
East Craigs LTN: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a Low Traffic Neighbourhood?

A “Low Traffic Neighbourhood” is a group of residential streets where “through-traffic” or “rat-running” is removed but residential access is maintained. HGVs and non-local traffic use the main or strategic roads instead.

2. Why a Low Traffic Neighbourhood?

The changes that are introduced as part of a Low Traffic Neighbourhood lead to reduced air and noise pollution due to less “through traffic” or “rat running”. Residential streets become quieter and can be used for children to play and for community activities.

They also make it easier and safer for people to travel through the area on foot, wheeling or by bike and vehicle closures can be used to introduce art or plants.

3. Why a Low Traffic Neighbourhood here?

There are several reasons why a Low Traffic Neighbourhood should be introduced in East Craigs:

- There is a lot of development happening in West Edinburgh. This could mean more people wanting to drive to and from these developments, through the East Craigs and North Gyle Estates.
- Residents have already expressed their concerns regarding the levels of traffic that cuts through East Craigs and North Gyle to avoid the busy junctions at Maybury, Barnton and Drum Brae. If the number of vehicles travelling through these junctions increases, more people may be tempted to try and save time by driving through these neighbourhoods.
- Traffic surveys were carried out in East Craigs and North Gyle in June 2019. These surveys show that a large number of vehicles were using many of the streets in these areas and were not local traffic. Many of these vehicles were also speeding.
- School travel plans tell us that most pupils in the area travel to school on foot. However, a significant proportion of pupils are dropped off by car. By reducing the volume of vehicles and vehicle speeds, this would improve the conditions for people walking, cycling and wheeling to school.

4. Why is this happening now?

This project has been brought forward, based around the feedback that has been received to date (through consultation associated with the West Edinburgh Link project and from the Council's Spaces for People Commonplace website), data that has been gathered, as well as the response to COVID-19

5. What is a “bus gate”?

A “bus gate” is a section of road that only buses, or other authorised vehicles can travel through. Emergency services are permitted through the gate, however private vehicles would not be. Signs are used to tell road users which vehicles are allowed and when.

6. How will the proposed bus gate be controlled / managed?

The bus gate would be controlled by an Automatic Number Plate Recognition enforcement camera. These can be installed on a temporary basis, which would be the case for this project.

7. What is a “modal filter”?

A “modal filter” prevents access by motorised vehicles in both directions. People travelling on foot, wheeling or by bike will be able to travel through the closure. It will be a row of objects such as bollards or planters with space for bicycles to pass through. These closures could include places for art, planting or seating. They can also be designed so that emergency service vehicles can pass through them.

8. Do these proposals consider the existing proposals for the new and extensive work on the Cammo (West Side) of Maybury Road from Maybury to Barnton junctions?

The proposals have carefully considered the planned developments in the areas around East Craigs. Indeed, the traffic modelling done in this area has highlighted that within the Low Traffic Neighbourhood, the developments to the west of Maybury Road would significantly increase rat running and traffic volumes in East Craigs. As such, part of the rationale of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood is to future-proof the area against these increases in traffic. The team working on the West Edinburgh Link project are also feeding into the development of the Maybury and Barnton junctions to help ensure a coherent development of transport infrastructure in the area.

9. Why has no consultation been complete before now?

Due to the agreed notification process the Council were committed to informing Councillors and other stakeholders prior to the public. Whilst no consultation has been completed on the final designs until now, residents have been consulted with throughout the development of the West Edinburgh Link project. Please refer to the next question and answer for more details.

10. Has any consultation been completed to-date?

The Low Traffic Neighbourhood in East Craigs was originally part of the West Edinburgh Link project. Consultation on what changes would improve the streets for walking, cycling wheeling were undertaken as part of the West Edinburgh Link project, including a full programme of consultation in March to May 2019 and smaller, more focused events in September 2019 and January 2020.

The feedback that was received during these consultations highlighted to the team that more interventions were required to make the streets feel safe and attractive for walking, cycling and wheeling. This feedback helped to shape the designs of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood which is now being proposed. Further feedback has been received via the Council’s Spaces for People Commonplace website, which also echoes the consultation responses previously received. In addition to this, detailed feedback was obtained from an advisory group of local residents about where the modal filters should be located to best address the rat running and vehicle speed issues.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 and the need to provide more space for people to socially distance, it was decided that this project would be taken forward as part of the Spaces for People programme.

Now that the temporary designs are ready to be implemented, we are informing local residents of the scheme and the reasons for it. These are temporary measures and will include further public engagement including a survey and socially distanced events (if permitted under Scottish Government and Council Guidance at the time). Through this process every resident will have the opportunity to give their feedback and help inform the development of the scheme.

The Council will monitor and review the impact of the measures and based on this will consider any other measures that may need to be implemented. The project will be kept under review with results shared via the Council’s website.

11. How were the measures and locations decided?

Having a Low Traffic Neighbourhood in East Craigs is informed by:

- Detailed public consultation that was carried out as part of the West Edinburgh Link project (WEL). Feedback from the consultation highlighted that many residents felt that certain streets in this area did not feel safe enough to cycle on due to “rat running” and high vehicle speeds.

