



RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT THE CAUSEY DEVELOPMENT TRUST'S PROPOSAL IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (TRO/16/44) RSO/16/12 PROPOSAL

Introduction and Background

Abbreviations:

Southside Community Council (SCC)

Planning Group of the Southside Community Council (PGSCC)

Causey Development Trust (CDT)

StudioDub (SD)

Southside Association (SA)

West Crosscauseway (WCC)

This document has been prepared in response to queries raised at the SCC Planning Group (4 Oct 2016), SA Meeting (4 Oct 2016) regarding the TRO/RSO consultation and to comments made on the SD Keep The Causey Open Facebook page.

Query 1: Proposed vehicle turning at Quarry close is dangerous to cyclists and pedestrians

Response. CDT's proposal has been developed in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council and safety audited throughout this process.

Current traffic levels through WCC are high - 116 veh/hr am and 76 veh/hr pm. Most of this is through traffic often at a high speeds, so WCC is effectively a shortcut for motorists, probably mainly to avoid lights elsewhere. Reducing this to local access only will dramatically reduce the traffic (not to mention vehicle noise) in WCC and will be safer and more pleasant for everyone. SPOKES and Living Streets Scotland have been involved at key stages in CDT's design process and are broadly supportive of CDT's plans for the area. See also response to query 2 below.

Query 2: The lack of a dedicated and effective footway/pavement on WCC

Response. This query mainly reflects a misunderstanding of our proposals.

The proposed surface of the eastern part of WCC is a shared space, so there's no defined footway, cycleway or road carriageway and it's also level with no kerbs. This approach to the design seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance of motor vehicles, primarily through lower speeds, and thereby making the streets or spaces involved more pleasant and safer for pedestrians and cyclists. Users of the space, particularly car drivers, are made aware on entry that the road environment is different and so become more observant and vigilant and more considerate of other users. This approach has been implemented successfully in various British cities in recent years, for example in Kensington High Street, London, where, among other benefits, accidents and injuries to pedestrians have been significantly reduced by 43% (over two years of 'before' and 'after' monitoring).

Some of the more specific details of the design this shared surface will be developed in the next stage of the design process, in consultation with CEC's Access Panel, so that people with various disabilities are fully considered, and, if local residents and others wish to be involved in this process too, CDT would welcome that.

Query 3: Creating a cul-de-sac with loading any time at the east end of WCC with vehicles up to 7.9m length is unworkable, is against HSE, Scottish Government and Freight Transport Assoc. guidance.

Response. Our design proposal has been subject to robust checks. The design team has used vehicle tracking to show that turning for vehicles up to this size is workable, and the proposal has also been audited for road safety. CEC Waste Management have also been consulted and have stated that they are happy with their smaller bin lorry turning here (this manoeuvre also happens elsewhere in the city). We also note that bin lorries attend the street once or twice week and normally have a banksman in attendance for turning.

At present, large vehicles can and do pass through West Crosscauseway, often double parking to unload, as shown in photos on Studio Dub's Facebook page. It is not clear in SD's proposal how any vehicles would unload without blocking the carriageway and loading across their proposed cycle lanes.

With the street stopped up, we envisage that delivery drivers generally will be discouraged from entering West Crosscauseway as it will be more time consuming to do that than to use the designated loading bay on Nicolson Street.

Query 4: Removal of permit parking spaces at east end of street, bins in that location, and lack of consultation on this.

Response:

PARKING SPACES

In a consultation with SD in June 2015, they indicated that they often had problems parking in the residents' bays in WCC, due to other people parking there in the evening while the zone doesn't operate. CEC is currently implementing new parking regulations to permit residents' permit holders to use pay bays for parking, so the pressure to have these residents' only bays in the street is reduced. There are a large number of pay bays nearby. As the presence of parked cars in the street at any time is likely to encourage others to consider fly parking there, on balance, in order to prioritise people and create street that works for people on foot and on bicycles, we feel it's better omit the two residents' parking bays.

BINS

The existing bins at this end of the street have been relocated to accommodate the new Toucan Crossing for cyclists. As mobile items an alternative location for bins could be discussed in the next design stage.

CONSULTATION GENERALLY

With regard to public consultation on these design proposals, these were first consulted on in 2010. Since 2012, they have been advertised publically in the prominent, colourful display board in the western part of WCC, along with information on how to contact us and with encouragement to view current proposals in more detail on our website, which has been updated as the design process has evolved. This CDT website encourages people to contact us and participate in our meetings. In addition, we held a 2-day Community Exhibition in March 2015 in one of the two churches in the space itself. Residents and businesses in WCC and adjoining streets and representatives of the two

churches affected by the TRO have commented regularly on details of the design as these have evolved, including parking arrangements, through individual consultations and attending the CDT steering group meetings which are well advertised and open to the public.

Query 5: Removal of the bus stops and cycle lanes (with no plans to replace them) on Chapel Street and lack of public consultation on this aspect.

Response:

BUS STOPS

The bus stops were indicated as repositioned on the drawings displayed and consulted on at the Community Exhibition held in March 2015. No one actually commented in their feedback on bus stops or, as far as we are aware, asked about them, so we haven't anything to hide here and it cannot really be said there has been no attempt to consult the public on this issue.

The options for bus stops along Buccleuch Street/Chapel Street have been discussed with the CEC public transport team, Lothian Buses, CDT and the University as part of the scheme's development. The final proposals for the stops will be considered at the next stage of design development where CEC would normally work with Lothian Buses to review provision locally.

