

Consultation on North Berwick High Street – response from *cycleforth & Spokes*, August 2022

We welcome the opportunity to consult on improvements to North Berwick High Street to make the centre of the town a more welcoming space for shopping, walking and cycling.

Cycleforth is fully supportive of changes that create safer and more pleasant public places. In summary our key aims are:

- Reduce the volume of car traffic through the east end of High Street by implementing time restrictions and by signing cars away from that route.
- Reduce traffic speed with a 10mph limit along the whole length of the High Street.
- Resurface the east end of the street to indicate that pedestrians have priority and elsewhere provide pinched crossing-points at regular intervals.
- Increase the number of cycle parking opportunities.

Overall, taking into account the businesses along the east end of the High Street, our aim would be pedestrian priority throughout, looking to achieve the quality and feel of a pedestrianised area. Vehicle access for loading and pickup should be limited to reduced times of day around a core period of perhaps 10am to 4pm when only emergency vehicles should be permitted. Short-stay parking at the foot of Law Road gives suitably close parking for the majority of users. Time limited parking should be re-introduced at the Glebe to provide additional spaces through turnover.

Prioritising pedestrians would require a level paved surface across the width of the street to show that pedestrians had priority, and the gateway to the street should indicate this. To assist visually-impaired pedestrians during the time when vehicles are permitted, tactile road markings should be installed to delineate traffic routes. Cyclists should be allowed access at all times but would be expected to take care and recognise that pedestrians had priority. A 10mph speed limit at all times should be in force. Even 20mph is too fast for such a narrow street.

Priority for pedestrians should also be the main driver in any changes to the west end of the High Street. Build-outs from the existing pavements should be installed to encourage safer crossing points, and there is scope within this section for more cycle parking. A single car parking space provides parking for about four bikes. At present, there are currently limited cycle parking opportunities serving the High Street (Quality Street, Law Road and outside the Abbey Church) and at times these are already used to full capacity. Encouraging active travel to the High Street means that more cycle parking will be necessary while planning for fewer cars.

2-way cycling on any 1-way street where cars are discouraged should be considered, as per the policy adopted by Edinburgh City Council: [Contra flow cycling \(edinburgh.gov.uk\)](https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/contra-flow-cycling). The current study, however, provides an opportunity to look at other 1-way streets around the High Street. These were implemented as part of the Covid measures but significantly affected access to the High Street for cyclists. Cycle lanes could be provided on both Market Place and Church Road allowing cycle access northbound from the High Street to Forth Street while maintaining these as southbound 1-way streets for cars.

In order to achieve the key objective of fewer vehicles using the High Street, particularly during the core hours during the middle of the business day, some redirection of traffic away from the High Street and towards the existing car parks is also required. Signs indicating restricted access for vehicles on the High Street will be necessary. We would expect that any such changes would not compromise the safe access to the town centre for cyclists. Making the lower part of Law Road 2-way for bikes would also improve access to the town centre for cyclists (including lifeboat crew) – we have further ideas on this route we would be happy to share.

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