

Letter to Evening News

Dear Editor,

The Evening News yesterday revealed that there were now two proposals for Roseburn, one of which removes 100m of track from the shops. I said in the article that the changes were a “partial victory”- if the version that saved the Roseburn shops was adopted. But the amended scheme is riddled with flaws both for Roseburn, and still spells disaster for West Coates and for Haymarket, as we learnt as several of us Roseburn residents and traders sat with the Council cycling officer in the Murrayfield bar on Tuesday, where he showed us his plans.

For instance, in Roseburn the cycling officer's plan for three Roseburn Place road closures still isolate the Chiropracter and Murrayfield View retirement homes. The new proposal to run the cycle track round the end of Roseburn Street outside Tesco's (an already very narrow junction) reduces the road width by 25% and so makes this junction unusable for long HGVs coming from Russel Road- and this is an official HGV route. It ignores the problems we flagged up in March of Abellio Scotrail getting their trains round the junction and the officer admits he never thought of consulting them. I suspect he has not consulted the bin lorry drivers either, as they flow round this junction too. Joined-up thinking is a talent that continues to be in short supply at Council HQ.

The cycling officer was unfazed that by moving the taxi rank from the Haymarket station it ceases to be an integrated transport hub: he remarked the needs of cyclists outweigh those who must get to a taxi, whether they be elderly, or with kids, or with loads of baggage. Most shops at Haymarket will lose their loading and thus their income.

The terrifying “Bus-stop Islands” remain, an accident waiting to happen to elderly commuters as they dodge cyclists to get on and off a bus (there is a high proportion of elderly folk in this area). Still on the subject of buses, the officer is content with losing the westbound bus lane.

I pointed out that the congestion of 50 buses and 600 cars carrying upwards of 5,000 people at rush hour being backed up all along West Coates on one lane from Roseburn all the way back to Haymarket would hugely impact on commuting travel times, yet all the officer saw was the odd few minutes delay. Truly, I think he lives in a world of make-believe when it comes to traffic modelling.

I would have to say that the revised scheme B's only redeeming characteristic is that it leaves the Roseburn shops out of the equation – but it is a dog's dinner of a compromise that really needs a lot more work.

In the revised plans the cycling officer says the “Results of the consultation show a high overall level of support, with 67% of over 2,500 respondents supporting the proposals.”? Yet he neglects to mention the petition against raised 4,000 signatures objecting to the scheme- that is in a population of 6,200 adults. His appraisal is a flagrant misrepresentation of reality.

I was hoping the officer might have considered our suggestions- the ones we gave to the Transport & Environment Committee on the 7th June. That day, the Vice-convenor, Cllr McVey, assured us that our scheme, “The Roseburn Vision” would be considered as an alternative and would come to the next Committee meeting alongside the cycling officers plans. Yet the Council cycling officer admitted he had not looked at our 25 recommendations and had no plans to include them in his report to Committee.

Regarding “The Roseburn Vision” there is in his plans just a dismissive 5- line appraisal of all our hard work – this from a man who admits he has not even studied the detail of what we propose. We expect that our scheme be evaluated and costed properly.

We are appealing to Cllr McVey to intervene. This is not what we have fought so long and hard for.

Yours sincerely, Pete Gregson

The Cycling Officer’s geography comparing his scheme and that of the Roseburn Vision, using National Cycle Route 1, is questionable.

- The Cycling Officer (Phil) states in his report that his route “is significantly shorter”. I measured it. His route is 940m. Our route is 1060 metres. A difference of 120m, or 12.7% is not significant. It is slight.
- He claims his route avoids Haymarket Yards. If he had bothered to read our proposal, he would have learned that our plan proposes a route which also avoids Haymarket Yards.
- He argues his route is significantly less hilly. Again, he abuses the term “significant”. True our route is more hilly, but only slightly. I have cycled both routes many times. Journey time by Phil’s route: 3 minutes. By our one: 4 minutes
- So- for the sake of cutting one minute off a journey, Phil wants to blow £1M, ruin 54 businesses, remove a bus lane and annoy every commuter going west by creating huge congestion and longer bus travel times.

DETAIL

Roseburn Area: Alternative Route – Option B

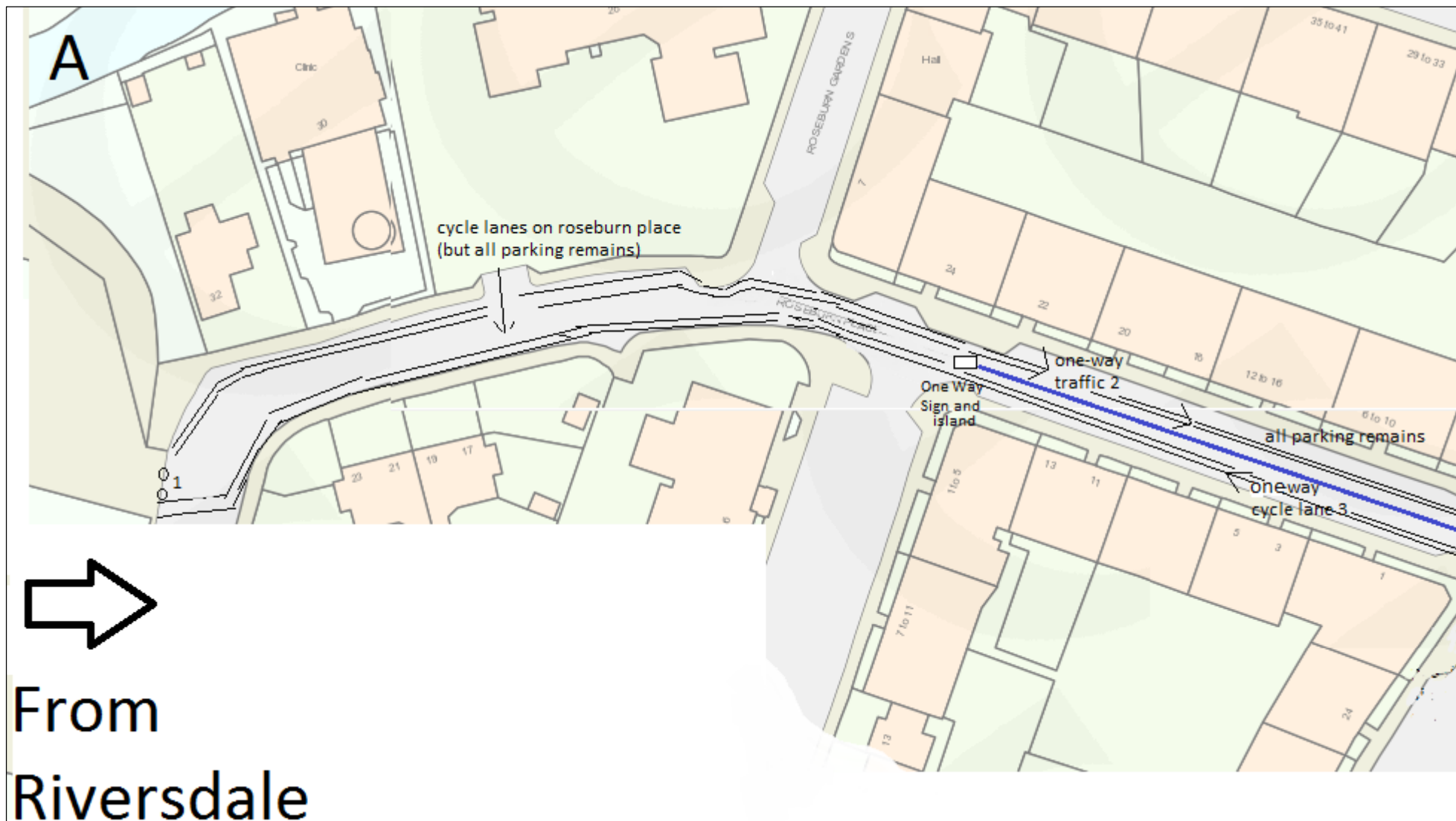
(we all know option A- the protected cycle track on Roseburn Place- not much change there: only a wee bit extra loading)

