



4th March 2021

Low Traffic Corstorphine

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RE East Craigs Connections

Whether you walk, cycle, wheel or drive in our neighbourhood, Low Traffic Corstorphine (LTC) is a community group that aims to provide a focus for residents, school children and carers, business owners, people who work in the area and regular visitors who want safer, healthier, less congested streets. To this end, we would like to respond to the Council's East Craigs Connections consultation.

We strongly support interventions in our local area to improve provision for people walking, wheeling and cycling, and as a natural extension of this are supportive of low traffic neighbourhoods.

Members of LTC live both inside and on the periphery of the proposed LTN area, and their personal experiences alongside policy and evidence should help to highlight problems, as well as areas of improvement for walking, wheeling and cycling.

While there are no LTN plans to currently comment on, we would like to submit some feedback regarding the key areas of consultation during this exploratory phase.

Travel behaviours

We can only provide anecdotal evidence on current travel behaviours in the East Craigs LTN area. We hope that the individual responses submitted from the East Craigs Connections consultation will give CEC a good evidence base to work with for making improvements.

Issues with transport and travelling in the area

We've identified the following issues that make active travel in the area difficult:

Busy arterial roads around the East Craigs boundary

The proposed East Craigs LTN area is bounded by Maybury Road, Glasgow Road, Drum Brae North & South and Queensferry Road. This makes active travel very difficult due to unpleasant and threatening environments for walking, wheeling and cycling

- ▶ Long waiting times to get across the Maybury/Glasgow Road junction on foot or cycle. Crossing four busy lanes of traffic to access local businesses and greenspace is intimidating and slow.
- ▶ Glasgow Road signalised crossings are few and far between. The pedestrian refuges and crossing points at St Thomas' Church and also Dechmont Road have been struck by speeding traffic multiple times.
- ▶ The roads are intimidating to cyclists due to fast moving traffic. As such many cyclists avoid them altogether or have to cycle on the pavements.

Rat-running traffic

Drivers use some residential streets in the area as rat-runs to save time on arterial junctions (specifically Maybury and Drum Brae roundabout).

- ▶ Craigs Road, North Gyle Road, North Gyle Terrace and Craigs Gardens are affected by heavy volumes of traffic. North Gyle Grove and North Gyle Loan are also used as through routes to/from Glasgow Road onto North Gyle Road/Craigs Road and Drum Brae South.
- ▶ Traffic calming is already on Craigs Road and North Gyle Road, with little impact. Many vehicles travel at much greater speeds than the 20mph limit. In addition to the speed, vehicles often drive as close to the pavement as possible (close to people walking) to avoid the middle height of the traffic calming on North Gyle Road.



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Speeding and high volume of traffic

This issue is prevalent on both residential streets within the LTN area, as well as on the main arterial routes that border East Craigs. Speeding and heavy traffic are significant contributors to lack of uptake in walking, wheeling and cycling. This is backed up by **ample evidence** and **research**. These main road barriers also mean that onwards connections for active travel are difficult for East Craigs residents.

- ▶ Residential streets with speeding and traffic volume issues include Craigs Road, North Gyle Terrace, North Gyle Loan and North Gyle Road. Drivers frequently break the 20mph speed limit, and as previously noted use these streets as cut throughs.
- ▶ Speeding is an endemic problem across all the main arterial roads - Queensferry Road, Maybury Road, Drum Brae North & South, and Glasgow Road have high volumes of fast traffic. These corridors of traffic cut people off from amenities and facilitates higher vehicle usage, as travelling by car feels like the only safe and convenient way to access local services.

Narrow pavements and poor walking/wheeling environment for pedestrians

Pavements are often cracked and uneven and can be narrow. There are not enough dropped kerbs. There are often a lot of inconsiderately positioned wheelie bins on bin day. Pavement parking is common. At roads, crossing times are often far too long and priority is not given to pedestrians.

This makes getting about difficult or impossible for anyone in a wheelchair, with a visual impairment or with limited mobility. It makes walking much harder for parents and carers with small kids and prams.

