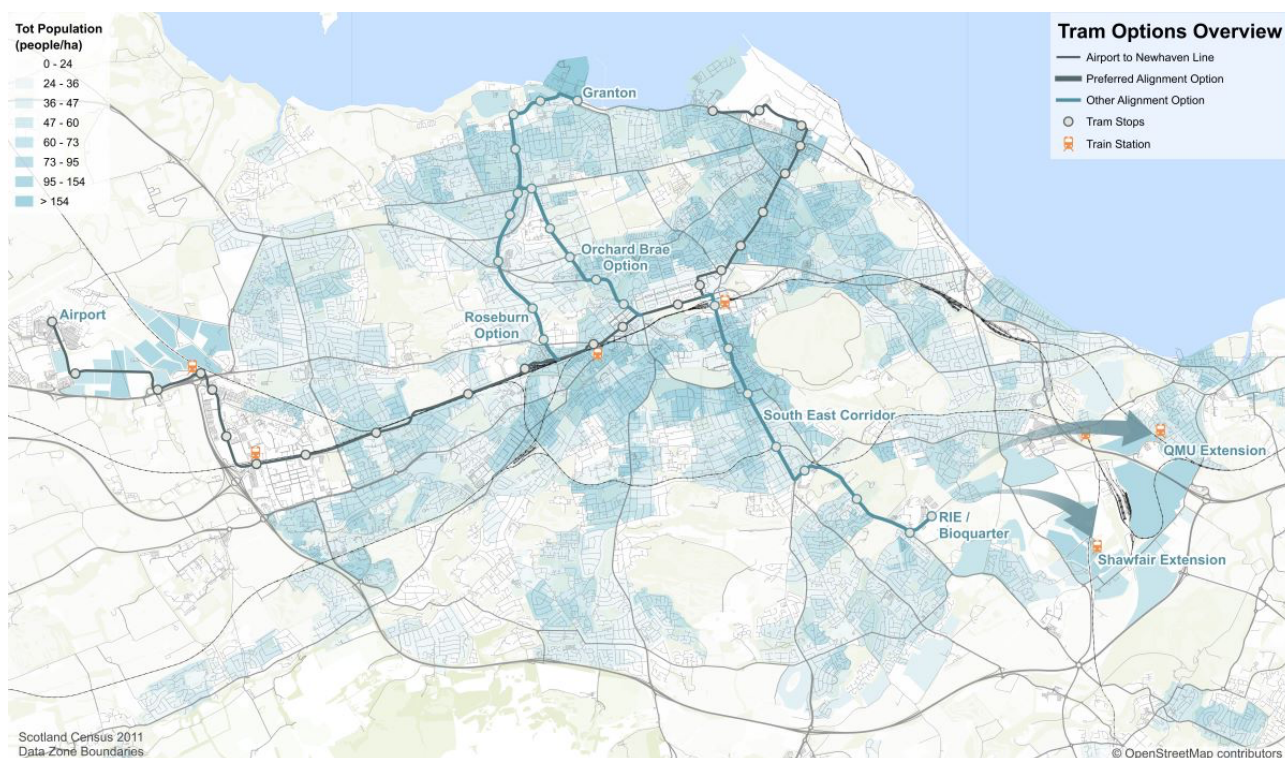


Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council

This note provides information on the Crewe Toll to City Centre section **only** of the proposed Granton to City Centre to Royal Infirmary tram route relevant to the Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council area.

The text below is from the City of Edinburgh Council's tram consultation web page.



Crewe Toll to city centre route options

From Crewe Toll there are two possible routes to the city centre via

- the off-road Roseburn Path
- the on-road Orchard Brae corridor
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In response to the concerns of some residents over the possible impact on the Roseburn Path, Edinburgh Council has looked at an alternative route on-street via Orchard Brae and an objective comparison between the two routes has been carried out.

For information, the Roseburn Path has been safeguarded for a tram route in Edinburgh's [City Plan 2030](#).