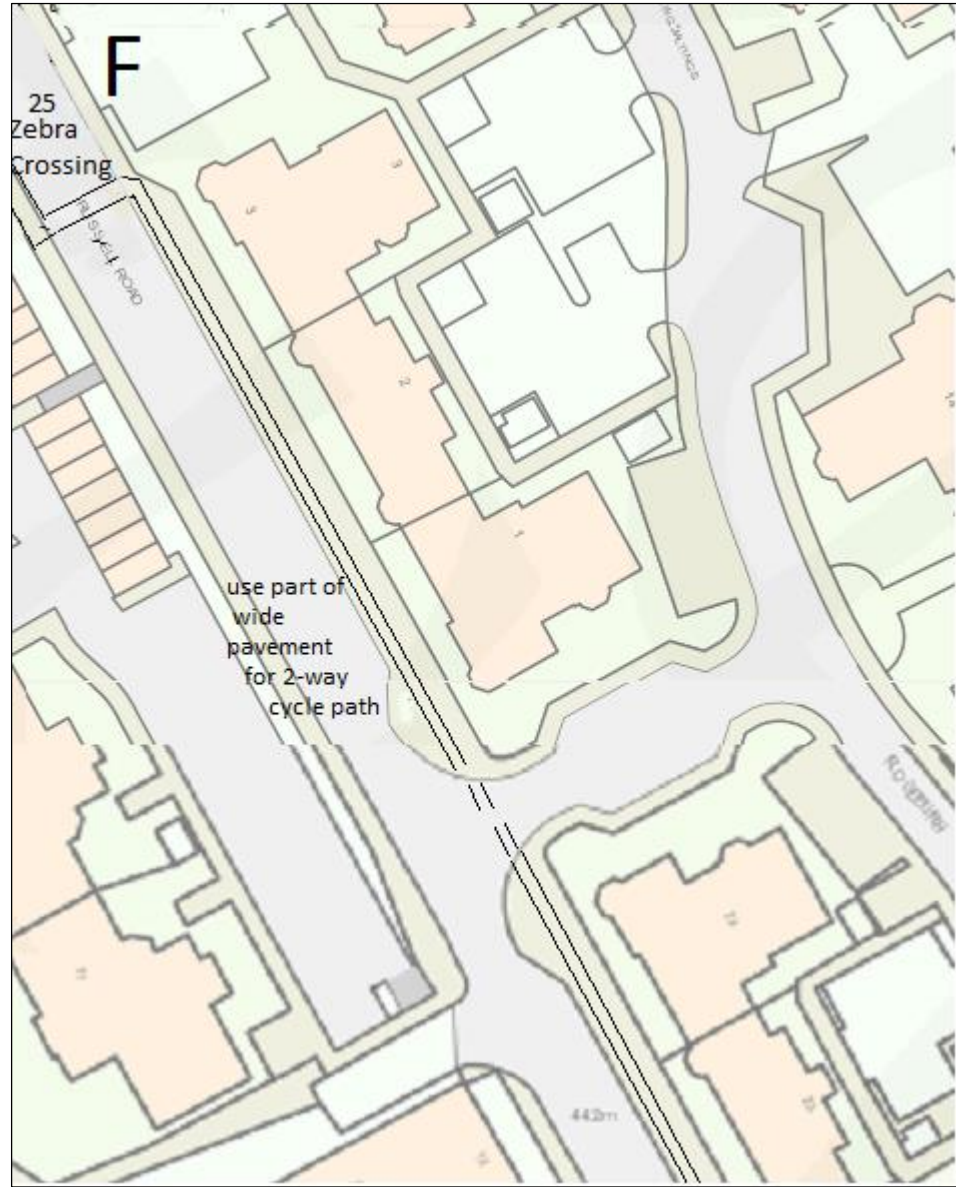
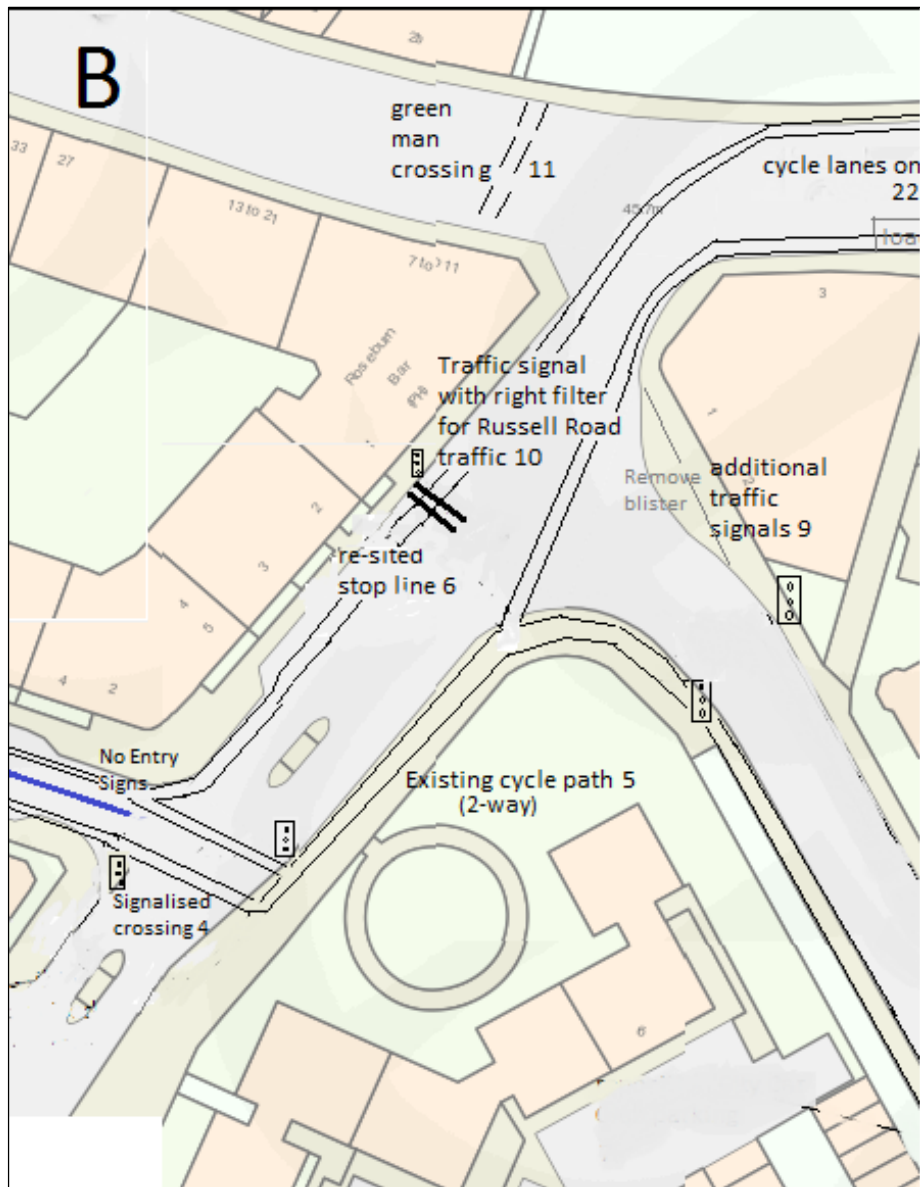
Osman Sinsel from Vigo’s Deli flagged up a concern: the closure of Roseburn Place and Roseburn Gardens. There will be three closures. This will stop drivers doing a loop-the-loop if they can’t find a parking space as they travel west along Roseburn Terrace. At present, anyone who can’t stop on Roseburn Terrace on their first attempt can turn left down Roseburn Gardens, left along Roseburn Place, left up Roseburn Street and left again back onto Roseburn Terrace.

