

SPOKES *The Lothian Cycle Campaign*

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Written deputation from Spokes to the CEC T&E Committee Meeting to be held on Thursday 2 February 2023

Item 7 Queensferry Town Centre TRO

1. Key Points Summary

Spokes welcomes the general principle of improving the High Street and Waterfront areas of Queensferry. However, we have serious concerns that:

- 1. a highly localised non-standard consultation process has been used, bypassing the CEC Consultation Hub, which we regard as highly unsatisfactory. See section 2.**
- 2. the previously unseen design of the contraflow cycleway at the west end of Newhalls Road, will be particularly dangerous, because it is sandwiched between parking bays and oncoming traffic. See 4.2.**
- 3. cycling west along the High Street on the contraflow system will continue to be very problematic, especially at the Seals Craig blind corner and other pinch points (see 4.3).**
- 4. without adequate enforcement proposals we consider it highly likely that vehicles will be driven and parked as suits them, irrespective of signage, weight limits or restricted hours. This is already acknowledged as being a problem at the newly remodelled layout at the foot of The Loan. (see 5.3)**
- 5. despite the attractive placemaking improvements, this is a vehicle access and heavily parking dominated design, which fails to align with the Councils travel hierarchy policies.**

2. Consultation process

We have concerns about the consultation process. Although Queensferry is part of Edinburgh, these proposals have developed outwith the normal CEC consultation channels.

We have previously requested that this consultation be widened and regularised by it being listed on the CEC Consultation Hub, so that Edinburgh-wide views can be heard and have greater stakeholder involvement, but this has not happened.

This is particularly puzzling as other Queensferry proposals do appear on the Hub. (There is currently one about improvements to the streets and between the Builyeon Road, Scotstoun Avenue, Queensferry High School and Dalmeny Station.)

Spokes was not party to the Steering Group, despite it having been agreed that a local members of Spokes would be invited to participate.

Accordingly, we consider that this consultation risks being flawed because:

- the findings of the Steering Group cannot be said to be fully representative of the local population.
- Queensferry is a very popular destination, and yet the consultation process used here has not sought the views of the wider Edinburgh population and stakeholder groups.

3. Local Parking Strategy.

3.1 Section 4.14 mentions a local parking study. This study fails to provide any context of local schools and how parking may impact on children walking, wheeling or cycling to schools. It also fails to make any reference to the two national cycle routes in South Queensferry and how the increased presence of parked vehicles and subsequent increases in traffic would have on the impact of people using these routes.

3.2 Section 4.15 We are concerned about a local parking plan and the statement "The Executive Director of Place has recently made contact with colleagues in Transport Scotland to explore parking opportunities, on Scottish Government Land close to the town centre." Although the following section mentions a "temporary arrangement" it does not make clear how temporary or when a CPZ may be introduced. We are concerned about the potential for the increased parking capacity and subsequent impacts on walking, wheeling and cycling that the inevitable increase in traffic that more parking brings. We believe resources should be invested reflecting the transport hierarchy and not on further parking provision.

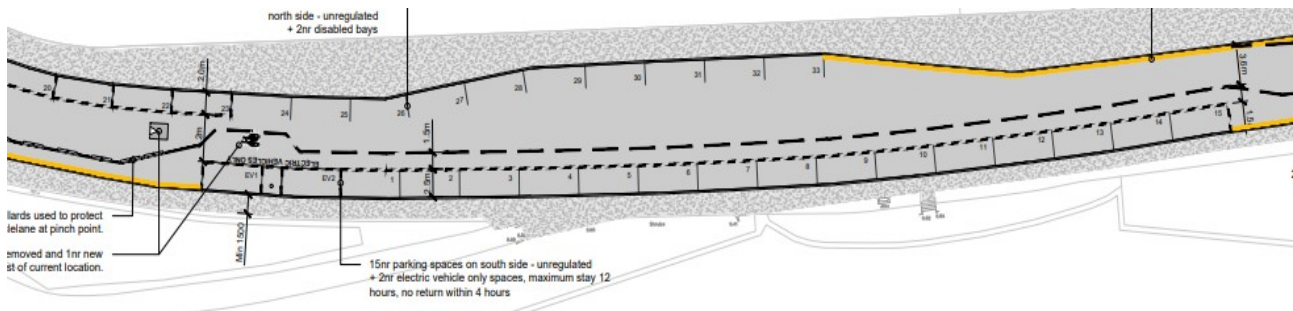
4. Newhalls Road

4.1. It is disappointing that there are currently insufficient funds for phase 2, such that the fully segregated cycle path along the waterfront has been postponed, as that would be both a very significant place-making improvement and also a step change in the quality of the provision for safe cycling.

