

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 1 October 2020

Spaces for People – East Craigs Low Traffic Neighbourhood

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Executive 3
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Transport and Environment Committee are asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Approve the introduction of a Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) in East Craigs, as set out in this report and in Appendix 2;
 - 1.1.2 Note the other LTN and Quiet Route proposals which are currently being developed will return to this Committee for approval in the future; and
 - 1.1.3 Note that developing schemes will be informed by ongoing reviews and will take into account other interacting projects.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Dave Sinclair, Local Transport and Environment Manager

E-mail: david.sinclair@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 7075

Spaces for People – East Craigs Low Traffic Neighbourhood

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report seeks approval to introduce a temporary Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) in East Craigs and sets out further plans for temporary LTNs and a Quiet Route which are currently being developed as part of the Spaces for People programme.

3. Background

Spaces for People

- 3.1 The Spaces for People programme was set up in April 2020 in response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to ensure that people had sufficient safe space for physical distancing, at the time while outdoors for exercise purposes. The City of Edinburgh Council secured £5m of Scottish Government funding for interventions in the city.
- 3.2 A report to Policy and Sustainability Committee on [14 May 2020](#) set out where temporary measures might necessitate prioritising mixed-use road space for walking or cycling, Councils may use temporary traffic regulation orders (TTRO) in the event there is a danger to the public.
- 3.3 The COVID-19 lockdown period saw large increases in the number of people walking and cycling, whilst the roads were quiet, facilitating the maintenance of physical distancing.
- 3.4 Spaces for People schemes are approved for implementation by the Council Incident Management Team (CIMT), followed by discussion between the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council and the Depute Leader under the delegated scheme approved in response to COVID-19.
- 3.5 Generally, the schemes to date have related to individual streets under the themes: space for exercise; travelling safely; space in the city centre; and space in town centres. These schemes are reported to Committee every two months.
- 3.6 The schemes set out in this report cover a broader geographical area and therefore, with the agreement of the Convener and Vice Convener of Transport and

Environment, such schemes will be presented to Committee for approval, rather than being approved by the CIMT.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

- 3.7 A “Low Traffic Neighbourhood” (LTN) seeks to create a safer environment for all road users by removing or dramatically reducing through traffic, often referred to as rat running, from a group of residential streets. The main way to create a LTN is by reducing the ability of motor vehicles to travel through certain streets, whilst maintaining local access for residents and deliveries, albeit sometimes via less direct routes. Non-local traffic is thereby discouraged from travelling through the neighbourhood and is encouraged instead to use the main or strategic roads. The key outcomes that LTNs typically aim to achieve are:
- Making it more attractive and safer for people to travel through the area on foot, wheeling or by bike;
 - Reduced levels of traffic, especially rat running at peak times; and
 - making streets more adaptable for other uses by local residents, such as for children to play and for community activities.
- 3.8 Road closures to vehicles can be used for introducing placemaking elements such as art, seating or plants, if desired by the community.

Permanent Changes

- 3.9 LTNs have a key part to play in delivering the ambitious agenda set by the Council in respect of walking and cycling.
- 3.10 In normal circumstances the introduction of a permanent LTN would be the subject of consultation and engagement in the development of plans and as part of the process to advertise a Traffic Regulation Order. This process can often be lengthy.
- 3.11 Since 2018, as part of the West Edinburgh Link (WEL) project, the Council has been consulting local residents, carrying out vehicle volume and speed surveys and considering long-standing concerns from local Community Councils regarding increases in traffic through East Craigs and in the surrounding areas.
- 3.12 On 20 August 2020 the following extract from an Addendum by the Coalition was approved specifically in relation to East Craigs:
- 3.12.1 Reaffirms that low traffic neighbourhoods should continue to be taken forward by officers as part of SfP for reasons of public health and public safety;
- 3.12.2 Notes some residents in East Craigs have expressed concerns relating to the lack of public consultation on the proposed low traffic neighbourhood for their area. Further notes the current process of stakeholder engagement for the rollout of SfP projects and that widescale public consultation unfortunately cannot be part of that process due to the need to act quickly;
- 3.12.3 Therefore agrees that as well as moving forward with the SfP low traffic neighbourhood proposals, also agrees to accelerate the permanent TRO process for East Craigs low traffic neighbourhood to the earliest possible time

to allow full public consultation to take place at the earliest opportunity with residents as part of the permanent TRO process.

