

# Response ID ANON-9WUZ-R31G-V

Submitted to Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) - Business Survey  
Submitted on 2024-02-06 21:48:55

## Introduction

### 1 Your details

Your name:  
Emma Crowther

Email address:  
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Yes, I consent to being contacted about this consultation:  
No

### 2 Business / organisation details

Business / organisation name::  
University of Edinburgh

Further or Higher Education (College or University)

Other (please state):

### 3 How many parking spaces are available at your business premises?

Number of parking spaces:  
1330 (528 in the city centre, 558 in King's Buildings, 244 at BioQuarter)

### 4 Please tell us more about your business / organisation.

Please enter comments::

We are a multi-site University based across Central Area (Old Town/Southside), King's Buildings, BioQuarter, Western General (no car parking provided), Royal Edinburgh Hospital (no car parking provided). We also have our Easter Bus Campus in Midlothian. We are a community of 41,250 students and 17,000 staff. We have c.1,000 staff travelling to and from work during unsociable hours of 11pm-6am. We have an Integrated Transport Plan 2023-30 which sets out how the University will improve connectivity to and between our campuses and residencies with the intent of increasing the proportion of students and staff using sustainable transport options. It adopts the Council's target to reduce car km's by 30% by 2030. The University employs a Travel and Transport Manager, Parking & Vehicle Manager, Fleet Manager and 10 staff in various supporting roles. There is a parking management system which is used to allocate permits on an annual basis according to need. Applicants are assessed on a range of factors including access to alternative sustainable modes of transport, business need, and care of dependents.

## Objectives and outcomes

### 5 What does Edinburgh need to invest in to improve the sustainable and active travel transport offer for people who visit and work in the city?

Provide better services and facilities at park and ride sites, Offer better connections from park and ride sites to the city centre, Additional or new park and ride sites, Offer more direct public transport links, Rail services, Extended mass transit system (e.g., tram or bus), Replace diesel buses with electric buses, Bus stops and bus station development, Concessionary fares or discounted public transport, Integrated ticketing, Expanding e-bike access, Investing in community car clubs, City bike hire scheme, Active travel infrastructure e.g., walking and cycling paths, Road conditions for vehicles and bikes, Other (please state)

Other (please state):

Ensure that active travel infrastructure is maintained. Do not limit access to bikes to just e-bikes. Access to bikes should also include support and training to be able to confidently cycle.

### 6 What else does Edinburgh need to improve transport for people working in the city?

Please provide comments:

Public transport needs to be reliable by addressing congestion on the roads to ensure bus and tram are prioritised and can run to schedule. Real time information must be accurate and reliable. Simplifying ticketing - at the very least bus and tram need to be fully integrated. More secure cycle parking needs to be provided in densely populated areas of the city - cycle crime is putting people off bike ownership.

## Congestion and air quality

7 To what extent are you concerned or not about the levels of congestion in the city?

Very concerned

Please tell us why.:

Congestion is negatively impacting on our public bus services, causing issues with unreliability. Published timetables do not reflect the reality of bus versus car. This unreliability causes stress and anxiety for students and staff who rely on services to reach our campuses. As a multi-campus university our students and staff also undertake inter-site travel during the working day, and congestion increases downtime.

8 To what extent are you concerned or not about air quality in the city having an impact on public health?

Very concerned

Please tell us why.:

Air pollution causes one in 29 deaths in Edinburgh, with a higher proportion of people dying from air pollution in Edinburgh than in any other city in Scotland: <https://www.scotsman.com/news/transport/deadly-air-pollution-causes-one-in-29-deaths-in-edinburgh-1376139>

Road traffic is the main source of air pollution in Edinburgh, and nationally.

Road Vehicle emissions total around a fifth of the UK's total GHG emissions

Dr Mark Miller, Research Fellow in the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Cardiovascular Science, recently conducted research imitating the effect on the heart of cycling in heavy traffic for 1-2 hours. He found that, "Exhaust exposure ... would increase the risk of developing a heart condition. There are ... similarities between cigarette smoke and air pollution that comes from vehicle exhaust...Some of the gases and chemicals released by burning tobacco or fuel are the same."

As an anchor institution, a good neighbour and a civic University we have a duty of care to our staff, students and local communities. This could be argued to include the reduction of local air pollution caused by our operations (including staff commuting).

## Exemptions and impact

9 If the council were to introduce WPL, what discounts or exemptions would you like to see?

Please comment below:

We agree with the list provided.

10 What do you believe are the positive impacts from introducing a WPL in Edinburgh?

Please comment below:

Encouraging large employers to manage car parking - for them to consider the needs of their staff and support them to use non-car modes of transport to work, where possible. Likely this will lead to employers rationalising their parking provision. Less cars used for the work commute = reduced congestion and improved air quality.

11 What do you believe are the negative impacts from introducing a WPL in Edinburgh?

Please comment below:

At the University we already carefully manage car parking by issuing permits on an annual basis. In the city centre we are confident that staff/students with permits to park would find travel to the University difficult without their car. Care of dependents is often cited as a reason why travel by car to work/study is essential. Safer streets for all, but particularly children and older people, to enable independent active travel, would contribute to reducing car dependence. Our key concern is the timing of introducing the WPL versus the delivery of the City Mobility Plan and the significant improvements in public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure necessary to enable people to confidently rely on non-car modes.

12 What support could be given to businesses to help them manage and reduce their supply of free commuter parking?

Please comment below:

This very much depends on the employer. We have introduced most of the usual travel behaviour change measures over the last 20 years. In businesses that have not engaged in such activity these could deliver a reasonable mode shift, but here at the University of Edinburgh, to deliver a step-change we need public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure to massively improve.

## Charge levels

13 Which of these benchmarks should be used to determine the most appropriate annual charge level for a WPL in Edinburgh?

Use local costs for public transport fares as a benchmark

Other (please specify):

14 If the cost of public transport fares was used as a benchmark for the annual cost of the WPL, what should the WPL charge per year be?

Be equal to this value

15 Please comment on whether there should be the same charge level across all areas of Edinburgh or a different charge in specific areas of the city.

Please comment here:

Our experience of operating our parking management system at King's Buildings is that this is extremely difficult due to the campus being surrounded by residential streets that are only partially covered by CEC parking management. If a blanket charge level is applied city-wide - then the implications of this on residential streets must be planned in.

## Geography

16 Do you think that an Edinburgh WPL should apply across all of the local authority boundary?

Yes

If no, please specify the area:

This is a difficult judgement to make. Suspect that larger car parking facilities which will generate the bulk of the funding to invest in sustainable transport infrastructure are to be found in the less accessible, non-central parts within the council boundary.

## Other comments and suggestions

17 Please use the space below for any other comments or evidence you would like to provide on Edinburgh's plans to develop a WPL proposal.

Please comment below:

## Feedback about this engagement process

18 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this engagement exercise?

Feedback about engagement process - I was given all the information that I needed to have my say.:

Strongly agree

Feedback about engagement process - This engagement exercise was clear and easy to understand.:

Strongly agree

Feedback about engagement process - I was given the opportunity to have my say.:

Strongly agree

Please provide any other comments or suggestions you may have about this engagement process.: