

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 14 January 2014

Review of George IV Bridge to King's Buildings Cycle Route

Item number	7.14
Report number	
Wards	11 - City Centre 15 - Southside/Newington

Links

Coalition pledges	P45
Council outcomes	CO4 , CO9 , CO10 , CO19 , CO22
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4

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Executive summary

Review of George IV Bridge to King's Buildings Cycle Route

Summary

The George IV Bridge to King's Buildings cycle route scheme was implemented in 2012, delivering a range of walking and cycling improvements along a 4km route linking the city centre with the University of Edinburgh's King's Buildings campus.

The Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee of 9 February 2010 instructed that a review of the scheme be carried out one year after its implementation. This report provides the results of that review.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1 notes the results of the review of the scheme; and
- 2 discharges the outstanding remit from the Committee of 9 February 2010.

Measures of success

76% of respondents within the Spokes Members Survey believed that improved cycling infrastructure has been delivered along the route.

The scheme has also delivered benefits for public transport users through the introduction of new bus lanes on George IV Bridge, Potterrow and Melville Drive, while better facilities for pedestrians have been provided with a number of improved crossing points, most notably at the Mayfield Road/West Mains Road/Esslemont Road junction for those accessing the University of Edinburgh's King's Building campus.

Financial impact

The costs of implementing the George IV Bridge to King's Buildings cycle route were met from the block funding allocation for Cycling Improvements within the 2012/13 and 2013/14 Transport Capital Investment Programmes. This was supplemented with external funding received from Sustrans.

Equalities impact

Improved pedestrian crossing points throughout the route include tactile paving and dropped kerbs and should impact positively on equality of opportunity for mobility impaired pedestrians.

No impacts upon discrimination, harassment or victimisation or the duty to foster good relations have been identified, nor have infringements of any rights.

Sustainability impact

The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered, and the outcomes are summarised below.

Improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians should contribute to reducing carbon emissions and increasing the city's resilience to climate change threats.

It is considered that there are no impacts on social justice arising from implementation of the scheme.

Consultation and engagement

Following the development of a preliminary design for the George IV Bridge to King's Buildings scheme, non-statutory consultation was carried out on the initial proposals in November and December 2010. The results of this consultation were reported to the Committee on 8 February 2011.

A formal statutory consultation was also required for the Traffic Regulation Order necessary to deliver the scheme. The draft Order was advertised in September 2011, and the results of this consultation were reported to the Committee on 29 November 2011.

Council Officers have also undertaken discussions with local businesses on Ratcliffe Terrace and Mayfield Road following the scheme's implementation to ensure that concerns over the provision of loading/unloading facilities at these locations were addressed. A statutory consultation will be carried out in January 2014 as part of a separate Traffic Regulation Order process to resolve these loading/unloading difficulties.

Local members have been consulted on this report reviewing the scheme, no comments or issues have been raised.

Background reading/external references

Appendix 1 – Plan of the George IV Bridge to King's Buildings cycle route

Background Paper – Report to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, 24 November 2009, 'George Square to King's Buildings Improvements for Cyclists – Quality Bike Corridor'

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2167/transport_infrastructure_and_environment_committee

Background Paper – Report to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, 9 February 2010, 'George Square to King's Buildings Improvements for Cyclists – Quality Bike Corridor (Motion by Councillor Perry)'

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1981/transport_infrastructure_and_environment_committee

Background Paper – Report to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, 8 February 2011, 'George IV Bridge to King's Buildings Quality Bike Corridor – Public Consultation'

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2353/transport_infrastructure_and_environment_committee

Background Paper – Report to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, 29 November 2011, 'George IV Bridge to King's Buildings Quality Bike Corridor – Objections to TRO (TRO/11/35)'

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2591/transport_infrastructure_and_environment_committee

Review of George IV Bridge to King's Buildings Cycle Route

1. Background

- 1.1 The George IV Bridge to King's Buildings cycle route scheme was implemented in 2012, delivering a range of walking and cycling improvements along a 4km route linking the city centre with the University of Edinburgh's King's Buildings campus. A plan of the cycle route is appended to this report.
- 1.2 The Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee of 9 February 2010 instructed that a review of the scheme be carried out one year after its implementation. This report provides the results of that review.