- 3.13 Plans for permanent changes arising from WEL will be subject to the normal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) processes.

4. Main report

Proposed East Craigs LTN

- 4.1 The report in May 2020 set out proposed interventions for improving conditions for walking and cycling, in response to COVID-19. This included introducing schemes, under the travelling safely theme, in neighbourhoods such as East Craigs and Leith to close selected roads, reducing through traffic to enable local trips to be made safely, especially to parks and schools.
- 4.2 A temporary LTN has been proposed for East Craigs, to provide quieter roads, enabling people to safely walk, cycle and wheel and to support the on-going need to maintain physical distance when moving around the city. The East Craigs LTN has been developed based on the preparatory work which was undertaken for the WEL project. This work has been ongoing since 2018.
- 4.3 The key elements of the WEL project preparatory work that fed into the temporary East Craigs LTN proposals were:
- 4.3.1 Detailed public consultation carried out on the concept of making the area safer for walking and cycling. The feedback received from residents highlighted that certain streets in the area did not feel safe enough to cycle on due to the number of vehicles choosing to use them to avoid busier areas and the speed of vehicles on these streets. The consultation report can be viewed [here](#).
- 4.3.2 Vehicle volume and speed surveys were carried out on the streets in the area to follow up on the feedback received from the consultation. These surveys confirmed that traffic volumes on Craigs Road were already higher, at peak times, than levels which the Edinburgh Street Design Guidance describes as suitable to be attractive and safe for cycling. The average speeds recorded on many of the roads in the area exceeded 20mph, with higher speeds particularly noted on Craigs Gardens, North Gyle Loan, North Gyle Drive, Dechmount Road and Craigs Road. Further, the level of peak time traffic on North Gyle Road and Craigs Gardens, was such that it was judged as likely to become too high for safe and attractive cycling once additional vehicles begin using this route (see 4.3.3).
- 4.3.3 Longstanding concerns from local Community Councils regarding increases in traffic through East Craigs and surrounding areas due to the West Craigs/ Cammo Developments.

4.3.4 Detailed feedback received from an advisory group of local residents about where the modal filters should be located to best address issues raised in the consultation and speed surveys.

4.3.5 The East Craigs Primary School Travel Plan which indicates that some of the same issues reported in the WEL consultation are also ones that make parents and pupils feel less safe about traveling to school by walking, cycling or wheeling.

4.4 In addition to this preparatory work, the Council also received feedback relating to East Craigs from members of the public through the Spaces for People [Commonplace website](#). This included many of the issues reported through the WEL consultation as well as highlighting unsafe conditions for cycling, narrow footways and requests for certain roads to be closed in the East Craigs area.

4.5 The original Spaces for People scheme design for East Craigs LTN is included in Appendix 1.

Resident Concerns

4.6 Local residents have expressed significant concern about the original proposals, including at a public meeting in Gyle Park on 28 August 2020. These included:

4.6.1 Difficulty of turning right across Drum Brae South from Craigs Road;

4.6.2 Difficulty of turning right across Glasgow Road from North Gyle Road, North Gyle Grove and Craigs Gardens;

4.6.3 Enforcement of restrictions in areas where double-yellow lines are in place e.g. for Craigs Road school drop-off;

4.6.4 Journeys for car dependent residents, including when accessing the Gyle Shopping Centre; and

4.6.5 Concerns around congestion.

4.7 Following the public meeting, officers were asked to consider the concerns raised by residents and information was issued to those who had contacted the Council directly.

4.8 Collision information has been reviewed for locations where residents need to turn in or out of side roads on to the major roads at the edge of the LTN. This found that there had been some collisions involving turning vehicles, and as noted below, the project has now been modified to remove the need for more drivers to make the turns of concern. The North Gyle Grove/Glasgow Road junction is due to be considered under the Council's 'Accident Investigation and Prevention' (AIP) programme; however the number of collisions occurring at the other locations would not trigger inclusion in the AIP programme.

