

Improved design on Leith Walk gets the thumbs up

ENHANCED DESIGN FOR LEITH WALK GETS THE SUPPORT OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

An enhanced design for Leith Walk as part of the Leith Programme has been given the seal of approval by local residents and organisations.

Following a comprehensive public consultation earlier this year, the Council announced it would be seeking additional funding from the Scottish Government in order to give Leith Walk the best possible revamp.

At a meeting in Leith's McDonald Road Library last night, an enhanced design, which would make the thoroughfare more cycle and pedestrian-friendly, was presented by the Leith Programme team to local residents, business leaders and community groups.

Features of the enhanced scheme include:

- clear pedestrian priority over 1.8km, including safer crossing points;
- significant sections of uninterrupted cycle space (both dedicated on and off road sections);
- redesigned, simplified junctions;
- largely segregated cycle provision from Pilrig Street uphill for around 1km to Picardy Place;
- two-way segregated cycle provision from Annandale Street to the Omni centre;
- replacement of London Rd roundabout with a signalled junction to significantly enhance conditions for both pedestrians and cyclists;
- 1.75m wide cycle lane provision on the road in both directions between Foot of the Walk and Dalmeny Street (into

town) Pilrig Street (out of town);

- Narrower road environment with frequent zebra crossings, with a design that supports slower vehicle speeds;
- a simplified streetscape more conducive to community activity, trading and business; and
- better connectivity for sustainable forms of travel between the waterfront and the city centre.

Given the scope of this new design and the need to obtain a Traffic Regulation Order to implement the changes, local stakeholders were advised that opting for the enhanced design would affect the timescale.

✘ For anyone wishing to view the designs in detail and speak to the project team about any aspect of the programme, a drop in session will be held at McDonald Road Library on Tuesday 23 July, from 2pm and 8pm.

Councillor Lesley Hinds, Transport and Environment Convener, said: “It was very useful for us to be able to present this potential enhanced design for Leith Walk to local stakeholders tonight. It prompted a lot of interesting debate and we are pleased that there was such overwhelming support for the plans from those present.”

Sustrans Scotland Director, John Lauder, said:

“Sustrans Scotland wants to see Leith Walk reach its full potential as a busy, vibrant shopping and residential street. In order to achieve this aim, the City of Edinburgh Council, in partnership with ourselves, has put forward an ambitious proposal to Transport Scotland for the full 2.2km length of the street.

“Sustrans strongly backs the features of this ‘enhanced design’ for Leith Walk, including the addition of new crossing points, wider pavements and better cycle lane provision. We now call on the Scottish Government to carefully consider the Council’s ‘enhanced design’ proposal and fully back its

implementation.”

Keith Hales, Vice Chairman of the Leith Business Association, who attended the meeting, said: “This is a massive improvement on what we thought the designs were going to be and we will be commending the designs to the membership.”

Charlotte Encombe, Chair of Greener Leith, said: “Greener Leith welcomes the improvements shown in these exciting new draft designs for Leith Walk, which will give pedestrians and cyclists a vastly improved public realm and help to revitalise the economy of the area. We are also delighted that officers and councillors have included local people’s priorities for the street and have made real changes to the design. We look forward to collaborating on the detail of the designs as the project moves forwards.”

Constitution Street has been the focus of attention over recent weeks and the photos below show the current upgraded condition of the street and pavements. We think it looks good – what do you think?