2. Main report

- 2.1 Issues arising from the scheme since it was delivered in late 2012 have been recorded. Feedback has been received from a variety of sources, including pedestrians, cyclists, residents and local businesses. SPOKES (the Lothian Cycling Campaign), and the University of Edinburgh were both approached for comments as representatives of major user groups.
- 2.2 The main issues which have arisen, are presented in this report.

SPOKES Member Survey

- 2.3 The George IV Bridge to King's Buildings cycle route was included in the SPOKES Members Survey which was carried out in March 2013. This survey sought the views of SPOKES members on a range of cycling issues in Edinburgh. Approximately 140 members responded to the survey.
- 2.4 Of these respondents, 57% had used the George IV Bridge to King's Buildings cycle route. Of these users, half used it less than weekly, just over a third used it at least weekly and the remainder used it most days.

2.5 Respondents were asked if cycling conditions had improved as a result of the scheme, and 86 members replied. The results are tabulated below:

Post-scheme Cycling Conditions	Percentage
A lot better	10
Somewhat better	66
The same as before	22
Worse than before	1
Total	100 (n=86)

Source – Spokes Members Survey (March 2013)

2.6 76% of respondents replying to this question thought that there had been an improvement, although in most cases conditions were ‘somewhat better’ rather than ‘a lot better’.

2.7 Respondents were also asked for specific comments on the scheme. The main sources of concern were the levels of car parking in cycle lanes along the route and that changes to waiting and loading restrictions did not go far enough.

2.8 There were also mixed comments regarding the use of red stone chippings instead of red thermoplastic material to provide coloured surfaces and concerns about the northbound cycle lane at the Missoni Hotel layby on George IV Bridge. A number of respondents also felt that segregated facilities would have been more effective along the route.

Waiting and Loading Restrictions

2.9 Significant changes to waiting and loading restrictions along the corridor were introduced as part of the scheme to keep the new cycle lanes and bus lanes clear of parked vehicles throughout the day. However the Council also appreciated that it was important for residents and businesses to have access to parking and loading facilities and sought to address their needs as far as possible while keeping cycle lanes clear of vehicles.

2.10 Following implementation of the cycle scheme, a number of local businesses raised concerns over the impact of new waiting and loading restrictions implemented at two locations. These were:

- Ratcliffe Terrace, between Grange Loan and Fountainhall Road; and
- Mayfield Road, between Mentone Terrace and Savile Terrace.

- 2.11 After undertaking discussions with traders and the Grange Prestonfield Community Council, the restrictions at these locations were reviewed and revised layouts were designed and agreed with local businesses. This provided additional space for loading/unloading to assist local businesses while maintaining cycle facilities at these locations.
- 2.12 Statutory procedures to make the Traffic Regulation Order required to implement the revised layouts at Ratcliffe Terrace and Mayfield Road are underway and will be advertised in January 2014.
- 2.13 In addition, several concerns have been raised by cyclists that use the route regarding illegal parking and loading/unloading in cycle lanes. Concerns have been raised at three key locations along the corridor:
- Buccleuch Street northbound at Buccleuch Terrace.
 - Causewayside at Tesco Express.
 - Ratcliffe Terrace, between Fountainhall Road and Grange Loan (addressed above).
- 2.14 Details of these sites were passed to the Council's parking enforcement contractor, and street visits to these locations have been increased. Comments received about illegal parking along the route will continue to be recorded and fed to the Council's Parking team and parking enforcement contractor.

