

Charlotte Square Public Realm Enhancement

Stage 2 Engagement Summary (Interim and Concept Designs)

City of Edinburgh Council

July 2024

Quality information

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Objectives

The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), in partnership with Sustrans, has commissioned AECOM and Optimised Environments (OP-EN) to develop improvements to Charlotte Square to create an attractive, welcoming space and experience for anyone walking, wheeling or cycling to visit and enjoy the area.

Charlotte Square is not only about improving this important part of Edinburgh's New Town and World Heritage Site, it also supports the City Centre Transformation strategy, City Mobility Plan and drive to net zero, connecting several key active travel cycling and walking routes including:

- City Centre West East Link (CCWEL);
- George Street and First New Town;
- Meadows to George Street; and
- Future links to Lothian Road and North Edinburgh.

Figure 1 below shows the context and planned active travel network in the city centre.



Figure 1: Charlotte Square and wider active travel routes.

The goal is to create a quiet and safe environment that will overcome many of the barriers to walking, cycling, and wheeling, by considering measures such as:

- widening and addressing inaccessible footways due to pavement levels
- adding new and improving existing pedestrian crossings
- creating quiet dwell zones
- installing segregated cycle paths on main roads
- connecting key parts of the Edinburgh cycle network
- providing alternative routes avoiding tram lines.

The project will also accommodate the need for security features associated with the First Minister's residence at Bute House, which are required to be sympathetically incorporated into the design, given the square's location within a UNESCO world heritage site.

An initial (Stage 1) engagement process was undertaken in 2023/2024 involving engagement with a targeted set of stakeholders with updates on the project to residents and businesses. The feedback from this stage was used to inform developing designs and frame further engagement at Stage 2 (Concept Design). This report summarises the outcomes from Stage 2 engagement undertaken in June 2024, focused on engaging with a wide array of stakeholders, residents and businesses on the proposed interim designs and concept designs, to gain feedback on the proposals through virtual and drop in sessions. The feedback gained through the engagement period will be used to help aid design development for future stages of the project.

1.2 Report Structure

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Project Delivery and Proposals Summary
- Section 3: Engagement Approach
- Section 4: Engagement Activities
- Section 5: Engagement Responses
- Section 6: Summary and Next Steps

2. Project Delivery and Proposals Summary

Project Delivery

The project needs to be delivered in two phases to align with connecting projects.

Phase 1 – Interim Scheme (Spring/Summer 2024)

The CCWEL project has now been completed and connects to Charlotte Square from Randolph Place via an existing shared use route emerging at West Register House.

In Phase 1 the project will deliver an ‘interim’ version of the scheme by the end of Summer 2024 to provide a safer cycle route around the Square in particular connecting CCWEL project to George Street via Charlotte Street. The interim layout will be a lower-cost temporary layout utilising traffic restrictions and semi-permanent materials to achieve the CCWEL connection in advance of a permanent scheme. It will also include new signalised crossings on Charlotte Street to connect Charlotte Square to George Street and Rose Street more directly and comfortably, as part of a full refurbishment of the traffic signals on the Square.

Phase 2 – Permanent Scheme (2026)

Charlotte Square presents a unique opportunity to create a high-quality street environment in one of the city’s finest Squares for people to pass through, visit and spend time in. The design is being developed to deliver a project which protects and enhances the heritage of the Square and quality of the spaces by providing:

- new safe and accessible walking and cycling routes.
- new public spaces and landscape design.
- high quality materials.

This permanent scheme will share many of the same principles and complement the George Street and First New Town project, which are due to start in 2025-26, and together will transform the city centre.

Traffic Operations Review

Prior to the first Phase of the Charlotte Square project, feedback was obtained from stakeholders on the proposal shown below in **Figure 2**. A summary of this feedback is included in Chapter 4 of this report.

Following early engagement with key stakeholders, and data gathering on current traffic and street use, a number of scenarios were developed and modelled these to understand how changes to access will affect the wider road and public transport networks. The proposed changes to traffic operations include:

- potential restricted access to the northern and western sides to the Square; and
- public transport and two-way general traffic retained on the south side of the Square.

Restricting access to the west and north sides of the Square will enable quiet streets which are safe for cycling can be created and provides the opportunity to improve public spaces. The cycle route will connect to George Street via a new dedicated signalised crossing on Charlotte Street, with full details still to be developed.

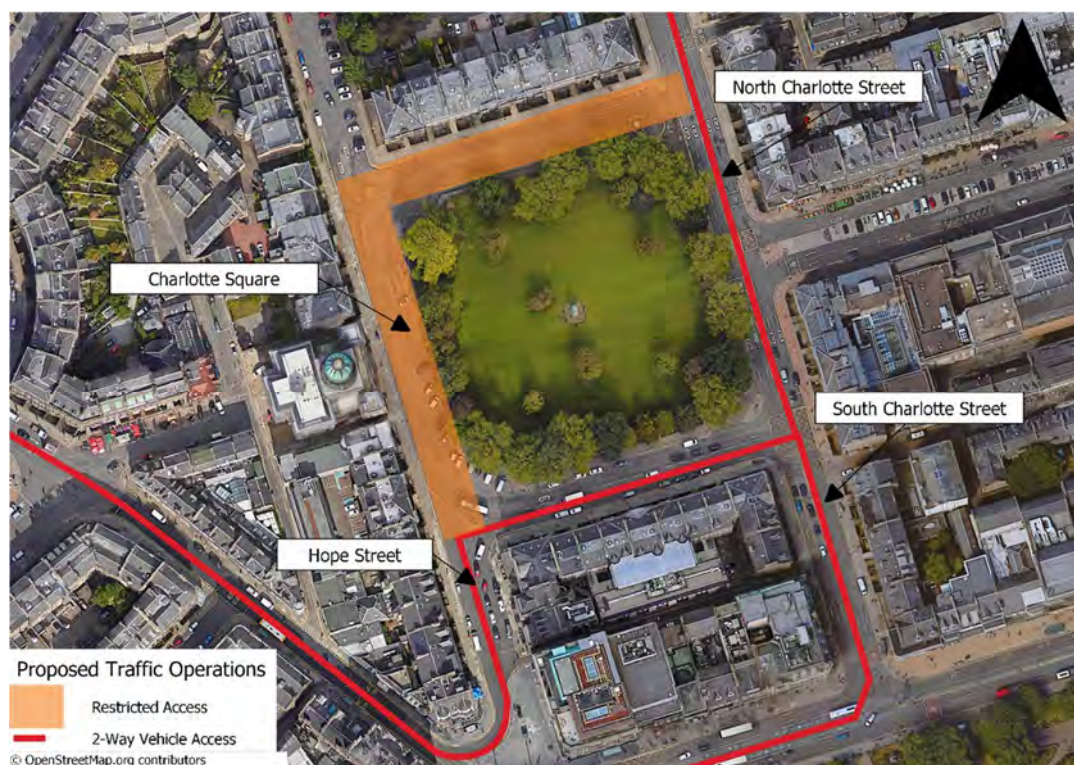


Figure 2: Proposed Traffic Operations for Vehicles

Concept Designs

During the concept design stage, two concept designs were developed, as illustrated in **Figure 3** and **Figure 4** below.