Existing cycling provision is poor

Busy arterial routes make utility cycling difficult from the East Craigs LTN area. There is little to no infrastructure provision for people choosing to cycle. There is no on-road protection along any of the main roads (except a recent addition to Drum Brae North via SfP), and key residential streets inside the LTN area feel scary for less confident cyclists due to rat-running and speeding traffic.

- ▶ The only current quiet route provision has very poor crossings at the Maybury junction and shares space with pedestrians, causing conflict.
- ▶ Craigs Road feels too fast and scary for children and families to cycle.
- ▶ While a great addition to local cycling permeability, the East Craigs Path Network is shared space and can cause conflict. It also feels dangerous at night due to lack of clear sightlines, visibility and lighting.
- ▶ Cycling provision to Gyle Shopping Centre spits cyclists out into the shopping centre's car park from the Edinburgh Gateway underpass, which is unpleasant and scary if you are less confident.

The school run is difficult for many families walking, wheeling and cycling

Craigmount High School and East Craigs Primary are located within the LTN area. This generates high volumes of people traffic and vehicles on streets around these schools.

- ▶ Craigs Road, North Gyle Road and the East Craigs walkway are the busiest streets for people traffic going to/from CHS. The pavements and crossings on Craigs Road at East Craigs Walkway are now to be improved under SfP temporary safety Improvements. However, North Gyle Road which has much narrower pavements coupled with high volumes of traffic and residents have difficulty or avoid walking during school start/end times.



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- ▶ Despite parking restrictions on Craigs Road outside the school gates and alongside the school playing fields, parents and carers park here to pick up/drop off pupils causing pollution and danger to people on foot, wheel and cycle.
- ▶ North Gyle Road (from North Gyle Loan to Craigs Road junctions) is used as a car park for parents/carers/taxi school pick-ups and drop offs, causing conflict with people trying to travel actively.
- ▶ Around East Craigs Primary School, Craigmount Brae has lots of parked cars at school pick up/drop off times causing hazards to children travelling to the school. Traffic calming also ends at Craigmount Brae causing traffic to speed up including regular heavy commercial vehicles attempting to bypass congestion on the arterial route.
- ▶ The catchment zone for Corstorphine Primary is in the south of the LTN area. Lots of residents drive to Corstorphine Primary as they feel there is no safe route to cycle to school, and it's too far for little legs to walk. North Gyle Terrace is currently the designated "quiet route" for families cycling to Corstorphine Primary, but they find it challenging due to the amount of drivers speeding, rat running and parking on-street.

Development to the west will create additional traffic pressures

All of the aforementioned issues are described with current level of traffic. We are very aware of planned development in west Edinburgh, which will exacerbate current traffic issues.

- ▶ The planned upgrade of the Craigs Road/Maybury Road junction will open up east Craigs Road to significantly more traffic from these new developments.
- ▶ Additional traffic pressures on the Maybury, Barnton and Drum Brae junctions will also lead drivers to rat-run through the area in attempts to avoid these pinch points.

Perceptions on walking, cycling and wheeling

Despite some local noisy voices, it's clear from multiple **quality surveys**, consultations and **reports** that the majority of people in Edinburgh support walking, wheeling and cycling investment and want to see more equitable streets; we see no reason why residents in East Craigs would not support this too.

We are concerned that anti-LTN voices are drowning out people that want to support active travel and less traffic. We feel anti-LTN groups are providing little in the way of viable solutions that meet budget constraints to address current and future traffic issues, and note that there is a significant amount of misinformation being bandied about locally in an attempt to stoke opposition.

We also note with concern the sudden "interest" from anti-LTN groups regarding disabled people's long-standing transport struggles as soon as filtering is mentioned. Disabled people's opinions and needs are just as varied as anyone else's, and hope that CEC will constructively engage with local disabled people and listen to their views. What we do know is that the status quo is **not working for people with disabilities**, and our urban environments need to change to reduce traffic domination and enable disabled people to get about safely.

