



**Verbal Deputation to Transport and Environment Committee meeting to be held on 25 April 2024 regarding item 8.2 Edinburgh Tram York Place to Newhaven Project Delivery Report**

Thank you for allowing me to make a deputation to the Committee today.

We are pleased that this long-awaited report has been issued and is being debated today. It provides a useful summary of the current state of the project but unfortunately does not provide the expected level of detail regarding how the remaining public realm issues will be resolved and the final close out achieved.

Rather than get into the broader issues identified in the CCTT deputation, I wanted to highlight some specific issues affecting our community. These are not new issues as many were identified in a walk-through of the trams route with Trams Project staff in November 2022 and again highlighted in a further walk through with Councillor Day, Councillor Arthur and other Councillors in April 2023. The fact that there has been so little progress on these issues is disturbing.

Firstly, those of you on the walk through in April will remember the powerful testimony of a resident who was visually impaired about the problems created by the lack of and inconsistencies in the tactile paving in many areas along Leith Walk. In particular, we highlighted the specific hazards for pedestrians at continuous footpaths across side streets. It was agreed that this was a priority

for action but over a year since then we still do not have tactile paving in place at many of the locations where it should be installed. Do we have the resources in place to drive such work?

One of the other issues that we highlighted was the potential interaction between cyclists and pedestrians travelling down Leith Walk due to the narrow cycle paths and pavements especially in the areas surrounding bus stops many of which are floating. I was recently visiting a friend of my daughter in the Major Trauma Unit of Edinburgh Royal Infirmary who had come off her bike on the Leith Walk cycle path. She was told by hospital staff that they had treated a large number of cyclists who had incurred accidents on this stretch of cycle path. As noted in the report, there are many defects relating to the cycle path that still need to be addressed along with a broader review of the design of this public realm to ensure that it is safe for pedestrians and cyclists. Again, do we have the right resources in place to progress this work?

My final example of lack of progress is the completion of works at the junction of Blenheim Place and London Road. This junction was intended to be narrowed on both sides to improve pedestrian safety. A decision was taken to remove the pavement build out on the east side from the project scope. It is not clear if this will be picked up by the Council or will just not happen. Also, the TRO called for double yellow lines to be installed on both sides of this junction to stop vehicles parking close to the junction. There are no lines on the west side of the junction and still only single lines on the east side, thus creating a hazard for other road users but particularly pedestrians trying to cross this junction. Is this a design change, a defect or something that someone else needs to address? It does not



appear on the outstanding defect list so presumably is no longer the responsibility of the project. The report does not provide the required visibility on this and many other issues that have been highlighted along the route.

In conclusion, the report demonstrates that this project is far from complete. It is not just the outstanding work to the public realm and the resolution of the many defects. As identified in the CCTT deputation, the Stage 3 Road Safety Audit has not been published despite being undertaken in June last year. As a result, we do not know whether the over 70 design issues identified in the Stage 2 RSA undertaken in May 2021 have been fully resolved or indeed whether new hazards have been introduced during the construction phase. These issues should be examined again as part of a Stage 4 RSA to look at the final as built status but as far as we know it has not yet taken place. The report fails to mention the status of these required independent audits. This is a significant omission given their importance to the safety of all road users including cyclists and pedestrians and their role in allowing the final close out of the contract.

Thank you for your time.