



The Lothian Cycle Campaign

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Leith Links Masterplan Consultation 2022

Response from Spokes - the Lothian Cycle Campaign, July 2022

This response considers the revised proposals shared via Consultation Hub on 9th June 2022

General comments

We welcome the recognition by City of Edinburgh Council that measures are needed to enhance Leith Links, due to the current design not meeting the current speed limit and travel hierarchy. However this scheme appears to be a tweaking of the status quo with minimal interventions that address our and others concerns in regards to rat running traffic and the dominance of motorised vehicles over active travelers in this area.

Although many of the new features are welcome. We are unconvinced it will enable more cycling to & from the park. Enabling more people to walk / wheel / cycle to the park may require filtering of streets like Links Gardens to prevent rat-running by through traffic. The surrounding streets will hopefully benefit from the modal filters proposed as part of the Leith LTN.

However given the current tram construction works these are yet to be implemented but we encourage City of Edinburgh Council to implement the wider Low Traffic Neighbourhood strategy alongside these works to be park.

We therefore support the general proposals to improve Leith Links put forward, and we urge the council to review our detailed comments carefully

Detailed comments:

The following notes are in response to the information provided on the consultation boards;

Quiet Route 10 Improvements:

Currently Leith Links provide the basis of Quiet Route 10 from Portobello to the east end of the North Edinburgh Path Network (NEPN) / Water of Leith Path (NCR 75 / Quiet Route 11) and is a popular commuter and leisure cycle route. We are aware that this popularity means there are some areas of conflict (e.g. outside of St Mary's RC Primary School) where barriers have been installed and reinforced grass have been added in mitigation.

Spokes acknowledges that this conflict is not desirable as we force historically pedestrian paths to for the basis of a now shared use path network. Spokes would encourage a redesign to minimise conflict & discomfort for disabled or non-standard cycle users of this pinch point. It must be a priority to provide safe walking and cycling, encouraging active travel to and from the school and other park path users.

Spokes would welcome improvements to cycling provision along Links Place to/from Queen Charlotte Street. The current cycle route on the southern side of Links Place poorly connects back onto the road for those headed west to Links Place. The creation of the '*Links Place Community Activity Park*' could be the catalyst to redesign Links Place adjacent. Removing and repositioning car parking on this street would have many benefits. However the new development could also induce demand for parking in the area if active travel options aren't provided for.

There are some similarities between Leith Links to The Meadows which over several decades has developed into a hub of safe cycle spaces in the area encouraging development of safe routes to / from it. Spokes would support this being the same for Leith Links too.

Existing Shared Path Capacity Upgrades:

Spokes would like to suggest a review of the existing shared path provision within the park. These should be reviewed in terms of the guidance contained within 'Cycling by Design 2021'. If the park is made more attractive the capacity of the existing paths may need to be increased. This is similar to the works along North Meadow Walk within the last decade.

For example there is a new entrance shown from the housing to the north beside the cricket club. However any awkward lines of sight need to be mitigated.

Leith Connections 'Phase 3' Proposals:

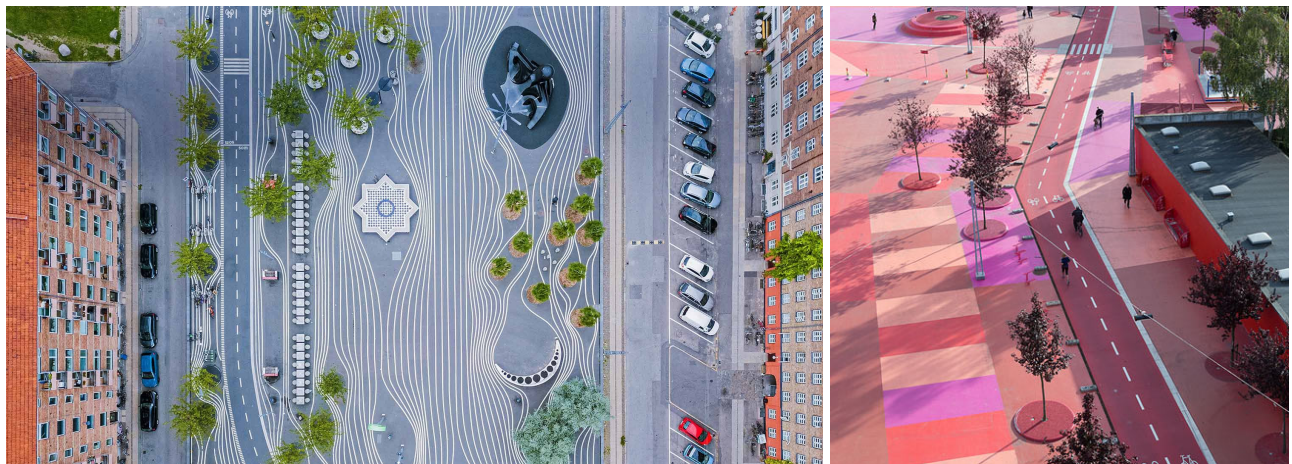
We are aware of the proposals for segregated cycle infrastructure along Salamander Street (see separate Spokes consultation response) which should provide an alternative safe and convenient route for many east / west cycle journeys, thus avoiding the need to traverse Leith Links onto the Restalrig Railway Path.