The Council Plan B stops that; drivers will keep going- the next turning opportunity will be Riversdale- and the shops at Western Corner will get the trade.

The Roseburn Vision does not close the roads- these closures are un-necessary. The one-way plug of Roseburn Place that features in both the Council and Roseburn Visions will suffice to stop rat-running.

The other major concern is the new proposal to run the cycle track round the end of Roseburn Street outside Tesco’s (an already very narrow junction) reduces the road width by 25% and so makes this junction unusable for long HGVs coming from Russel Road- and this is an official HGV route. Also reconfiguring the Russell Road/Roseburn Street interchange is un-necessary and will create congestion on Roseburn Street. All that is needed is the new set of lights on Russell Road that the Roseburn Vision proposes. Here is a plan showing how the Council wants to change things; it is followed by the Roseburn Vision proposals.





Next: West Coates & Haymarket Area:

FOR DETAILS
OF ROSEBURN SECTION
REFER TO -

OPTION A - 5135105-100-0095
OPTION B - 5135105-100-0097

WESTBOUND BUS
LANE REMOVED

LINK TO RAILWAY CYCLE ROUTE
(NCN1) VIA WESTER COATES ROAD
AND WESTER COATES AVE.
SEE SHEET 1

EXIT

IMPROVED
FOOTWAY
POCKET
SQUARE

ENTRANCE

EVENING LOADING

WESTBOUND BUS
LANE REMOVED

DRAFT

Key

Parking
Public
Resident
Shared
Greenway
Motorcycle
City Car Club
Disabled
Loading
Greenway
Other Loading

Waiting and Loading restrictions

Double Line
Single Line
Reconstructed Shared Space
Internal/Relief
Pedestrian/Cycleway
Crossing
Tactile Parking
At Crossing
Tactile Greenway
Parking
Ramp On/Off Related Greenway

Greenway Double Line

Greenway Double Line
Greenway Single Line
Reconstructed Footway
Potential Cycle
Parking Locations
Tactile Loading Parking
Tactile Transverse
Parking
RECYCLING BIN

