



CORSTORPHINE COMMUNITY COUNCIL – Submission to City of Edinburgh Council’s Full Council 19

November 2020

The Corstorphine Community Council wishes to make the following submission to the City of Edinburgh Council’s Full Council as our residents are affected by the Low Transport Neighborhood (LTN) plans being discussed at the Full Council meeting on 19 November 2020. We have previously provided a submission to the Council’s Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) meeting on 12 November 2020 covering the same matters and this is included at ANNEX A. The additional appended deputations at Annex B & C are provided to remind City Councillors’ of the views Corstorphine CC has previously expressed on behalf of our residents. While the concerns have been clearly articulated we offer the following further thoughts -

We recognise the burden on Councillors on the TEC by virtue of the large volume of deputations and resident emails but, as we are at a critical stage of the discussions on the proposed East Craigs LTN, we request that you take time to read the deputation submitted by Corstorphine CC last week (ANNEX A). As clarified within that, we wish to discharge our duty in representing our community. We are keen to support the achievement of a reasonable outcome that is acceptable to the residents of that community.

Since last week, we as a Community Council have received 53 pieces of correspondence on this matter from the affected community, which indicates the strength of feeling on this issue. Key themes arising from the correspondence are broad issues of a perceived lack of democratic accountability and transparency to specific assertions about the proposed LTN such as the area is already a low traffic neighbourhood; an increase in pollution levels due to the rerouting of traffic; safety concerns for schoolchildren due to the rerouting of traffic; the proposed LTN does nothing to reduce traffic but simply concentrates it into certain streets; the proposed LTN forces people to make longer journeys and increases air pollution and more.

We note the plan for social distancing measures around Craigmount High School, which has been combined in proposal 2B with a cycle lane in a different area, i.e. Drum Brae North.

We welcome the deferment of any further action on an LTN until spring 2021. We note the post-implementation consultation process normally associated with an ETRO but also the TEC recommendation of last week that a full, public consultation is held before any ETRO is implemented.

In our role as a community representative body, we wish to have written clarification around the consultation processes and timescales, so that we may plan the necessary meetings and other communications between ourselves and the community.

In our own Community Council meetings, we have recognised the poor communication from CEC around this issue (e.g. as recorded in August’s minutes) so are keen to play our part in enabling good communication at this important point.

We are aware that the Drumbrae Community Council’s Participation Request under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 regarding the East Craigs LTN is ongoing so suggest we also need to allow that process to complete.



ANNEX A

CORSTORPHINE COMMUNITY COUNCIL – Submission to City of Edinburgh Council’s Transport & Environment Committee 12 November 2020

The Corstorphine Community Council wishes to make the following submission to the City of Edinburgh Council’s (CEC) Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) as our residents are affected by the Low Transport Neighborhood(s) (LTNs) plans being discussed at the TEC meeting on 12 November 2020.

The appended depositions at Annex A & B are provided to remind Committee members of the views Corstorphine CC has previously expressed on behalf of our residents. While the concerns have been clearly articulated we offer the following further thoughts -

Our remit as a Community Council

Key responsibilities of community councils are stated in *The City of Edinburgh Council Scheme for Community Councils* (CEC, 2019) and include:

3.1 The general purpose of Community Councils is to act as voices for their local areas, articulating the views and concerns of individuals and groups on a wide range of issues of public concern, including making representations to the City of Edinburgh Council, other public sector bodies and private agencies on matters within their sphere of interest.

3.2 Community councils have a statutory right to be consulted on planning applications.

We make this deputation in that context and seek to reiterate the perspective of Corstorphine Community Council and views of the community affected by the proposed traffic changes in East Craigs.

As a Community Council, we believe that further discussion on the revised proposal is required. We note two elements: that the Spaces for People initiative and the LTN have been separated, and we welcome that, and also that an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) has a guaranteed statutory consultation element, as with all Traffic Orders. Clarity is required around Option 2a as it is not clear what traffic calming measures CEC intend to implement. Is North Gyle Road included in these measures?

