

SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Notes from Planning Group re The Causey

In particular TRO 201- TRO/16/44 (West Crosscauseway, Edinburgh)

Today the Planning Group met to discuss the Causey. It was given a presentation from two members of The Causey promoting the overall scheme and the TRO as part of it. The Group had also previously been in discussion with Gordon Duffy (Studio Dub) who lives and works in West Crosscauseway and had raised concerns on behalf of residents. Paperwork had been received from both.

It was agreed that, in principle, the aims of the Causey project are sound and the 'Statement of Reasons' for the TRO valid. The Group therefore supports the project.

However, it was also noted that there was very little proven support for the scheme from residents of West Crosscauseway and that it seemed that Gordon Duffy/ Studio Dub represented an equal number of residents as the Causey's promoters.

The key area of difference is in respect of traffic management. The Causey's proposal (CP), represented by the TRO, is for the closure of the street to motor vehicles at its west end, beyond Quarry Close. Studio Dub had proposed an alternative (SP) that still allowed the street to operate in one direction for motor vehicles travelling from Nicolson Street through to Chapel Street.

The issue is centred on access to and from Quarry Close, and indeed West Crosscauseway itself. In the CP, vehicles (including those delivering to shops in West Crosscauseway, and cars taking infirm people to the church) will have to turn round at the 'closed' end and there will be two-way traffic along a very narrow street, which cycle traffic and pedestrians will share. This was seen as a potential hazard, with delivery vehicles blocking the 'closed' end, as they often do East Crosscauseway. While the CP is intended to be 'transformational' in attempting to remove the primacy of motor vehicles in West Crosscauseway, there were concerns that the current motor traffic would merely be 'restreamed' into West Nicolson Street and/or Hope Park Terrace, already heavily trafficked, and the CP has not addressed this.

The SP, on the other hand may not do enough to 'transform' the street from a much used thoroughfare, to one in which pedestrians feel they 'own' the space and in which motor traffic is reduced to walking pace. However, it was felt that the concerns that the SP tried to address were not invalid.

In conclusion it was felt that the most logical way forward was to put the CP in place as far as possible on a trial basis, in particular by closing West Crosscauseway beyond Quarry Close. This trial should last long enough for road users to become familiar and acclimatised to the change. As part of this, assessment should be made of the effect of the closure on other east-

west roads in the vicinity. If, as the CPs supporters suggest, no obvious ‘problems’ emerge, either with circulation at the Quarry Close ‘end’ or with traffic flow nearby, the closure can be made permanent and the CP go ahead without any major revision. If problems do manifest themselves the CP can be revised before extensive work takes place to rebuild the Causey in its new form.

The Community Council Planning group therefore supports the implementation of the TRO on a temporary basis, for at least six months, but no more than one year, with a thorough assessment of its operation being made with a view to proving its benefit and workability before any more permanent TRO is put in place.

Nicholas Oddy
Chair, SSCC planning group,
4th October 2016