



Neighbours Opposed to Trams Nottingham Express Transit - Local "Stop the Tram Campaign"

PLEASE READ THIS

NET (Nottingham Express Transit) are proposing a tram system extension that will severely affect you and your area in Wilford, Ruddington Lane, Compton Acres and Silverdale!

Nottingham City Council, in conjunction with private investors, is developing a tram system and the first line - to serve the north of the city - is already under construction. Plans are now under consideration for further routes to the south and west of the city. As you may have seen from an official leaflet delivered to some properties around June, or from articles in local press and TV, **NET** are currently considering 6 possible tram routes. They are :-

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|-----------------------|--|------------------|
| Clifton | • <i>via the Meadows and Wilford</i> | <i>Route CW</i> |
| Clifton | • <i>via Queen's Drive and the possible new developments on the site of the Royal Ordnance factory site.</i> | <i>Route CQD</i> |
| Beeston | • <i>via the Queen's Medical Centre and The University of Nottingham</i> | <i>Route BN</i> |
| Beeston | • <i>via the Boots site</i> | <i>Route BS</i> |
| Chilwell | • <i>Route BN or BS then extending to Chilwell to the A52 at Stapleford</i> | <i>Route CH</i> |
| West Bridgford | • <i>Terminating at Gamston</i> | <i>Route GT</i> |
| West Bridgford | • <i>Terminating at Sharphill where a new housing development is proposed</i> | <i>Route SW</i> |

Why has this Newsletter been produced?

Local residents in the Wilford, Ruddington Lane, Compton Acres and Silverdale areas are concerned about - and are strongly opposed to the proposed CW route.

However, although **NET** say they are consulting and informing local residents, many people still do not know about **NET**'s plans, or they do not know what effects those plans could have on the local environment' or they do not know what to do to make their own concerns known. The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide that information.

Where would Route CW go ?

This would be a tramline built from Nottingham City Centre to Clifton, via The Meadows, Wilford and following the line of the former Great Central Railway from the south embankment of the River Trent through to Clifton.

After crossing the river at the old ferry bridge, the CW route would run towards the village, turn left before reaching Coronation Avenue and then connect to the line of the former railway. It would then follow the old railway route through to Willwell Nature Reserve where it would turn right, through the fields directly behind Silverdale and on towards Clifton.

I have heard there is concern about the Route CW proposal. Why?

If **NET** selects this tram route, the potential impact upon the local environment could be devastating.

Over the thirty-five years since the railway line was closed this area has flourished as a haven for a wide variety of birds and insects, foxes, hedgehogs, rare plants and other threatened wildlife; leading to its official designation as a "Site of Importance for Nature Conservation" (SINC). This means that the species of flora and fauna found there are significantly rare, and are of County Importance to Nottinghamshire. It is an established nature trail much-used by locals for recreation, and has become an important amenity to the area. To the north, where it meets the Trent there is a large pond surrounded by woodland and heathland, home to an even wider range of wildlife (also carrying SINC status), and the southern end leads to Willwell Cutting Nature Reserve, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and of national conservation importance. The nature reserve is currently managed by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.

An even more important aspect of the old railway line is its importance as a safe route for wildlife that connects natural habitats and helps prevent them becoming isolated islands and going into decline.

So what are the objections to Route CW?

Clearly, it doesn't make good Environmental sense

- ✍ Removal and destruction of the nature trail on the old railway embankment with its mature trees, shrubs and wildlife.
- ✍ The route of the old railway from the Trent through to Willwell Nature Reserve is a Site Important for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- ✍ Willwell Nature Reserve is a SSSI. After crossing the ring road, the proposed route would turn sharp right, directly behind Silverdale to go to Clifton. This would take it right past the Nature Reserve with all the disturbance and upset to wildlife that construction and trams passing by up to 10 times an hour in each direction would create.
- ✍ Land allocated to SINCS/SSSIs in Rushcliffe is only just over half the national average of 7%. This will be further reduced if the **NET** plan goes ahead.
- ✍ Permanent loss of footpaths and play areas.
- ✍ Loss of local walks.

- ✍ Increased traffic and congestion in the immediate area - people accessing tram stations.
- ✍ Increased risk of danger to children and animals.
- ✍ Inevitable noise and pollution.
- ✍ Disruptive and heavy construction for 2 to 3 years.
- ✍ Installation of electrical sub-stations along the route.
- ✍ Installation of tubular masts to accommodate 750 volt over-head power cables 19 feet above the ground.
- ✍ The visual eyesore that can be the only result.

It doesn't make good Economic sense

- ✍ There is no clear business case to support "hoped for" passenger volumes.
- ✍ **NET** have said that none of the route options are significantly different in terms of overall cost.

