre's service road, but we think they should both be parallel "tiger" crossings to encourage the Gyle Centre to extend the cycle links towards the centre. (Their recent plans for cycle routes were awful and rejected by the Council.)

Crossing South Gyle Broadway

The removal of the cycle lanes on the east side of the roundabout at the junction of South Gyle Broadway and Gogarloch Road leaves the toucan crossing of South Gyle Broadway without a cycle access on either side. There should be cycle links to it from South Gyle Road and South Gyle Park.

Junctions off South Gyle Crescent

We do not like the way the segregated cycle lanes veer away from the road at the approach to some junctions. These are the places where a cyclist has to look back to check that a vehicle is not about to turn into the side road and cross the cyclist's path. If the cycle lanes have to be moved away from the road at this point the kink should be further away from the junction, if there is room (and here there is room).

The same problem occurs at Bankhead Avenue, though we admit that there is not so much room. On the other hand, a similar kink in the path beside Wester Hailes Road at Sighthill Road has been made less severe, so that treatment ought to be possible at South Gyle Crescent, too.

South Gyle Access

Although the path parallel to South Gyle Access has been increased in width and made segregated instead of shared, it still leaves a pinch point under the tram bridge where it crosses Quiet Route 8, where cyclists and pedestrians wait to cross the constricted two-stage crossing of South Gyle Access. We would like to see improvements here, by making the crossing single-stage (as seems to be the case with the nearby crossing of Bankhead Drive), removing one of the five traffic lanes, or both. If a traffic lane can be removed from South Gyle Broadway between the Gyle Centre and Gogarloch Road it ought to be possible to remove one here, too.

Wester Hailes to Lanark Road

It is a pity that the Spaces for People plan for the southern end of Wester Hailes Road (improvements to Clovenstone Roundabout and segregated cycle lanes from there to Gillespie Crossroads) has not been incorporated into the WEL project. This could create a more direct safe cycling route for commuters between Gyle and Colinton, and improved links to the Baberton Mains estate.

Lanark Road to the Water of Leith

The layout at Lanark Road will create a pinch point for cyclists going along Lanark Road, particularly uphill. Several cycle commuters use it, especially during the wetter times of the year when the Water of Leith path can get muddy. The Spaces for People project now being installed on Lanark Road includes segregated cycle lanes, which we would like to be made permanent and incorporated into the WEL plans.

It's odd that the WEL ends at Dell Road, which has no connection to the Water of Leith path (National Cycle Route 75). The path along the river from Dell Road has lots of steps so it is unsuitable for cycling. The WEL ought to go along Lanark Road (using the above-mentioned segregated cycle lanes) to Spylaw Bank Road and Spylaw Avenue, then across Gillespie Road and down the path from there to join the Water of Leith path between West Mill and Woodhall Mill. The WEL route as shown could link to Colinton Village, but it includes a very steep and twisty hill, a push for most cyclists, at the east end of Spylaw Bank Road.

Legal orders

There seems to be a mistake in one of the RSO Orders, RSO/20/05, Part 2:

"Dechmont Road

All that part of the footway on both sides of Dechmont Road from the north kerb-line of Glasgow Road northward to a point 12.0 metres or thereby south-east of the south-east kerb-line of Maybury Drive and which has a width that varies from 11.5 metres or thereby to a width of 18.5 metres or thereby."

That doesn't make sense; Dechmont Road is nowhere near Maybury Drive.

Other points

Good signage is essential as it will be easy for someone not familiar with the area to find themselves lost, particularly in the residential areas without segregated cycle routes.

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