Miscellaneous

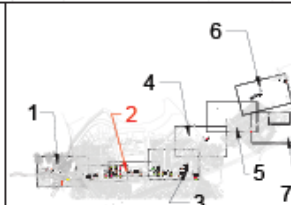
Tree
Bench
Grass

Transport facilities

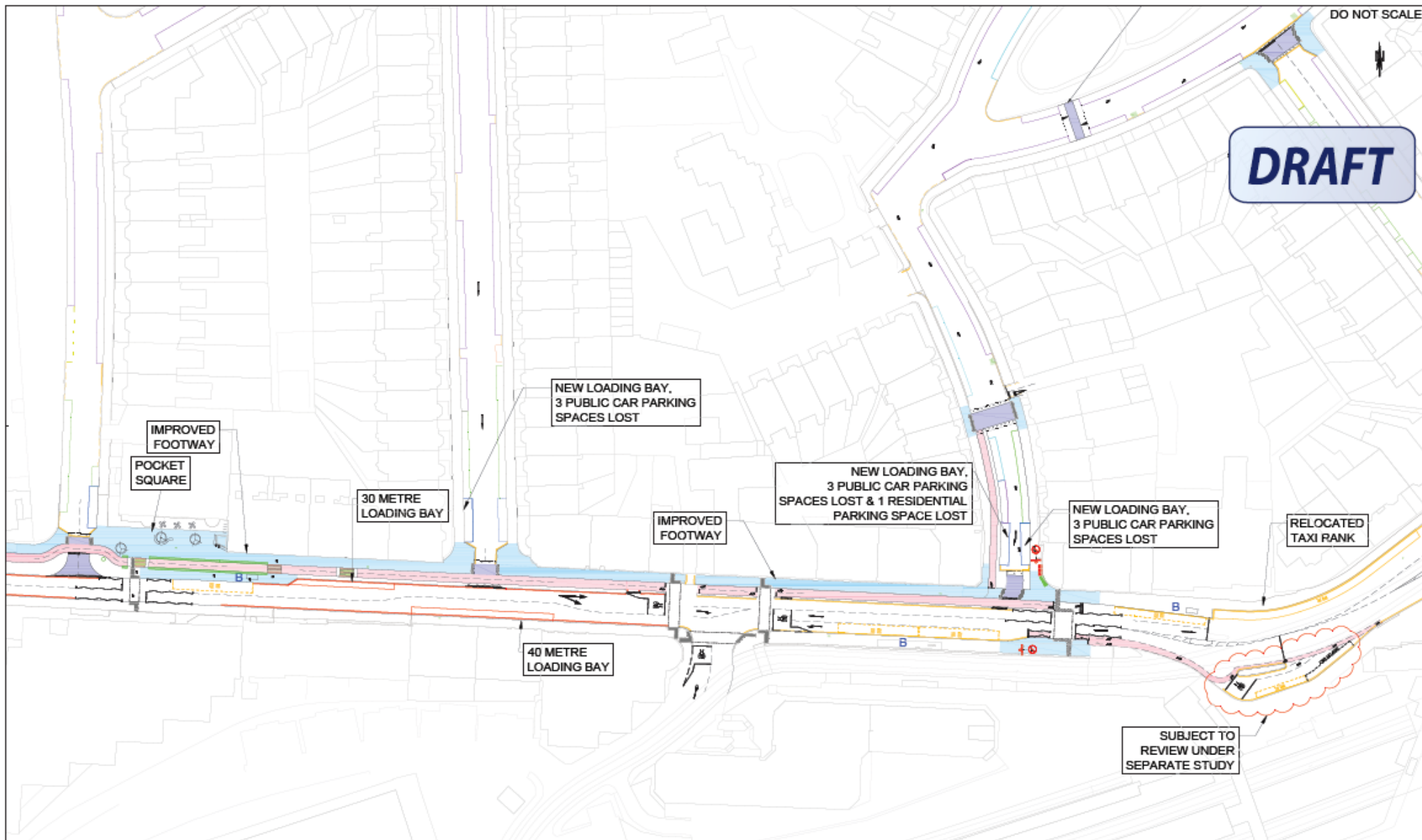
Bus Stop
Tact Rank
Cycle Lane
Bus Lane
Internal Pedestrian Crossing
Advisory cycle way

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100023409 (2014)

CT CYCLE TRACK
BL BUS LANE
IS ISLAND
CW CARRIAGEWAY
T TRAM
PP FOOT PATH



Drawing Name		CONSULTATION		Project Title	
ATKINS		10 Canongate Street Edinburgh EH1 1BS Tel: +44 (0) 131 215 700 Fax: +44 (0) 131 215 701		ROSEBURN TO LEITH WALK CYCLE LINKS	
Copyright © Atkins Limited (2013) www.atkinsglobal.com		Drawing Title		Roseburn to George Street Sheet 2 of 7	
Scale	1:500	Designed	PM	Drawn	JM
Original Size	A1	Date	15/03/15	Check	PM
Drawing Number	5135105-100-0091	Date	15/03/15	Authorised	
				Revision	A

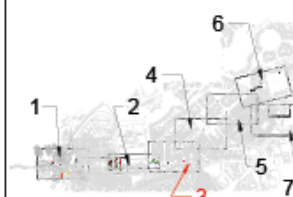
DRAFT**Key**

Parking		Waiting and Loading restrictions		Greenway Double Line		Miscellaneous	
Public	Green	Double Line	Green	Greenway Double Line	Green	Tree	Green
Resident	Blue	Single Line	Blue	Greenway Single Line	Blue	Bench	Green
Shared	Yellow					Grass	Green
Greenway	Green						
Motorcycle	Red						
City Car Club	Orange						
Disabled	Yellow						
Loading		Infrastructure		Transport facilities			
Greenway	Green	Reconstructed Shared Space	Blue	Reconstructed Footway	Blue	Bus Stop	Blue
Other Loading	Blue	Informal Ramped Pedestrian Cycleway Crossing	Blue	Potential Cycle Parking Locations	Blue	Taxi Rank	Blue
		Taxi Parking At Crossing	Blue	Taxi Loading Parking	Blue	Cycle Lane	Blue
		Taxi Temporary Parking	Blue	Taxi Temporary Parking	Blue	Bus Lane	Blue
		Ramp On/Off Ramped Carriageway	Blue	RECYCLING BIN	Blue	Informal Pedestrian Crossing	Blue
						Advisory cycle way	Blue

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100023439 (2014)

OT	CYCLE TRACK
B	BUS LANE
IS	ISLAND
CW	CARRIAGEWAY
T	TRAM
FP	FOOT PATH



CONSULTATION		Project Title	
ATKINS		ROSEBURN TO LEITH WALK CYCLE LINKS	
Copyright © Atkins Limited (2013) www.atkinsglobal.com		Roseburn to George Street Sheet 3 of 7	
Scale	1:500	Design	PM
Client	EDINBURGH THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL	Check	JM
Drawn	15/03/15	Approved	PM
Drawn by	A1	Drawn	15/03/15
Drawn by	5135105-100-0092	Drawn	15/03/15

Those travelling east or west along Wester Coates number 40 per hour at peak time (those travelling east and west), falling to 13 per hour outside rush hour. It is for those cyclists that the protected cycle track scheme was intended, costing £1M.