Amended Scheme Design

4.9 An amended scheme design has now been developed and is included in Appendix 2. The main changes are:

4.9.1 Removing the Craigmount Avenue and Craigs Loan modal filters;

- 4.9.2 Changing the position of the Craigs Gardens modal filter;
 - 4.9.3 Changing the North Gyle Terrace filter to No Entry east bound (from Maybury Road); and
 - 4.9.4 Altering the Craigs Road bus gate so that it always permits one-way westbound traffic and restricts eastbound traffic at peak times (07:30 – 09:30 and 16:00-18:30).
- 4.10 These refinements ensure that every area in the LTN can access (entry and/or exit) onto two of the major distributor roads (Drum Brae, Glasgow Road or Maybury Road). By so doing, the new design alleviates the requirement for right turns across Drum Brae South and Glasgow Road, which have been key concerns of residents.
- 4.11 The design still ensures that through traffic/ 'rat running' will be reduced or eliminated throughout the area, in particular past Craigmount High School during school opening/closing times, and the main WEL north-south cycle route.
- 4.12 In response to resident concerns about congestion and increased journey times, the impact of the proposed changes have been assessed with the aid of a traffic model and the findings suggest that the impact of the LTN on the major junctions of the area: Barnton; Drum Brae; and Maybury will be minor. The initial modelling was at strategic level looking across the whole area of East Craigs and, as such, did not provide precise predictions for side roads such as Craigmount Approach.

Monitoring and Refinement

- 4.13 Implementation of a LTN on a temporary basis (under the TTRO process) enables the scheme, including side roads, to be monitored and reviewed following implementation with adjustments being made, if required, in response to any issues identified. This will include monitoring of vehicle numbers and speeds and analysis of the effectiveness of the scheme.

Engagement on a permanent LTN

- 4.14 It is still intended to progress with consultation on a permanent LTN scheme for this area as part of the WEL project. Engagement will continue on this through the autumn and will utilise any findings from the temporary scheme. A full TRO process, including appropriate statutory consultations will be undertaken for the permanent scheme.

Other LTNs

- 4.15 In addition to the East Craigs LTN, two further areas have been identified for similar potential schemes. The development of plans for these is still underway but they are summarised below. In each case the measures proposed will be analysed holistically. In particular, development of proposals will take into account any inter-relationships with other nearby projects and will consider whether there is a need to modify these projects in parallel with the introduction of the LTN proposals.

