

Update 3: Greenbank-Meadows Quiet Route

Green councillor Ben Parker reports on progress and what to expect early on next year.

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Many residents have been in touch with me to ask about what is happening next with the Greenbank-Meadows Quiet Route. This blog post is to provide an update on plans for the changes in the Braid Estate which were decided by the Transport and Environment Committee earlier this year.



What is the Greenbank-Meadows Quiet Route?

The Greenbank-Meadows Quiet Route describes the series of road layout changes in place from Bruntsfield Links to the south of Braidburn Valley Park. These changes are designed to facilitate a safer environment for those walking, wheeling and cycling by restricting vehicular traffic flows through residential areas via strategic use of 'modal filters'. Modal filters limit the ability of private vehicles to drive through an area whilst still permitting pedestrians and cyclists to travel through, such as at Whitehouse Loan. Importantly, all areas remain accessible to vehicles in an area – the difference is that through routes/rat runs are closed off.

What was decided by the Transport and Environment committee in March 2024?

In March 2024, Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat councillors voted to remove modal filters along the Quiet Route, in support of 'Option 3' which was included in the Council's previous consultation on the route in September/October 2023. At the time, I opposed this decision – [as I set out in this blog at the time](#) – and I maintain this position. Nevertheless, I recognise that the committee took this view, and the Council must implement the decision.

What will happen next?

Many people have been anxious about what will happen when the changes are implemented. Before anything can happen on the ground, officers need to draw up new Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). As part of this, a new detailed design is prepared, a road safety audit conducted and a procurement process followed to engage a contractor to undertake the changes to the schemes. Officers have now made good progress with all of these steps, and we are expecting to see changes happening on the ground from early 2025. These changes will then be in place for up to 18 months (and an accompanying consultation will take place during the first six months), after which time the Council will decide whether to implement those changes permanently, or to make further changes.

How will the process be managed?

Officers have confirmed that the sequencing of changes will be to install all mitigating infrastructure (such as the cycle lanes on Braid Avenue) before any modal filters are removed. Officers have also confirmed that monitoring will be in place to measure the impact of the changes on people walking/wheeling/cycling, and on traffic speeds and volumes in the area too. Officers have also agreed with me that the Council will do a letter drop for residents along the route so people are notified of when works will start.

What will happen when the changes are made on the ground?

The Council will complete monitoring of vehicles in the area, as well as the number of pedestrians and cyclists using the route. This will enable us to compare whether the new route is functioning as well as the old route, in terms of supporting active travel and reducing speeds and traffic in the Braid Estate. When the changes are implemented, a new consultation period will also open. This is a statutory requirement, and residents are encouraged to share their views.

Why is there going to be another consultation?

The focus of this consultation will be on the changes which have taken place since the last one – i.e. the removal of the modal filters and installation of the cycle lanes on Braid Avenue. The comments from the consultation period will be considered when the Council makes a decision about whether to make the (new) route permanent or not, likely 12-15 months into the new trial. Previous comments from previous consultations will also be considered where these relate to aspects of the route which haven't changed since the last consultation.

Extra info

More detail for those who have been closely following developments with the Greenbank-Meadows Quiet Route.

What about the rest of the South Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs)?

Those who have been especially engaged with the history of the Quiet Route will be aware that the ETROs/consultation process around the Quiet Route/Braid Road/Comiston Road area has been treated separately to other 'Travelling Safely' schemes across the city. Previously, the ETROs were bundled together with a number of other changes, grouped as the 'South ETROs' for short. Because the Transport and Environment Committee decided to treat the Quiet Route separately to these, the consultations/published drawings for the different schemes are now out of sync. This means that the ETROs for the other schemes – Buccleuch Street/Teviot Place, Causewayside, Mayfield Road, Old Dalkeith Road, Gilmerton Road and Craigmillar Park corridor – will be published sooner than those for the Quiet Route, before the end of the year.

Importantly, these TROs will also include 'holding' drawings for the Quiet Route which reflect the route as it is on the ground now. This is simply a technicality, and those drawings for the Quiet Route will be overwritten by the new orders when they are advertised early next year. Please don't worry about responding to the Council consultation on the South ETROs if you want to share views about the Quiet Route – you should save your comments for the specific Quiet Route drawings.

What will be in the Quiet Route drawings?

When the drawings come forward, you will see that they also include drawings for the other options which were considered during the last consultation (though drawings for Option 3 will be the ones implemented). This was another decision of the Transport and Environment Committee earlier in the year. The idea of including these additional drawings will be to give the Council greater flexibility should they decide to make changes to the route during the consultation process, based on feedback. If the decision is made to revert to the previous scheme layout (or another option from the previous consultation), there won't be a need to redraw the orders to cover this, so changes will be able to be made more readily.