CYCLE LANES

CDT's proposal will lead to significantly reduced traffic speeds on this stretch of Chapel Street and removes the need for a segregated cycle lanes through The Causey. The leaflet circulated by SD speaks from the point of view of segregated lanes for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians and therefore misses the fundamental point of the Causey Project that *it seeks to change people's behaviour significantly*.

As noted above, the principle of a shared surface has been implemented successfully elsewhere in British cities but is relatively innovative in Scotland. The idea behind shared space is that all users - pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle drivers - respect each other. By introducing elements that signal that none of these groups has 'exclusive right of way', greater vigilance and awareness is created in the mind resulting in drivers, cyclists and pedestrians proceeding more slowly and cautiously. A slow vehicle speed means that a street is safer and more pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists and is one of the key reasons why the 20 mph speed limit has been introduced widely by CEC in Edinburgh.

We are confident the CDT proposal will lower vehicle speeds significantly from 20mph to 10-15mph through this relatively short section of the existing cycle route through the Causey. To further this aim, we're also narrowing the carriageway along Chapel Street, raising it almost to pavement level (so that vehicles entering the Causey from north and south have to go up ramps) and changing its surface from tarmac to setts, to signal to drivers that they are entering a restricted zone.

This aspect of the design of the Causey has been developed in close consultation with CEC's cycling team and with Sustrans, a UK charity which promotes walking, cycling and use of public transport and provides funds via a competitive application process for projects which encourage these. The CDT proposals have been carefully audited from the road safety point of view.

Sustrans wants to encourage everyone (including children, older people and inexperienced others) to be able to cycle safely and enjoyably. To do that, however, we need transformational change to our streets and the Causey Project is an early step in that direction. We have taken encouragement from the fact that such a widely-respected environmentally-minded body as Sustrans has judged our project merits funding among the range of no doubt other well-argued projects contending for funding. If our project had not obtained significant funding commitment from Sustrans, the funds

involved would simply have gone to projects in other places in Scotland or UK, projects which Sustrans must have previously rated less valuable than ours.

Query 6: Comments on SD proposal

Response. It's not clear what consultation with the public or relevant stakeholders the SD proposal has actually involved. Nor does it address the community brief for The Causey which CDT developed through engagement with the local community and other stakeholders.

The SD proposal maintains WCC as a one-way route for vehicles i.e. effectively as a short cut for vehicles from Nicolson St to Buccleuch St and areas beyond, with contraflow cycle lanes on either side. With the vehicle traffic flows through this street, this is not ideal for cyclists. We are unaware of any consultation with cyclists on this, but we note that the present one-way system is dangerous for pedestrians crossing at the western end of WCC, due to the speed of vehicles coming round the blind corner to the east.

The SD proposal puts 5 car parking spaces (4 in other versions) in a dominant position in the triangular public space, although their video 'fly through' (posted on their website and shown at the SA meeting) omits to show any cars parked there and therefore creates a quite misleading impression. Cars parked there would have to reverse out over the carriageway and SD's two cycle lanes, with traffic coming round a blind bend from the eastern part of WCC.

The SD proposal screens off Chapel street with a line of trees - as if protection is needed from cars and cycles on Chapel St – and this separates the western part of the triangle visually from the Chapel of Ease, now being transformed into a church for the Orthodox Community. Linking the two churches in the space visually is a significant part of the community's brief and some of our visual detail reflects that.

SD have stated on their facebook page that the CDT proposal to make the eastern part of WCC an access only street contravenes the Scottish Government's policy document on 'Designing Streets' in respect of culs de sac. However their quotation is selective, not quite accurate in terms of context, and doesn't pick up the recommendations that discourages the use of one-way streets (p20).

In fact 'Designing Streets' actually prioritises quality of 'place' and quality of 'spaces' over 'movement' and that is exactly what CDT is trying to do in order to make a transformational change within the historic environment at The Causey, whereas the SD proposal maintains the status quo and privileges movement of vehicles.

Since the SD proposal thus essentially maintains the current priority for vehicles in the street and does not propose transformational change, we are certain it would be unable to obtain any funding from Sustrans, whose commitment of substantial funds to the CDT proposal is key to our current design being implemented, as well as other current funders.

In conclusion, CDT is designing The Causey from the point of view of people and has offered local people the opportunity to be involved in the design process.

We consulted with local people in the first instance to discover the brief for the Causey and this has been a key reference for the design, which has been fully consulted on throughout. It has been open to SD to participate at all stages and they would have been most welcome to do so.

Though SD state on their Facebook page that they consider their involvement with the Causey Project to have been 'active' from the outset, no-one from SD has actually attended even one of

CDT's Steering Group's monthly meetings in the 9 years of our existence or any of our community ideas workshops. The only involvement of SD in CDT meetings of any kind we are aware of is attendance at our AGMs in 2015 and 2016, although we believe they did attend the original Causey 2007 event, the Public Consultation in 2010 and our Southsiders event in 2013. Gordon Duffy attended the Community Exhibition in 2015 and completed a feedback form, which we followed up with two further one to one consultation meetings earlier this year.

We regret very much that SD were not involved at earlier stages of the process, as their input would have been valuable and may have added to our collective learning experience of understanding the complexity of designing the public realm for people.

David Wood, Chair of CDT on behalf of members of CDT Steering Group
October 2016