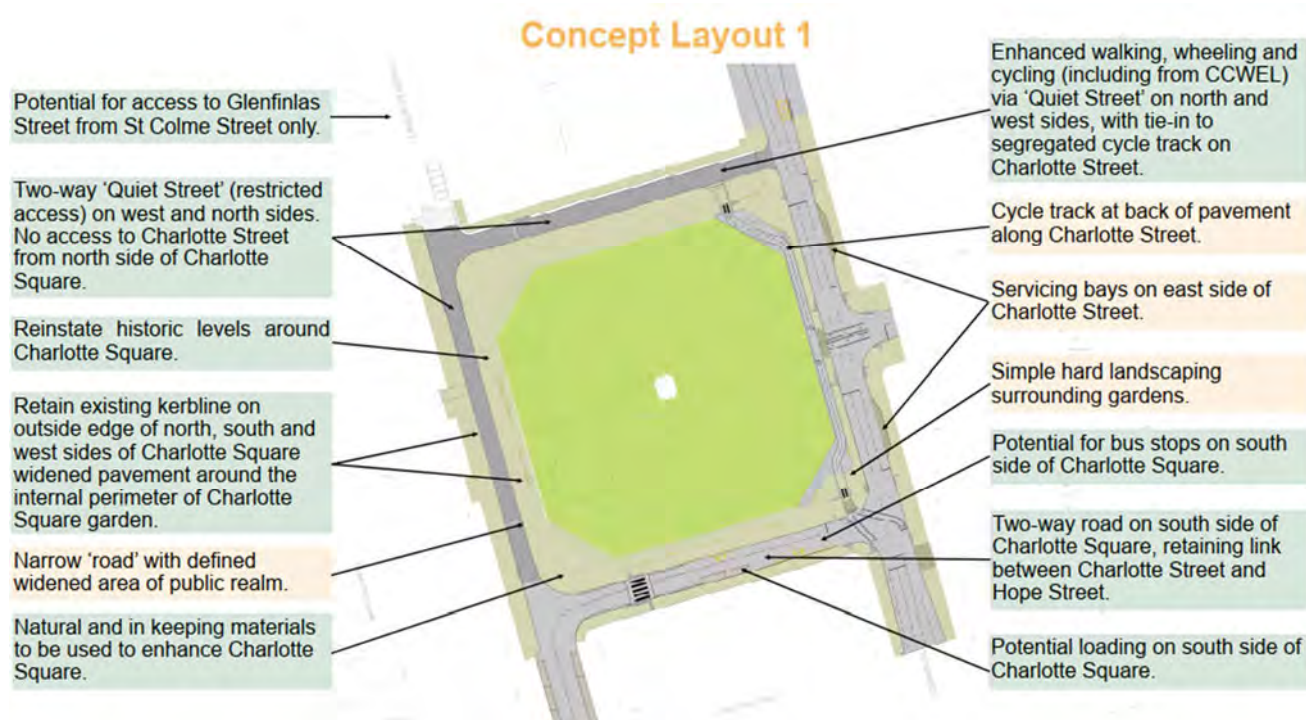


Figure 3: Concept Design 1

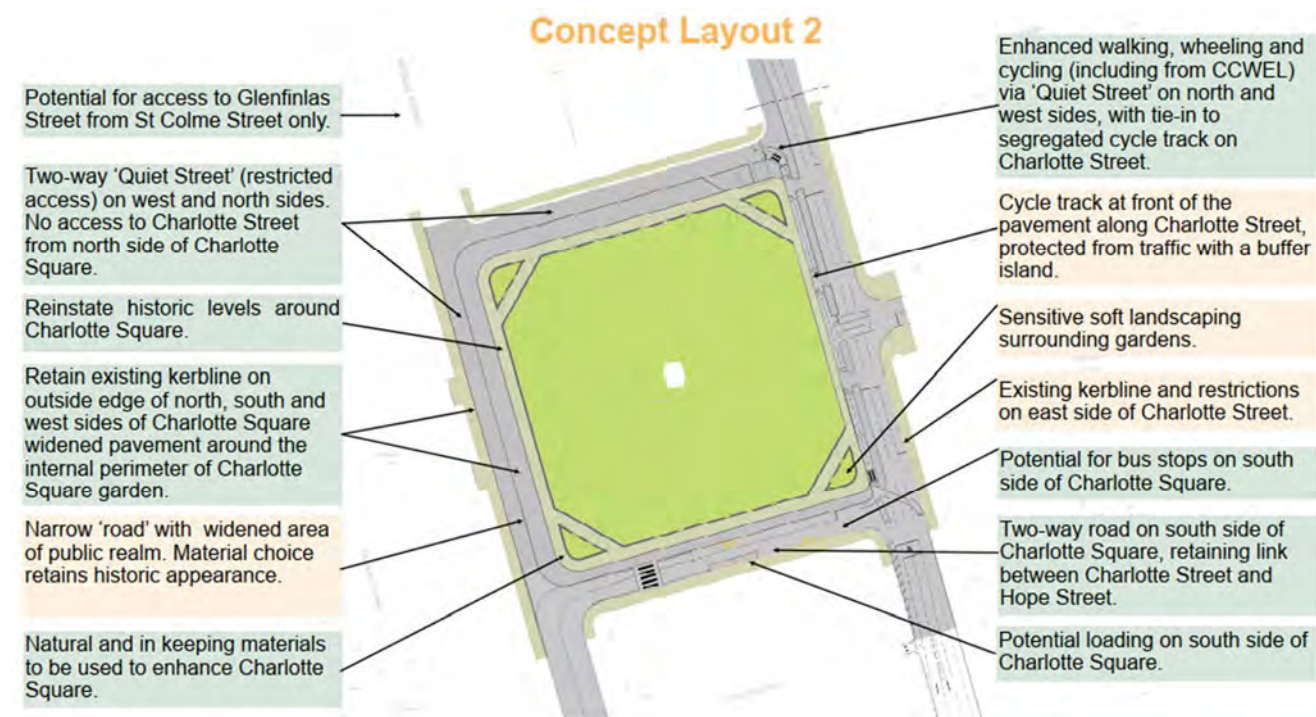


Figure 4: Concept Design 2

3. Engagement Approach

Due to the setting of the project within the historic character of the privately owned Square, and the potential influence this affords to a few key stakeholders, a staged approach has been taken to the engagement process, starting with key stakeholders and the proprietors of Charlotte Square during the early stages of the project before expanding to the wider stakeholder group and businesses. The forms of engagement undertaken are outlined in **Table 3-1** below.

Table 3-1: Forms of Engagement

Meeting with Businesses, and Proprietors	✓	Meetings were held with Businesses and Proprietors of Charlotte Square, outlining the designs and plans for the square.
Online Briefing with Key Stakeholders	✓	Local groups, including representatives EWH and the Proprietors group, were invited to a virtual meeting where an online presentation was given following by a question-and-answer session.
Pop-Up Engagement Session	✓	A drop-in session was held to obtain feedback on proposals for the permanent scheme concept designs alongside the interim scheme for Charlotte Square.
Email Notifications	✓	Email notifications were issued to all stakeholders and those who have registered an interest in the project, and a dedicated project email address was set up for feedback and queries.
Social Media	✓	Social media posts were created on Facebook, Twitter and the City of Edinburgh Council's project website.
Core Stakeholders	✓	During the engagement period continuous engagement has been ongoing with Bute House, Corran Estates and the Proprietors of Charlotte Square.

4. Engagement Activities

4.1 Stage 1 Engagement

Engagement during Stage 1 of the project included engaging with key stakeholders who are directly impacted by the operation and potential proposals for Charlotte Square, to provide them with an update on the traffic operations as well as gain feedback on the interim design. The table below provides a record of the key stakeholders who were engaged at Stage 1. The Stage 1 engagement technical note provides further details.

Stakeholder Name	Engagement Details
Corran Properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involved in previous Charlotte Square project in 2011-2014. Previously engaged by meeting on the 3rd April 2023. Provided with a project update via email on the 7^h February 2024. Met to discuss the project and proposals for Charlotte Square on 11th March 2024.
Bute House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged through meeting 10th January 2023. Previously engaged via a project update via email (30^h March 2023). Provided with a project update via email on the 7^h February 2024.
Edinburgh World Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided with a project update via email. Held meeting to discuss the project and proposals for Charlotte Square (25th January 2024) Further direct engagement was held on the 27th February 2024. Ongoing monthly engagement with CEC is occurring including updates on Charlotte Square project as appropriate.
Spokes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 2024 email correspondence with project update. Feedback was provided by Spokes through email correspondence with CEC.
Residents and Business of the Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter drop was undertaken to all resident and businesses associated with the Square on (22nd February 2024).

In addition to these methods of engagement the CEC Project Website was also updated to reflect the latest project overview information to the public.

1.1.1 Key Feedback

Corran Properties:

The project team held a meeting with Corran Properties on 11th March 2024 to outline the proposed traffic operations and gain feedback on the designs for Charlotte Square. The following feedback was provided:

- There are 11 Proprietors associated with Charlotte Square, who were highlighted as a key group to engage with due to the impact of changes to the square on their operations. It was requested they should be contacted first before the wider stakeholders were engaged with.
Action: a meeting was subsequently set up for and held on the 24th of April with Corran Properties along with a further meeting in May with the wider Proprietors Association.
- Traffic within the square was highlighted as a concern, mainly associated with Private Hire Coaches indiscriminately parking.
- Limiting access hours to properties would be unpopular with businesses and visitors. It was considered important that there is drop off access for vehicles outside the offices. Accessibility is key for client drop offs and delivery, with approximately six properties with access to the rear of the buildings.
- Glenfinlas Street access being relocated from Charlotte Street to St Colme Street was not viewed as an issue, retaining the restriction on rat-running.
- Maintenance of the soft landscaping was seen as a concern, primarily the potential for maintenance not to occur if budgets are not ringfenced. If budgets are reduced or withdrawn these landscaping elements could become overgrown detracting from the beauty of the gardens.

Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH):

- Placement of a cycle track in front of the eastern gates was opposed based on accessibility.
- If ramps are required for the interim scheme for accessibility, the noted preference would be to install them without wooden surrounds.
- There was concern about the proposed widening of the kerb line outside of West Register House.
- Noted EWH would welcome ongoing discussions as the scheme develops.

4.2 Stage 2 Engagement

Stage 2 engagement activities expanded to a wider audience with a broader set of engagement methods. Advertisement for events were coordinated through direct emails to stakeholders, updates to the project website, social media posts and emails to those who have requested to be kept up to date with the project. The engagement activities are summarised below.

Virtual Stakeholder Briefing

A Virtual Stakeholder Briefing session was held on Monday 3rd June at 10am till 11am. The event consisted of the project team providing a project overview, an update on the project timeline along with presenting the different concept designs for Charlotte Square and Charlotte Street. At the end of the presentation there was opportunities for attendees to

provide feedback and ask questions to the project team. The following organisations were represented at this event:

Sight Scotland	Whighams Wine Bar
Coran Properties	City Link
National Trust Scotland	Spokes

In Person Drop-In Session

An in-person drop-in Session was held to allow key stakeholders, businesses and residents of Charlotte Square and the Proprietors the opportunity to speak to the project team, review the project material, ask questions, and provide feedback on the proposals for Charlotte Square and Charlotte Street. The event was held on the following date and venue:

- Kimpton Hotel, Charlotte Square 5th June 2024 at 4pm till 6:45.

Virtual Residents and Businesses Drop-In Session

A Virtual Briefing session was held on Thursday 6th June at 5pm until 6pm. The event consisted of the project team providing a project overview, an update on the project timeline along with presenting the concept designs for Charlotte Square and Charlotte Street. At the end of the presentation there was opportunities for attendees to provide feedback and ask questions to the project team. Attendees included residents and businesses around the square as well as wider stakeholders.

5. Engagement Responses

The following chapter provides a summary of the feedback gathered through the Stage 2 engagement events. A full list of the comments recorded and responses is presented in Appendix A.

5.1 General Feedback

Table 5-1 summarises key areas raised during the engagement with a summary of key actions to consider during development of the proposed concept designs. In addition to this, the following, more general feedback was received:

- Apprehension over the visual impact on Charlotte Square and the surrounding streets from the vertical wands.
- Confusion was noted associated with the cycle track which has a lack of access for users (note this is to be opened as part of the interim scheme).
- Noted that vehicles turning right from Charlotte Street southbound to the south side of Charlotte Square are causing congestion due to the removal of the right filter lane.
- Noted that drivers can find it difficult turning left from George Street on to South Charlotte Street during busy times.
- Feedback highlighted the need to provide information on the current Charlotte Square arrangement to ensure all members of the public, alongside businesses and residents understand.

