

Council estimate two years to complete the redesign of King's Road junction

The council continues to work on a redesign for the junction on Sir Harry Lauder Road, but council officers reckon it could take two years before any new layout becomes permanent.

According to a report for the Transport and Environment Committee, which meets on Thursday, the council intends to proceed with a design which removes some traffic lanes and introduces a single crossing for pedestrians and cyclists across the main roads leading into the junction. There is a diagram in the document below which shows the £1 million redesign which incorporates a segregated cycle route.



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Following the deaths of two cyclists at the junction, the council put a temporary road traffic order in place banning heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) coming from Portobello from turning left. Cars can still make the left turn, just not larger vehicles. The two cyclists who died, Heather Stronach and Stuart Elliot, were both involved in separate collisions with lorries at the junction. The council says that this temporary measure “mitigates many immediate road safety concerns”.

Spokes, the Lothian cycle campaign group, flagged this junction in their 2023 predictions stating that the “complex and dangerous” junction had short term cycle measures implemented in autumn 2022 with medium term plans to follow in late summer 2023. It is the longer term improvements which have yet to be implemented with members of Spokes and other stakeholder groups involved in the redesign. The council cites “resource pressures” as one of the reasons for the time it will take to complete the project, but officers have decided to deliver this redesign in-house rather than handing it over to a third party to create.

The report states that delivering this project in-house will: “offer more control and provide the best option to undertake further engagement with public transport operators, promote the necessary traffic orders and develop the detailed design”.

Spokes have submitted a deputation to the council expressing their frustration at the length of time this has taken, and will take, to complete. They want a full explanation of why the timetable outlined in the June 2023 committee papers has slipped so badly from expected delivery in Summer 2024 to

potentially spring 2026. Spokes also dispute the safety of the status quo: “The junction in its current state remains a hostile environment for everyone who walks, wheels and cycles despite the clear need for people to move between the various communities that surround the crossing without having to rely on a car. We have had recent reports of near misses by cyclists heading straight over the junction from Portobello by drivers turning left onto Sir Harry Lauder Road. Fishwives Causeway cannot be considered a viable alternative route for all as it only suits some routes and is not considered safe by many women in the dark given its isolation.”



King's Road junction with Sir Harry Lauder Road where HGV traffic coming from Portobello can no longer turn left



King's Road junction with Sir Harry Lauder Road

The long term solution is part of the Major Junctions Review which will be considered by the [Transport and Environment Committee on Thursday](#). Council officers said that the permanent and long term redesign will involve consultation with public transport providers, and that although the temporary traffic orders have been continued indefinitely, it will take a further 24 months before a permanent solution is in place.

A council officer explained to The Edinburgh Reporter that Sir Harry Lauder Road is a principal distributor route and the council is keen not to create significant delays for public transport, perhaps as an unintended consequence of any redesign, so consultation with Lothian Buses is an important part of the process.

The King's Road junction is not actually the highest on the priority list. It sits at number nine on the list of major junctions which require some attention from the council. Work is already under development on four of the top 10 junctions and five others are being considered in a brief to outside

consultants. The top four are the junction at Lothian Road/Princes Street, the Tollcross junction, the Maybury Road/A8 Glasgow Road junction, and the East End Princes Street junction.

Transport Convener, Cllr Scott Arthur, said: "It amazes me that the most challenging junction in the city is right in the city centre at the west end of Princes Street and it is incredible when you look at the number of pedestrians moving around there, just incredible."

When TEC consider the City Mobility Plan (CMP) and Future Streets Framework in February 2024 the top 10 schemes will be reviewed – and this will include a review of the funding and other resources the council has to manage any projects which result.

Cllr Arthur explained that the CMP would be "incredibly important stuff". He said: "This plan will establish how we want the city to work and what we want to be prioritising on individual routes. We will also see there how the key arterial routes are going to look and operate in terms of the division of modes. There will be more detail about how we're going to manage parking and loading on those routes. And another part will include plans for getting non-essential vehicles out of the city centre and whether that happens quickly or with a phased approach."

Appendix 1 List of Prioritised Junctions Scored from Highest to Lowest Priority

Green schemes – To progress
Amber schemes – To be considered under other projects
Red schemes – Under review following outcome of City Mobility Plan
Top 40 schemes – All to be considered for early intervention package.

ID	Junction Name	Baseline Score	Review for Major Improvements	Review for Quick Wins Identification and Design
1	West End/Lothian Road	5.20	No	Yes
2	Tollcross	4.95	No	Yes
3	Haymarket Junction	4.83	Yes	Yes
4	East End	4.81	No	Yes
5	Milton Link Junction	4.67	Yes	Yes
6	Holy Corner	4.55	Yes	Yes
7	Crewe Toll Roundabout	4.54	Yes	Yes
8	St Mary's Street	4.45	Yes	Yes
9	King's Road Junction	4.35	Yes	Yes
10	Maybury Junction	4.35	No	Yes
11	South Charlotte Street	4.32	No	Yes
12	Jock's Lodge	4.29	No	Yes