However, Leith Links and the adjacent roads will need to become safe routes connecting to/from Salamander Street. As Spokes cannot guarantee that this will be constructed in the near future, therefore Spokes would seek improvements to the existing paths and crossings in Leith Links as soon as possible.

Links Gardens:

Spokes is disappointed that there is no mention of the partial closure / modal filtering of Links Gardens between the 2 main areas of the park as was implemented during Spaces for People in the Covid 19 pandemic. The closure was removed to ease motor traffic congestion associated with tram works. As the tram works draw to a conclusion, Spokes would hope this modal filter was reinstated as an ETRO prior to the masterplan being implemented.

The space on Links Gardens could be 'greened' or repurposed as a new space for activities as well as an active travel link from Restalrig to Quiet Route 10. A good example of what is possible is Superkilen Park in Copenhagen Denmark. Where walking wheeling and cycle provision is maintained whilst also greening and encouraging play.



Superkilen Park source: <https://peapix.com/bing/30210> & <https://www.dezeen.com/2012/10/24/superkilen-park-by-big-topotek1-and-superflex/>

Another benefit of a modal filter on Links Gardens would be to reduce through traffic on this and surrounding roads, meaning on road cycling should be safer for active travel users. Thus helping achieve 20 minute neighbourhood goals and benefiting the wider Leith LTN proposals.

Link to Foot of Leith Walk & Great Junction Street:

Leith Links connects Quiet Route 10 to the Foot of Leith Walk and the cycleways being constructed there that link to the City Centre (CCWEL). Many of those who live in the housing to the north of Leith Links or Seafield will traverse the park to connect to the cycleways at the Foot of the Walk. The crossing of Duncan Place should be continuous with priority for pedestrians and cycles. This will encourage observance of road speeds and the sustainable transport hierarchy.

Link to Foot of Leith Walk Tram stop:

Leith Links also connects Quiet Route 10 to the Foot of Leith Walk tram stop being constructed on Constitution Street. Many of those who live in the housing to the north of Leith Links will traverse the park to connect to the tram and buses around the Foot of the Walk. Safe cycle parking / cycle hire docks should be provided in proximity of the tram stop, the housing and park. The crossing of Duncan Place should be continuous with priority for pedestrians and cycles. This will encourage

observance of road speeds and the sustainable transport hierarchy.

Additional general comments

Priority Crossings:

Spokes would like to see cycle and pedestrian priority implemented at all points where the existing (& new) paths cross roads where motor vehicle access is allowed. Duncan Place, Links Gardens & John's Place would all benefit from these measures.

Cycle Parking:

Spokes welcomes increased cycle parking across the park at both old and new features. Spokes would like to state these should generally be of 'Sheffield' type allowing for multiple types of cycle incl. non-standard cycles like cargo bikes. Edinburgh Street Design Guidance should be followed for this.

With eBikes becoming increasingly popular, charging facilities should be provided to assist those who need electricity. This could be beside a cafe or other refreshment point like a water fountain.

As noted earlier there needs to be parking provision for a future public Cycle Hire Scheme by Transport for Edinburgh. Ideally this would be on road and taking away car parking spaces not green space.

Surface Quality:

Spokes would like to note that recent surface installations in Edinburgh have been inconsistent, meaning the surface quality gives discomfort to some cyclists. Hand laid materials should be avoided and Edinburgh Street Design Guidance should be implemented with machine laid surfaces used as much as possible to provide consistent and comfortable surfaces.



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Vendor / Trader Points:

Spokes would like to suggest at points where vendors are allowed, these should have electric points to minimise airborne pollution and CO2 emissions in the green space. Also provisions for cycle based vendors and their needs should also be prioritised as is happening in The Meadows.

CycleHoop Cycle Lockers:

Spokes would welcome integration of on street cycle lockers to encourage those who live nearby to be able to store bikes securely. It may also be used by those who work in or around Leith Links to store their bikes securely.