Positive feedback was received on the ideas and intentions presented during the engagement within the concept designs, most notably around the levelling of the square to help remove the current camber and promote a consistent level, increasing safety and accessibility for all users.

5.3 Concept Design Feedback Summary

Table 5-1: Specific Feedback from Stage 2 Consultation

Theme	Comments	Action
Design	Need clear differentiation between cycle track and crossing points for visually impaired people.	A clear vertical level difference is proposed between footways and the cycle track to highlight the different facilities. At any pedestrian crossing points of the cycle track that are not under traffic signal control (i.e. zebra controlled priority crossings), the cycle track will raise to footway level with blister tactile paving marking the extents of the crossing point and providing vertical deflection for cyclists.
	Zebra crossing on southside of the square is offset from the desire line.	The crossing has been located to provide requisite forward visibility between pedestrians and vehicle drivers away from the 90 degree bend at the southwest corner of Charlotte Square, maintaining on the desire line as far as possible. For information the major desire line from pedestrian surveys is from Hope Street (east side) to George Street, acknowledging Charlotte Square should be considered a destination.
	Cycle track would be better served not being close to the square railings - need access to do maintenance.	The preferred concept design is under consideration taking into account feedback on the two overarching short-listed options.
	Glenfinlas Street should not be closed at the south, Charlotte Square end. As pointed out at the meeting, if access from St. Colme Street is allowed, buses will come into Glenfinlas Street to drop off then must reverse out making the street impassible.	The proposed change is local to Glenfinlas Street residents to reduce the need for need for vehicles to be within Charlotte Square (west and north), whilst maintaining the ability to rat-run via St Colme Street/Glenfinlas Street. As part of this project re-examination of the ratio of pay & display bays to resident parking on Glenfinlas Street are proposed, alongside necessary waiting restrictions.
	Colour contrast of paving for delineation is needed to be considered and that it is consistent when moving on to George Street.	Noted, materials are still to be specified acknowledging the importance of vertical and/or colour differentiation for visually impaired people.
	Cycle Track outside of Bute House would be preferred.	The cycle route is to the north via Bute House in the 'Quiet Street' environment, connecting to the segregated cycle track on the west side of Charlotte Street.
	Laybys outside the Kimpton causing an issue.	The revised layout on Charlotte Street is being monitored, with the upcoming interim scheme clarifying the layout and lane discipline southbound.

Theme	Comments	Action
Congestion	Changing Glenfinlas Street is not a good idea as causes more traffic on Colme Street	The proposed change is local to Glenfinlas Street residents to reduce the need for need for vehicles to be within Charlotte Square (west and north), whilst maintaining the nability to rat-run via St Colme Street/Glenfinlas Street. As part of this project re-examination of the ratio of pay & display bays to resident parking on Glenfinlas Street alongside is proposed, necessary waiting restrictions.
	The new road layout is causing significant traffic problems due to the reduction of lanes along Charlotte Street, which is having an impact on Queen Street.	The interim scheme has been testing the reduction of road space on Charlotte Street. Barriers have been removed in the meantime to assist with congestion. The plans for George Street to become limited to traffic mean that traffic volumes exiting this unction will reduce and a reduction of road space from 4 lanes to 3 will be viable in the future once the George Street proposals are complete on the ground.
Accessibility	Street furniture: would be good to have an understanding of where it would be located so that it doesn't cause an issue in terms of barriers for those who are visually impaired.	Street furniture types and locations are to be developed during subsequent design stages when the overall concept layout is approved. Further engagement will allow feedback on proposals.
	Need to ensure that those with disability can be dropped off. Clear signage regarding disabled parking needs to be provided.	The balance of parking/loading/public transport is being developed inclusive of feedback from engagement.
	Need to ensure that there is clear delineation between cyclists and pedestrians to protect those who are visually impaired or have other disabilities.	A clear vertical level difference is proposed between footways and the cycle track to highlight the different facilities. At any pedestrian crossing points of the cycle track that are not under traffic signal control (i.e. zebra controlled priority crossings), the cycle track will raise to footway level with blister tactile paving marking the extents of the crossing point and providing vertical deflection for cyclists.
Parking and Loading	Deliveries to the front doors of the businesses around Charlotte Square was essential	Deliveries to front doors of businesses on the square will still be possible.
	a desire to have more parking spaces for residents on Glenfinlas Street to mitigate against the loss of spaces on Charlotte Square	As part of this project re-examination of the ratio of pay & display bays to resident parking on Glenfinlas Street is proposed, alongside necessary waiting restrictions.

Theme	Comments	Action
	The provision of parking on the southside of Charlotte Square has the potential to cause congestion through the narrowing of the carriageway as well as lowering safety levels for those entering/exiting their vehicles.	The south side of Charlotte Square will remain as a vehicle route from Charlotte Street to Hope Street to service bus routes, loading and access to the west/north sides of the square for servicing. Short term loading/drop off is proposed for the west/north sides of the square but to be incorporated into the public realm scheme.
Public Realm	What safeguards will be put in place to ensure the public realm space is kept as that and not for events space.	CEC operate a permit system for any events, requiring detailed applications that must be reviewed and approved by relevant authorities to ensure compliance with usage policies.
	Concerns around the potential soft landscaping around the corners of the square. Who will maintain those areas to ensure they do not get overgrown or filled with litter?	Through the Tourist Levy for Edinburgh proposals budgets are currently being investigated for maintenance of key public realm spaces in the city centre. CEC operate a permit system for any events, requiring detailed applications that must be reviewed and approved by relevant authorities to ensure compliance with usage policies.

6. Summary and Next Steps

6.1 Summary

A variety of engagement methods have been employed in order to maximise the opportunity for feedback. Engagement has been undertaken on the emerging concept design options in particular with key stakeholders including Corran Properties, Bute House, Residents and Businesses of The Square as well as other key stakeholders such as Edinburgh World Heritage and Spokes. The feedback provided to the wider project team from these organisations, as well as members of the public, will be valuable in helping to develop the current designs to improve Charlotte Square for all users. These designs will also look to ensure that the proposed changes to the Square are accepted by the main users such as residents and businesses, as well as Edinburgh World Heritage, whilst meeting council objectives. The main areas of feedback focused on 5 main themes: Design, Congestion, Accessibility, Parking and Loading and Public Realm.

6.2 Next Steps

During Stage 3 of the project, a preferred option will be developed including where possible the feedback from the recent engagement; this engagement will continue during the Preliminary Design phase to ensure a balanced solution for the Charlotte Square Public Realm project. Engagement will be undertaken with residents and businesses, Bute House, Corran Properties and wider stakeholders to ensure the views of all users of the space are taken into account in the development of the final design. Once this stage has occurred the project team will move from Preliminary Design to the Detailed Design stage, with the aim to have the permanent scheme in place in 2026.

Appendix A

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
Virtual Briefing	Need clear differentiation between cycle track and crossing points for visually impaired people	Design	A clear vertical level difference is proposed between footways and the cycle track to highlight the different facilities. At any pedestrian crossing points of the cycle track that are not under traffic signal control (i.e. zebra controlled priority crossings), the cycle track will raise to footway level with blister tactile paving marking the extents of the crossing point and providing vertical deflection for cyclists.
Virtual Briefing	Cycle track would follow with traffic on each side of the street	Design	There is insufficient space on Charlotte Street to provide uni-directional cycle tracks each with a buffer from the traffic lanes.
Virtual Briefing	Street furniture: would be good to have an understanding of where it would be located so that it doesn't cause an issues in terms of barriers for those who are visually impaired.	Design	Street furniture types and locations are to be developed during subsequent design stages when the overall concept layout is approved. Further engagement will allow feedback on proposals.
Virtual Briefing	colour contrast of paving for delineation is needed to be considered and that it is consistent when moving on to George Street.	Design	Noted, materials are still to be specified acknowledging the importance of vertical and/or colour differentiation for visually impaired people.
Virtual Briefing	How are stakeholders going to be involved at further stages when options become clearer?	Stakeholder Involvement	Stakeholders are being engaged with through a variety of activities. Residents and businesses of the Square have had letter drops and leaflet drops to their door with contact details for the project team to provide feedback. Proprietors of the Square have been engaged with through a briefing and drop-in session. Engagement will continue throughout the entire design process at key stages. Wider stakeholders will be provided with project updates and invites to events at key stages during the projects development.
Virtual Briefing	How are you going to learn from the mistakes made on Leith Walk and Picardy Place?	Case Studies	Active travel infrastructure, more so than other infrastructure, is ever evolving. And lessons learnt logs are kept from all of CEC previous projects that capture insights from these projects to identify successes and failures, guiding improvements and avoiding repeated mistakes.
Virtual Briefing	How are you going to ensure the heritage is protected?	Heritage	A Heritage Impact Assessment is being produced as part of the design process. This process will analyse the key attributes which contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site and will be supported by analysis of other Heritage designations. Through the assessment process, areas where the proposed action may cause positive or negative impacts on these attributes will be identified. Once identified, negative impacts will look to be removed or mitigated whilst positive impacts will look to be maximised through an iterative design process.
Virtual Briefing	Zebra crossing on southside of the square is offset from the desire line	Design	The crossing has been located to provide requisite forward visibility between pedestrians and vehicle drivers away from the 90 degree bend at the southwest corner of Charlotte Square, maintaining on the desire line as far as possible. For information the major desire line from pedestrian surveys is from Hope Street (east side) to George Street, acknowledging Charlotte Square should be considered a destination.
Virtual Briefing	What is the proposal of parking and loading provisions?	Parking and Loading	Parking and loading is subject to further development however at a concept level: the north side: - as existing, the north side of Charlotte Square will not permit parking and loading in the vicinity of Bute House - short term loading/drop off facilities are to be confirmed for the west side of the square within the 'quiet street' environment. - Provision around the south side of the Square and Hope Street to be confirmed in terms of mix of short term loading/drop-off, public transport facilities.
Virtual Briefing	Access to Queen Street for cycling can this be an option?	Design	Access to Queen Street is under consideration however segregated facilities to Queen Street will not be possible as part of the Charlotte Square scheme. Access from the proposed cycle track on Charlotte Street onto the carriageway is being investigated as an interim connection to the existing network.
Virtual Briefing	Deliveries to front doors for businesses is key during the day.	Parking and Loading	Deliveries to front doors of businesses on the square will still be possible.
Virtual Briefing	Would be a cause for concern with bus stops on the south side of the square with occupiers of the square	Design	Provision to be investigated further as part of the development of the design, this is intended to address accessibility to the Square and adjacent attractors.
Virtual Briefing	Cycle track would be better served not being close to the square railings - need access to do maintenance.	Design	The preferred concept design is under consideration taking into account feedback on the two short-listed options.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
Virtual Briefing	lighting on the square needs to be considered - need consistency as currently there is a number of different types of lighting on the square.	Lighting	A lighting review is proposed as part of the programme.
Virtual Briefing	what safeguards will be put in place to ensure the public realm space is kept as that and not for events space.	Public Realm	CEC operate a permit system for any events, requiring detailed applications that must be reviewed and approved by relevant authorities to ensure compliance with usage policies.
Virtual Online Session 2	cycle post are currently destroying the square. Why does anything need to be done to charlotte square, its simple and beautiful. Didn't know about the event last night. Rather see the money spent else where i.e. schools.	Waste of Money	Current vertical wands are a temporary arrangement as part of the interim scheme to reduce the risk of collisions with the temporary kerbs defining the widened off-carriageway areas. The final permanent designs and construction will not include the wands.
Virtual Online Session 2	Why doesn't the cycle route go round to the north in front of Bute house instead of mixing with traffic coming from Queensferry Hope street? This is disastrous for car owners and local residents - we have lost around 150 parking spaces from our zone in Charlotte square	Design	The cycle route is to the north via Bute House in the 'Quiet Street' environment, connecting to the segregated cycle track on the west side of Charlotte Street. There is no proposed segregated route on Hope Street/south side of as part of the Charlotte Street project.
Virtual Online Session 2	It's my understanding that the public are not able to go into the private gardens. this is not clear anywhere on the plans The 'public realm' is such an overused term when 9/10th of the space available is not public	Consultation	The Square is not currently open to the public and not in CEC ownership, hence is not part of the Charlotte Square project; access into the gardens will be maintained for potential future changes with regard to access.
Virtual Online Session 2	The Square is paid for by the residents/businesses around the outside of the Square, hence the reason its not open to the Public	Consultation	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	What is the budget? As just raised - besides environmental concerns (rain water) not clear on the ratii up make for this. Thirdly, the 3 lane traffic scheme is dangerous (I have almost been hit by merging traffic more than once) and causing congestion which itself has an environmental impact. What's being done to monitor that.	Environmental	Currently the budget is not allocated for the project. We will be looking to update cost estimates on the final concept design proposals and currently have a bid in for Stage 3 developed design funding to Sustrans Places for Everyone. Budgets will be allocated per financial year via the Visitor Levy for Edinburgh capital funding from 2016 and applications will be made to external funding partners such as Transport Scotland.
Virtual Online Session 2	the 'options' looked as if there were 'red parts' to both car biased options and pedestrianisation biased options but no 'red parts' to the cycle biased options	Consultation	Cycle biased options had amber through to green, acknowledging even the car biased options need to meet the objective of provide active travel connections from CCWEL to George Street.
Virtual Online Session 2	There has been huge displacement of traffic already to Queen street Colme St Ainslie and Great Stuart from the trams and now the LEZ . There has also been displacement of parking to the Moray Feu.	Congestion	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	Why are cyclists seen as the more important than pedestrians or people with disabilities	Consultation	Our sustainable transport hierarchy is set out in our City Mobility Plan and clearly prioritises walking and wheeling, then cycling, then public transport. In line with this, the proposed design for Charlotte Square improves the quality, range and integration of sustainable travel options.
Virtual Online Session 2	Some good ideas. Glenfinlas street - access change makes sense	Consultation	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	Traffic has been bad on charlotte street with the new layout. But the LEZ coming in to affect has helped to lower the volume of traffic	Congestion	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	laybys outside the Kimpton causing an issue.	Congestion	The revised layout on Charlotte Street is being monitored, with the upcoming interim scheme clarifying the layout and lane discipline southbound.
Virtual Online Session 2	Charlotte square gardens are privately owned. This is a big and expensive development for the public realm round the edges. Hard to understand given all the other things in the city that need attention.	Public Realm	Charlotte Square is crucial to Edinburgh as a prime example of neoclassical architecture by Robert Adam, central to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the New Town. It serves as a cultural and civic hub with important private gardens and plays a key role in the city's urban landscape. To enhance public access, we aim to provide additional public realm space, as the existing gardens are privately owned, and integrate it with the City Centre West Edinburgh Link, which features a vital cycle connection to improve the city's transport network and promote sustainable mobility.
Virtual Online Session 2	Decisions about this scheme is SO dependant on the Lothian Boulevard Project, as if this project is a given decision, whereas the council have already received much opposition to the scheme in it's present form	Conflicting Projects	We are working closely with the Lothian Road project team to ensure that the projects are coordinated in approach for both transport movement.
Virtual Online Session 2	biggest concern is how this fits with broader issue of traffic. Queen Street has more traffic now due to the trams. The lez is now causing a ring road to avoid it.	Congestion	Redirecting traffic to certain streets to make others quieter aims to improve the city centre by reducing noise and pollution, enhancing safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and creating more pleasant public spaces. The LEZ also promotes sustainable transport by making walking, cycling, and public transport more attractive, and it seeks to optimise traffic flow and infrastructure use. While it involves trade-offs, the overall goal is to balance traffic distribution to support environmental sustainability, and improve road efficiency in the city.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
Virtual Online Session 2	Changing glenfinlas street is not a good idea as causes more traffic on Colme Street	Congestion	The proposed change is localised to Glenfinlas Street residents and limit the need for private vehicles to be within Charlotte Square (west and north), whilst maintaining the inability to rat-run via St Colme Street/Glenfinlas Street.
Virtual Online Session 2	why not take cycle lanes along thistle street for example - already a one way street, taking them away from pedestrians	Route Location	Thistle Street is a cobbled street which may be used for local trips but not suitable for a strategic connection. Separate pedestrian footways and crossings are provided to those for people who are choosing to cycle.
Virtual Online Session 2	where is your analysis for those with restricted sight and other disabilities - this becomes a dangerous place for them if they share it with cyclists	Design	Shared use facilities are not proposed as part of the permanent Charlotte Square scheme, cycle facilities on Charlotte Street are segregated with zebra priority controlled crossings or signal controlled crossings of the cycle track for pedestrians.
Virtual Online Session 2	where can those with disabilities be dropped off - disabled parking etc - They have been forgotten in the Meadows to George Street too.	Disabled Parking	The balance of parking/loading/public transport is being developed inclusive of feedback from engagement.
Virtual Online Session 2	The square is already a quiet contemplative space!!!!	Waste of Money	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	Not convinced there is an integrated approach to planning. I asked about monitoring air quality in adjacent streets following introducing the LEZ. It's not happening. This scheme will likely result in more traffic displacement into nearby streets. Environmental concerns are not being looked at in the round.	Environmental	Monitoring of air quality has been conducted for Edinburgh's Low Emission Zone (LEZ). The City of Edinburgh Council and other relevant agencies regularly measure and analyse air quality data both before and after the implementation of the LEZ. This monitoring helps assess the impact of the LEZ on reducing air pollution levels, track improvements in air quality, and ensure that the LEZ is meeting its environmental goals. Data from these assessments are typically used to refine policies, enhance traffic management strategies, and address any emerging issues to further improve air quality in the LEZ area. Data is proposed to be available late 2025. Redirecting traffic to certain streets to make others quieter aims to improve the city centre by reducing noise and pollution, enhancing safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and creating more pleasant public spaces. The LEZ also promotes sustainable transport by making walking, cycling, and public transport more attractive, and it seeks to optimize traffic flow and infrastructure use. While it involves trade-offs, the overall goal is to balance traffic distribution to support environmental sustainability, and improve road efficiency in the city.
Virtual Online Session 2	If people with mobility issues can't use a car and have to walk significant distances to buses - then they are not being properly considered.	Accessibility	No changes are proposed to existing bus stop provision or bus routes. The ability to provide additional bus stops are being considered however requires operator negotiation and commercial support, and balance to be found within the available space alongside parking/loading/disabled access.
Virtual Online Session 2	to raise the levels will be very expensive and is it necessary to 're-level' it?	Design	Re-levelling' the square to pre-1960's levels will provide a significant improvement to accessibility and movement around the square particularly for those with mobility difficulties. It is also required to achieve widened footway areas.
Virtual Online Session 2	Can you send out the figures on the monitoring of traffic before and after the LEZ introduction	Consultation	The City of Edinburgh Council and other relevant agencies regularly measure and analyse air quality data both before and after the implementation of the LEZ. This monitoring helps assess the impact of the LEZ on reducing air pollution levels, track improvements in air quality, and ensure that the LEZ is meeting its environmental goals. Data from these assessments are typically used to refine policies, enhance traffic management strategies, and address any emerging issues to further improve air quality in the LEZ area. Data is proposed to be available late 2025. It is currently too soon to see any impact of the LEZ on air quality.
Virtual Online Session 2	We shouldn't put the needs of a business ahead of the residents	Consultation	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	Better way would be to have the cycle track outside Bute house	Design	The cycle route is to the north via Bute House in the 'Quiet Street' environment, connecting to the segregated cycle track on the west side of Charlotte Street.
Virtual Online Session 2	There are Lothian bus routes that unnecessarily come through Charlotte Square from Queensferry street to get to Lothian road via Princes street - can this be stopped ?	Public Transport	This movement is important due the tram route alignment and constrained space on Princes Street to allow the right hand turn onto Lothian Road.
Visual Briefing	Important that there is delineation of kerbs. Ideally not bidirectional cycleway.	Accessibility	There is insufficient space on Charlotte Street to provide uni-directional cycle tracks each with a buffer from the adjacent traffic lanes. However vertical and material delineation is proposed.
Visual Briefing	Street furniture/ palette of materials appropriate. Careful with grey scale- making sure a colour contrast with the road. Consistency with other surrounding streets.	Accessibility	Material selection will be developed through the project programme aligned to CEC policies.
Visual Briefing	Will send across Design principles and elements send across to make sure they are considered	Consultation	No comment needed.
Visual Briefing	Make sure the contrast of the zebra crossing high - advocate for them to be controlled	Accessibility	No comment needed.
Visual Briefing	Request for a site visit. Follow George Street engagement model - 3D tactile model	Site visit	We are keen to work closely with accessibility groups throughout the engagement process to ensure design proposals are fit for purpose and that useful feedback is fed into the design process.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
Visual Briefing	How are stakeholders being engaged. How it will be managed now?	Stakeholder Involvement	Stakeholders are being engaged with through a variety of activities. Residents and businesses of the Square have had letter drops and leaflet drops to their door with contact details for the project team to provide feedback. Proprietors of the Square have been engaged with through a briefing and drop-in session. Engagement will continue throughout the entire design process at key stages. Wider stakeholders will be provided with project updates and invites to events at key stages during the projects development.
