

Critical Mass cycle to the Braids highlights council decision on Quiet Route

Councillors in Edinburgh agreed in early March to remove the modal filters in the Braid Estate and also dismantle the Quiet Route.

The council is proceeding with the move which had most backing in a consultation – 47% – to reopen two roads – Braid Road and Braid Avenue to traffic, and construct a new cycleway which it is estimated will cost around £400,000.

This decision was discussed at length during the committee meeting, and has been hotly debated online since, but work has already begun to remove some of the measures which were installed during the pandemic.

Some residents in the Braid Estate have now set up a [petition](#) to stop the council from removing the modal filters and road closures, saying that it will increase the risk for cyclists and pedestrians. They also claim that to reduce costs the council plans on using second hand wands and plastic orcas to delineate the cycle lane after the Quiet Route is ripped out.

Spokes say in their latest Bulletin that main roads need segregated cycle lanes whereas residential streets need freedom from through traffic. This is they say the policy put forward in the council's document [Future Streets](#) which sets out how the council will reduce congestion, improve conditions for those walking and cycling and also for those sitting outside a café or delivering to a business.

The cycling campaign group explains that deputations addressing councillors argued to retain the filters but claim that “a confusing mess of politics and a consultation, self-selected, omitting option costs and treated as a referendum, led to the perverse decision which officers plainly told councillors conflicted with their own policies”. Spokes also said that the through traffic had reduced by 39% and cut traffic speeds from 28mph to just 17mph, which they say suggests the speeding was due to through traffic or “rat-runners” and not residents.

Paul Findlay who is a local resident and behind the petition, joined the Critical Mass cycle from The Meadows to the Braids on Saturday and addressed the assembled cyclists before the event. He said: “We are asking the council to look again at this decision, ask yourselves, ask the residents, ask the people who use the quiet route what they want and what will benefit everyone – not just a few loud people who want to drive their cars in an unsafe manner.”

Ed Hawkins of Blackford Safe Routes spoke to the Transport Committee ahead of the decision, explaining why it was so important to the group to retain modal filters. He said: “Blackford Safe Routes are clear that modal filters are the only sensible option on residential streets. We welcome the officer recommendation for Whitehouse Loan of the revised option to that is retaining the full filter Strathearn Road and adding a new filter on Clinton Road. Modal filters reduce the risk of death and serious injury by 50% including for drivers.

“The safety of people has always been at the heart of Blackford Safe Routes. And we were reminded of how dangerous Edinburgh has roads are last week. Our committee member and her son were involved in a car crash with a speeding driver. She has suffered a broken neck and damage to her knee. Car crashes like this are a direct consequence of street designs that prioritise cars and speed, creating places where people

feel unsafe. high traffic volumes and speeds can be designed out campaigners against modal filters ignore that there is a human cost.”

Mr Hawkins added there had been traffic evaporation of around 40% and that had not led to increased traffic on nearby streets, proving that the low traffic neighbourhood had worked.

[The deputations and the councillors’ deliberations from 7 March can be watched online on the council webcast here.](#)



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