Corstorphine South, Featherhall LTN

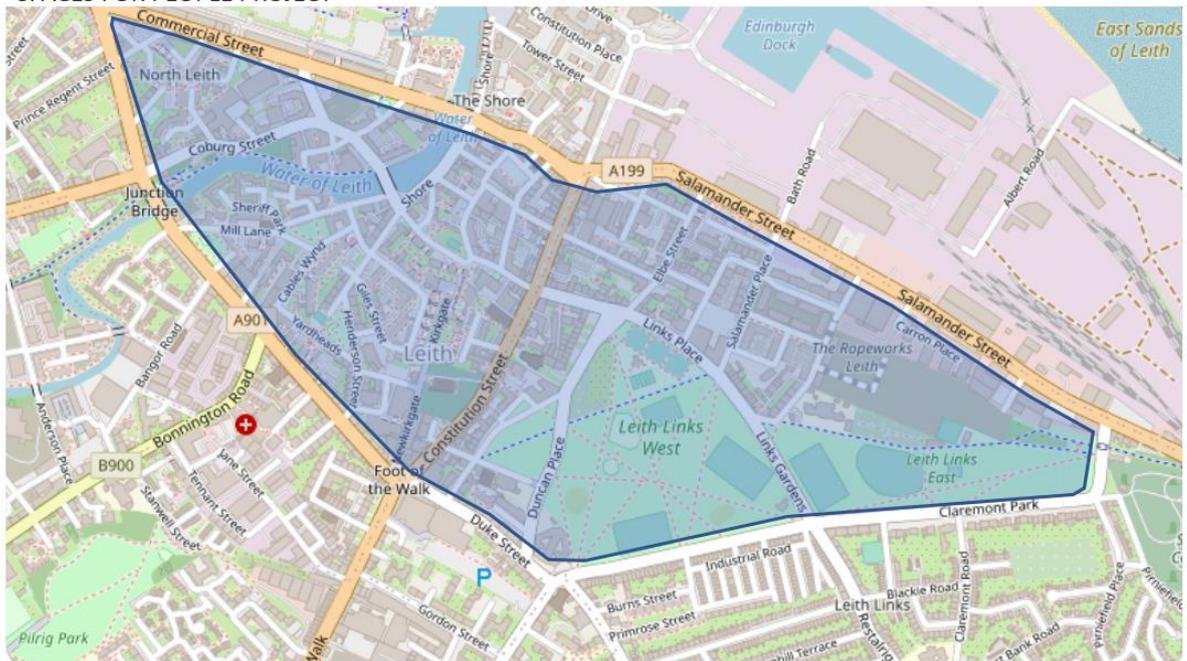
- 4.16 The North West Locality team, with input from local Councillors and Corstorphine Community Council, had previously implemented temporary road closures and traffic calming in the area around Featherhall to address issues of vehicles using local streets to avoid busier routes and increase the safety and attractiveness of the streets for walking and cycling, particularly around the local schools.
- 4.17 Building on the success of this and taking into consideration feedback from the Council's Locality and Road Safety teams, the Commonplace website engagement and Corstorphine Community Council, a Spaces for People scheme is being developed to introduce a temporary LTN in this area (funded by the Neighbourhood Environmental Programme (NEP) budget) .
- 4.18 The rationale for this scheme as part of the Council's response to COVID-19 is that removing 'rat running' and making streets feel safer and more attractive for walking and cycling will help encourage people to choose active travel to exercise and to provide space for physical distancing when walking or cycling. Discussions will also take place about enhancing road safety in this area.

Leith LTN

- 4.19 A LTN in Leith was already under consideration as part of the Council's Active Travel programme. Notwithstanding this, feedback from local councillors and via the Spaces for People Commonplace website engagement suggested that there was significant demand for implementing a LTN in the area as part of the Council's response to COVID-19.
- 4.20 The purpose of the proposed LTN is to address issues of 'rat running' and to make the streets feel safer and more attractive for walking and cycling, in line with the objectives set out in paragraph 3.7. Addressing these issues will help people use active travel both for day-to-day journeys and to exercise, which in-turn has been linked to [aiding recovery from COVID-19](#) , and also to physically distance when walking and cycling.
- 4.21 The LTN is being developed in discussion with the Trams to Newhaven project and considering bus services, to ensure that its benefits can be delivered whilst these other crucial projects and services continue.

4.22 An outline of the area proposed to be covered by the LTN is included below.

Leith LTN, project extend under consideration
SPACES FOR PEOPLE PROJECT



Greenbank to Meadows Quiet Route

- 4.23 The Greenbank to Meadows Quiet Route (QR) aims to establish a network of safe quiet streets between Greenbank Crossroads (the junction of Comiston Road and Braidburn Terrace) and the Meadows. It is the second half of a proposed route from Fairmilehead, Buckstone, Comiston and Oxgangs to the city centre. The first half consists of the segregated cycle lanes recently created on Comiston Road through the Spaces for People programme. The Quiet Route will run along quiet roads parallel to Morningside Road; road closures/'modal filters' will be introduced at various locations to remove through traffic on the route.
- 4.24 Earlier on in the Spaces for People programme, a road closure was installed at Braid Road, with associated one-way street (except cyclists) on Braidburn Terrace. These two interventions have had the effect of significantly reducing through traffic in the Hermitage Drive/ Braid Ave/Midmar Dr area. However, there has been some concern from local residents about the impacts of associated traffic re-routing. With this in mind, development of proposals for the Greenbank to Meadows QR will incorporate a review of the Braid Road closure and consider the impacts of different options holistically
- 4.25 At its southern end the QR runs along Hermitage Drive between Braid Road and Hermitage Gardens. With Braid Road closed this link is lightly trafficked, however, were Braid Road opened this would be likely to require further intervention to ensure it was safe.
- 4.26 The Greenbank to Meadows QR has been designed so as to cut out 'rat-running' traffic from streets between Cluny Gardens and Comiston Road with strategic