Visual Briefing	Leith Walk - Lessons learnt from Leith Walk - Detailed design. Making sure the intuitive and legible.	Case Studies	Active travel infrastructure, more so than other infrastructure, is ever evolving. And lessons learnt logs are kept from all of CEC previous projects that capture insights from these projects to identify successes and failures, guiding improvements and avoiding repeated mistakes.
Visual Briefing	Heritage - How to make sure it is protected	Heritage	A Heritage Impact Assessment is being produced as part of the design process. This process will analyse the key attributes which contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site and will be supported by analysis of other Heritage designations. Through the assessment process, areas where the proposed action may cause positive or negative impacts on these attributes will be identified. Once identified, negative impacts will look to be removed or mitigated whilst positive impacts will look to be maximised through an iterative design process.
Visual Briefing	Why zebra crossing not raised- why offset from the desire line? Forward visibility- vehicles coming north bound on Hope St will have sufficient visibility.	Design	The crossing has been located to provide requisite forward visibility between pedestrians and vehicle drivers away from the 90 degree bend at the southwest corner of Charlotte Square, maintaining on the desire line as far as possible. For information the major desire line from pedestrian surveys is from Hope Street (east side) to George Street, acknowledging Charlotte Square should be considered a destination.
Visual Briefing	Width of Carriageway for on street parking	Parking and Loading	The carriageway width on Charlotte Square south and west, and Hope Street, will provide loading/short term parking where appropriate offline from the running lanes.
Visual Briefing	How will illegal parking be managed? Short term parking and loading / drop off / picks but not pickups. How will bollards be avoided at Heritage Sites	Parking and Loading	Illegal parking in Edinburgh city centre is managed through a combination of traffic wardens who issue fines, CCTV cameras for monitoring violations, and parking meters or pay-and-display machines to regulate spaces. Clear signage and road markings delineate parking rules, while fines and towing deter offenders. The city also utilises resident parking permits and conducts regular patrols and audits. Public awareness campaigns and reporting systems further support enforcement efforts, ensuring that parking regulations are upheld. The project aims to remove street clutter for both heritage and accessibility.
Visual Briefing	Pedestrian / Cyclists Interaction?	Accessibility	Cycle facilities are segregated on Charlotte Street with zebra priority controlled crossings or signal controlled crossings of the cycle track for pedestrians.
Visual Briefing	Onwards cycle connection - onward connection - north to Queen Street. Should it be consideration as Queen Street included as primary cycle link in Our Future Streets.	Connectivity	Access to Queen Street is under consideration however segregated facilities to Queen Street will not be delivered as part of the Charlotte Square scheme. Access from the proposed cycle track on Charlotte Street onto the carriageway is being investigated as an interim connection to the existing network.
Visual Briefing	Need drop off - for business to operate in business hours	Parking and Loading	Short term pick up and drop off is proposed for businesses around the square, with locations and operation under development.
Visual Briefing	Who are the bus stops for? Could move bus stops - requires further engagement with CEC officers	Existing Infrastructure	Bus stops requested by CEC public transport team during engagement to address lack of accessible public transport for access towards George Street, Queen Street and around Charlotte Square.
Visual Briefing	Don't want cycle way against the railings - practical point of view	Route Location	No comment needed.
Visual Briefing	Why 2 footpaths. Segregation - why needed. Stacking space of cyclists crossing. Need segregation for a bi directional cycleway	Consultation	A single footway is provided on each side of the road; Option 2 includes a buffer required between the cycle track and carriageway, of a width that can provide a waiting area for turning cyclists, separate pedestrian crossings of the cycle track from adjacent crossings of the carriageway, whilst retaining straight kerblines protecting the heritage / historic symmetry and simplicity of kerblines around the Gardens.
Visual Briefing	Planning permission - conservation area. How to make sure materials are appropriate. EWH. Engagement.	Consultation	Under permitted development rights, local authorities can efficiently undertake public realm projects without full planning permission, including improvements such as installing or modifying street furniture, upgrading pavement surfaces, and enhancing street lighting. They can also implement landscaping changes, such as planting, install or update signage for better navigation, and make accessibility enhancements like ramps and tactile paving. These measures help enhance the functionality, safety, and aesthetic appeal of public areas while streamlining the development process.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
Visual Briefing	Lighting. Very important. Railing lightings - now LED. Look good. Don't all come on at the same time	Lighting	A lighting review is proposed as part of the programme.
Visual Briefing	Use. Additional soft landscaping. Maintenance concerns. Hot to protect public realm space - not event space. What safeguards that events do not start happening in these corners. Legal services - by laws - MD to investigate with CEC and report back	Public Realm	Through the Tourist Levy for Edinburgh proposals budgets are currently being investigated for maintenance of key public realm spaces in the city centre. CEC operate a permit system for any events, requiring detailed applications that must be reviewed and approved by relevant authorities to ensure compliance with usage policies.
Virtual Online Session 2	How do we publicise the event?	Consultation	Residents and businesses of the Square have had letter drops and leaflet drops to their door with contact details for the project team to provide feedback. Proprietors of the Square have been engaged with through a briefing and drop-in session. Wider stakeholders will be provided with project updates and invites to events at key stages during the projects development through established contacts. Public consultation during later stages will be more widely advertised using social media and other channels.
Virtual Online Session 2	Why do you need to do something?	Consultation	The Charlotte Square project is crucial for enhancing Edinburgh's urban environment by improving cyclist safety across Charlotte Street as part of the City Centre West Edinburgh Link and addressing accessibility concerns related to the steps surrounding the square. It helps preserve architectural heritage, revitalizes public spaces, supports sustainable transport, and boosts economic and cultural vitality, creating a safer and more inclusive environment for all users.
Virtual Online Session 2	Budget for the project	Consultation	Currently the budget is not allocated for the project. We will be looking to update cost estimates on the final concept design proposals and currently have a bid in for Stage 3 developed design funding to Sustrans Places for Everyone. Budgets will be allocated per financial year via the Visitor Levy for Edinburgh capital funding from 2016 and applications will be made to external funding partners such as Transport Scotland.
Virtual Online Session 2	Flatten out levels good idea	Consultation	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	LEZ seems to be helping traffic. Traffic hasn't been bad	Consultation	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	Bottle neck on Charlotte Street has been created	Congestion	The revised layout on Charlotte Street is being monitored.
Virtual Online Session 2	Crossing at Hope Street would be useful	Consultation	Comment noted, crossings have been aligned to results from pedestrian routing surveys and to establish routes into the Square.
Virtual Online Session 2	Young Street - yellow no wait hatch box. People are blocking the junction. Would like to see it back	Consultation	Comment noted, the yellow box is included within the upcoming interim scheme.
Virtual Online Session 2	LEZ - Parking issue on Glenfinlas Street. Want bollards to stay were they are	Consultation	The proposed change is local to Glenfinlas Street residents to reduce the need for need for vehicles to be within Charlotte Square (west and north), whilst maintaining the inability to rat-run via St Colme Street/Glenfinlas Street. As part of this project we also propose to re-examine the ratio of pay & display bays to resident parking on Glenfinlas Street alongside necessary waiting restrictions.
Virtual Online Session 2	Dangerous junctions: Charlotte St/ Princess St Hope St/ Princess St Queen St/ Glenfinlas St	Consultation	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	140 parking spaces have been taken away without consultation	Parking and Loading	Consultation took place as part of Statutory Order process 2014 to approve the Traffic Orders and were implemented in 2022.
Virtual Online Session 2	Tourists and the public coming and parking in the area: Don't intend buses to continue to use the North and West of the square	Parking and Loading	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	Concern about road being quieter: More traffic and parking away and putting more pressure on key crossing points	Parking and Loading	Edinburgh is removing car parking from the city centre to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety. This approach supports the city's sustainability goals by encouraging the use of public transport, cycling, and walking, which helps create a more vibrant, accessible, and environmentally friendly urban environment. Additionally, reducing car parking can help reclaim public space for recreational and cultural uses, contributing to the overall quality of life and urban aesthetics.
Virtual Online Session 2	How will levelling work?	Consultation	The 'levelling' will retain the footway on the outside of the Square and the footway around the gardens and return the carriageway to its original level. The carriageway was 'bowled' in the 1960's to address 'congestion' and retaining the existing footway level around the Gardens required the installation of the steps present today.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
Virtual Online Session 2	LEZ data - available yet?	Consultation	The City of Edinburgh Council and other relevant agencies regularly measure and analyse air quality data both before and after the implementation of the LEZ. This monitoring helps assess the impact of the LEZ on reducing air pollution levels, track improvements in air quality, and ensure that the LEZ is meeting its environmental goals. Data from these assessments are typically used to refine policies, enhance traffic management strategies, and address any emerging issues to further improve air quality in the LEZ area. Data is proposed to be available late 2025. It is currently too soon to see any impact of the LEZ on air quality.
Virtual Online Session 2	Stacking of buses - concern over bus drop offs at the Kimpton.	Buses	Through the George Street project a maximum of one coach at any time will be able to access George Street from Charlotte Street and exit at North Castle Street. It is proposed that CEC will work with hotels and venues to manage a permit system for access.
Virtual Online Session 2	Supportive of levelling out square.	Consultation	No comment needed.
Virtual Online Session 2	Concern with the ban of right hand on Charlotte Square	Consultation	Existing restrictions around Charlotte Square are retained, no further turning restrictions are proposed as part of the Charlotte Square scheme.
Virtual Online Session 2	Wants cyclists to take north route around square (Confusion on Layout)	Consultation	The cycle route is to the north via Bute House in the 'Quiet Street' environment, connecting to the segregated cycle track on the west side of Charlotte Street. There is no proposed segregated route on Hope Street/south side of as part of the Charlotte Street project.
External Emails	Pleased with the emphasis in the projects aims on improving pedestrian crossings and we would support this as this as the main way to improve walking and wheeling within what we understand is a modest (£320k) budget	Endorsement	No comment needed.
External Emails	We would recommend that the timings of all signalised crossings are reviewed in order to provide adequate crossing time for pedestrians and to minimise waiting times.	Signalised Crossings	Comment noted, crossing timings will accord with current national standards with local policies.
External Emails	There is a particular problem at the junction of South Charlotte Street with Princes Street with red light jumping and we would recommend installation of a safety camera at this location (this can also delay eastbound buses on Princes Street).	Safety	This is not something our signals team are aware of. We have passed the concern on for their awareness.
External Emails	I feel that we should compliant about poor quality of this design. Is it an active travel project? Likewise Powderhall! I'd also like to know the approval process for designs - How can this have been approved when there is clearly so much wrong with it?	Design	No comment needed, no specifics to consider.
External Emails	The cycle lane defenders really aren't appropriate.	Design	The final permanent solution will not include bolt down kerb units or vertical wands as per the temporary scheme required to deliver the CCWEL connection to George Street.
External Emails	Yes the east end of CCWEL is a much better precedent for them to follow.	Design	Charlotte Square is providing the necessary connection for the CCWEL active travel corridor utilising the same core design principles.
External Emails	Where should that complaint be made? We did comment at last week's AT meeting about the nonsense at the Powderhall Junction. The AT team seem to have no involvement in George St or this.	Consultation	CEC are continuing to engage with Spokes reps on a regular basis on both George St and Charlotte Sq. Met 12th Aug and again on 29th of Aug. All comments are being responded to and taken forward to inform design progress where possible.
External Emails	I also think it would be helpful to have a protected cycle lane at the corner of Queen St and up to George Street.	Consultation	Access to Queen Street is under consideration however segregated facilities to Queen Street will not be possible as part of the Charlotte Square scheme. Access from the proposed cycle track on Charlotte Street onto the carriageway is being investigated as an interim connection to the existing network. The Charlotte Square project includes signal controlled cycle crossings for access/egress to George Street.
External Emails	Prefab kerbing has been used on CCWEL at St Andrew Square so would be consistent if used here too. Maybe with the addition of bollards on the kerbing with cycle direction signs.	Consultation	Charlotte Square is providing the necessary connection for the CCWEL active travel corridor utilising the same core design principles. Bollards are only provided where absolutely necessary to reduce street clutter but acknowledged wayfinding through markings and/or signing is critical. Note the permanent scheme for the square will not utilise prefab kerbs with wands.
External Emails	1.Traffic from Q. St. heading to Ch. Sq. two lanes, right lane painted for them to merge with left, yet left lane has to move right for lane position ahead. Causing a total mess. Note whatever has been placed ahead to stop traffic cannot be used by cyclists as it's blocked. When the cyclists navigate the traffic they are then faced with merging into a lane that two vehicles are also attempting to do same with. Hectic.	Congestion	The geometry of the three lane layout provides a merge that narrows equally from the nearside and offside lanes from Queen Street, not from the nearside only.
External Emails	2.Heading up in left lane the issue can be seen more clearly ahead. Why is the right lane being asked to merge?	Safety	As above.
External Emails	3.Opposing direction: lines showing ahead only, there was no right turn into George Street, until last week when old signage has been reinstated allowing cyclists, taxis to make a right turn. This is confusing as the road signage is poor, lines show an opposing piece of information and it is a danger for cyclists in particular.	Signage	The road markings and signing is in accordance with national standards i.e. road users northbound are ahead only, with an exception provided only for those identified on the sign. The additional of a right turn arrow on the road marking would infer all users may turn right.
External Emails	4.There is 3/4 of a lane now. Wide vehicles are faced with two lanes of opposing traffic, this has also become the only lane that one can make a right hand turn into Ch. Sq. it doesn't allow the traffic to flow at all.	Congestion	Lane widths are in accordance with national standards, not clear where lane identified as 3/4 width refers to. A single right turn lane is provided southbound, with the southbound right turn into Charlotte Square permitted but not offline from the ahead traffic.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
External Emails	Poor Traffic Flow	Congestion	The revised layout on Charlotte Street is being monitored.
External Emails	6. Not pointing the finger only at this van. Loads of deliver cars now park here and at rush hour it's a nightmare, selfish parking means the second lane cannot be utilised to help the already poorly flowing traffic	Congestion	No comment needed.
External Emails	however a true measure cannot be taken of efficiency when the one Southbound lane doesn't serve as a full single lane, by which I mean the barriers remaining in place (in their current position) do not allow wide vehicles to use the lane safely	Safety	A single southbound lane is provided with a 3.25m lane, the barrier is outside of this width, however as part of the interim scheme the barrier will be replaced with bolt-down kerb units.
External Emails	Have sent over Design Principles for the Visually Impaired	Accessibility	Noted.
External Emails	Charlotte Square: there is now a large open space which pedestrians don't use, cyclists are blocked off from, and a road half the size?	Consultation	The interim scheme is testing the reduction of road space on the south of Charlotte Square. To the east of the square, this space will be used by cyclists and will be open for use once the interim scheme is complete mid-September after the summer festival embargo.