We contend that the process of consultation with Community Councils, including ours, about planned traffic management changes has been insufficient for us to properly discharge our duties of community representation. It is made more complex as the proposed introduction of LTNs was not intimated to us when plans were being made. In common with our approach to all engagement with the City Council Corstorphine CC has engaged positively and constructively with the West Edinburgh Link team. This was evidenced by our invitation to them to the January 2020 Corstorphine CC meeting to discuss the Gogarloch/South Gyle element of their plans, at which over 60 members of the public were in attendance. The proposed changes to East Craigs were not mentioned.

We are grateful for the input of City Council officers who have given time to Corstorphine CC to discuss traffic matters at various points, including about the Featherhall area. We are aware that the Get Edinburgh Moving (GEM) group, which represents residents in the East Craigs, North Gyle,



Craigmount and Drumbrae area, have met with the Council Leader, Transport and Environment Committee Convenor, Deputy Convenor, and others, which we also welcome. As previously noted, we have engaged with CEC through work via Steve Kerr, Chairperson Corstorphine CCs roles as Co-Chair and Vice Chair respectively with the North West Locality Community Planning Partnership and the Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC). However, we suggest that consultation could be improved upon by bringing together relevant parties to discuss the current situation and the details of future consultations. Crucially, it is important that those consultations are sufficiently broad to include relevant residents' groups and, vitally, the Drumbrae Community Council in addition to Corstorphine CC.

We have noted that our colleagues in Drumbrae Community Council felt compelled to submit a Participation Request under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 to seek to ensure their involvement in deliberations. We understand this is still outstanding. Is Corstorphine CC required to resort to a similar Request? We have always assumed that as a statutory consultee on planning matters, we would be among the first organisations that the City Council would engage with. We state our wish to move past deputations to meaningful engagement with the CEC Administration and officers over the local and immediate issues as well as the longer-term and strategic planning work.

We reiterate our continued commitment as Corstorphine CC's to working with the City Council in a collaborative manner to help improving our area's environment, and to the soliciting and faithful representation of the views of all members of our community. Our aim is to help find solutions that address issues in ways that command community support and that will, we feel, require careful consideration if we are to achieve a positive result.

Residents' views

We are aware that residents have communicated their views directly with the Council so do not seek to reiterate all their arguments. However, as Corstorphine CC has received written communication this week from one such resident, we include a summary of some of the main points raised with us, as an example.

- The writer, like many, is a long-term resident, loves living in this area and wishes to protect and enhance it. She and others are active in doing so, describing themselves as 'local' in a strong sense.
- There is a commitment to and engagement with a variety of travel modes, including active travel of all sorts.
- She is concerned about what she sees as confusion and ineffectiveness in consultation processes with CEC, including that the two community councils need to be involved but that that does not appear to be happening.
- A lot of work has gone into capturing the unheard views, and she suggests that a reflection of many LTN resident concerns, described as from real people within the extensive LTN area, of Maybury, West Craigs, Craig, Craigmount, Fauldburn, North Gyle, Drumbrae etc.
- There is support for measures that address, e.g. speeding on Craigs Road, by reductions and enforcement, especially around schools, and she describes herself as open-minded.
- However, she believes positive change can be made, prioritising any genuine area of concern, by using simple measures and without speedily implemented road closures. She asserts that East Craigs is not a dangerous area.



- She has concerns but, is clear in stating, that she does not support the implementation of this LTN.

Another resident has created a video diary to show the road conditions in the area at various times.

Elsewhere, including on social media, residents have contended that *“the East Craigs LTN is a solution without a problem, and is unnecessary”* and have expressed their wish to engage on the wider strategic challenges around west Edinburgh traffic. Many of their points resonate with the example above.

As a Community Council we have also received representations of support from residents living in the proposed LTN. While these views have been in the minority, as a community council reflective of locals it is important to note that there are residents who do support the proposed changes. In a similar vein to the above correspondence, we received recent communications from a resident who raised the following points:

- They have not engaged with the LTN debate because they have found the tone of discussion ugly and aggressive, and feel that much weight has been afforded to those who state their views are reflective of the whole community when they are not.
- They are delighted at the prospect of their road being closed to through traffic, as traffic has increased greatly in the 30+ years they have lived on their street. They are particularly keen to see their road filtered as it is a major route for children walking to Craigmount High School.
- They have many friends and neighbours in the area who are supportive of the scheme, who appreciate they will have to make adjustments when getting about the area, with benefits including the reduction in traffic resulting in less pollution and greater safety for children and adult pedestrians.
- They trust that, as a Community Council, we will continue to represent all residents affected by these proposals.