We would like to reiterate that there is support in the local community for interventions that tackle traffic and make walking, wheeling and cycling safer. Many residents in the area have been in touch with us to express their support, as well as families who live outside of the boundaries but whose children attend Craigmount High School. These people often choose to stay quiet in public forums, due to the sometimes toxic nature of local debate.



Access to and use of greenspace space in the area

There are several small parks within the East Craigs LTN area, as well as Gyle Park and the Cammo Estate close by.

- ▶ The Gyle Park requires two-stage crossings over the busy Glasgow Road. Improved access could include a single stage toucan or tiger crossing at Dechmont Road and at St Thomas' Church, as well as an additional single-stage signalised crossing to the east.
- ▶ The Cammo Estate until very recently was quite inaccessible due to the lack of safe crossing over the Maybury Road. We are delighted by the recent addition of the temporary crossing point for people to access newly pedestrianised Cammo Walk at the Craigs Road junction and would like to see a permanent toucan/tiger crossing. We would also like to see a further crossing to the north towards the Barnton junction, giving people from Bughtlin safe access to Cammo.
- ▶ Fauldburn Park and Craigievar Square Park are both situated in the north of the LTN area. Both these are council parks with play areas, and can be accessed via the East Craigs Path Network. Fauldburn Park currently lacks any cycle parking while Craigievar Square has a single Sheffield stand. Increased cycle and scooter parking would be great at these sites. Some seating would also be welcomed.
- ▶ There is informal green space in the north of the proposed LTN area, via the East Craigs Path Network. This path network is well-used by locals including pupils at Craigmount High and East Craigs Primary, but it can feel unsafe after dark, the path surfaces are very poor in places, is not gritted as a priority during winter and is often full of overflowing bins.

Where people want to travel to and from

An LTN in East Craigs could potentially make short, local journeys much more appealing by foot, wheel and cycle. We've identified the following local destinations that residents in the area would like to visit:

Retail

- ▶ St Johns Road shops
- ▶ Hermiston Gait
- ▶ Gyle Shopping Centre
- ▶ Tesco
- ▶ Corstorphine retail park (PC World etc)
- ▶ Local shops like Coop

Employers

- ▶ RBS Gogarburn
- ▶ Gyle Industrial Estate

Leisure

- ▶ Drumbrae Leisure Centre
- ▶ David Lloyd

Greenspace

- ▶ Gyle Park
- ▶ Cammo Estate

Schools

- ▶ Corstorphine Primary
- ▶ East Craigs Primary
- ▶ Clermiston Primary
- ▶ St Andrews Fox Covert Primary
- ▶ St Augustines High
- ▶ Craigmount High

Amenities

- ▶ Drumbrae Hub
- ▶ Local churches
- ▶ East Craigs/Parkgrove/Ladywell doctors' surgeries
- ▶ Local nurseries and community centres

Transport

- ▶ Local bus stops
- ▶ Edinburgh Gateway train station
- ▶ Local tram stops

Many of these local destinations could be **cycled within 10-15 minutes** if good on-road infrastructure and safer conditions were provided.



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Opportunities for improvement

We have some suggestions to help improve active travel conditions in the proposed LTN area:

Improve pavements

Widen lots of pavements, introduce continuous footway across minor road junctions (residential streets feeding onto Craigs Road would be great for this), remove street clutter and provide more dropped kerbs.

Improve crossing points

More crossing points are badly needed on arterial roads, so that the wider area can be much more accessible for people looking to actively access amenities outside of East Craigs.

