

CEC TEC 12.9.24 Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy

7.1 [Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy](#)

Written deputation from Spokes

Spokes believe that there should be protected cycleways on Princes Street, and are therefore disappointed that there is no mention of this possibility in the report. Whilst we recognise that there are space constraints, Princes Street has always been a more popular cycle route than the parallel streets, and is clearly an important destination in its own right.

Importantly, Princes Street is the direct route for many journeys which would otherwise require crossing and re-crossing the tramlines. This manoeuvre, as the Council knows, has resulted in many bike crashes, injuries and council compensation payments following the precedent created by [Lady Wolff's judgement in 2019](#).

We also note that:

- Public consultations in previous years and Spokes's own member surveys have shown strong support for a Princes Street cycle route.
- Cycle lanes (albeit unprotected) were installed in Princes Street when then councillor David Begg was Transport Convener, and operated well, only to be removed by a subsequent council
- The Council-commissioned 2010 report by Jan Gehl, a leading expert on sustainable city design, clearly seeks provision for cycle use in Princes Street.
- Permeable city centre cycle use is vital if Edinburgh is to achieve its targets for growing cycle use - including its targets for all trips, i.e. everyday trips to shops etc, not just commuting. People of all ages and abilities need to get to destinations such as shops, the Gardens and Waverley by cycle.
- We believe that there is adequate space for cycleways once a properly considered design is developed alongside junction safety improvements.
- When the City Centre Transformation plans for Lothian Rd and the Bridges Corridor are implemented, alongside the existing CCWEL and George St - Meadows links then Princes St will be an even more popular cycle route than at the moment. Cycle space provision for all the cyclists headed to and through it will therefore be required. Spokes traffic counts show that cycles form 15%-20% of all vehicles coming down Lothian Road & Forrest Rd, and it is likely that this will increase once safe space is provided.

We therefore ask that, at the very least, further consideration is given to whether carriageway space on Princes Street can be re-allocated to provide protected cycleways. This could possibly involve a reduction in the number of buses on routes served by trams.

Additionally, we do not feel that sufficient emphasis is being given to making the West End junction safe for cyclists. The junction was listed as the top priority junction in the Major Junctions Review in 2023 and is where [Zhi Min Soh](#) was killed in 2017. With current resources, it may easily be another seven years before the Lothian Road project is finished, and to leave the West End junction in its present state of danger for so many more years is surely unacceptable

Spokes planning group
10/9/24