Conclusion

As a Community Council, we suggest that a way is found to move forward positively with the community, drawing on their constructive suggestions, and seeking to find a genuinely helpful solution that attracts the active support of all residents.

References

The City of Edinburgh Council Scheme for Community Councils

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/23674/scheme-for-community-councils>

News page of the Get Edinburgh Moving website:

<https://getedinburghmoving.godaddysites.com/news>

East Craigs Video Diary

<https://vimeo.com/477611288?fbclid=IwAR3EfrZRTE6y0QzQkpU5LB8asdTUsApzK3g1uxSurtss4FBcxT5LKnEDOR4>

STEVE KERR

Chairperson

Corstorphine Community Council



· CORSTORPHINE ·
Community Council



ANNEX B

CORSTORPHINE COMMUNITY COUNCIL – Submission to City of Edinburgh Council’s Full Council 15

October 2020

The Corstorphine Community Council wishes to make the following submission to the City of Edinburgh Council’s Full Council as our residents are affected by the Low Transport Neighborhood(s) plans being discussed at the Full Council meeting on 15 October 2020. We have previously provided a submission to the Council’s Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) meeting on 1 October 2020 covering the same matters and this is included at ANNEX A. Indeed, the Corstorphine CC has specifically been mentioned in the papers Committee members are considering.

East Craigs ‘Low Traffic Neighborhood’ LTN

The East Craigs ‘Low Traffic Neighborhood’ (LTN) falls in part within the north western boundary of the Corstorphine CC area, with the remainder being within the Drum Brae CC area. As we stated in our TEC submission, ultimately Corstorphine CC would be failing in our duty to a significant number of our residents if we did not advance their strongly held concerns about the introduction of the East Craigs LTN. Firstly, there are concerns about democratic accountability. Secondly there needs to be greater transparency from the Council administration about the strategy and methodology they are employing to achieve their objectives. Change and modal shift requires community buy in. This will not be achieved in a polarised and increasingly politicised argument.

The community also has concerns about equality impact and emergency service access, especially given the older demographic of the area. Overall, many residents believe that they already are in a ‘low traffic neighborhood’ and therefore seek engagement with the Council around focused interventions on specific issues, rather than what they view as an extreme measure. They wish to do this as part of the normal consultation process of a Traffic Restriction Order (TRO), as they do not believe that a Temporary Traffic Restriction Order (TTRO) using emergency powers is valid for this purpose. We believe that the Community Council as an apolitical representative body has a pivotal role going forward in achieving outcomes that all can appreciate as meretricious. The East Craigs Residents group now constituted and known as “Get Edinburgh Moving” (GEM) with more than 1,400 members has been invited to join Corstorphine CC in the same manner as residents’ associations in Pinkhill and Forrester. We hope GEM will accept and work with the Community Council. In the same vein, we are also happy to extend an invitation to Low Traffic Corstorphine representatives, another local group advancing the voices of residents in the East Craigs community who are supportive of the scheme.

Corstorphine South LTN

Background information regarding the Corstorphine South LTN can be read in Corstorphine CC’s deputation to the TEC on 1 October. There have long been complaints from residents about parking and traffic in the Featherhall area, as well as street safety concerns on Corstorphine High Street and around Corstorphine Primary School. Corstorphine CC members met with City Council officers on 30



September to review and discuss proposals for a trial Corstorphine South LTN to see if measures could help address these concerns as well as support social distancing for the school. There was good support for actions along Corstorphine High Street and the primary school, including widened pavements and tightened junctions for easier pedestrian movement and better social distancing. Feedback was given asking for more improvements of these types. Members also requested actions to reduce/enforce vehicle speeds along the High Street. Proposed modal filtering along residential streets had a mix of views. Some members (including Featherhall residents) were keen to see modal filters, as they felt it would make the area less traffic-dominated, better for children walking/cycling to school and generally safer.