Councillors decided to consult on both the Roseburn Path route and the Orchard Brae route. A variant of the Roseburn Path option via Telford Road was considered but discounted at this stage due to construction costs, patronage figures and the likelihood of causing network disruption. A summary of key points are outlined below.

Active Travel - Roseburn Path

The section of the Roseburn Path between Craigleith and Russell Road is part of the Sustrans National Cycling Network and is categorised as a secondary cycle corridor as part of the Council's Active Travel network classifications.

A dedicated walking, wheeling and cycling corridor would be incorporated into the tram design for Roseburn Path with a segregated tram route running alongside. For over 90% of the Roseburn Path, the minimum width for walking, wheeling and cycling would be 3 metres. and at some points up to 4.2m wide, similar to the existing width). Fencing, with a buffer zone (a minimum of 0.5m and a maximum of 1.9m) would separate the tram from the walking, wheeling and cycling space.

There are two sections where the width would be below 3 metres under current designs (Telford Road Bridge and south side of Roseburn Bridge to Russell Road). At Telford Road Bridge the width would reduce to 2.1m for approximately 24 metres. At Roseburn Bridge, alternative routes would be provided although cyclists could continue to use the Roseburn Path.

A section of single-track running is proposed between Craigleith and Roseburn tram stops to make more space for walking, wheeling and cycling and to reduce the impact on ecology.

As part of the project a link to the City Centre West East cycle route at Roseburn (on A8) would be created. Formalised crossing points for people crossing the tram tracks would be required, as on the existing network, to ensure consistency. The aim would be to also have permanent improvements to cycling routes on Crewe Road South, Queensferry Road and Queensferry Street and an alternative route from Crewe Toll to Roseburn / Murrayfield identified.

Active Travel - Orchard Brae

A tram on this corridor would run on-street, using Crewe Road South, Orchard Brae, Queensferry Road, Dean Bridge and Queensferry Street

Existing cycling lanes on Crewe Road South, Queensferry Road and Queensferry Street would need to be removed as a result of, the lack of space. People on bikes could still cycle on the route and would share with general traffic, bus and tram on this route.

Alternative cycling route during construction and post-construction would be via the Roseburn Path.

The protection and enhancement of ecology - Roseburn Path

Ecology would be impacted by a tram route on the Roseburn Path.

It is currently assumed that all trees within a 3-metre off-set from the edge of the tram rail and 1 metre from the edge of the active travel path would be removed.

Tree surveys undertaken in 2005 as part of previous tram works estimated that around 25% of the trees on the Roseburn Path were either rotten or unstable and would need to be removed as part of the Council's maintenance scheme to reduce the spread of diseases.

It is estimated that approximately 30% of the trees currently in place would need to be removed. Single track running between Craigleith and Roseburn tram stops is proposed to reduce the impact on ecology. This, along with the use of self-powered tram (eg: battery operated) along part / the whole of the Roseburn Path, would reduce the requirements for tree / plant removal. Further technical work on the type of tram that could be used would be continued during the next stages of the project. [Down and read the power and rolling stock technical note \(PDF\).](#)

The opportunity to create additional green spaces along this route has been identified and would be delivered as part of the project. Artist impressions of these new green spaces can be viewed below:

[Old Murrayfield Railway Station Green Space \(PDF\)](#)

[Craigleith Green Space \(PDF\)](#)

[Drylaw Park Improvements \(PDF\)](#)

[North of Drylaw Park Green Space \(PDF\)](#)

Safeguards could be stipulated by the Council to maintain and enhance ecology as part of the project. For example, within the Tram Act 2006 that the Council used to build the existing line, the Code of Construction Practice required a 2 for 1 replanting of any tree removed.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken to provide an updated understanding of the ecological sensitivity, potential constraints, and potential for ecological enhancement along the Roseburn Path. For more information

[Download and read the preliminary ecological appraisal report \(PDF\).](#)

The protection and enhancement of ecology - Orchard Brae

This route is not a green corridor like the Roseburn Path, though there are pockets of mature and protected street trees and landscaping, some of which might be affected by the extra space needed for a tram.