It doesn't make good sense for Effectiveness and suitability

- ✍ The CW route serves no valid public transport benefits because there are so few stopping points available along the route.
- ✍ There are few significant workplaces along the CW route. This contrasts with several commercial developments along the alternative proposed route to Clifton via Queens Drive (Route CQD).
- ✍ Other route options do more to serve transport to work and shopping needs.

What have **NET said about the Environmental impact of the Route CW proposal?**

They have said that, if they were to go ahead with Route CW they may need to remove part or all of the embankment. They go on to say they would, "aim to replace as much of the existing wildlife corridor as is possible." Clearly, following heavy construction over a period of years this would fail. So the **NET** statement is nothing short of laughable.

There are already 2 sets of traffic lights close together on Wilford Lane. How would Route CW go across at this busy road?

Adding a third set of traffic lights to allow trams to cross every six minutes would increase congestion considerably.

However, in a written reply to Kenneth Clarke on 30 July the **NET** project director wrote, “the proposed tram route would traverse Wilford Lane on a new bridge, which would eliminate the need for conflict with traffic on Wilford Lane and therefore would not require a signal controlled junction.”

But **NET** are not consistent because, in a leaflet issued recently they said, “our consultants are currently exploring the options of a traffic signal controlled crossing or building a bridge at this location”.

So a clear decision stated to our Member of Parliament has been changed within a couple of weeks to just one possible option. This must throw some doubt on other **NET** reassurances, which seem to be more about saying things to keep people quiet, rather than real consultation.

NET say they have done consultation. What has that shown?

NET say they have delivered 17,000 questionnaires to properties along the possible tram routes. But this is less than 3,000 in each area, so many people know very little about the **NET** proposals.

NET say they have received many more responses in favour of the tram proposals than opposed. But this is the result of the design of the leaflet they distributed. It is clearly engineered to get a response in terms of choosing a route option, rather than being a consultation enquiry in any true and statistically valid market research sense. So anyone in, say, Beeston who doesn't want a tram route there and who therefore ticks the box for CW as their preferred route is counted as supporting the construction of CW rather than opposing the Beeston routes.

NET have been asked for information analysing the responses they have received. They said in a letter dated 23 August that they were, “not prepared to provide analysis of our recent consultation outputs in the depth you ask.....as I do not believe that such an analysis would be scientifically or statistically robust”.

Yet, in a letter to the Post on 25 August, they continued to claim the results of their consultation indicate “considerable support”.

Do we have to do anything now? When are decisions going to be made?

Recommendations on the preferred routes for the Tram will be put to committees of the City and County councils in October this year. There will then be a process of consultation and enquiry to determine exactly which route or routes will be developed, and detailed plans will be produced.

See overleaf for details of a public meeting on 11 September

Suggested Question for the public meeting on 11 September.
(Please bring this tear-off with you)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Question: _____

In replies to letters and in a newsletter issued during August **NET** have said any objections to tram routes raised now will inform local decision making but they will not constitute a formal objection if a Public Inquiry needs to be held next year. **NET** say they will let residents know if they make an application for a Transport and Works Act Order to proceed with Route CW. This, we are told, will not happen before the late Spring of 2002 at the earliest, and there would then be 42 days to make a formal objection.

On the face of it, this all sounds quite helpful. But many people are concerned about the cavalier manner that **NET** seems to be displaying. The underlying message is trying to calm down strength of feeling and stop action being taken now by saying, in effect, "don't worry about it now; and anyway, any objections made now are **only** local so you would have to do it all again in 2002. We'll let you know when you need to object in 2002, and you can object then."

But, if those who object to **NET's** proposals allowed themselves to follow that advice, by the time 2002 came around they could find that decisions had already been taken, which would then be much harder to get changed.

So what is happening now?

Despite what **NET** have said, many hundreds of households are strongly opposed to route CW.

They are writing letters to **NET** and to their councillors; they are advising their neighbours and they are completing petitions. Many grouped together to put up yellow "Environment Not Trams" posters over the bank holiday weekend to signal the strength of feeling. The local councils acted with surprising speed in taking down those posters. (If only they tackled other tasks with such lightening speed).

A Public Meeting

A Public Meeting to discuss the opposition to Route CW is scheduled for 7:30pm on 11 September at the Beckett School in Ruddington Lane.

If you oppose Route CW please come and let your views be known.

Who should I write to if I oppose Route CW?

To record your objections please write to:

NET Project Team, Lawrence House, Talbot Street, Nottingham, NG1 5BR.

If possible, also complain to your local councillor and MP

It is up to us to object if we do not like the **NET** proposals. It is already clear that unless people complain strongly then the proposal to use Route CW could go ahead - and it is likely to be done in the cheapest way, having the greatest impact on our environment.

<p>Your own copy of the Suggested Question for the public meeting on 11 September.</p> <p>Question: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