closures. This would include diagonal closures at the junctions of Braid Road and Braid Crescent, and the junction of Cluny Drive and Hermitage Gardens, as well as a modal filter on Braid Avenue. If Braid Road remains closed, these further closures would effectively eliminate through traffic cutting through residential streets between Cluny Gardens and Comiston Road, whilst allowing local access to both roads.

- 4.27 As part of Greenbank to Meadows QR, it is also proposed to introduce two closures on Whitehouse Loan, one immediately south of Strathearn Road, the other immediately south of Bruntsfield Crescent. These closures would enable safe cycling on Whitehouse Loan, assist safe pedestrian and cycle access to James Gillespies Primary and Secondary Schools (complementary additional measures relating to school travel will be considered) and reflect proposals which have been put forward by local community group 'Blackford Safer Streets'.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If the LTN design for East Craigs is approved, officers will:
- 5.1.1 Notify all local residents of the final plan, setting out the rationale for the changes made and indicating the proposed date for installation;
 - 5.1.2 Install the measures required for LTN implementation;
 - 5.1.3 Undertake on-going engagement with residents, ward Councillors and Community Councils;
 - 5.1.4 Monitor implementation (e.g. traffic surveys) of the LTN; and
 - 5.1.5 Review implementation and make changes if appropriate.
- 5.2 Engagement on the proposal to introduce a permanent scheme under the WEL project will continue in the Autumn and will be subject to all of the normal processes associated with implementing a TRO.
- 5.3 Officers will continue to develop plans for the other schemes outlined above. In recognition of the relatively complex nature of the projects compared with other Spaces for People interventions, it is proposed to carry out an enhanced Notification process with wider publicity and more time for responses. After this process the projects will be presented to Committee for approval.
- 5.4 The next Spaces for People update will be presented to Committee on 12 November 2020.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The City of Edinburgh Council has been allocated £5m from the Scottish Government's Spaces for People programme.
- 6.2 The measures outlined for East Craigs will be funded from the Spaces for People funding. The Leith LTN and Greenbank to Meadows Quiet Route would be funded

by the same mechanism, whilst the Corstorphine South/Featherhall project would use NEP funding, as agreed by the Western Neighbourhood Partnership.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The introduction of a LTN at East Craigs was first considered as part of the WEL scheme. Consultation with local residents and representatives was undertaken but the statutory processes required to introduce a permanent scheme have not yet commenced.
- 7.2 There has been significant correspondence from local residents of East Craigs on this matter and, on Friday 28 August 2020, a public meeting with residents took place. The revised proposals outlined in this report have been developed to respond to the feedback received.
- 7.3 An interim Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) for the East Craigs LTN is currently being developed and is expected to be published by 9 October 2020.
- 7.4 As noted in paragraph 5.3, an enhanced Notification process is proposed in relation to the other LTN proposals. All will be the subject of IIAs.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 The most recent update on Spaces for People was presented to Policy and Sustainability Committee on [20 August 2020](#).