4.2. We **strongly object** to the proposed parallel parking bays on the south side of Newhalls Road between the turning circle and Seals Craig (Reference EV1-2 and 1-15) as:

- It is dangerous and unreasonable to expect westbound cyclists who are cycling contraflow against the traffic flow, to have to contend with cars cutting across in front of them to park **and** to also be at risk from "dooring" by parked vehicles.
- Eastbound vehicles speed along this section, having escaped the confines of the High Street and because of the downhill gradient.
- The road is too narrow to accommodate parallel parking on **both** sides, plus one way traffic and a contraflow cycle lane.
- This is all wrong in terms of the CEC accepted transport hierarchy.

Accordingly, we **strongly recommend** that the contraflow cycle lane be located alongside the pavement, with full segregation, throughout for its entire length between the turning circle and the Seal's Craig.



NB Contraflow cycle-lane hard alongside parking bays

4.3. We **strongly recommend** that signage be located at the Seals Craigs pinch-point giving westbound traffic priority over eastbound, in order to lessen the danger to cyclists at this difficult pinch pint and blind corner.

4.4. Although there is very little new for the rest of Newhalls Road in this phase, we **recommend** that the current absence of bike parking be addressed now and that it should be located close to the shops and cafes.

5. High Street

5.1. We continue to find the existing one-way with cycling contraflow system **very problematic**, because of driver behaviour both intended and unintended - particularly contraflow close passes. Unfortunately, we do not see how that experience will be improved by these proposals, which designs-in close passes and pinch point face-offs. Most cycle users will be for leisure and will include family groups and we continue to **recommend** as much segregation as possible. There are many examples of where the contraflow is problematic with the example below providing one example, We do not believe it is acceptable to put people in these dangerous situations and that physical protection for the contraflow is a necessity.



Although the surface treatments will have been improved, situations like this will continue.

5.2. Only closure to general traffic (with the usual exemptions for timed deliveries, disabled permit holders etc) will remove this conflict danger. Previously proposed complete pedestrianisation did not survive local consultation, but we **recommend** that consideration be given to temporary and/or rolling closures, such as at weekends.

5.3. We have **serious enforcement concerns and can find no reference to an enforcement plan in the report.** We are strongly of the view that **vehicles will be driven and parked as suits them, irrespective of signage, weight limits or restricted hours.** This is already acknowledged as being a problem at the newly remodelled layout at the foot of The Loan. Unless there is physical protection it is an inevitability that this gross abuse will present itself along the High Street, in the same manner as has been the case even with fully pedestrianised streets across Edinburgh. The photo below presents an example of the recently altered pedestrian space at the bottom of the Loan. This happens on multiple occasions daily. We do not see why this would change elsewhere on the High Street without enforcement.



Rogue parking on the newly remodelled pavements at the foot of the Loan

5.4. We continue to have **unresolved concerns** about:

- how eastbound traffic entering from the signalled junction will be fully expecting to meet people on bicycles travelling west.
- whether the paved area immediately to the east of the traffic signals at The Loan is intended for waiting cycles; and why does the contraflow cycle way surface treatment does not connect to into it.
- the safety implications of eastbound delivery vehicles having to cross westbound cyclists to access the daytime loading bays.
- the multiple types of surface treatments have the potential to significantly improve the cycling quality, but can we be assured that these are all cycle friendly and will be laid as such.

6. Wider Area View

6.1 This is one of at least 3 current project schemes for Queensferry and we are keen to see how these are being coordinated. We have particular concerns about traffic diverting to Station Road.

6.2 Port Edgar is the other Queensferry waterfront leisure destination, but cycling and walking access is very poor. We have previously suggested that it would be beneficial for access and for the local economy if safe pedestrian and cycling linking infrastructure were created (a) connecting it with the High Street and (b) through to Society Road (which has existed previously). Although mentioned in this report, it is mainly about its potential for overflow parking.

6.3 We have also previously suggested the provision of a peak-times shuttle service between Dalmeny Station and Port Edgar via Hawes Brae, Newhalls Road and the High Street. It would encourage visits by public transport access by rail and bus, as well as linking all of the car parking locations.

Ewan Jeffrey and Simon Christie for Spokes Planning Group
30 January 2023