

# Cycle path Protesters to hand in petition to council



This Wednesday residents, cyclists and traders who say they will be affected by the council's proposed plans to develop a new cycle route from Roseburn to Leith will go to the City Chambers to present their [petition](#) to the Transport Convener.

The protest rails against proposals to introduce a new cycle way from Roseburn to Haymarket on the A8. They claim that it will affect businesses, create more congestion, air pollution and will be less safe for pedestrians.

The council's consultation on the proposals closes today and you can read more about the proposals [here](#).

The route which the council proposes is shown below



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The petition suggests using the existing National Cycle Route 1 as an alternative. The route runs along the off-road paths and low-traffic streets of Balbirnie. The protesters say this will save the council £1 million.

The protesters say that 2,278 people have signed the petition, (although the online version only has 422 signatures we are told there are many more on paper) and that 167 are cyclists.

*They tell us: “The petition was started last month and most signatories are from the 6,203 strong adult local population. Spokes have organised their own [counter-petition](#), with 580 signatures in favour. Protesters are thrilled that four times as many oppose the plans as support them. But the petition almost did not happen. Nobody in Roseburn knew about the proposals, due to the fact the Council forgot to inform locals of their plans. It was only due to the efforts of Ward Councillor Jeremy Balfour that the Council agreed to extend its consultation period by a month to 1<sup>st</sup> Feb.*

*“Shops will close should the cycle track go ahead- in Roseburn alone, 75% of the parking will be replaced by double red lines, thus preventing traders getting supplies. 34 businesses along the route submitted an [open letter to Councillor Hinds](#) on 29 January, published by the Edinburgh Evening News, outlining their concerns. Over a third of the population are elderly and bought homes in the area because of the shops and they are particularly fearful of the Council’s plans. The only businesses getting their own loading bays are Scotmid in Roseburn and Tesco’s in Haymarket. However, should a car park in one of them, lorries will be unable to unload food.*

*“The protesters will hear from those representing their voices- Pete Gregson, petitioner, local father and cyclist,*

*fears the congestion, as 1,200 cars and 40 lorries at peak hour are reduced from 4 lanes to 2. The removal of the westbound bus lane heralds chaos , as the 80 buses and 160 lorries vie for road space where previously they had a bus lane – yet Lothian Buses have backed the scheme. He believes air pollution will soon rival that of St John's Road, Scotland's worst. Pedestrians will be unsafe, expected to cross back and forth through cycling traffic to get to bus-stops and to cross roads. This is all for the sake of the 40 cyclists using the road at this time.*

*“Taxi drivers too, are angry at the planned removal of the taxi rank outside Haymarket Station, which threatens the viability of the City's only integrated transport hub, where trains, taxis, trams and busses all meet. Disabled people will suffer as they will have to journey further from the hub to get to the taxi rank.”*

Local businessmen and councillors are expected to speak at the protest.

Businesses from Roseburn to Haymarket have put huge posters in their shop windows. The traders line the path of the proposed one kilometre stretch of cycle track on the A8, which is to form the first leg of the Roseburn to Leith cycle track. They hope these will catch the eye of the drivers of the 2,000 vehicles which travel this road every day.

Petitioner Pete Gregson (and a Spokes member) said: “If the Council has declared war on the car, the best way of reducing congestion in town is not to make it worse. They should consider the [Congestion Charge](#) again they lost 12 years ago, but this time I believe this time they'd get it through.”