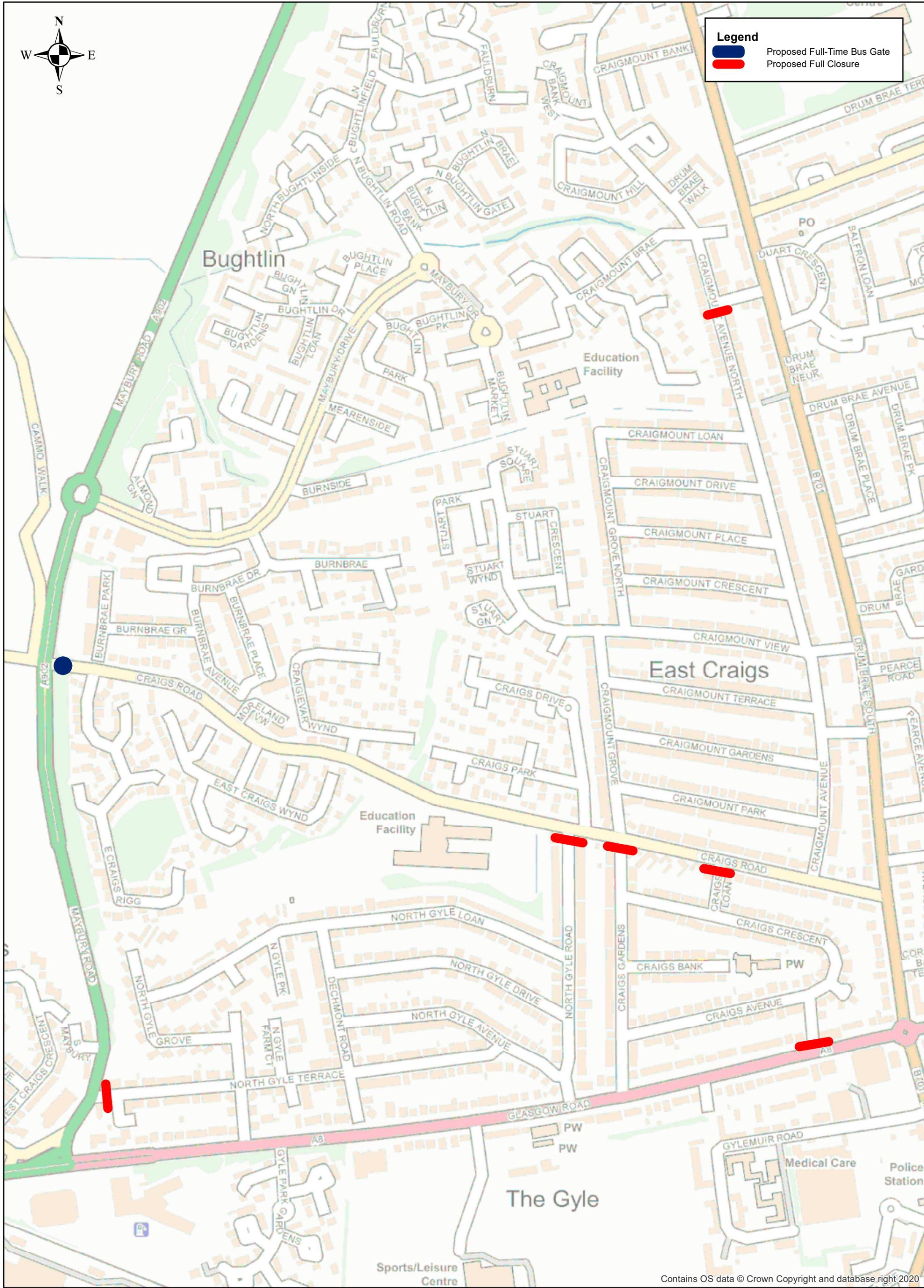
9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Original East Craigs LTN Design
- 9.2 Appendix 2 – Revised East Craigs LTN Design



