

Spokes Party deputation for TEC meeting 15 June 2023

[Agenda Item 7.5: Medium Term Improvements at Portobello High Street/Inchview Terrace/Sir Harry Lauder Road Junction](#)

Spokes Party is a local group of Spokes - the Lothian Cycle Campaign. We campaign to make walking, wheeling and cycling safe, easy and fun for everyone in and around Edinburgh East.

Summary of our position

Spokes Party supports the recommendation made in the paper to take forward Option 3 as a **medium-term measure** and we urge all members of the Committee to support it. This must be taken in the context of:

- vital safety improvements for cyclists
- essential improvements for those walking, wheeling and cycling in the area
- the Council's traffic reduction targets and climate change ambitions
- prioritising bus use over private car use as part of the 20 minute neighbourhood plans (and elsewhere in the area) to mitigate resultant delays to bus passengers
- **future proofing the design** for a long-term best practice solution that implements the sustainable travel hierarchy in and around Portobello and neighbouring residential communities.

Background

Spokes Party has been campaigning for an urgent redesign of the junction following the deaths of Stuart Elliott (March 2019) and Heather Stronach (November 2020). Both Stuart and Heather were killed by HGV drivers as they cycled through the junction. Their deaths have been devastating for their families, friends, and colleagues, as well as for the local community. Nobody should face the risk of death in Edinburgh just for using a cycle to get around.

We worked hard to get the interim safety measures in place to temporarily ban HGV drivers from turning left into Sir Harry Lauder Road from Portobello High Street along with vital traffic calming measures on the diverted route through Northfield. These measures were always intended to be temporary. It is now vital that significant design improvements are made urgently which improve the safety and comfort of people cycling along with improving the crossing experience for people walking and wheeling.

The junction in its current state is a hostile environment for everyone who walks, wheels and cycles despite the clear need for people to move between the various communities that surround the crossing without having to rely on a car.

Why we support Option 3

We oppose option 1 which includes unprotected cycle lanes which would be unacceptable for the volumes of traffic expected.

We oppose option 2 because, although cyclists are protected, the two stage crossings only offer a marginal improvement over the existing layout for pedestrians.

We support option 3 because it offers significant improvements for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Finally, we recommend that option 3 designs are future proofed for active travel and bus priority infrastructure connections. Adaptability is a core principle in Cycling by Design. This means the kerb lines must be positioned correctly in this phase to allow future phases and connections on all arms of the junction. Completing the junction will be vital if the Council is to meet its climate change and traffic reduction targets, and essential for people who live, work and study in the area who should not be dependent on private car use to get around.

End.