Concerns were expressed on traffic displacement, as well as worries about people not being able to access some local businesses. There were specific concerns raised re people having difficulty accessing the pharmacy from the doctor's surgery. Feedback was collated by Council officers. Corstorphine CC expects CEC to liaise with residents, providing a timeline and context regarding the trial with the opportunity to feedback. Corstorphine CC's understanding is this is a temporary measure to aid with social distancing, help children get to school and address the many complaints regarding traffic in this area. An initial discussion on the proposals has been held between a group of parents and the Corstorphine Primary Head Teacher. All were broadly supportive of the proposals as it was felt that reducing through traffic would make the journey to school safer and more pleasant. Everyone agreed that traffic calming and pavement widening along Corstorphine High Street were particularly important to making a difference to families travelling to and from the school.

CONCLUSION

Corstorphine CC is entirely supportive of the health and safety rationale behind the 'Spaces for People' measures; recognises the intent behind Low Traffic Neighborhoods; continues to advocate for traffic management measures including combating parking and 'rat running' issues; and encourages provision for cyclists and walkers and supports public transport provision. We advocate for an exacting Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for the whole City, as we have high pollution levels in roads in our area. There are Corstorphine CC members who are informed; eloquent; and measured in their advocacy of active travel and related matters such as LTNs, as there are informed, eloquent and measured members who support active travel but view the East Craigs LTN as extreme. This does not mean that either should be dismissed as 'activists'. Corstorphine CC is not 'anti car' or 'pro-car'. Rather we support the right of all our residents to move freely and safely, and that includes cycling and walking.

We recognise the damaging effect of this polarised debate – on the community and its relationship with the Council - and request that the Council considers how it may best engage with the affected community in order to bring about a solution that ensures the concerns and worries of residents are mitigated. The Corstorphine CC is willing to assist in any way it can.



In my capacity as Co-Chair of the **North West Locality Community Planning Partnership**, I attended the Partnership's meeting on 9 October. This was the first meeting of the Partnership since lockdown began. Spaces for People'/LTN measures were discussed, and I asked what forum was appropriate for Community Councils to discuss these measures with City Councillors and officers. I suggested in the context of the Locality Improvement Plan or City Plan. I was told that neither was appropriate and that these matters should be discussed directly with the Officers concerned. The Corstorphine and Drumbrae Community Councils wish to have such a meeting as soon as practicable.

In my capacity as Deputy Chair of the **Edinburgh Association of Community Councils (EACC)** I will be introducing a discussion on 'Spaces for People'/LTN measures' at the EACC meeting on 22 October.

The desired outcome from the deliberations is -

- Guidance that all Edinburgh's Community Councils can utilize when engaging with residents
- A submission to the City Council that reflects where possible EACC members unified position

I trust that Corstorphine CC's motivation and our continued commitment to improving our area's environment are both clear. We will continue to engage with the City Council in a collaborative manner to achieve these ends. We will also continue to solicit the views of all members of our community and seek to represent them faithfully as we work with the City of Edinburgh Council in helping find solutions that address issues in ways that command community support.

STEVE KERR

Chairperson

Corstorphine Community Council



ANNEX C

CORSTORPHINE COMMUNITY COUNCIL – Submission to City of Edinburgh Council’s Transport & Environment Committee 1 October 2020

The Corstorphine Community Council wishes to make the following submission to the City of Edinburgh Council’s Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) as our residents are affected by the Low Transport Neighborhood(s) plans being discussed at the TEC meeting on 1 October 2020. Indeed, the Corstorphine CC has specifically been mentioned in the papers Committee members are considering.

BACKGROUND

The Corstorphine CC has consistently solicited the views of residents to inform and prioritise our activities. This was initially achieved through undertaking a **Placemaking Exercise** with the assistance of the City of Edinburgh Council. The Exercise involved utilizing a Scottish Government designed matrix to ascertain resident satisfaction on the services and facilities in the area. We conducted a series of public meetings and an online survey which provided significant numbers of contributions from residents across Corstorphine. The number one issue for residents was what can broadly be described as the Environment. There is a deep appreciation of the access residents have to green spaces such as parks and playing fields and a desire to move freely and safely within the area. Equally there was concern about increasing levels of traffic which would be exacerbated by building in the West of the City, poor air quality, traffic management and parking. There was such strong feeling on the latter matter that we held a **Traffic Management and Parking Public Meeting** which was attended by local elected representatives, Council officials, the Police, and many residents from across Corstorphine. The meeting was emotive with residents demanding immediate action on long standing problems.