Legend

- Proposed Full-Time Bus Gate
- Proposed Full Closure



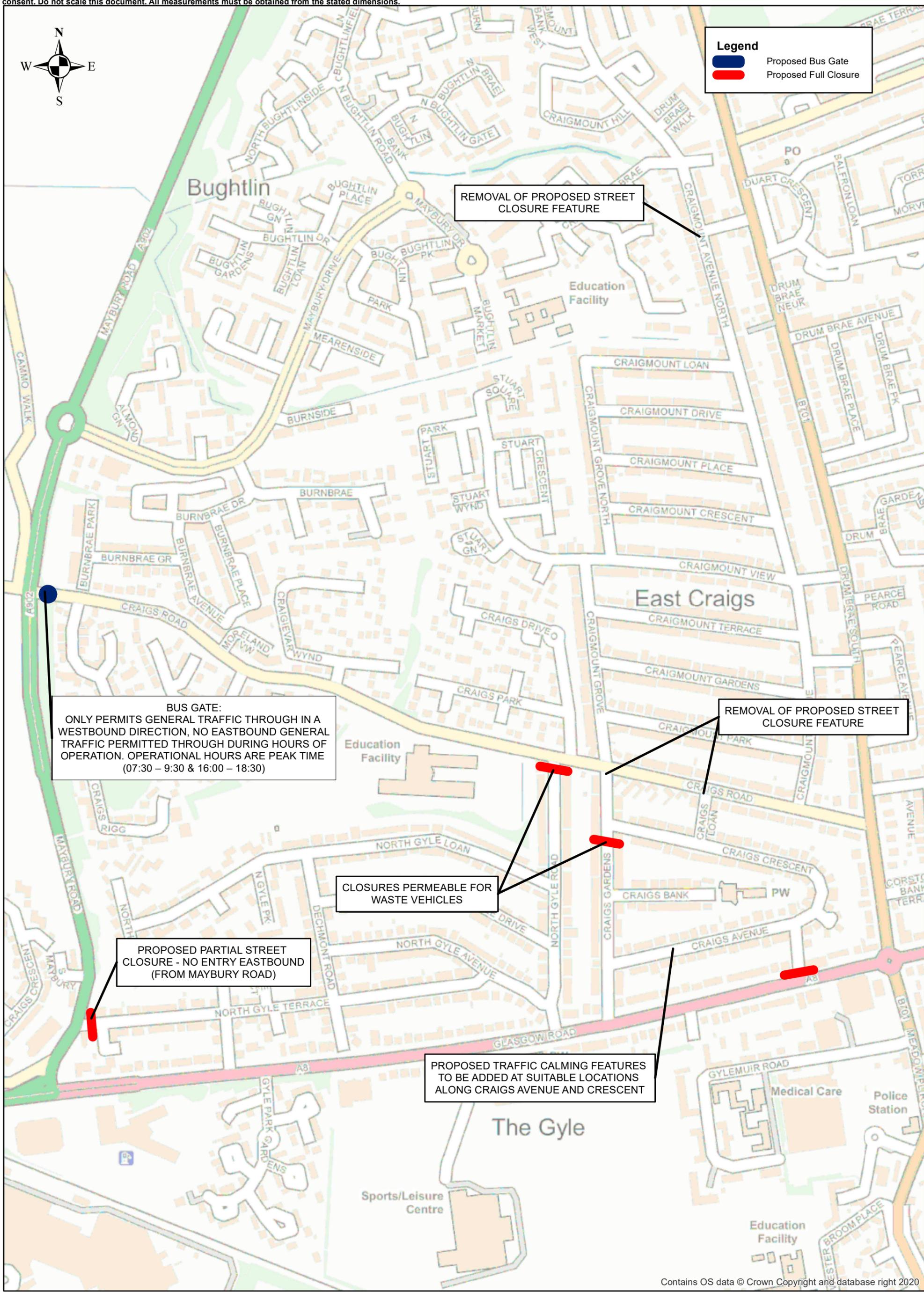
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Legend

- Proposed Bus Gate
- Proposed Full Closure



REMOVAL OF PROPOSED STREET CLOSURE FEATURE

BUS GATE:
 ONLY PERMITS GENERAL TRAFFIC THROUGH IN A WESTBOUND DIRECTION, NO EASTBOUND GENERAL TRAFFIC PERMITTED THROUGH DURING HOURS OF OPERATION. OPERATIONAL HOURS ARE PEAK TIME (07:30 – 9:30 & 16:00 – 18:30)

REMOVAL OF PROPOSED STREET CLOSURE FEATURE

CLOSURES PERMEABLE FOR WASTE VEHICLES

PROPOSED PARTIAL STREET CLOSURE - NO ENTRY EASTBOUND (FROM MAYBURY ROAD)

PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING FEATURES TO BE ADDED AT SUITABLE LOCATIONS ALONG CRAIGS AVENUE AND CRESCENT

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