Traffic Statistics on West Coates

Dr E Housley of Kew Terrace, counted the traffic on Kew Terrace vehicles and cycles, both west and east bound, over a one hour period, from 2-3pm (non rush hour), and from 5-6pm (rush hour) over three successive weekdays in December 2015.

Non rush hour

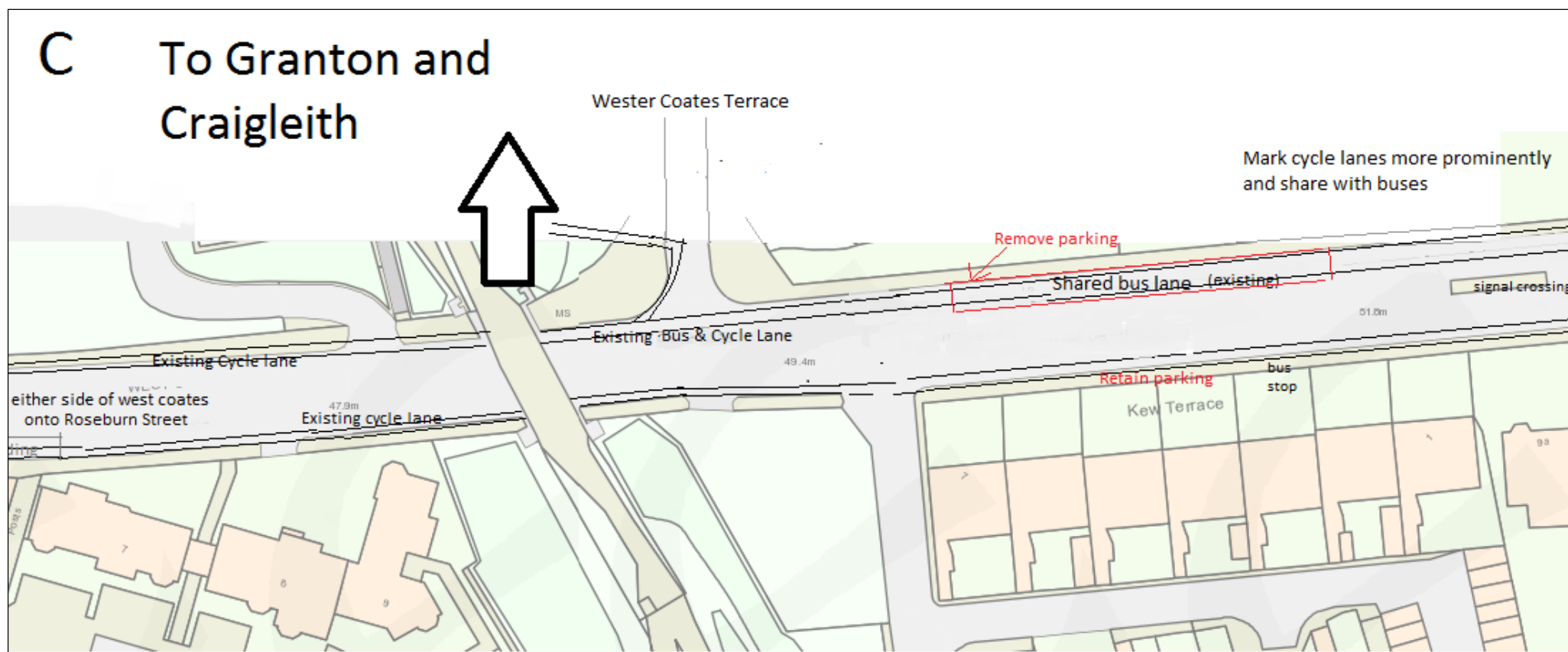
Cycles 13 per hour
Cars 436 per hour
Buses 33 per hour

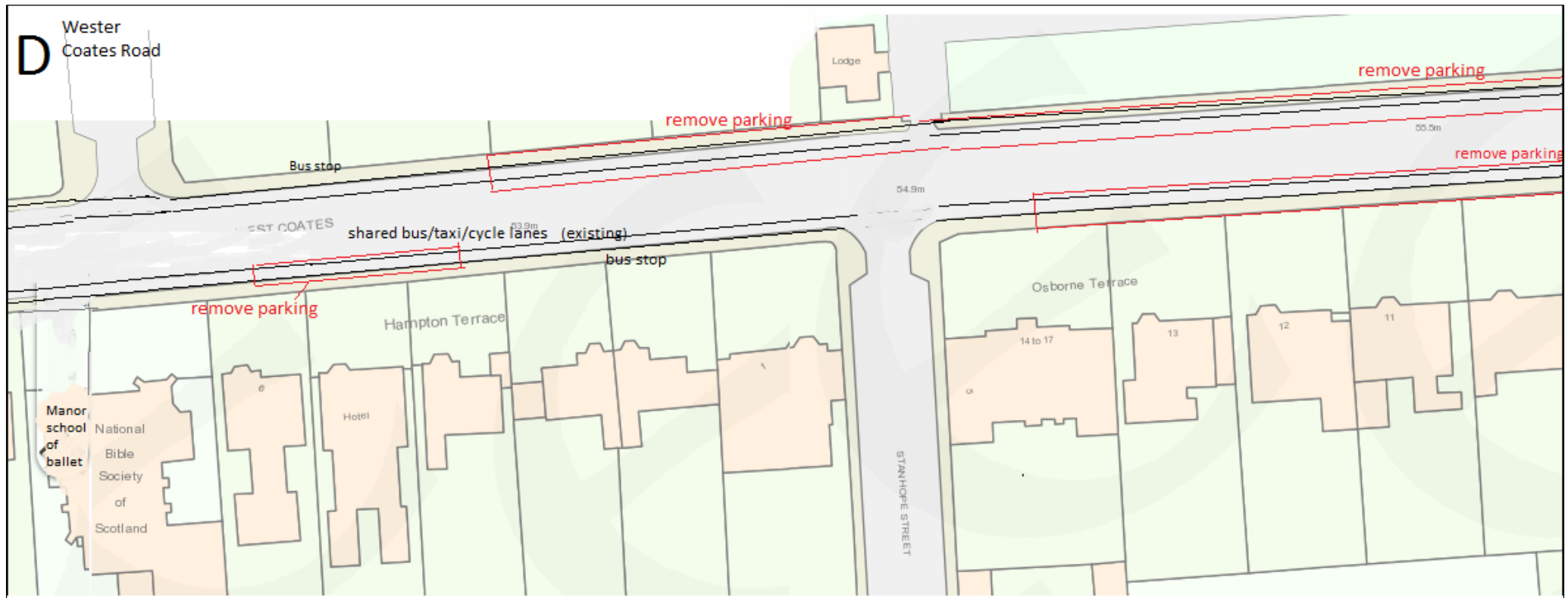
One every 5 mins
Seven per minute
One every 2 mins

Evening Rush Hour

Cycles 40 per hour
Cars 450 per hour
Buses 32 per hour

Less than 1 per minute
Seven per minute
One every 2 mins.





We feel no need to emulate the protected cycle tracks of the US , Amsterdam and Copenhagen as we already have the National Cycle Route 1. However, we understand that keen cyclists may seek to get from West to East in minutes, so we propose changes to West Coates that will satisfy their needs, requiring the removal of most on-street parking on either side of West Coates and clearer cycle lanes.

Along West Coates, the road surface needs improving and the current free on -street parking on the main road restricts traffic, for both cyclists and buses—and should be largely removed. The only parking left would be for those at Kew Terrace who have no parking in their drives. Cycle lanes on either side of West Coates would continue to be shared with buses.

Rather than continuing into Haymarket, the Roseburn Vision takes cyclists up by the side of the hotel after Donaldson’s school, along Magdala Crescent.

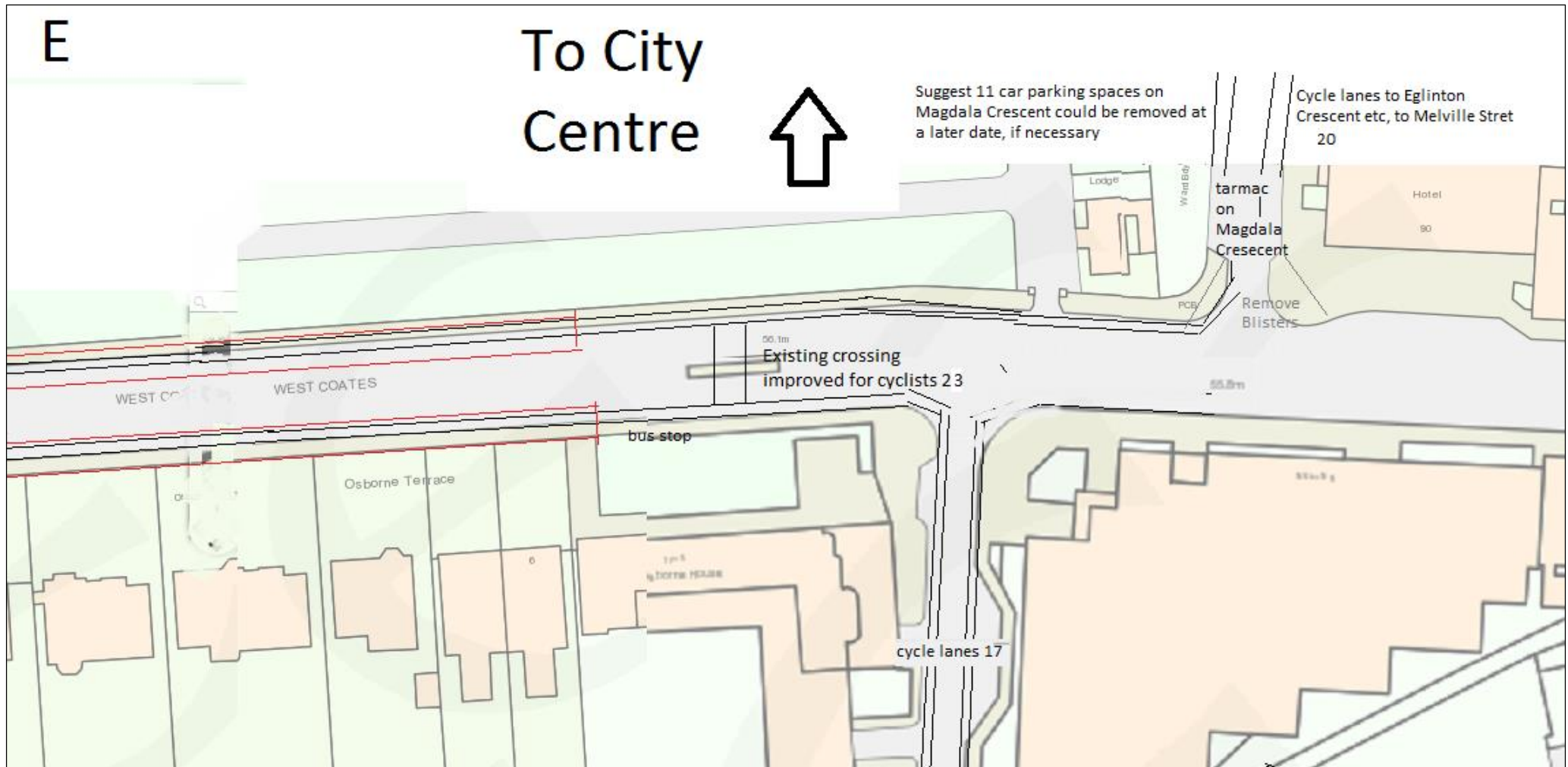
Magdala Crescent would lead to cycle lanes on Eglinton Crescent and eventually past the cathedral onto Melville Street, where our route connects up with the Council’s current proposals. This solution keeps cyclists away from the dangerous tram lines and heavy Haymarket traffic and allows the taxi rank to remain as is. Eglinton Crescent and Landsdowne Crescent could be made one-way to further enhance cyclist safety.

