



# ***Environment Not Trams Newsletter***

## **Public Inquiry over – but the battle continues**

### **February 2008**

- Public Inquiry update
- WPL (Tram Tax)
- Land grab
- Meeting with Kenneth Clark

### **Public Inquiry update**

The Inquiry into further NET Phase 2 lasted from 6 November until 21 December. There was considerable opposition to NET's proposals for further tram lines.

The ENT team presented our local case over four days and also cross-examined NET's consultants.

Also appearing at the Inquiry to argue against the CW route were Rushcliffe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.

Mr Barker, the Inspector, kindly arranged an evening meeting at the Becket School. This was well attended and gave those who could not attend the inquiry during the day an opportunity to state their case.

Since the Inquiry closed, members of ENT have walked the proposed route with the Inspector. Representatives from NET were also present. The Inspector has also visited some of those who stand to be particularly affected if the route goes ahead.

The Inspector's report is expected towards the end of June and will go direct to the Secretary of State for Transport who will then decide whether the route should go ahead. That decision is expected

around the end of 2008. In the meantime ENT will continue to lobby for good sense and against the trams.

### **WPL (Tram Tax)**

During the tram inquiry, the report on the public examination of the workplace parking levy (WPL) was published. WPL is the new tax that Nottingham City Council want to introduce to pay 'their share' of the tram costs. Of course most of the people who will pay the new tax will not be City residents. Whatever happened to the idea of 'no taxation without representation'?

The independent Examiner concluded that WPL would probably have a very limited effect on growth in traffic congestion; might cause hardship to those on low incomes and shift workers; might be sufficient to tip the balance in persuading businesses to move to a site outside the City; and would clearly be a disadvantage when potential incoming investors were weighing the costs and benefits of relocating to Nottingham.

How did Nottingham City Council respond to the report? At its meeting on 18 December the Council's Executive Board voted to push ahead with the scheme. This will now go before a meeting of the full Council and, unless some sense finally prevails, is certain to be ratified.

### **Land grab set in motion**

You may have recently seen notices appear along the nature trail of the tram promoter's intention to acquire the land.

This is not pre-empting the outcome of the Public Inquiry, but is another necessary step in the process if the plans should get the go ahead.

There was a short time period within which to object to the notice and ENT has submitted a letter of objection.

### **Kenneth Clark**

An ENT delegation met our MP on 26 January. Ken was very well informed of all the issues raised by ENT at the Inquiry. He remains steadfastly opposed to CW. Ken said he is considering asking the Speaker of the House for an Adjournment Debate so that he and the Transport Minister can discuss the proposed tram extensions. But Ken must first await the Inspector's report and study the recommendations. Ken and ENT will continue to liaise over this.

### ***Netballs***

During the PI it became clear that another hat-trick of own goals was scored by the NET team ...

- 1. They forgot to mention the effects on flooding and subsidence of 96 years of coal digging under the proposed CW track.*
- 2. They didn't know about the Environment Agency flood defence work in the area.*
- 3. They didn't know the history of flooding in Wilford and its obvious effects on the proposed track.*

We knew about these issues. We've mentioned them. They are important.