It is assumed there would be little in the way of impact on animals along this route as the tram would run on the road. There may be nesting in some of the trees along the route which may be impacted by tree removal though care would be taken to minimise

impact. Careful consideration would need to be given to the impact of any construction work on the Water of Leith.

A full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would be undertaken if the project proceeds to Outline Business Case (OBC). For more information

[Download and read the landscape, streetscape, heritage report \(PDF\).](#)

Wellbeing - Roseburn Path

Removal of trees / vegetation would be required as previously outlined, which might change the feel of the route in some particularly constrained locations.

Losses would be offset in part by improved, easier to access green public spaces at Telford Road, Craigleith, and Roseburn and improvements made to Easter Drylaw Park as outlined previously.

Noise and vibration associated with tram operation would be a noticeable impact on the route. These would need to comply with relevant national legislation, but this would change the quiet nature of the route.

Walkers, wheelers and cyclists would need to be more aware of interactions with tram with dedicated crossing points across the tracks installed. For more information

[Download and read the Initial Health Impact Assessment \(PDF\).](#)

Wellbeing - Orchard Brae

There would be very little change as this is already a busy transport corridor.

Due to space constraints, the segregated cycle lanes for people on bikes would need to be removed. There would be no significant impact on pedestrian crossing points or walking / wheeling provision.

Buildability - Roseburn Path

Bridges along the route were designed for heavy rail as the route is an old railway line so would be suitable for tram.

The Roseburn Bridge would need to be extended to the west to allow a 3m walking, wheeling and cycling space, with the original façade retained. A cantilever bridge would be required at Groathill Road South bridge for walking / wheeling and cyclists (width 3.5m).

The proposal is to remove Drylaw pedestrian bridge and to create pedestrian access to and from Telford Drive at ground level improving accessibility towards the Western General Hospital.

There would be minimal impact on other road users during construction as off road. Utility records suggest little in the way of utilities that would need to be moved. Tracks would be on ballast rails (similar to heavy rail).

All land that is required for construction is under Council ownership. There would be minimal heritage impact.

(Additionally the construction of the tram on the Roseburn Path route is covered by the existing Scottish Parliamentary legislation)

Buildability - Orchard Brae

There is significant risk associated with Dean Bridge due to its form and construction, ground conditions, utility conflicts, listed status, and future maintenance. For more information [Download and read the Dean Bridge Structures report.\(PDF\)](#)

There would be significant impact on other road users during (and post) construction as on road.

As with previous tram projects, there is risk associated with moving utilities from under the tracks which increases the cost of construction. Tracks would need to be embedded into the carriageway as it shares the space with other users.

Land may be required to connect West Granton Access to Crewe Road South. Detailed analysis of left hand turn off Orchard Brae onto Queensferry Road would be required.

A new section of tram line would operate within World Heritage Site and Dean Village Conservation Area which adds cost to design.

(Additionally the Orchard Brae route is not included in the current legislation and new legal powers would be required from the Scottish Parliament)

Impact on transport network - Roseburn Path

Roseburn Path is off road so there would minimal impact on network. Lessons learnt from the Airport to York Place and Trams to Newhaven tram projects shows running off road minimises impact on other road users. There would be some interactions at Granton Square & Western Approach/Ferry Road, though this is not forecast currently to have a significant impact on road traffic.

Roseburn Path would provide additional public transport provision into the city and city region with bus services continuing to use Orchard Brae. While passengers for the Airport would change at Haymarket an existing junction at Russell Road would allow a direct service to / from Airport and Granton if future demand required it. The journey time to the airport via Haymarket tram stop in the AM peak would be approximately 52 minutes.

Roseburn Path has less resilience to incidents if single track running is introduced rather than double track, though there may be operational ways in which this could be tackled including sidings.

Running tram off road reduces journey times which is a key factor in people choosing to use public transport. This is not just about the speed the tram is travelling at, but also avoiding congestion and road works.