Road Surfaces

- 2.15 Red chippings (embedded within asphalt) are now used to provide a coloured surfacing within Edinburgh's cycle lanes, and were used within the George IV Bridge to King's Buildings cycle route. However, feedback has been received from SPOKES and other route users that this surfacing does not offer enough colour contrast compared to the red thermoplastic screed material which was previously used in many cycle lanes.
- 2.16 Although red chippings initially offer less visual contrast to the surrounding road than coloured thermoplastic and are more expensive to install, unless this is done as part of planned resurfacing of the whole road, there are a number of advantages in using this type of coloured surfacing. These advantages are:
- considerably longer lifespan than thermoplastic screed;
 - significantly reduced whole life costs;
 - utilities can reinstate excavations with a matching material in a single operation; and

- reduced visual impact makes the use of coloured surfaces possible throughout the city, even in environmentally sensitive locations.

2.17 In addition, a number of comments were received that the condition of the road surface at some localised sections of cycle lane along the route was in a poor condition, particularly around Bank Street/North Bank Street. It was not possible to resurface every cycle lane along the entire corridor as part of the scheme, however the Council are reviewing the locations identified and will prioritise the resurfacing of areas that are in a poor condition.

Lussielaw Road Area

2.18 A number of concerns have been received regarding a perceived increase in traffic on local roads in the Lussielaw Road area resulting from the prohibition of the right turn from Mayfield Road into West Mains Road at the Mayfield Road/West Mains Road/Esslemont Road junction.

2.19 Traffic counts were carried out at the junction during the design process which indicated that a maximum of 30-35 vehicles per hour previously made the right turn movement into West Mains Road during the morning and evening peak periods. Given the very low volume of vehicles and that several alternative routes are available, the impact of displaced traffic is considered to be minimal.

2.20 The Council's Road Safety team will be undertaking monitoring of vehicle speeds on Lussielaw Road in the near future. Should any safety concerns be identified, measures will be considered to address these.

Safety Audit

2.21 As part of the Council's standard procedures for transport schemes, a post construction Road User Safety Audit was carried out on the route by an independent Road Safety Auditor. No significant issues not already identified within this report were raised.

Lessons Learned

2.22 One of the key challenges in delivering a scheme of this type is addressing the differing, and often competing, needs of various stakeholder groups.

2.23 Whilst cyclists have aspirations for kerbside parking to be minimised in order to ensure clear routes or provision of segregated facilities, this is in direct conflict with the needs of residents and local businesses for parking and loading/unloading facilities. There are also competing needs for the allocation of road space in the narrower sections of the route. Finally, monitoring of the scheme has identified some examples of conflict between pedestrians and cyclists at shared use areas introduced as part of the scheme.

2.24 In light of the above, better consideration could have been given at the outset of the project to the branding of the route. This was initially referred to as the 'George IV Bridge to King's Buildings Quality Bike Corridor' which may have led to expectations amongst cyclists that were not subsequently met, given the difficulties identified above.

Ongoing Monitoring

2.25 The Council's Road Safety team routinely monitors road collision data on an ongoing basis and investigates any unusual patterns that are identified. This process will identify and address any recurring safety issues that might arise on the cycle route in the future.

2.26 In addition, the Council's Cycle team are currently developing proposals to measure cycling activity on key routes throughout the city. Once these are implemented it will be possible to monitor the level of use of the George IV Bridge to King's Buildings cycle route on an ongoing basis.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

3.1.1 notes the results of the review of the scheme; and

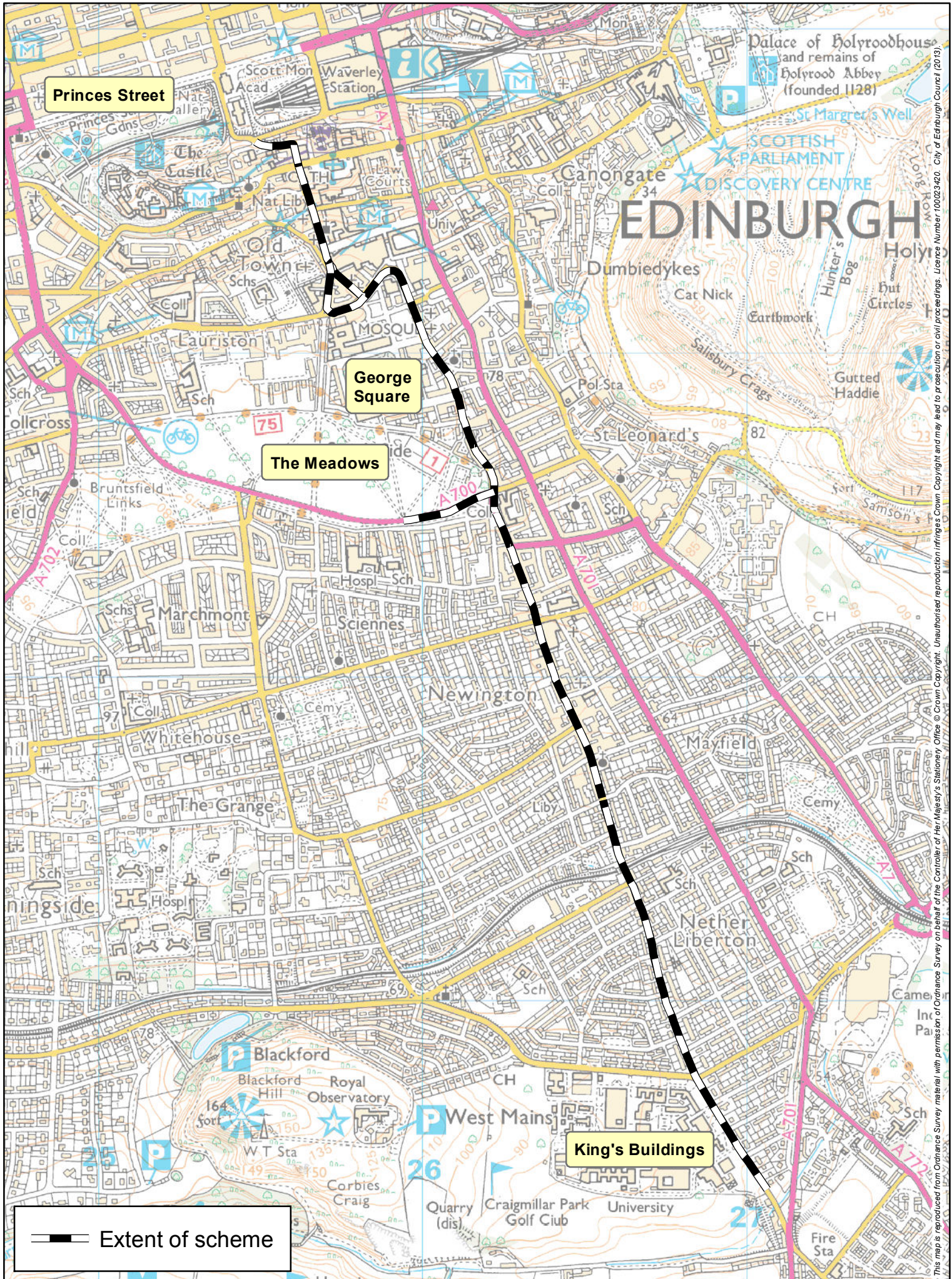
3.1.2 discharges the outstanding remit from the Committee of 9 February 2010.

Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities

Links

Coalition pledges	P45 – Spend 5% of the transport budget on provision for cyclists.
Council outcomes	CO4 – our children and young people are physically and emotionally healthy. CO9 – Edinburgh residents are able to access job opportunities. CO10 – improved health and reduced inequalities. CO19 – Attractive Places and Well Maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm. CO22 – Moving Efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible.
Single Outcome Agreement	SO2 – Edinburgh’s citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health. SO4 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.
Appendices	1. Plan of the George IV Bridge to King’s Buildings cycle route.



Princes Street

George Square

The Meadows

King's Buildings

EDINBURGH

— — — — — Extent of scheme