

Wester Hailes underpass given the green light



Local Wester Hailes MSP Gordon Macdonald has welcomed the Council's decision today to agree to the revised upgrade scheme for the railway underpass linking the new Wester Hailes Healthy Living Centre and the Westside Plaza Shopping Centre.

Following the council decision at the [Finance and Resources Committee](#) today Gordon said:- *"This decision will hopefully result in a more integrated solution between the healthy living centre and the shops at Westside Plaza. Any redesign should take into consideration the safety fears of the local community and as a result should increase footfall in the shopping centre. A win win situation for everyone concerned."*

As part of the Wester Hailes Healthy Living Centre development, being constructed by the South East Scotland Hubco on behalf of their clients NHS Lothian and the City of Edinburgh Council, there is a need to upgrade the access from the Westside Plaza car park. At present the existing railway underpass fails in its compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 amended by the DDA 2005. The existing upgrade scheme had caused safety concerns within the community.

Gordon continued: *-"The Wester Hailes Community Council was keen to secure a solution which provided a safe and attractive approach from the Westside Plaza car park. There is a history of problems with pedestrian underpasses in the nearby Calder Road which includes a series of 26 assaults and robberies over a 16 month period. In order to avoid the replication of the issues on the Calder Road the community would like to see an entrance to the railway underpass which is welcoming and*

inviting rather than the existing proposal which suggest a narrow and steep entrance.”

The community believe that if an attractive passageway can be constructed between the shopping centre and the Healthy Living Centre, then this could be of benefit to the Westside Plaza Centre owners and tenants. The Healthy Living Centre will be a facility for the south west of Edinburgh and many of the people using it might currently shop in other areas. There is therefore an opportunity to attract new custom for the existing tenants.

