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Our response to the City of Edinburgh Council's tram consultation

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust welcomed the opportunity to respond to the City of Edinburgh Council's consultation around future development of the city's tram network.



Read Walk Wheel Cycle Trust's full response to the City of Edinburgh Council's tram consultation. Credit: Colin Hattersley.

As custodians of the National Cycle Network (NCN), our response focuses on the proposals' potential impact on walking, wheeling and cycling along the existing alignment of National Cycle Network Route 1 - and their interaction with future ambitions to improve and expand the Network.

After completing a robust internal process, it is our charity's position that, from the two options presented within the consultation, expansion of the tram network along the Orchard Brae alignment would represent the best outcome for the National Cycle Network.

Our position on the proposed Roseburn alignment is that we neither support nor oppose this at this stage. As we have outlined within our response, Walk Wheel Cycle Trust considers that further improvements can be made to the proposed designs, and additional measures can be taken with respect to protecting biodiversity.

Our charity is committed to working collaboratively with City of Edinburgh Council to making walking, wheeling and cycling possible for more people across the city, and we remain supportive of the Council's vision of a greener, healthier, and more accessible transport system.

Read our full response to the consultation below.

The proposed route

4. To what extent do you support or oppose expanding the tram network by introducing a north/south tram route in the city and potentially into the city region?

Support

Please tell us why:

The new north/south tram route is aligned with the aim of Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans) making it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle to public transport and so make sustainable longer journeys possible.

Granton to the city centre

Option 1: Orchard Brae corridor

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have effectively considered the following in the proposals for Orchard Brae corridor?

Orchard Brae - Walking, wheeling and cycling provision:

- Neither agree nor disagree

Orchard Brae - Tram stop locations:

- Neither agree nor disagree

Orchard Brae - Protecting and enhancing ecology:

- Neither agree nor disagree

6. What else do you think we could do to improve walking, wheeling and cycling along this route?

Enter comments:

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust are providing a response to sections of the tram alignment that have an impact on the National Cycle Network Development Plan (NDP). As Orchard Brae is not on the NDP, the charity is not providing a response to this part of the consultation.

7. What else do you think we could do to improve ecology along this route?

Enter comments:

No response.

8. What, if anything, would you ever use the Orchard Brae route for?

Other (please specify)

Other (please state):

- Not responding as an individual path user.

Option 2: Roseburn Path

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we have effectively considered the following in the proposals for Roseburn Path?

Roseburn - Walking, wheeling and cycling provision:

- Disagree

Roseburn - Tram stop locations:

- Neither agree nor disagree

Roseburn - Protecting and enhancing ecology:

- Disagree

10. What else do you think we could do to improve walking, wheeling and cycling along this route?

Enter comments:

Designs for active travel provision along the Roseburn path should refer to Cycling by Design (CBD) standards. Cycle counts for this section record a peak of 300 cycle movements per hour, for which CBD specifies a desired minimum of 4m. This should be defined as an effective width as opposed to a path width identified in the consultation. This is to allow for horizontal features such as handlebar and pedal width. An additional 0.5m of path width adjacent to any vertical constraints (such as the

tram/active travel route barrier, bridge structures etc) should be provided to achieve the correct effective width.

The 3m path width in the proposals as presented give an effective width 2.5m, described in CBD as an absolute minimum. This represents a reduction in capacity and should be treated as a pinch point width, not a design specification.

All access points and interactions between the tram and path users should be designed in such a way to ensure that all path users, including those vulnerable users and those with protected characteristics, are able to access and use the path without encountering barriers. The overall permeability and accessibility of the path should be improved as a result of the tram project.

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust recommends that the Queensferry Road and Dean Bridge elements of the Circulation Plan be constructed as part of the tram project and ahead of any disruption to the Roseburn path in order to mitigate the loss of active travel capacity. This should be a through route from the Blackhall Path at Craighleith station to the New Town, designed to Cycling by Design standards. It is not clear from the consultation materials that this will be the case. This should be designed and constructed ahead of the tram works to mitigate the impact on path users during tram construction.

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust also considers that there is an opportunity to deliver parts of the City Mobility Plan for active travel delivery where they interact with the tram, such as the Roseburn Bridge over the Glasgow to Edinburgh Railway.