Subsequently the Community Council hosted the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee of the Scottish Parliament. The Committee who were producing a report on poor air quality in Scotland singled out Corstorphine for attention and comment as St. John’s Road had the unwanted epithet of ‘the most polluted street in Scotland’.

The Community Council has also hosted representatives of the Transport and Environment Committee at one of regular monthly meetings to discuss action on pollution issues, particularly around the proposed Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for Edinburgh.

To reiterate Corstorphine CC has advocated on behalf of residents articulating the views and concerns they have expressed to us.



LTN(s)

The **East Craigs 'Low Traffic Neighbourhood' (LTN)** falls in part within the Corstorphine CC area that takes in Craigmount (East Craigs itself is part of Drum Brae CC area). During the one-week notification period Corstorphine CC received one written representation from a resident which was immediately forwarded to Council officials. We did not have the time and resources to widely canvass residents' opinions during this period. There has been considerable local opposition to the proposals with a 2,500-signature petition opposing the LTN and crowd funding to challenge the City Council in court. Members of Corstorphine CC attended the public meeting on Friday 28 August held in Gyle Park. National and Local elected representatives addressed a large crowd of residents, the majority of which appeared opposed to the introduction of the LTN in its current form. The principal reasons cited are misuse of Covid -19 powers to pursue an Administration agenda (the Community Council does not have the competence to comment on questions of legality); lack of resident consultation; mixed messages as to why the Council wishes the LTN to be introduced; and more. The City Council administration committed to review the LTN proposal considering the representations they had received. A revised LTN has been produced which in part reflects the requested changes and the Community Council welcomes this.

The **Corstorphine South LTN** has evolved from an initial proposal for a Filtered Permeability Scheme (FPS) in the Featherhall area of Corstorphine. Featherhall has long been identified as an area with chronic parking and 'rat running' issues. Corstorphine CC secured £50,000 of Council funding to establish a one-way system on Featherhall Avenue to address traffic flow problems. The one-way system had been overwhelmingly endorsed by the residents in a Council consultation following a trial. Council officials then approached Corstorphine CC with an alternative proposal for an FPS which would deal with the issues in a more holistic fashion. We have now been informed that the FPS will be part of a wider Corstorphine South LTN. We have no details of what this will encompass.

CONCLUSION

Corstorphine CC is entirely supportive of the health and safety rationale behind the 'Spaces for People' measures; recognises the intent behind Low Transport Neighbourhoods; continues to advocate for traffic management measures including combating parking and 'rat running' issues; and encourages provision for cyclists and walkers. We strongly advocate for an exacting Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for the whole City and not the two-tier LEZ that is currently proposed. We could hardly do otherwise with St. John's Road and Queensferry Road as two of the most polluted roads in Scotland within and adjacent to our area.

There are Corstorphine CC members who are informed; eloquent; and measured in their advocacy of active travel and related matters. This does not mean that they should be dismissed as 'activists'. Corstorphine CC is not 'anti car'. Rather we support the right of all our residents to move freely and safely and that includes cycling and walking.

Ultimately Corstorphine CC would be failing in our duty to a significant number of our residents if we did not advance their strongly held concerns about the introduction of the East Craigs LTN. Firstly, there are concerns about democratic accountability. Secondly there needs to be greater transparency from the Council administration about the strategy and methodology they are employing to achieve their objectives. Change and modal shift requires community buy in. This will not be achieved in a polarised and increasingly politicised argument. We believe that the Community Council as an apolitical representative body has a pivotal role going forward in achieving outcomes that all can appreciate as meretricious. The 'Say No East Craigs LTN' ('Get Edinburgh



Moving') Residents Action Group have been invited to join Corstorphine CC in the same manner as Residents Associations in Pinkhill and Forrester. We hope the Committee will accept and work with the Community Council.

I appreciate that this exposition is lengthy, but I felt it was important to correct any misapprehension about Corstorphine CC's motivation and give some context to our continued commitment to improving our areas environment and enriching the lives of our residents. We will continue to engage with the City Council in a collaborative manner to achieve these ends.

STEVE KERR
Chairperson
Corstorphine Community Council