CYCLE TERMS

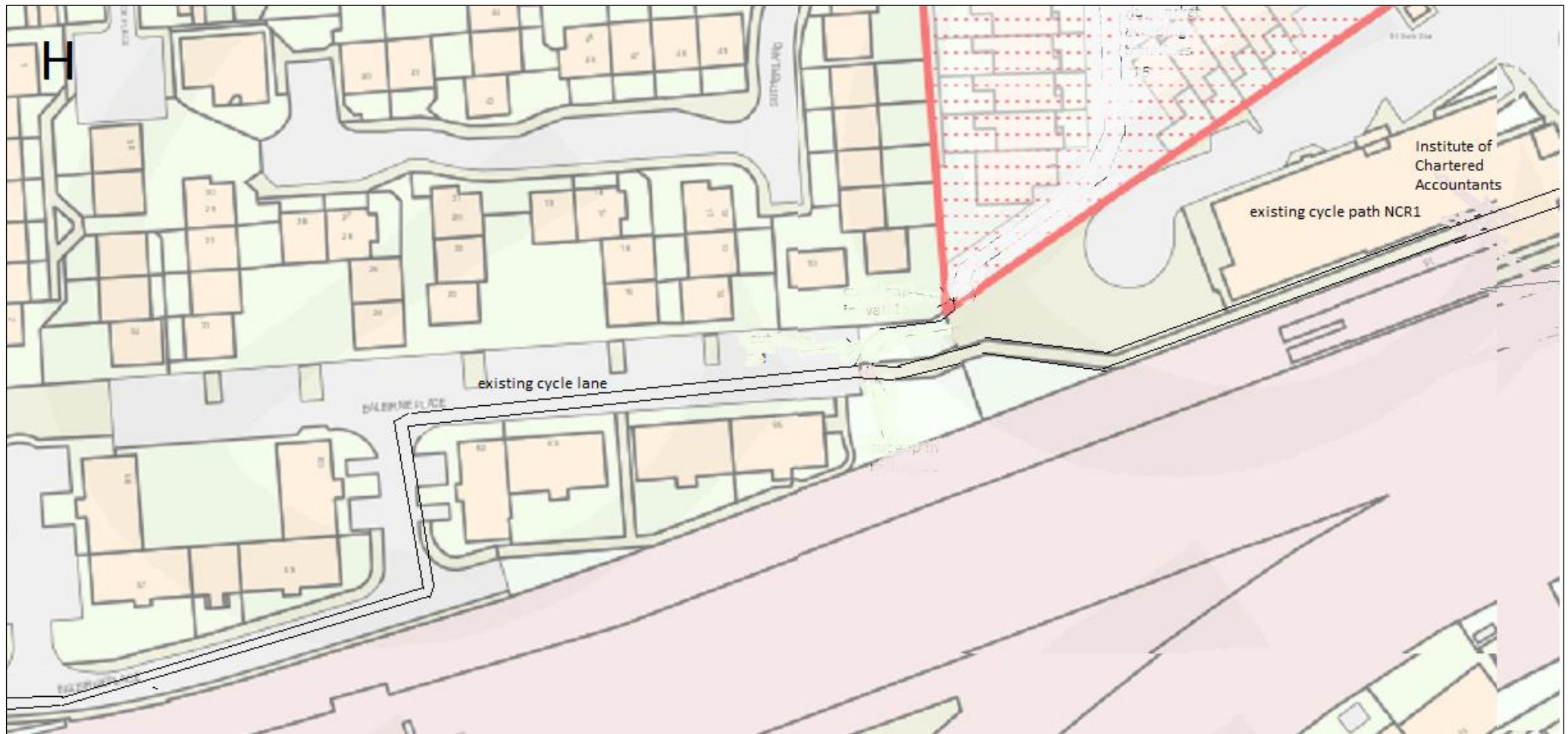
Cycle Lane = route along part of main road marked in brown tarmac that is for cyclists. Can be used by buses and taxis and cars in emergencies. Cyclists usually travel in same direction as other vehicles on their side of the carriageway (but allowed in both directions on 1-way street)

Cycle path = route for cyclists that can be shared with pedestrians if needs be. Can be part of pavement. 2-way cycling traffic