- Vehicle volume and speeds surveys carried out as part of the WEL project that confirmed the issues highlighted by the consultation.
- The Spaces for People Commonplace website, where the public left comments also highlighting rat running, vehicle speeds, unsafe conditions for cycling and walking, and requests for certain roads to be closed.
- Detailed feedback from an advisory group of local residents about where the modal filters should be located to best address the rat running and vehicle speed issues.
- Recognition backed up by modelling data, that once the new developments in West Craigs and Cammo are completed the volumes of traffic moving through East Craigs, particularly on Craigs Road and Craigmount, will increase. This will make the area feel more unsafe and unattractive for walking and cycling.
- Analysis of census data showing that, compared to the rest of Edinburgh, a higher proportion of people in this area travel by car to work and that these journeys are typically between 1 and 3km. This is a fairly walkable and very cyclable distance for most people. The information in BikeLife Edinburgh also clearly indicates that more people would like to cycle and that the biggest barrier to people cycling is feeling unsafe on the roads because of traffic speeds and volumes. This scheme would help address this barrier and encourage more people to cycle.
- The East Craigs Primary School Travel Plan indicates that there are several existing issues in the area, including “rat running” and high vehicle speeds. These discourage parents and pupils from travelling to school by walking, cycling or wheeling and generally make them feel unsafe. Our proposals address these issues and will encourage more people to walk, cycle and wheel to school safely.

The individual measures and locations identified are proposed because they allow the Low Traffic Neighbourhood to function most effectively. They prevent “through traffic” or “rat running” vehicles from being able to travel through the neighbourhood whilst also enabling local residents to access their home and receive deliveries. The measures and locations were also informed by the feedback that has been received and by a series of traffic surveys that were undertaken in the area in June 2019.

12. Why do I have parking restrictions outside my house which are not close to any road closures?

Some parking restrictions are required to enable all vehicles to be able to travel through the Low Traffic Neighbourhood safely. These parking restrictions could be required to allow some vehicles, such as bin lorries, to reverse or turn, or to ensure that there is enough visibility next to the traffic calming measures.

13. What monitoring is being done?

The Council will monitor and review the impact of the measures at regular intervals and based on this will consider any other measures that may need to be implemented. The results of the monitoring will be shared via the Council’s website.

14. How long will the measures be in place?

The scheme comprises temporary measures and its final configuration will be informed by the consultation with local residents and a review of monitoring data gathered during the time that the scheme is in place. It is currently planned that a final implementation of road changes (as informed by the above process) would be carried out under the West Edinburgh Link project in 2021/22. This implementation would require a Traffic Regulation Order that would also involve further public consultation.

15. How do these measures relate to the West Edinburgh Link walking and cycling project?

The layout of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood concept was formed through the feedback to the West Edinburgh Link project’s public consultation. This called for addressing rat running, traffic volumes and speeds on certain roads in East Craigs.

16. What about the elderly and disabled?

Anyone who cannot walk, wheel or cycle still has the choice to use a private car, taxi or public transport. As there will be less vehicles on the road it may also be easier for these people to use their cars. The proposal has broad support from the Edinburgh Access Panel.

17. How will I get access to my home?

All residents will be able to reach their homes by all modes of transport. The route to their home by private car or taxi may be different and / or slightly longer.

18. Why will it take longer to drive in or out?

It takes longer to drive in and out because vehicles cannot travel straight through the Low Traffic Neighbourhood. This means that vehicles would have to re-route onto one of the main or strategic roads instead of using the residential streets.

19. Won't traffic displacement clog up the main roads?

A traffic modelling exercise has been undertaken, which shows that the impacts on congestion should be negligible. Impacts on air pollution will also therefore be very minor. The scheme is fully in line with the Council's policies to prioritise active travel and public transport whilst trying to reduce the number of private car trips, which are a key source of congestion and pollution.

20. How am I going to drop off my child at school?

From feedback on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in London and the BikeLife research studies in Edinburgh, there is a clear message that the greatest barrier to more people walking and cycling is feeling unsafe on the roads due to the volume and speed of vehicles. It is also clear that more people would like to walk and cycle if they were given the right road conditions to do so and when the right conditions are provided, they do walk and cycle more. A very clear indication of this was the significant rise in cycling during the lockdown when very few motor vehicles were on the streets.

The East Craigs Primary School Travel Plan indicates that there are several existing issues in the area with rat running and high vehicle speeds which make parents and pupils feel less safe to travel to school either walking, cycling or wheeling.

Our proposals address these issues and will make it viable for many more people to use active travel to get to school.

Also, as there will also be significantly fewer vehicles on the road, due to there being no through traffic, it will make social distancing much easier and safer for the people walking and cycling who are trying to avoid close proximity to others at peak times. There will likely be fewer car drop offs because more people can walk and cycle and there is less incentive to drop off by the school due to there being no through routes through the Low Traffic Neighbourhood. As a result, the concentration of pupils all arriving at the school gates at one time should be reduced, which again will significantly help social distancing.

Drum Brae cycling improvements

21. Why are improved cycle lanes only provided between Queensferry Road and Drum Brae Terrace?

Cycle lanes are only provided on this section because it provides a link between the Low Traffic Neighbourhood and Queensferry Road. Drum Brae Terrace also provides a link eastward to Drum Brae Leisure Centre, the John Muir Way and Corstorphine Hill. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that Drum Brae is a busy road and the uphill sections are where cyclists feel most vulnerable, due to the difference in the speed of the cyclist and adjacent vehicles.

22. Why does the route not continue across Queensferry Road?

The junction of Queensferry Road and Drum Brae North is constrained due to the number of traffic lanes required and the existing road width.

The pavements are too narrow to be considered for use by pedestrians and cyclists. We recognise the need for a better connection across Queensferry Road and we look to see how this could be delivered as part of a future scheme.

23. Why are there gaps in the segregated cycle tracks on Drum Brae?

The cycle tracks will be protected by temporary kerb units, which will be spaced at regular intervals. The wider gaps are provided to ensure that local residents can access their driveways, garages and local accesses.