

date: 19 Apr 2023, 21:12  
subject: Re: Craigleith Retail Park access - emails

Hi Dave,

I thought I'd give a brief report back from the Spokes angle from today's meeting with local councillors, Malcolm Bruce, me, and John McLeod of Savills regarding Craigleith Retail Park access.

I felt this was a constructive meeting with much goodwill expressed on all sides regarding the hopes for a retail park site that is friendlier to active travel. Clearly a number of conversations have been ongoing to try to make progress on this.

John McLeod reported on plans for the Saville's side of the park to improve the environmental aspects (planting etc), and create marked green paths to improve the signing for pedestrians, and de-prioritise vehicle movements. Plans are in place for electric vehicles charging points. We also discussed plans to increase the provision of cycle storage and John showed us some examples of covered cycle racks. The point was made that people will lock bikes close to their destination, therefore little and often is better provision than one large set of cycle racks in a potentially inaccessible corner. There was some concern over the limited space available, if cycle hoops are placed everywhere. However, the point was made that cycle racks need not take space from pedestrians if parking spaces are re-allocated for cycles. John indicated that current plans will remove about 20 spaces for the 'greening' of the space. The option of bolt-on options for cycle locking that use existing poles was also mentioned.

Access on foot and bike into and within the retail park was also raised as a serious concern. On many of the points raised we came up against the issue that the southern half of the park is run by Sainsbury's, and over the years they have shown little interest in investing in the kind of schemes we were proposing. Decisions seem to be made remotely from the Store Manager, who is himself reputedly quite responsive.

Many of the issues raised by Spokes members were brought to the meeting, and a summary of these comments was made prior to the meeting and copies were handed out to the participants. This summary is attached.

The key issue, it seems, in moving forward with improving active travel access is how to engage Sainsbury's decision makers in a conversation that includes Savills and is informed by the Councillors. The next step agreed at the meeting is that the councillors will confer on how best to approach Sainsbury's and seek to bring them into the conversation. John McLeod is very happy to be part of this.

One possible 'easy win' we did identify is to see whether the disputed shared use path past the play park (linking the retail park to the North Edinburgh Path Network) could be widened, re-signed as shared-use (current advisory sign says 'cyclists dismount'), and re-routed to run directly into the Savills car park. This would enable cyclists to access the retail park avoiding a kerb, busy road, trolley-trap, and mini-roundabout. Pedestrians have already created this as an informal access (see attached picture.) However, it would require cutting a new section of path through an earth bank. The bank is the boundary between the Savills side and the Sainsbury's side. It may be both sides can agree to doing something specific like this more easily than adopting a whole strategy, especially if Sainsbury's can see that there may be Scot Gov money available.

Much more was discussed at the meeting and this is not an attempt to create a formal minute, but hopefully it conveys something of the positive energy that was present for making changes that benefit the very many local people who arrive under their own steam! The councillors have indicated they will keep us informed of progress.

Best wishes,

Duncan

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Duncan MacLaren