In addition to the sites identified in the consultation, opportunities should be taken along the Roseburn path to engage the community and preserve the sense of place in order to offset the urbanisation that will result from the introduction of the tram. These can include rest areas, art works, interpretation boards, and playable elements.

Facilities should be provided at the Craighleith and Roseburn tram stops to facilitate intermodal journeys, such as secure bicycle parking (e.g. cycle lockers), bike hire and repair stations. Additional measures to improve social safety should be considered at these stops due to their isolated locations away from passive surveillance.

11. What else do you think we could do to improve ecology along this route?

Enter comments:

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust would like to see a firmer commitment that any ecological enhancement package will fully meet the project's obligations under section 3 of NPF 4 to leave nature in a demonstrably better state by leading best practice in this area. At

the Outline Business Case, we would expect to see a commitment to using a recognized and quantified Bio Net Gain metric that will measure the baseline of the existing and proposed habitats, and a commitment to a habitat maintenance plan.

12. What, if anything, would you ever use the Roseburn Path route for?

Other (please specify)

Other (please state):

- Not responding as an individual path user.

13. Based on the information presented, to what extent do you support or oppose the following options?

Overall support - Introducing a direct tram route from Granton to the city centre:

- Support

Overall support - Using the Orchard Brae corridor as a section of the tram route:

- Support

Overall support - Using the Roseburn Path as a section of the tram route:

- Neither support nor oppose

Overall support - Extending the tram line from Granton to Newhaven in the future:

- Neither support nor oppose

14. Please share any other comments or suggestions about the Granton to city centre tram route.

Enter comments:

Orchard Brae is the preferred option for the tram between Granton and the City Centre from the perspective of the National Cycle Network. Research carried out by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust shows users report many benefits of the existing path at Roseburn that may be significantly reduced with the introduction of the tram. 80% of users said the route had improved their wellbeing, 90% said it had helped them increase their physical activity, 91% said it had helped them access greenspace and 98% identified the appreciation of nature as a motivation for using the path.

McKelvie Parade active travel route, which is on the proposed Granton to Newhaven tram extension, forms part of a planned coastal alignment for NCN Route 76. Walk Wheel Cycle Trust are unable to support a tram extension here before seeing detailed proposals for active travel provision.

City Centre to Edinburgh BioQuarter / Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

15. To what extent do you support or oppose extending the tram network by introducing a city centre to Edinburgh BioQuarter / Edinburgh Royal Infirmary route?

Support

16. Please share any other comments or suggestions you have about the route from the city centre to Edinburgh BioQuarter / Royal Infirmary Edinburgh.

Enter comments:

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust have concerns about the quality, connectivity and coherence of the active travel provision along this corridor as laid out in the consultation materials.

The tram proposal interacts with the development of National Cycle Network route 103 from Edinburgh to Gorebridge at Lady Road to the west of Cameron Toll, and continue along Old Dalkeith Road to the tram terminus at the hospital.

The specific concerns raised by the consultation materials are:

- A gap in active travel provision along Lady Road and on Cameron Toll roundabout
- Indirect route alignment along Drylaw Road
- Lack of reference to Cycling by Design standards or minimum widths

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust will continue to engage in the project as custodians of the NCN to work towards a high-quality active travel route along this corridor.

17. What, if anything, would you ever use the City Centre to Edinburgh BioQuarter and Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh route for?

Other (please specify)

Other (please state):

- Not responding as an individual path user.

Option to extend to Midlothian and East Lothian

18. To what extent do you support or oppose introducing

mass-transit connections from Edinburgh South East to the following areas?

Mass-transit support - East Lothian:

- Support

Mass-transit support - Midlothian:

- Support

Mass-transit support - Shawfair:

- Support

Mass-transit support - Queen Margaret University:

- Support

19. Please share any other comments or suggestions you have about developing mass transit connections with the city region.

Please enter comments:

Developing mass transit connections is aligned with Walk Wheel Cycle Trust's aspirations to improve active travel connections to public transport.

Previous policy consultation submissions

Policy consultation submissions

Scotland

Our response to the City of Edinburgh Council's tram consultation

Policy consultation submissions

Our response to the Battersea Bridge safety improvements scheme

Policy consultation submissions

Scotland

Our response to the Scottish Government's 20% Car reduction route map consultation

Policy consultation submissions

Scotland

Our response to the Scottish Government's STPR2 consultation