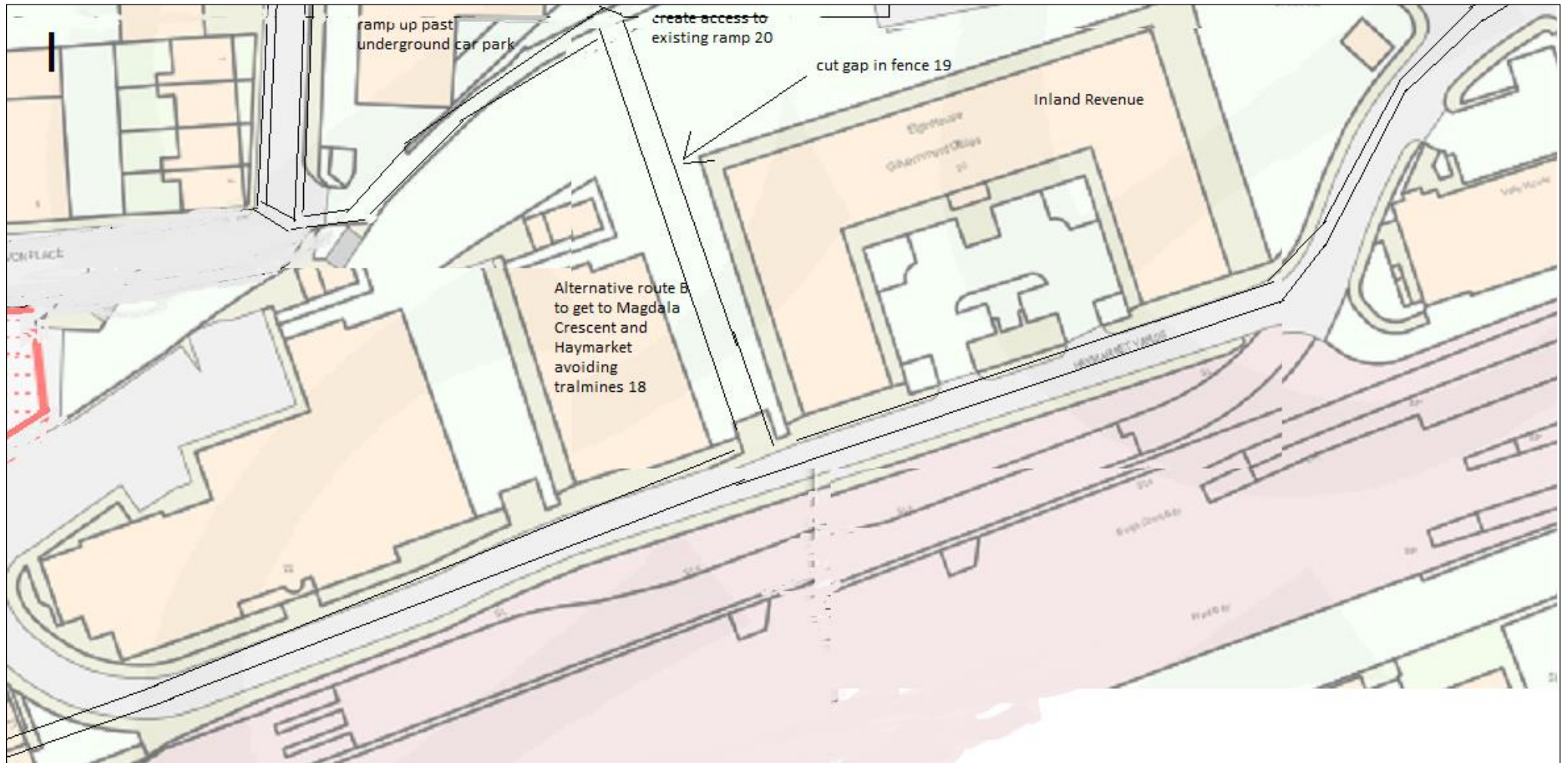
Protected Cycle Track = route along part of main road sectioned off for cycling using raised kerb. Cannot be used by other vehicles. 2-way cycling traffic.



The Roseburn Vision leaves Haymarket unaffected.

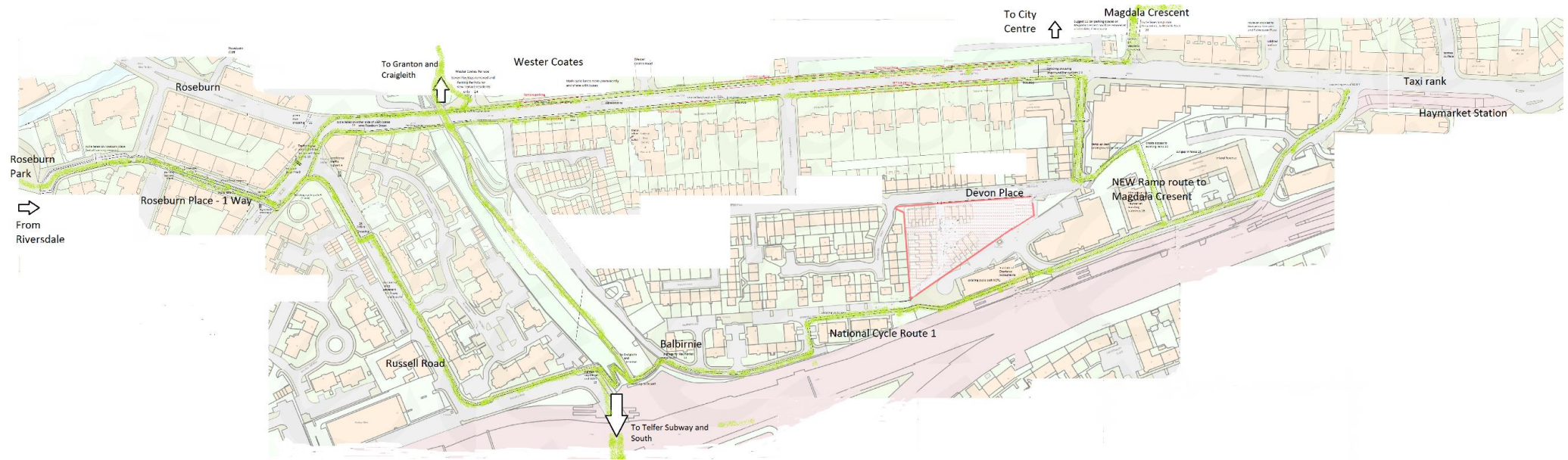


On NCR1, for those cyclists fearful of tramlines, we shall assist them in getting to Magdala Crescent (thereby avoiding the dangers of Haymarket completely). This requires creating a route from NCR1 up the side of the Revenue offices, through fences and waste land to utilise ramp by underground car park and onto Devon Place. Along a short stretch of Devon Place and up, to cross West Coates to Magdala Crescent.



To summarise, the Roseburn Vision proposes an elegant means to join the Roseburn Cycle path to the rest of the Roseburn-Leith cycle route that is both safer for vulnerable cyclists and pedestrians but also easier to implement and has the additional benefit of actually reducing congestion to vehicle traffic and lowering dangerous emissions.

It will also be vastly cheaper and allow the traders to continue as now. It allows buses to transport commuters more quickly and keeps the traffic flowing. We urge all 7,000 residents of Roseburn, West Coates and Haymarket to press for its adoption in full, instead of the cycling officer's protected track scheme.



A second recommendation beyond the Roseburn Vision to the Council is to put bike racks on the front of buses for commuters: the Seattle scheme works well.



Getting your bike onto a Seattle bus video is illustrated here <https://youtu.be/ZoE2MKHM7IA>

More info at www.kidsnotsuits.com/stop-the-west-coates-cycle-track-petition-to-edinburgh-council