

## **Meadows to George Street: Spokes Response**

TRO/21/32 & RSO/21/08

Spokes strongly supports the Meadows to George Street project. It will transform the quality of walking, cycling and public transport within the heart of the city centre.

The project is crucial to creating a cycle network within Edinburgh. It will link individual routes from the Meadows, Canal, Innocent Railway and beyond to the city centre, CCWEL, Leith Walk and the North Edinburgh Path Network.

### **General Comments**

The proposed bus gate is strongly supported and will deliver significantly reduced traffic volumes on the corridor. Given that construction of the project may not begin until late 2026, the potential to implement the bus gate in advance of this should be explored.

Spokes supports the use of well designed bus stop bypasses. They are crucial to protecting cyclists from vehicles and have been shown to be extremely safe in several recent studies, including by Transport for London just this month.

Nonetheless, we appreciate concerns regarding the floating bus stop at the foot of The Mound and support mitigating measures to address these. These could include visual or physical narrowing of the cycleway, rumble strips and so on. The pedestrian crossing points on to the bus stop bypass should also closely align with the pedestrian desire line to maximise their use.

By clearly marking the carriageway as still being able to be used by cyclists, such as with cycle symbols and ASLs, faster cyclists can choose to travel on the road as opposed to the downhill cycleway. The bus stop bypass should be proactively monitored so that any early problems can be addressed.

## **Detailed Comments**

### **TRO Sheet 1 / 14**

It is not clear how the cycleway will tie into George Street. Given the lengthy duration of the George Street project, an intermediate solution should be in place so that cyclists can access all directions from the cycleway.

Exempting cycles from the existing banned turns at Hanover Street / Princes Street is supported. If the intention is for the adjacent pedestrian crossings to continue running at the same time, it should be made clear that cyclists will need to stop here.

### **TRO Sheet 2 / 14**

As noted in our general comments, mitigation measures may be appropriate on the downhill approach to the bus stop bypass here.

The proposed cycle stage at Hanover Street / Princes Street is supported, although it should be ensured that wait times for the cycle stage are as short as possible. This can be achieved by reducing the time given to vehicles on The Mound given the lower volume of traffic.

The vehicle access to The Galleries complex can be heavily used at times. Measures to prevent obstruction of the footway and cycleway should be considered.

### **TRO Sheet 4 / 14**

It is unclear whether cyclists will be able to turn into Market Street and Mound Place from the cycleway. This should be possible and clear to users.

### **TRO Sheet 5 / 14**

As previously noted, the proposed bus gate is strongly supported.

Allowing vehicles to exit from St Giles Street is regrettable and compromises the cycleway. However, we understand this is linked to required court access. Given this, it is not clear whether it is intentional for the bus gate to apply to vehicles turning left from here.

#### **TRO Sheet 6 / 14**

Victoria Street is now subject to two-way traffic and as such, the provided access in the cycleway should be altered to suit this.

We understand the Royal Mile junction will have a dedicated cycle stage that will enable all cycle movements to be made. We strongly support this and it should be retained.

#### **TRO Sheet 8 / 14**

The two-way bus gate on Candlemaker Row is supported. However, the text states that "TAXIS AND CYCLES ARE EXEMPT FROM BUS GATE" while the signage would not enable taxi access.

Cyclists should be able to access Candlemaker Row to from the cycleway similar to Victoria Street.

#### **TRO Sheet 9-10 / 14**

Removing traffic from Forrest Road is strongly supported and pivotal to the entire scheme's success. However, the restriction does not appear to be supported by bollards and ANPR enforcement is currently not possible.

Vehicles may begin to use the route as a rat-run when it is understood that the restriction is not enforced. This noncompliance frequently occurs at the South St David St bus gate.

Loading restrictions are currently routinely ignored on Forrest Road. Enforcement of all

restrictions should be built in from the start of the scheme.

Even with perfect compliance, the restriction allows for unrestricted local access - something that should be monitored to ensure traffic volumes remain low. The University of Edinburgh maintains a store site on Forrest Road which receives frequent HGV/LGV traffic.

The no left and right turn signage into Forrest Road should be altered to state "Except cycles and authorised vehicles".

The new junction arrangement, which allows for a single stage crossing from Middle Meadow Walk to Forrest Road is a significant improvement.

#### **TRO Sheet 14 / 14**

The Market Street bus gate is supported and will improve the environment of the southern entrance to Waverley.

#### **RSO Sheet 9 / 17**

It is unclear why only half of the island will be converted to carriageway (2AB).