Impact on transport network - Orchard Brae

There would be an impact on bus journey times as they would be sharing space with trams.

Roads would be impacted significantly during construction, potentially across the whole of the north-west of the city. The closure of Dean Bridge would be required during construction with alternative routes for cyclists, buses, taxi, business vehicles and private cars needed. The cycling diversion route would be via Dean Village and vehicle diversions via Stockbridge and the New Town, and Ravelston Dykes.

There is no space for a right-hand turn from Queensferry Street onto Shandwick Place so a direct service to the Edinburgh Airport would not be possible in the future. Passengers for the airport would change at Princes Street tram stop. The journey time to the airport at AM peak via the Princes Street tram stop would be approximately 1hr 4 minutes.

For safety reasons, designs for busy on-street sections could see uncontrolled right turn movements across the tram tracks banned so access to private driveways and non-signalised side streets may only be possible with left in and left out manoeuvre.

The roundabout at Comely Bank would need to change to a signalised junction and Orchard Road be closed permanently to facilitate tram through this junction. The introduction of a signalised junctions at Learmonth Terrace would be required.

There would be more resilience to incidents due to two tracks along the whole of this section although this may be offset by interaction with other carriageway users / vehicles. Single track running along this whole route or sections of this route would not be practical as it would significantly impact journey times and reduce customer demand.

Operating costs - Roseburn Path

Operating costs on Roseburn Path could be lower due to quicker and more reliable running times which means less tram vehicles required to deliver the timetable.

Roseburn Path would be a “ballast track” (like railways), so lower operating costs than running on road and requires less maintenance.

Operating Cost - Orchard Brae

Operating costs could be higher due to longer running times and less journey time reliability, which means more trams are needed to deliver the service. The costs of maintaining concrete and tarmac route are higher as it needs to be renewed more frequently due to traffic also running on it.

Access to the Western General - Roseburn Path

A tram stop would be located approximately 200-250 metres from Telford Road entrance to Western General with a high quality and safe access route created.

Access to the Western General - Orchard Brae

A tram stop would be located approximately 100 metres away from the Crewe Road South entrance.

Construction costs, passenger numbers and journey times - Roseburn Path

Please note these figures are indicative and further work would be required as part of further business cases.

- Forecast construction costs: £350 million - £480 million
- Forecast patronage (2032): 4.1 million passengers
- Forecast patronage (2042): 4.25 million passengers
- Journey time to city centre (morning peak): 26 minutes
- Journey time to city centre (afternoon peak): 25 minutes
-

Construction costs, passenger numbers and journey times - Orchard Brae

Please note these figures are indicative and further work would be required as part of further business cases.

- Forecast construction costs: £650 million to £850 million
- Forecast patronage (2032): 3.7 million passengers
- Forecast patronage (2042): 3.75 million passengers
- Journey time to city centre (morning peak): 34 minutes

- Journey time to city centre (afternoon peak); 27 minutes

The difference in timings between the morning and afternoon peaks is a result of the volume of traffic in the morning peak.

Accessibility and Safety - Roseburn Path

Dedicated crossing points would need to be installed to support people crossing the tram tracks. There is likely to be more infrastructure and interactions with tram for individuals with restricted mobility to navigate.

There is the potential for better accessibility for those with restricted mobility to new green spaces

CCTV and additional lighting could be provided as part of tram infrastructure.

Accessibility and Safety - Orchard Brae

CCTV and additional lighting could be provided as part of tram infrastructure.

Concerns from groups representing people with visual and mobility impairments in other parts of the city about it becoming harder for these groups to use the public realm, and to access goods and services, due to the introduction of features such as bus stop bypasses and continuous footways would need to be addressed.

Roseburn Path Maps

[Granton Square to West Pilton \(PDF\)](#)

[West Pilton to Telford Road \(PDF\)](#)

[Telford Road to Ravelston Dykes \(PDF\)](#)

[Ravelston Dykes to Russell Road \(PDF\)](#)

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council
3 September 2025