External Emails	Charlotte square. There is now a huge area blocked off, exactly the same as the majority of the "spaces for people" schemes throughout the city. My business is located just round the corner and watching large buses struggle to turn and nobody using the space is just confusing. I don't understand the logic. Furthermore, the filter lane right onto Charlotte square has been removed resulting in traffic now being clogged up whilst a car waits to turn right.	Existing Infrastructure	The interim scheme is testing the reduction of road space on the south of Charlotte Square. To the east of the square, this space will be used by cyclists and will be open for use once the interim scheme is complete mid-September after the summer festival embargo. The cyclist space on the east side of the square requires a reduction in road space meaning that the filter light cannot be provided for. New signals will be installed shortly to help this work more efficiently. In the meantime defender units have been removed from Charlotte Street to assist with buses turning.
External Emails	Outside the intercontinental there are cones in the middle of the road for no reason. It's causing a daily backlog on traffic and one lane is completely out of use. Would help massively getting that lane back on open as if you have 1 car or taxi turning right they are now waiting for all traffic coming off princess street to pass before turning. By that time the traffic behind going straight towards princess street are stopped by the lights changing. This also has a huge impact on traffic turning onto the road from George street	Congestion	The interim scheme has been testing the reduction of road space on Charlotte Street. Cones have been removed in the mean time to assist with congestion. The plans for George Street to become limited to traffic mean that traffic volumes exiting this junction will reduce and a reduction of road space from 4 lanes to 3 will be viable in the future once the George Street proposals are complete on the ground.
External Emails	Following up here. Have you had a look at Charlotte square yet? If so what's the reasoning for the left lane being blocked off? There's no notice of further works and it's causing a huge amount of traffic being blocked up on George Street and down to Queens street. I have attached some images so you can see what I mean. 1. The filter lane right onto Charlotte square was removed recently. 2. The left lane is now blocked off meaning, each time 1 car wants to turn right into Charlotte square the cars behind are blocked from going straight. This then results in a huge backlog of traffic for no reason?	Congestion	The interim scheme has been testing the reduction of road space on Charlotte Street. Cones have been removed in the mean time to assist with congestion. The plans for George Street to become limited to traffic mean that traffic volumes exiting this junction will reduce and a reduction of road space from 4 lanes to 3 will be viable in the future once the George Street proposals are complete on the ground.
External Emails	You must be joking?! What a disgrace, a bike lane on the south side of Charlotte Sq., wider than the lanes the buses have to squeeze through, and with those disgusting bollards and pavings. It is SO ugly, on such a lovely area. Why oh why does the lane have to be there anyway, considering the north side is basically exclusively for bikes as there is no other traffic allowed? And even if there, why wide enough for 2 buses, and then make the area so terrible with those horrible bollards. Some tourists I was talking to this afternoon could not believe you have ruined such a scenic spot (the grass lawns, bulbs, statue, beautiful buildings, old church) with this ugly and totally unnecessary disgrace. And it has made the road SO narrow that if traffic is queued at the lights, buses turning left in to Charlotte Sq. have no chance of getting round. Crazy. And why do you need a bike lane up to and around the lights anyway, when you have that huge slip lane that you have reopened?? This is an absolute unnecessary disgrace and a real blot on the landscape	Consultation	The space blocked off with defender units on the south side of Charlotte Square is for pedestrians. It is being used to test the reduction in road space to allow for permanent public realm enhancements long term. Defender units are a temporary measure. In the interim scheme some defender units have now been removed from the proposals that will assist with bus movements.
External Emails	If North side of Charlotte Sq. is for bikes, why have you cut off half the road on the South side and installed ridiculous bollards? These means that buses turning right from Hope St in to Charlotte Sq. have to try to get around the bollards, and if there are vehicles queued west they can not fit through?! And now installed a stupid barricade on the east side that blocks off a lane going south, and makes the only lane going south so narrow that if vehicles going north are queued then southbound traffic can not fit through. Madness. And, taxis can not drop off at the hotels on Charlotte Sq. This is all a waste of our money, no-one I know is in favour of this rubbish.	Design	Although the cycle route is intended around the north of the square, the South of Charlotte Square is busy with vehicular traffic. The space blocked off with defender units on the south of Charlotte Square is for pedestrians. It is being used to test the reduction in road space to allow for permanent public realm enhancements long term. Defender units are a temporary measure. In the interim scheme some defender units have now been removed from the proposals that will assist with bus movements and informal taxi drop off while the space is undesignated for public realm/ pedestrian space.
External Emails	It does not work and makes the beautiful square look horrendous	Design	Defender units are temporary and being used to test the permanent layout. Monitoring is ongoing and amendments are being made to ensure design proposals are feasible long term.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
External Emails	Why, there are wide footpaths either side already. And that ridiculous barricade on Charlotte Sq. east, is stopping all traffic heading south any time a vehicle needs to turn right in to Charlotte Sq. south, backing traffic up way back in to Queen St. Come on, common sense here, get rid of it	Design	The interim scheme has been testing the reduction of road space on Charlotte Street. Barriers have been removed in the mean time to assist with congestion. The plans for George Street to become limited to traffic mean that traffic volumes exiting this junction will reduce and a reduction of road space from 4 lanes to 3 will be viable in the future once the George Street proposals are complete on the ground.
External Emails	Please don't allow changes to the pedestrian, bicycle and traffic management of Charlotte Square ignore the residents. We are an important section of the users of the area and contribute to its use every day.	Consultation	There is ongoing engagement with residents and businesses in the immediate area of Charlotte Square to ensure comments are collated and responded to where possible. The interim scheme is also allowing us to test these proposals ahead of a permanent layout being delivered on the ground.
External Emails	Glenfinlas Street should not be closed at the south, Charlotte Square end. As pointed out at the consultation meeting, if access from St. Colme Street is allowed, buses will come into Glenfinlas Street to drop off then have to reverse out, the street will become dangerous in the winter when the cobbles are frozen, and the LEZ will have an impact with all of our parking taken over by vehicles getting as close as possible to the city centre. Indeed, it may be that the LEZ boundary would need to be altered or monitored at the entry to Glenfinlas Street. I'm not aware of any resident in Glenfinlas Street that would support this plan. To be clear, when Glenfinlas Street was closed at the north end 25 years ago, I supported that plan for both management and safety reasons and I still support it.	Design	The proposed change is local to Glenfinlas Street residents to reduce the need for vehicles to be within Charlotte Square (west and north), whilst maintaining the inability to rat-run via St Colme Street/Glenfinlas Street. As part of this project we also propose to re-examine the ratio of pay & display bays to resident parking on Glenfinlas Street alongside necessary waiting restrictions.
External Emails	New traffic lanes in Charlotte Square are not working effectively. The single lane when driving south on the east side of Charlotte Square means that when buses or cars are turning right, they block all the traffic coming from Queen Street, sometimes for a full cycle of the traffic lights. Similarly, a single lane from south Charlotte Square effectively traps users if either north or south lanes on the east side are restricted, which happens regularly.	Design	The interim scheme has been testing the reduction of road space on Charlotte Street. Barriers have been removed in the mean time to assist with congestion. The plans for George Street to become limited to traffic mean that traffic volumes exiting this junction will reduce and a reduction of road space from 4 lanes to 3 will be viable in the future once the George Street proposals are complete on the ground.
External Emails	Changing more parking spaces to residential spaces in Glenfinlas Street will mitigate some of the loss of spaces from Charlotte Square and the coming loss of parking spaces on George Street, and we'd support most of spaces being made resident's spaces. As I said at the meeting, with the combination of trade users and the current limited space for residents, a lengthy journey is sometimes needed to find a vacant space when carrying shopping.	Design	As part of this project we propose to re-examine the ratio of pay & display bays to resident parking on Glenfinlas Street alongside necessary waiting restrictions.
External Emails	Why are you wasting so much time and money on a piece of road that no-one can use. Charlotte Square, when there are so many other roads around that are in dire need of repair? This is Crazy	Waste of Money	Charlotte Square is crucial to Edinburgh as a prime example of neoclassical architecture by Robert Adam, central to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the New Town. It serves as a cultural and civic hub with important private gardens and plays a key role in the city's urban landscape. To enhance public access, we aim to provide additional public realm space, as the existing gardens are privately owned, and integrate it with the City Centre West Edinburgh Link, which features a vital cycle connection to improve the city's transport network and promote sustainable mobility.
External Emails	Looks like you are putting parking on the south side of Charlotte Sq. meaning a narrow roadway for all the traffic inc buses, and no left turn lane for traffic turning into Charlotte Sq. East, when the west and north sides are huge and no traffic allowed, so would be ideal for parking	Design	The south side of Charlotte Square will remain as a vehicle route from Charlotte Street to Hope Street to service bus routes, loading and access to the west/north sides of the square for servicing. Short term loading/drop off is proposed for the west/north sides of the square but to be incorporated into the public realm scheme. Noted comments re. buses, road widths are narrower but within national standards and observations show movements may be slower but not restricted.
External Emails	traffic queues at the lights, buses turning left in to Charlotte Sq. have no chance of getting in	Congestion	Defender units are a temporary measure. In the interim scheme some defender units have now been removed from the proposals that will assist with bus movements and informal taxi drop off while the space is undesignated for public realm/ pedestrian space.
External Emails	a bike lane that bikes can not get in to, that is just UGLY and means only 1 lane heading south, causing huge backlogs in the evening in particular.	Design	The layout is being monitored for operation. The completed interim scheme will include opening of the cycle track on Charlotte Street.
External Emails	Why does a bike lane that hardly anyone will use need to be wider than the road lanes? Why does it need to be there at all when the north side is totally empty of traffic and where cyclists go anyway? Why these stupid bollards, they are SO ugly? Means if an ambulance is coming through vehicles have nowhere to go. Why is the traffic squeezed in to 1 lane going south, and 2 lanes in a very narrow bit on the south side? You encourage people to get public transport then make it near impossible for them to get around? Your beloved bikes are all very well but MANY of us (older, handicapped, sick, pregnant, etc) need to drive. People I work with ride bikes and say they will never use these as road is better	Congestion	Defender units are a temporary measure and proposed on Charlotte Street to allow City Centre West Edinburgh Link (CCWEL) to connect safely to George Street. The intention is that cyclist would be on the carriageway round the west and north of the Square as traffic volumes are low. Defender units at the south of Charlotte Square are testing a reduction in carriageway space to allow for enhanced public realm and pedestrian space. On the east side of Charlotte St barriers have been removed in the mean time to assist with congestion. The plans for George Street to become limited to traffic mean that traffic volumes exiting this junction will reduce and a reduction of road space from 4 lanes to 3 will be viable in the future once the George Street proposals are complete on the ground.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
External Emails	The recent tarmac work has raised the road level and reduced the kerb height, causing water to flow over the pavement. This has resulted in numerous water damage issues since Phase 1 of your works. Additionally, we have experienced multiple power outages since the work was completed, a problem we had never faced before.	Property Damage	Kerb heights have not changed through the construction work of the roads resurfacing carried out Oct 2023- Mar 2024. It has been a year of extremely high rainfall which is likely to have led to flooding.
External Emails	My main concerns at Whighams are drainage, loading and parking. A provision for sustainable drainage was mentioned in the current climate conditions. The heavy rain of a couple of weeks ago hit us badly and we need assurance that improvements will be made. This is due to the fact that the kerb is now very low and allows the water to run over the pavement rather than in a designated channel to the gully. I will be interested to see the design to improve this.	Flooding	No comment needed.
External Email	Road layout between Lothian Road and Charlotte Square encourages traffic to flow at excessive speed. Two factors seem to have a negative effect on driver psychology - having two lanes in each direction, and having traffic signals co-ordinated so that traffic can flow without stopping. Drivers seem to treat this stretch of road like a racetrack, accelerating to beat other vehicles to the next junction.	Safety	Through the permanent scheme we are looking to reduce the number of southbound lanes from 2 to 1 to provide the segregated cycle lane on Charlotte Street to connect CCWEL to George Street. Signalling is also being revisited as part of the works re-examining traffic movements.
External Email	There are especially dangerous corners at junction of Lothian Road / Princes Street (most dangerous junction in Edinburgh) and at Princes St / South Charlotte Street junction. Where vehicles turn north from Princes St into South Charlotte St there is barely enough room for vehicles in the two lanes to squeeze together through the bottleneck. Pedestrians are in danger while they wait for the green man. Many pedestrians are crushed onto pavements either side and huddled on a small island in middle of road while traffic hurtles either side of them.	Safety	This junction is being redesigned as part of the Lothian Road works.
External Email	To slow down the vehicles - suggest modify traffic lights to more frequent red light phases / shorter cycles - so drivers do not feel they can race through as many sets of lights as possible by putting foot down on accelerator.	Safety	The Charlotte Square interim scheme includes a refurbishment of the traffic signals at Charlotte Square/George Street and Rose Street junctions and co-ordination of the junctions. Comments noted, co-ordination must also consider the location of queues on the network and the potential for unsafe queueing across pedestrian crossings, impact on bus and tram movements etc.
External Email	Long term redesign of road - traffic calming. Reduce roadway width from two lanes to one lane - and reallocate disused road space to pedestrians, cyclists, walkers and wheelers.	Consultation	The permanent scheme is looking to reduce roadway width from 4 lanes to 3 lanes to provide enhanced space for walking, wheeling and cycling.
External Email	Very good news that there is to be a trial reduction to one lane southbound on Charlotte Street.	Endorsement	No comment needed.
External Email	Just looking to query the outstanding coned off area on south Charlotte Street. Its having 2 negative impacts: 1st is any right turners into Charlotte Square are blocking the traffic and creating tailbacks. Tour bus at times is having issues getting out of George Street	Congestion	Noted, as part of the interim scheme signing and right turn road markings are to be installed to emphasise the use of both lanes. The layout is being monitored.
	2nd is having the greater impact and what the lane closure causing is vehicles to pass in the outside lane and then all continuing to stay in the outside lane right to Princes street. No one is using the inside lane so we have halved the stacking space. This then in turns mean buses that are coming from Hope street to try get to Princes Street are missing several phases of lights as the traffic is continuously back to the Charlotte Square Junctions		
External Email	I also think it would be helpful to have a protected cycle lane at the corner of Queen St and up to George Street.	Safety	Access to Queen Street is under consideration however segregated facilities to Queen Street will not be possible as part of the Charlotte Square scheme. Access from the proposed cycle track on Charlotte Street onto the carriageway is being investigated as an interim connection to the existing network. The Charlotte Square project includes signal controlled cycle crossings for access/egress to George Street.
External Email	Additional problem with turning left onto St C St South from G St? Maybe that is resolved by this phase 2 design?	Design	The Charlotte Square interim scheme includes a refurbishment of the traffic signals at Charlotte Square/George Street and Rose Street junctions and co-ordination of the junctions.

