

Ready steady stop for traffic...?

☒ In order for trams to run through Edinburgh's streets unimpeded, a number of changes to traffic management are required. The process to make these changes has been underway for a number of years and the proposals have been out to consultation both informally and through the statutory process.

Council officers are now set to present the final proposals to Councillors at the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee later this month.

431 objections were received in total which was a relatively low number considering the quantity of proposed changes along the route. Two areas generated the majority of comments. The proposal to ban the right-turn into Blenheim Place from London Road generated 248 letters of objection, 58% of all responses.

The closure to general traffic on Shandwick Place attracted 146 objections, which was 34% of the total received. Most of these were in relation to concerns about the consequential wider-area impact of the restriction, for example displaced traffic onto other streets.

The report recommends that the Blenheim Place junction be trialled without the banned turn to determine whether it would impact on traffic and the running of trams. However the report does not concede that Shandwick Place should be re-opened to mitigate against the effects of displaced traffic in nearby streets. There are details on the outcome of environmental monitoring and it is recommended that workshops be held to look at other alternatives to ease the concerns of local residents.

There were also other comments relating to proposals at

Picardy Place, Leith Walk, Forth Ports and relating to cycling. Although many of the remaining responses were either not specifically relevant to the TR0 process or included thoughts on the project rather than specific concerns about the TR0, the Council report includes responses to these points as well to ensure a full and fair consultation has taken place.

Cllr Gordon Mackenzie, Transport Convener at the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "We have had a lengthy period of consultation and whilst we cannot accommodate all the requests from objectors we have identified a way forward to work with them to minimise their concerns.

"This is a complex, statutory process which we must follow in order to have the streets along the tram route properly regulated. I requested that these reports be made public well in advance of the Committee and that a number of drop-in sessions be held to ensure that objectors can fully scrutinise the conclusions and have the opportunity to seek clarification, if needed, on the response to their objection.

"The recommendation is for the orders to now be made as advertised, however we do recognise that a number of people have concerns that their local areas will be adversely affected by changes to the road network.

"We have taken this into account and are now looking to how we could re-design the Blenheim Place junction without impacting on the tram route but allowing better access for local residents and businesses. While the impact on the wider area around Shandwick Place is not a statutory concern of the TR0 process we are proposing that a series of workshops be held with local people to investigate whether any of their suggestions, or any other measures can be put in to minimise the impact of displaced traffic on their area."

There are three reports in total, one on the outcome of the

TRO consultation and recommendations to make the traffic orders, a second on the next stage of the process and how wider area concerns could be accommodated and a third in response to a Motion to Committee on the possibility of re-opening Shandwick Place to general traffic on a temporary basis prior to tramworks re-commencing. At this time this is not recommended by Council officers.

To view the papers click [here](#) and go to Transport, Infrastructure and Environment, enter the date 21 Sept 2010 and hit search.