- ▶ Providing a safe crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists at Drum Brae North to access Drum Brae Terrace would facilitate active travel to the leisure centre, the library and the Fox Covert primary schools, as well as onward travel.
- ▶ Dechmont Road/Glasgow Road should be a single-stage toucan crossing. We understand this is in the pipeline with respect to the West Edinburgh Link and are pleased to hear of this impending improvement.
- ▶ The crossing at St Thomas' Church should be upgraded to single-stage and preferably a toucan crossing.
- ▶ At least one more single-stage toucan crossing should be added to Glasgow Road, so that access to Gyle Park and onwards travel is easier. We suggest around 60 Glasgow Road, as this location would serve people travelling east onto a quieter and shorter route via the private road next to 45 Glasgow Road.
- ▶ A single-stage toucan crossing towards the north end of Maybury Road would be welcomed, giving people safe access to Cammo. A good location for this could be around Cammo Gardens.
- ▶ The junctions of Queensferry Road at both Barnton and Drum Brae North are not cyclist friendly, as you have to dismount and wait at multiple crossings. Improved crossings would facilitate onward travel towards South Queensferry and north Edinburgh.
- ▶ A protected cycleway and single stage crossing from Craigs Road to Templeland Road could improve this route for cyclists travelling through Corstorphine.

Build protected cycleways on main roads

Protected cycleways on main roads would increase cycling. Protected infrastructure would also be especially beneficial to those who commute by bike and don't want to take longer, convoluted routes to destinations.

- ▶ A protected cycleway along the Glasgow Road would be our priority, as it would give people cycling a safe way to cross the Drumbrae roundabout, join up local amenities in the Corstorphine town centre, and give improved access to the Gyle Shopping Centre, RBS Gogarburn and Gyle Industrial Estate.
- ▶ It would be fantastic to see full protected provision on Drum Brae North and South, giving people access to Drumbrae Leisure Centre, the Drumbrae Hub and onward quiet connections to Davidson's Mains and north Edinburgh.
- ▶ With all the development in the pipeline for west Edinburgh, we think it very important to provide protected on-road cycling infrastructure along Maybury Road, so that north/south movement is fast and easy by cycle.
- ▶ A protected cycle route on Craigs Road would be a real positive to the area. It would likely increase active travel to school, not just from East Craigs but the wider catchment area.



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Reduce traffic speeds

Slower vehicle speeds on arterial routes would be warmly welcomed. Ideally we would like to see 20mph as the default speed limit on all roads in Edinburgh, including the big arterial roads that border East Craigs. Recent research on 20mph in the city has **shown some great benefits** – why can't these benefits be transferred to main roads too? A default speed limit across all roads is also clearer and less confusing for drivers.

Filter residential streets/remove through traffic

This would make a huge difference to volume and speeds of traffic. Filtering, one way streets with contraflows, and other traffic calming measures could really improve the area.

- ▶ Candidate streets include Craigs Road, North Gyle Road, North Gyle Terrace, Craigs Gardens, North Gyle Grove and North Gyle Loan.

Provide streetscape improvements so walking feels more enjoyable

We'd really like to see some placemaking in our local community. Pocket parks, benches and places to linger, children's play areas, public artworks and more trees and greenery would be welcomed.

Remove barriers like steps, guardrails and chicanes

We would like to see barriers removed to help facilitate more walking, wheeling and cycling.

- ▶ Access to and from North Gyle Loan via Craigmount High is an important pedestrian thoroughfare but it is currently not accessible. We would like the steps replaced and the route made accessible for people wheeling and cycling.
- ▶ Steps are also in use at the pedestrian access point to the East Craigs Path Network at Blackthorn Court. It would be great to remove them and make this more accessible.
- ▶ There are several pedestrian routes that are made less accessible by the use of chicanes. Pedestrian movement would be improved with their removal at **North Gyle Park, North Gyle Loan** and North Gyle Grove.

Conclusion

We hope that these insights and suggestions will be useful to council officers as they start to piece together the walking, wheeling and cycling stories from residents and visitors to the area. We are pleased to also be a part of the Community Reference Group, and feel positive about the consultation process and ongoing dialogue with the City of Edinburgh Council. No doubt there is a lot of work to do, but once the balance starts to shift towards **more equitable and socially just forms of transport**, it will make all the difference for our community and the environment.

Thank you for addressing the long-standing issues we have faced in the area with traffic, road safety and pollution. We cannot wait to experience our community with more priority and space given to walking, wheeling and cycling.

Yours sincerely
(on behalf of Low Traffic Corstorphine)

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