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
External Emails	<p>1. We are concerned about the the use of "cycle lane defenders" to demarcate pavement extensions, because</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cyclists associate them with cycle lanes, because of their widespread use on arterial routes. • there have been many complaints about these lane defenders not being appropriate for areas with pedestrian crossings. • these measures would be more legible if more appropriate materials had been used to define the pedestrian and cycle spaces. 	Design	<p>The interim scheme required an approach to temporarily trial the reduction in carriageway space to that of the emerging permanent designs for the square, allowing the required CCWEL connection to George Street to be provided and enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities.</p> <p>Using the intermittent kerb units allowed CEC to recycle existing stock and locate intermittently to provide permeability for pedestrians who may choose to cross around the square away from the crossing locations. A continuous upstand kerb unit may represent a trip hazard whilst providing continuous barriers to prevent access to the square would represent a significant visual and accessibility issue.</p> <p>Therefore the intermittent kerb units have been utilised, with associated signing to identify pedestrian and cycling space, and particular hazards highlighted through road markings and full length kerb sections.</p>
External Emails	<p>2. Arising from this, there are several locations which look inviting for cycling (and will very likely be so used), but are designated as pavement extensions.</p> <p>2.1 Two of these spaces are easy to access, but harder to exit. We suggest that there are safety benefits to, either, adaption to making cycling legal, or for informal cycling use not being unnecessarily obstructed by very close spacing of the temporary defenders. There is not likely to be any conflict with pedestrians at either of these locations:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the west side of North Charlotte Street, where the space provides a valuable de facto northern extension of the cycle lane almost all the way to the ASL at St Colme Street junction. Note that that would facilitate easy northbound continuity via the existing dropped kerb access to Forres Street and quieter New Town residential streets. • On the NE corner of gardens, where very likely to be used as a shortcut. <p>2.2 There is a third location, on the south side of the Square, which may well be mistaken for the official CCWEL route by eastbound cyclists – see 3.1.1– or by cyclists arriving via Hope Street from Shandwick Place or Lothian Road heading to George Street.</p>	Design	<p>- West side of Charlotte Street - the section of kerbing between Rose Street junction and Young Street junction will be opened as cycle track upon completion of the interim scheme following the Summer Festival Embargo, for access to George Street and the north side of Charlotte Square. The cycle track will not extend beyond this point to Queen Street as part of the interim scheme due to the narrowing of the build out to the northern end.</p> <p>- North East Corner of the Gardens - this area includes pedestrian and cycle routes from the north side of the Square to Charlotte Street towards George Street.</p> <p>- South side of the square - signs have been erected to confirm that this space is intended for pedestrian use if travelling from the west. The CCWEL route is marked to turn left out of Charlotte Lane (north side of West Register House) and use the north side of Charlotte Square to access the new two-way cycle track on the west side of Charlotte Street.</p>
External Emails	<p>3. We are concerned that the routings are not intuitive for anyone unfamiliar with the area:-</p> <p>3.1.1 Eastbound cyclists, emerging from the CCWEL link alongside West Register House, will see cycle lane defenders to their right but nothing to their left. The painted left turn arrow will wear away quickly and some cycles may turn right towards the defenders - which don't actually permit access for cycles.</p> <p>3.1.2 If they do turn left ,then they're welcomed with a sea of tarmac with no protection, so may guess you'll have gone the wrong way. Why can't the cycle lane defenders continue around the middle of the square forming a continuous and segregated bidirectional link around the north side?</p> <p>3.2 Southbound cyclists on the new cycle lane must cross into George Street. Please advise how it is intended for them to continue south into South Charlotte Street.</p> <p>3.3 How will southbound cyclists on North Charlotte Street access Charlotte Square?</p> <p>3.4 Northbound cyclists on North Charlotte Street heading for George Street will need clear guidance to use the cycle lane, which may not be intuitive when their desire is to turn right ahead. There is the risk that they could find themselves trying to turn right out of the traffic lane - its not clear if that remains legal, but it would certainly not be safe.</p>	Design	<p>Noted; the interim scheme will continue to be monitored with regard to feedback on perceptions of unclear routings. The narrowing of the carriageway is currently limited to the south of east sides of Charlotte Square to trial the reduction in carriageway cross section on the key traffic routes, provide the key segregated cycle track on Charlotte Street, and to limit the impact of the temporary kerb units and vertical wands on the square.</p> <p>Charlotte Street is considered a 'quiet route', with the entry and exit restrictions creating a low volume highway. Thus on-carriageway cycling is considered suitable as a connection from Charlotte Lane to Charlotte Street two-way cycle track. Further signing in addition to the road markings will be considered to highlight the CCWEL route.</p> <p>On Charlotte Street, for the interim scheme the southbound link terminates at George Street as there is insufficient space to provide a continuous two way track without the proposed permanent scheme re-levelling of the square to remove the steps. This link will be provided in the permanent scheme. Cyclists must continue ahead to George Street in the interim and connect to Princes Street via Frederick Street/Hanover Street in the intervening period. All northbound cyclists will be guided from North Charlotte Street into the new segregated cycle track (to be opened upon completion of the interim scheme), including those turning right into George Street.</p>
External Emails	<p>4. There is currently conflicting no right turn signage at the George Street junction.. Will these be clarified as part of this scheme implementation? The sign on the west side shows that cyclists can turn right into George Street, whereas the sign on the east side of the road just shows "no right turn".</p>	Existing infrastructure	<p>The signing is incomplete and the sign on the offside is missing the supplementary plate. This is to be rectified. Additionally, cyclists will be able to turn right from the segregated cycle track.</p>

