



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department for Transport  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4RD

30 November 2012

Dear Patrick,

**Nottingham Express Transit Phase Two Tram Works: Chilwell Road and High Road, Beeston, Nottingham**

Further to our conversation on 28th November, I am writing with regard to the Nottingham Express Transit Phase Two Tram works that are currently underway within my Constituency and, most specifically, their effect on businesses on Chilwell Road and High Road in Beeston, Nottingham. This is a long stretch of road with a large number of small independent businesses (including shops and food outlets) on both sides and the local Police station. There are no franchises and no national or internationally owned shops. I should add that it is a mark of the entrepreneurial spirit of these businesses that their traders association and the Beeston BID have been running a proactive "open for business" campaign since earlier this year when the tram works began.

In a meeting with local businesses on Tuesday 27th November, it was revealed by Nottingham Express Transit (NET) that the original construction plan for utility diversions of Chilwell Road and High Road, to reduce the road to a one way system for 18 months, has been abandoned for safety reasons. In its place, the tram contractor Taylor Woodrow Alstom has developed an alternative proposal which requires 2 parts of Chilwell Road and High Road to each be closed for 6 month periods. I attach for your reference a copy of an email I have since received from Chris Deas, Project Director of NET phase 2, which details these changes in full.

I have a number of profound concerns about these proposals:

- (a) Firstly, the complete closure totalling 12 months will have a devastating effect on the shops, food outlets and other businesses on High Road and Chilwell Road. I acknowledge that a Financial Assistance Package has been put in place for this part of the tram route which will reach up to £13,500 a year for each trader against loss of profit; however my real concern is that, due to the size of these businesses and their reliance on passing trade, some will not survive beyond any closure of the road. Many of these businesses are already on the edge given the current economic climate and a road closure will be the end of them.


*Anna Soubry, Member of Parliament for Broxtowe*

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(b) Secondly, at the Public Inquiry, it was made clear that although there would be considerable disruption to Chilwell Road and High Road, the road would not be closed. Whilst I must be clear that my office and I have always had a good relationship with NET and with few exceptions they have worked hard to communicate very well with everyone affected by the tram works, I am extremely concerned that, as late as September 2012, I was receiving assurances from NET that rumours regarding the closure of Chilwell Road during the construction works were unfounded. In short, businesses on High Road and Chilwell Road are not prepared for such a profound level of disruption and damage to their business for such a lengthy period of time.

I would welcome the opportunity for an urgent meeting with you to discuss these issues in more detail. I would also welcome any advice or assistance that your Department could give, in the meantime, to my constituents who will be adversely affected by this change to the construction plan.

You will see that I am also sending copies of this letter to: NET, the Leader and Chief Executive of Broxtowe Borough Council, Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council (Highways Authority) and I welcome their urgent response to this serious matter.

*Anna Soubry*  


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