Source	Comment	Theme	Action / Response
External Emails	5. 1 We welcome that you have noted that alterations are necessary on the west side of the Square, at the junction with CCWEL. The exit point from the lane beside West Register House is narrow and located hard between heavily used bus bays for tour coaches and a disabled parking bay. As well as regular coach encroachment, these block the view to the right when cycling east. Nor is the routing very clear to westbound cyclists following CCWEL. We look forward to seeing the proposed improvements. These could perhaps include a clearly painted lanes across the pavement, leading to a a box with give-way lines on the carriageway, flanked by "defenders".	Design	Physical islands cannot currently be provided without an associated redetermination order, therefore the current layout includes the road marking guidance only on the western side of the square. However we are considering the options for addressing the reported issues with bus parking.
External Emails	5.2 We understand that traffic orders are necessary to move the bus stop. Can this process we started now?	Existing infrastructure	This is scheduled to be started in sufficient time that it can be delivered as part of the permanent scheme.
External Emails	6. The painted advisory cycle lanes on George Street are significantly worn off and it would be great if any refreshing of these could happen during this scheme's implementation works.	Existing infrastructure	Not within scope of project.
External Emails	7. We request that there is a review of how well this interim scheme is working before the longer term plans are finalised	Existing infrastructure	Noted
External Emails	If cycle users do make it to the George St crossing I assume cycles get their own crossing phase otherwise if shared with pedestrians they'll conflict at right angles. Cycles will likely cross diagonally on the desire line.	Design	Separate cycle and pedestrian phases are provided throughout. Cyclists northbound or southbound heading to George Street will be held at the cycle stop line opposite George Street but the northbound ahead movement will be permitted. When the pedestrian crossing across the northern arm of George Street receives a green signal the north/south cycle track is stopped. The eastbound cycle crossing to George Street runs with the southern pedestrian crossing (i.e. northbound right turn and southbound left turn from the cycle track at George Street).
External Emails	East to West it also seems odd as these wide crossing markings (that will wear away quickly) lead into narrow bidirectional lanes. Surely more space could have been provided given the extended pavement opposite?	Design	The level difference between the carriageway and footway prevents a wider cycle track being provided northbound/southbound on Charlotte Street, the cycle track must be created within the existing carriageway width. The westbound cycle crossing is wider to emphasise the ahead movement for cyclists from the westbound stop line, and reduce the risk of a left hook incident as motorists must cross the cycle lane.

